CSÖNGE TAMÁS

PERPLEXIVE PERSPECTIVES, DISTORTED DISCOURSES

A RHETORICAL APPROACH TO AGENCY, FOCALIZATION AND UNRELIABILITY IN CINEMATIC FICTION

PhD dissertation

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Introduction

People can lie, but can a fiction film lie to the audience and later reveal this trick without violating the integrity and understandability of the story, without becoming incomprehensible or paradoxical? Who is responsible for a deception, where I see and hear a dramatized lie? The fictional character, the narrator of the film, or the director is the liable party? Is there a narrator in every fictional film at all? How many agencies control the different elements (the visual, acoustic and narrative dimensions) in film? These questions are not new, but each generation of film scholars and narrative theorists try to answer them in the light of new narratives and trends that emerge in fictional, nonfictional and academic discourses, or due to the necessity to re-think theoretical assumptions and schemes that stiffened to dogmas.

The stake of my dissertation is to promote a rhetorical understanding of the logic of narrative representation in film. I would like to complete this task by focusing on some neuralgic points in narrative theory: it mainly concerns the strategies of *perspectivation*, *character narration* and their relationship. While I want to emphasize that the former is always integral to the latter, as the core of my argument, I make a fundamental distinction between these concepts. The adjectives in my title simultaneously refer to the main themes (misperceiving characters, lying narrators) and to the misunderstandings which surround them in the narratological discourse. I want to shed light on the root causes of these issues by arguing that they originate from an incorrect understanding of a more fundamental distinction between *technical* and *rhetorical* aspects of cinematic (or any) narrative. I understand the technical dimension as the sum of conceptual and material *tools* (discursive forms, verbal registers, patterns) that an author utilizes in the course of her/his activity, while the rhetorical dimension applies to the intentional communicational *act* itself, by which this agent conveys certain (narratively intelligible) meanings. All other theoretical refinements (mostly in the form of distinctions) stem from this approach: my understanding of such dichotomies as scenic and narrative continuity, textual and narrative focalization, authorial narration and represented (character) narration, external media and narrative conceptuality, distorted perspectivation and unreliable narration are all the logical consequence of my initial commitments. My terminological clarifications are always more than just a description of known phenomena with more appropriate wording: they are conceptual repartitions with long-term consequences for the understanding of narrative cognition. I only

introduce new terminology where original conceptualizations led to serious misunderstandings and where these subtle distinctions necessitate them, but even in these cases I utilize expressions that are already present in the narratological discourse.

As my study is in large part a response to some dominant views on (film) narratology, I seek answers for abstract, general questions and draw my conclusions by reviewing and comparing prior theoretical work (both from classical and contemporary authors), and opening a dialogue with them through the recognition of their valuable insights and the criticism of their deficiencies. It is not my intent to paint the history of these questions, but to provide useful and practical answers. Although, my aim is not to provide hermeneutic interpretations for particular films, this task cannot be done without the analyzes of scenes and situations from individual films and other types of narratives, to reflect on some crucial features of storytelling.

The main influences on my understanding of narrative representation and basic narratological concepts were Richard Walsh's (1997, 2007, 2010a) and James Phelan's (1989, 2005a, 2005b, 2007, 2011) works, whose insights I want to utilize during the characterization of cinematic discourse. I use their arguments as guidelines, but not without any criticism towards them. While they exercise quite different theoretical attitudes, both of them approach their subject from a so-called rhetorical standpoint, which I also want to embrace. To a certain degree, I also rely on classical (structuralist) narratology's invaluable results (Gérard Genette, Seymour Chatman), as the structuralist school made it possible for modern narratology to came into existence. It follows, that I regard narrative representation as an act with a rhetorical force, performed in a communicative situation between authors and audiences, where forms, patterns, and structures are established (and intended effects emerge) in order for the audience to decode them.[1] Despite that it becomes an issue in multiple cases during my analyzes, I see no inherent tension with cognitive/contructivist approaches (David Herman, Ansgar Nünning, Monika Fludernik, David Bordwell, Edward Branigan), as I always understood the relevant cognitive effects of a high quality narrative work as an intentional part of an authorial rhetoric. Neither with the approach of the international narratological trend that studies the unnaturalness of fictional narratives (Brian Richardson, Stefan Iversen, Henrik Skov Nielsen, Per Krogh Hansen, Jan Alber).[2]

[1] Although I rely on Walsh, my definition is somehow less permissive than his formulation of narrative as „the semiotic articulation of linear temporal sequence" (Walsh 2010b, 5) My understanding is more theoretical, but also in accordance with Phelan's definition, who regards it as „the act of somebody telling somebody else on a particular occasion for some purpose that something happened." (Phelan 2005a, 217 and Phelan 1996, 8)
[2] For a manifesto-like summary of unnatural narratology, see: Alber et al. (2010)

Since the question of authorship and the identity of the author will not be the focus of my discussion, as a preliminary point, I must briefly clarify my stance on the subject. Although Chatman and Phelan both embraced it in their communicational models (Chatman 1978, 268; Phelan 2011, 63-64), I refrain from the use of the much-debated term of *implied author* (as Walsh does too) which was introduced by Wayne C. Booth, during the explication of unreliable narration in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961). In my view, this unnecessary theoretical construct can be easily substituted by the simpler concept of *the author* as authorship itself is a rhetorical, cognitive and social construct. (Birke 2015, Berensmeyer 2012) My pragmatic point is that we can just as easily discuss authorship in narrative films, as in literature, because the real person or persons who actually invent and produce the text (and not necessarily its physical manifestation) are only relevant as far as their rhetorical choices have an impact on the text and on the audience's understanding of it.

During research, my initial question was aimed at the understanding of unreliable narration and how properly Booth's concept was applied to diverse narrative situations in film by many scholars. According to his intial definition, „a narrator [is] reliable when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say the implied author's norms), unreliable when he does not" (1983, 158–59). His approach included many problematic concepts, especilly when applied to film: both the presence of an (implied) author whose norms the narrative should reveal, and a narrator who speaks are hardly evident in such context. After Booth's concept became popular again in the 2000's, in filmnarratology, the academic discourse started to adjust, and while the term itself remained, the emphasis started to change from the original definition's value-based focus („normative unreliability") to factual distortions or factual unreliability[3] (or: from under- and misjudgement and misinterpretation to under- and misreporting[4]), due to the proliferation of narratively complex mainstream films (Buckland 2009, Kiss – Willemsen 2016, Hven 2017, Schlickers – Toro 2017). While the axis of fictional facts are in the center of my study, in a certain sense, I want to remain faithful to Booth's original formulation of the concept where he distinguishes between the authorial and the narratorial agencies, which presupposes that in all cases of unreliability, a narrator persona (a fictional narrator) is depicted. In film, where there is no necessary verbal narration, this criterion of double agency was neglected to a greater degree and caused much greater confusion than in literature.

[3] For this distinction, see: Martinez-Bonati 1981, Nünning 1998, Laass 2008.
[4] See a fully elaborated conceptual frame in Phelan – Martin 1999.

Surveying theoretical discussions of the subject, it became instantly clear, that the larger problem is not the diverse criteria according to which scholars tried to identify the special conditions and features a narrator has to meet in order to call it unreliable, but the definition of narratorship itself became an issue. (Houtman 2004, Laas 2008, Ferenz 2008, Hansen 2009, Köppe – Kindt 2011) The inaccurate conceptualizations of unreliability led me back to more abstract problems in several critical areas regarding the definition of narrator, author, perspective, focalization, subjectivity, perception, distortion, deception, medium and fictionality. It became inevitable for me, to widen the scope of my discussion from perspectival distortions to cinematic character narration and to narrative representation in general. But the distinction between unreliable narration and the representation of distorted character-perception (which is internal character focalization) is only evident if one understands narrative representation from a rhetorical perspective, therefore I will pay special attention to the elucidation of the logic of narration in fiction.

My other base issue was related to the medium itself. I see little value in establishing „literary" and „filmic" prototypes of unreliable narration (or narration in general) as Brütsch (2014) and many others do, because it would mean the operation of radically different mechanisms of narrative cognition in different media. I understand the relationship between the rhetorical activity of narration and its textual/physical manifestation in a much looser way, where the *external medium* can influence and restrict the possibilities of this rhetorical activity, but does not determine and define the logic of its semiotic processes. (This is what narrative conceptuality does.) If we carefully examine Brütsch's arguments it becomes clear that he is not really describing medium-specific types of unreliable narration, but the difference between normative and mimetic (factual) types. His distinction rather describes what is easy to construct and effective in a specific popular format, and it is more based on cultural and historical than representational differences. I argue we can define the literary and filmic type of unreliable narration by the same rhetorical criteria, because the strategy always involves character narration. It has no significance if there is always a narrating voice in verbal narrative, while film's narration is „impersonal" (a quite misleading expression), and it rather shows than tells. All is needed is a suitable indication of character-narration. Naturally, there are ambiguous and puzzling cases, but it can occur in verbal narrative as well, because (as „unnatural narratology" thought us) real-life constraints of authorial narration not necessarily apply to represented discourses. This does not mean that the medium is irrelevant in the questions of perspectivation and character narration, but what I

will focus on is the medium-bound possibilities and established textual techniques an author can exploit and build his narrative strategies on.

Methodically, the first half of my study (chapters 1 and 2) proceeds from the particular to the general, from technical details to rhetorical intentions. It concentrates on what is specific in cinematic representation and on perspectivation techniques in film to gain insights regarding narrative representation. The latter half (chapters 3 and 4) moves from the abstract towards the concrete. It focuses on the logic of narration in order to draw conclusions about its functioning in fiction film to highlight what is universal in narrative discourses. This chiastic structure is reflected in the fact that my detailed case studies can be found at the beginning and end of the dissertation. At the core of each chapter there is one (or more) fundamental distinction(s) I want to make in order to further elucidate my line of reasoning in the subsequent parts. It does not mean that the individual arguments and conclusions are not understandable or cannot stand in themselves, but I also considered their premisses (or consequences) desirable and worthwhile to explain.

In order to confirm the usefulness of my distinction between perspectivation and character narration, I have to investigate three other important areas: in chapter 1, the textual strategies of continuity which play a crucial role in the narrative comprehension of film; in chapter 2, textual and narrative aspects of perspectivation; and in chapter 3, the logic of narrative representation and its relationship with different media; then, in chapter 4, I turn my attention to the questions of character narration and subjectivity.

In chapter one, I focus on the most important formal/technical characteristic of film: the art of the arrangement and artificialization of raw footage (or semiotically speaking the manipulation of the indexic/iconic signs) to produce narrative meaning. My aim is to accentuate the difference between the continuities on the textual (local) and narrative (global) levels, and to highlight how certain strategies of textual *segmentation* can be utilized to (1) create a sense of narrative continuity or discontinuity, and (2) to represent subjective perception.

The commitment of the second chapter is to make the same distinction, but one level higher: I claim that the narratological term of *focalization* is a part or aspect of the representational act of narration, thus a narrative feature of the work. I study perspectivation strategies and formulate the need to distinguish between textual level (perceptual) perspectivations and narrative focalizations. This move not only involves a classification of different types of perspectivations, but one that highlights a more fundamental difference: namely, that direct textual manifestations of subjective perceptions and the actual mediation

of mind-contents and abstract concepts like (narrative) knowledge and emotion exist at different cognitive and hermeneutic levels. To explore the correlations of technical tools, editing strategies, textual and narrative focalizations, I have chosen a challenging Hungarian film, titled *Másnap* (2004). The first two chapters are centered around the analyzes of scenes taken from this film, which poses a serious challenge for narrative theorists with its unique utilization of continuity editing, focalization, temporality and plot-structure.

In chapter three, I test the adaptability of Walsh's arguments about the nature of narrative fiction to film. To establish my model, three important concepts must be examined: (1) the notion of the *narrator*, where authorial-narration (diegesis) must be clearly differentiated from represented character-narration (mimesis); (2) the notion of *fictionality*, which I understand as a series of serious speech acts instead of pretended assertions with suspended truth values; (3) and to avoid further confusions, three different senses of the concept of *narrative voice* must be distinghuised (as an instance of representation, an object of representation, and an ideological position). Building on these theoretical commitments, I claim that the presence of a fictional narrator is only a possibility in all narrative media, because the medium does not define the rhetorical act of storytelling.

Once the fundamental differences between rhetorical and technical aspects of narration are outlined, in chapter four, more elaborate distinctions can be made between perspectivation and character-narration. A version of this confusion, between factually unreliable narration and representation of distorted mental or physical perception, is not only present in narratological accounts, but also in everyday discourses on films as the concept is becoming more and more popular in non-academic circles.[5] Definitions tend to focus on the central character of the story, but this person is not always a narrator who can „lie to us", but often just a character who is focalized by the author. Therefore, I would like to distinguish between two forms of represented subjectivity. I argue that unreliable narration should be understood in a narrower sense, as a form of represented narration (or simply character narration), while understanding the representation of character perception as a strategy whose sole agent is the author. Naturally, character narrators can also perspectivize their stories, as they are the authors of their own discourses. The novelty of my approach lies in the fact that I suggest this restriction on a rhetorical basis, and not on a technical one, as many studies improperly did before. (Laas 2008, Ferenz 2008) By this, I mean that the narration can be represented by cinematic (audiovisual) tools, and not necessarily by a verbal

[5] This list of ten unreliabe movie narrators contains five films which has no character narrator at all: (http://whatculture.com/film/10-most-unreliable-movie-narrators-of-all-time?page=11, 2018-02-22)

discourse in order to consider it unreliable narration of a character, but even if a voice-over is employed to tell a misleading story, it does not automatically mean that a fictional character is created by this voice. In the first part of this chapter, through many literary and filmic examples, I discuss narrative situations, where the existence of a fictional narrator is questionable. In the second part, I make some conceptual clarifications regarding unreliable narration in film; and in the third part, I discuss Alfred Hitchcock's *Stage Fright* (and briefly Bryan Singer's *The Usual Suspects*) as case studies for filmic unreliability and their narratological reception, as they are the most well-known and over-analyzed example(s) of lying narrator(s) in cinema.

1. Segmentation

Authors often represent literal and abstract subjective perspectives (textual/spatiotemporal, narrative and ideological positions) by utilizing or exploiting mechanisms related to various levels and types of continuities in film. Therefore, to study higher level phenomena in film such as character-focalization and narration, in this chapter, I approach the subject from a determinative feature of the medium: segmentation. I argue that the manipulation of audiovisual continuity plays a crucial role in both textual and narrative perspectivation. These techniques are part of the *editing process* by which I understand two distinguishable but interweaving activities: in the first sense, it is part of the recording and refers to the techniques and strategies associated with the choices regarding field-of-vision, the movement of the camera and the composition of the images. These techniques are slightly inaccurately called spatial editing or image and shot framing. Post-production editing (a more traditional sense of editing, often called temporal editing) is the juxtaposition of individual shots, the art of arranging and manipulating the recorded footage. Naturally, segmentation plays a greater role in this second sense, but I always lay emphasis on its interaction with the first one, because the actual content of individual shots (what is present and what is not on the image) are as important as their arrangement. It follows that I will mainly discuss visual aspects of editing, although, where it is required, I always take into consideration its interaction with the acoustic dimension. Throughout the first two chapters, most examples will be taken from a Hungarian film, *Másnap* (2004) to examine the questions of continuity, perspective and focalization. This narratively complex art film utilizes and exploits the artistic codes of traditional narrative cinema, while its story evokes the genre of the crime thriller. It challenges and defies many concepts of narrative film on multiple levels (conventions of editing, storytelling, characterization), thereby exposing and highlighting the functioning of some well-known rhetorical strategies.

My aim is to demonstrate, that although, narrative continuity is dependent on scenic continuity, different techniques used to break up scenic continuity do not necessarily become obstacles of narrative cognition or result in narrative breaks. The perception of narrative continuity based on textual discontinuities can have several reasons. I try to nuance the dominant paradigm (according to which these reasons are entirely based on artistic conventions and our attunement to them) and argue (following Tim Smith 2011 and Thomas van den Berg 2013) that classical editing is intuitively formed by imitating an important

cognitive process, our real-life perception and we rely on this knowledge when we interpret cinematic signs. In other words, cinematic narratives do not only it feel familiar and comprehensible because we are accustomed to these methods of visual storytelling, but because it utilizes patterns from natural human perception.

The true theoretical yield of *Másnap*'s fragmented spaces, time and storyline is their power to highlight how techniques of continuity editing maintain the illusion of narrative continuity, despite the fact that they are often used to create structures far from continuous on the scenic/textual level. Different strategies of building up a scene (or breaking down/textualizing the diegesis) can result in a seamlessly continuous and linear narrative or a seriously disarranged one.

Chapter 1.1 examines techniques of scenic continuity which I call „textual continuity" because the juxtaposition of shots is a tangible, technical feature of film. I start my study with an example of an abrupt breakdown of scenic and narrative continuity in *Másnap* (1.1.1) to show how the film challenges the basic principles of continuity editing. The questions of how editing becomes „invisible" or transparent in a narrative film and how scenic discontinuity can establish narrative continuity are central to this part of my study. (1.1.2) Then, through a detailed analysis of a scene from *Másnap* I raise some questions about space construction and the significance of the technique called *match-on-action* in it, when two scenes are both spatially and temporally linked by the actions of a character. (1.1.3) The whole issue is connected to the dual nature of the (photographic and) cinematic sign: during narrative comprehension of fictional films, *indexical* signs of the recorded footage became purely *iconic* (then as a next step in narrative interpretation, often *symbolic*) when their correlation to actual objects and sights become irrelevant. This process is present at every level of a fiction film, but most easily observable in the case of space and time construction. (A year in the story can be represented by several minutes of running time, an American city can be represented by an Eastern-European one, or a specific fictional hotel can be represented by shooting in many real ones.) I want to point out how editing (a syntactical operation, the selection and juxtaposition of images and sounds) can create serious semantic (hermeneutic) problems if this ubiquitous strategy of creating „artificial landscapes" is debunked by the unusual or innovative utilization of the elements of a well-known system, continuity editing. This is especially spectacular in *Másnap*, where the established (dis)continuities are part of a self-reflexive (medium reflexive) rhetoric which sheds light not only to his own artistic mechanisms but to the general features of classical cinematic storytelling. I seek explanation of how the perception of continuity works by

examining some tools that filmmakers use to direct the audience's attention (by exploiting some basic cognitive abilities of the viewer) and achieve the intended effect both on scenic/textual and narrative levels. (1.1.4) I describe and offer a critique of Tim J. Smith's thesis, the *„Attentional Theory of Cinematic Continuity"* and discuss the phenomenon that Daniel J. Simons and Daniel T. Levin named *change blindness*. Then, to put *Másnap's* editing strategy in context, I turn my attention to films which purposefully lack scenic continuity (for different rhetorical reasons) to show that scenic discontinuities can either remain imperceptible (as it happens in Kubrick's *The Shining* [1980]), stay at the verge of perceptibility or can create serious confusion in understanding the segment/film narratively. (1.1.5) Here, I review Thomas van den Berg's arguments, who analyzed the psycho-thriller, *Chasing Sleep* (2000) and elaborated a fairly plausible system for continuity breakdowns in films. I point out that continuity is a powerful rhetorical resource in the hands of the author to indicate different types of subjective (here, mostly distorted) perceptions, and I make an important distinction between these techniques and the strategies of unreliable narration. This distinction will be a recurring and persistent theme throughout my thesis that will turn up at multiple points in different contexts, due to the many misunderstandings that surrounds it. Even van den Berg uses the term misleadingly, confusing perspectivation and character-narration.

In chapter 1.2, I investigate temporal discontinuity on the narrative level and reconsider the concepts of linearity and non-linearity to see how continuity issues affect the understanding of a narrative and shed light to the relationship between continuity and character-perspective in *Másnap*. I make a distinction between linearizable and non-linearizable/paradoxical (and highly unnatural) narratives. In the former class, a coherent and logical („linear") story can be deduced from the textual arrangement of events; in the latter class (where, according to my hypothesis, *Másnap* belongs), this is not possible due to the employed rhetorical strategies.

1.1 (Dis)continuity on The Textual Level

1.1.1 Continuity in *Másnap*

It is nighttime. A poorly lit interior of a modest room can be seen. There is a man sleeping in the bed: he is the Traveller. (A1) His opening eyes are shown in an extreme close-up, and

after a few seconds he suddenly gets frightened as he notices something in the room. It is the ghost-like figure of the landlady's daughter, with whom he starts a strange conversation. The girl wants him to kill her tyrannical mother and the Traveller is naturally astonished by the request. At the end of their dialogue, the man asks the girl if she would switch on the lights in the room. A sudden cut occurs when (A3) the girl touches the switch on the wall and (A4) we see the awakening Traveller's eyes again in an extreme closeup. This time it is daytime, and we hear the recognizable creaking sound of a train's wheels. The location has changed. (A5) In the next shot we see a summer landscape with rich vegetation and rails in the middle where a train passes through. (A6) Its windows glide past in front of the visual field of the immobile camera as numerous screens or empty frames of a film roll in a movie projector. (A7) Thereafter we see the landscape from one of these windows, and (A8) after the train stopped, our suspicion is confirmed. (A9) The person who pulls the curtains away in the following POV shot is indeed the Traveller, as the next close-up shot (A10) reveals. Something catches his attention outside. (A11) A young girl runs through the hills, fleeing from a man in a trench coat.

This could be interpreted as the beginning of a classical dream sequence, but there is something unnerving in the transition between the two scenes (A3-A4), perhaps the abrupt nature of the caesura. The film utilizes a classic cinematic trope of awakening to represent the beginning of a dream (a sudden change of scenery, an opening eye). From the perspective of image framing, the awakening in the house (A1) and in the train (A4) is very similar, but has a different rhythm. The slow pace of A1 much more reflects the gradualness of falling asleep, than the A3-A4 change which evokes the abrupt experience of awakening and leads the viewer from the interior of the farmhouse to the yellow-brown composition of the train and the exterior landscape. However, the narrative framing of the exterior scene confirms it as a dream sequence: at the end of the sequence the camera shows the eyes of the Traveller again, who lies in the same bed where he fell asleep at night, and repeats the images of A1. Therefore the „dream" both opens and ends with an awakening. But can we be sure about the interpretation of the sequences as a dream/reality solely based on their form and cinematic conventions they evoke? Or does their content overwrite these formal conventions? The same hermeneutic questions can be asked and the same ambiguities emerge at the level of the editing: is A7 a point of view shot of the Traveller or not? From a formal perspective it could be, because the landscape is moving in the opposite direction and with the same speed as the windows of the train in the previous shot. But from a narrative perspective the Traveller only opens his curtains in A9. The film does not really clarify which

one is a dream and which one is reality. The scene also raises a more abstract narratological question: How do we know if the spatiotemporal jumps function as dramaturgical devices in the plot or they signify the mental contents or perceptions of a specific character? Beyond this highlighted sequence, the whole film is particularly suitable to study the breakdown of different kinds of continuities in narrative film.

Másnap[6] is tellingly set in an unspecified time and space, somewhere in the rural Hungarian countryside. Although the film is not sociographic in a narrow sense, the clothes, the tools and the atmosphere evoke a secluded corner of Hungary in the 1950's. The film presents the story of a mysterious, nameless man (Tibor Gáspár), who wanders in the alien countryside, looking for an inherited house, of which he only has an old, low quality photograph. We know nothing about his past, only that he is allegedly a photographer. While he meets some strange, unreasonably unsuspicious or hostile people, he involuntary becomes an eyewitness of a troubled family affair, between an (also nameless) teenage girl (Borbála Derzsi), her fierce father, Romek (Dénes Ujlaki), and her young lover, Simon (Sándor Czecző). As the Traveller finds out from various accounts of the events, the affair ended with the violent death of the girl. At this point, the killer could either be her father or her boyfriend. Of course, as the story progresses, it becomes more and more probable that the Traveller killed the girl, but by the end of the film, when we actually see the murder, it also turns out that he did it for no apparent reasons. Everyone is acting around him as if they know more about his connection to the murder than himself. Neither the Traveller, neither the viewer understands why is he so familiar to the residents of the neighborhood. „A man travels in the countryside, an abandoned area, looking for a farmhouse. We don't know much about the people who live there. There is a girl living here, who is ostracized by the others, perhaps because of her beauty, perhaps because she is sexually stimulating, perhaps because she is not like as they would like her to be, this is a general situation. They say all kinds of things to this man, they suggest that she is this or that kind, he listens in conversations, and fills himself with this wickedness and hatred towards the girl, and there is a point, where this girl, who has already been made prey by the community, is in front of her, and he becomes a beast." – as Attila Janisch, the director of the film interprets the story.[7] The screenplay was

[6] The English title „*After The Day Before*" sounds somewhat tautological or evasive, and it is exactly its point: not to say anything specific just being a relative temporal information. The Hungarian title: *Másnap* (literally „the day after") is mysterious and raises the question: after what? At the story level it refers to the brutal murder of a young girl by the protagonist. But at a linguistic level it refers to an expression „másnapos"- that is how the condition of *having a hangover* is referred to in hungarian: literally - „having a day after".

[7] His interpretation can be found among the extra features in the DVD of the film. (An interview with Attila Janisch on *Másnap*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHhbj8ewKno, 2018-02-22.)

co-written by Janisch and András Forgách, adapting the novel *Le Voyeur* (1955) by Alain Robbe-Grillet, but apart from a few basic motives, the story and the structure of the plot is considerably altered.[8]

In addition to being an „art film", it fits well into the crime/detective tradition and it shows relation to the crowd of complex/puzzle films or mind-game films[9] released around the millennium, in which the viewer can take on the role of the detective to unravel the tangled threads of the story and wrap up a cleverly designed mystery (crime or „game"). *Másnap* differs from the most characteristic topoi of the mind-game film in two respects: Although the film raises the possibility of culpability of multiple characters (Simon, Romek) and toys with these options, the mystery is actually not about the identity of the killer, because it is quite obvious from the start. On the other hand, the film „cheats" in the puzzle, because not all the pieces fit together, and a number of important ones are missing, that is, it is impossible to assemble the whole picture (fabula) if we regard the film's discourse exclusively as an intellectual challenge which is created to delay our access to the „truth" in the narrative.

The central issue is related to the film's temporal-structure, and although a proper narrative understanding can shed light to the fact that the discourse is organized around a central event, the film is not jumping between different time planes because of purely aesthetic considerations. The order of events in the film's story are elusive, the narrative's temporality is contradictory (as Richardson 2002: 48-49 understands the term). When the film finally arrives to the depiction of the murder, it has already taken many digressions into prior and subsequent events, placing the viewer into a position similar to the little metallic ball in the girl's "ball in the maze" toy. An important feature of the nonlinear presentation of events is the particular way some (chronologically distant) scenes are juxtaposed, when the continuity of the actions of the protagonist connects spatiotemporally isolated parts of the narrative (utilizing the editing convention called *match on action*). It is not merely a strategy what Genette calls „temporal ellipsis" (1983, 108), because these temporal leaps can occur chronologically backward, presenting and filling a time-period which was left untold before. Hence the film raises the following theoretical questions: What is the

[8] Janisch's earlier short film, *A másik part* (*The Other Shore*) is basically a pre-study for this film and another, more tight adaptation of Robbe-Grillet's novel regarding story elements and structure. The main events are practically the same as in *Másnap*, and the most important difference lies in its temporality: *A másik part* mostly presents events in their chronological order, operating with a classical thriller-structure in which only the depiction of the murder is delayed in order to present it as a twist-ending for the story.
[9] See: Elsaesser 2009, 13-41.

rhetorical purpose of this nonlinear structure? Is it simply replicating the protagonist's subjective experience, or is it doing something else? Which cinematic devices are utilized to achieve this interpretation?[10] I would like to approach these issues primarily through the characteristics of film narration. In my view, the film (not only medially but also rhetorically) converts the language of the early Nouveau Roman, which seeks to marginalize traditional plot-structures, the notion of character, and aims to give detailed descriptions of objects (Robbe-Grillet, 1965, 133-142), to a subjective vision governed by a fictional mind.[11] Although crime-fiction dramaturgy and the material logic of cause and effect are still major factors in the discourse,[12] they are not an exclusive organizing force.

In order to describe perspectivation and the representation of subjectivity in film (which will be the subject of subsequent chapters), the discussion of fundamental editing techniques that play a significant role in the establishment of the narrative is indispensable. The most widespread sum of principles used to create meaning and orient the viewer spatiotemporally in classical narrative films is called „continuity editing" or simply „classical style". My claim is that the source of narrative distortion in *Másnap* (the ambiguous and deceptive character of its narrative) lies in its attitude towards narrative film language, as it both relies and exploits conventions of continuity editing. It means that its consistent and recognizable cinematic language is mainly based on the principles of continuity editing, but these techniques are being subverted and its established meanings are being reinterpreted at certain highlighted points in the film that create the effect of confusion in the viewer. It is not surprising that narrative representation in *Másnap* becomes the most complex and problematic in regard to the depiction of temporality and time-perception.

1.1.2 Theories of Filmic Continuity

Continuity in narrative film can be understood on several levels. (1) There is the actual and literal (although illusionary) continuity of the standard 24 frames we see per second, (2) the discursive spatiotemporal continuity of a scene (our ability to piece together a totality from perceiving audio but mainly visual fragments, only bits and pieces of it) and (3) the global

[10] Kolozsi László for example sees a clear connection between the character of the protagonist and the peculiarities of the narration: "*Másnap* is mysterious like Borges' short stories. The narrative technique, the method tells more about the hero than we learn from himself." (Kolozsi 2004)

[11] Brian Richardson called my attention to the similarity of this strategy and the one utilized by Robbe-Grillet in *La jalousie*.

[12] According to Forgách "the time structure is special, because it is a crime story without a detective. If I have to find an archetype, it is similar to the Oedipus myth." (*Másnap* DVD extras)

temporal and causal continuity of the events and acting characters of the narrative (which we judge on the basis of mimetic and synthetic principles: our real world experiences, knowledge of genres, codes of fictionality, etc.). The continuities of these levels are getting more and more abstract, but they are working together to give a sense of coherence in the end. I will mainly discuss the violations of (and relationship between) the latter two kinds of continuity, discussing scenic continuity in this chapter and narrative continuity in the next one.

Because it is the most well-known and widespread set of cinematic principles with a lot of cultural and historical variants, I will only summarize its features that will become relevant in my analyzes of strategies of breaking up continuity in *Másnap* and other similar movies. In Bordwell and Thompson's view,[13] „the continuity style aims to transmit narrative information smoothly and clearly over a series of shots (2012, 232). The authors highlight the role of the visual attribute of the image as the primary tool in the creation of continuity: „filmmakers usually keep graphic qualities roughly continuous from shot to shot. The figures are balanced and symmetrically deployed in the frame; the overall lighting tonality remains constant; the action occupies the central zones of the screen." (2012, 232) Bordwell and Thompson explain that „since the continuity style seeks to present a story clearly and forcefully, the filmmakers' editing choices shape space and time in particular ways." (2012, 233) One of the most important principles is connected to the restriction of the shot-angles: „When working in the continuity style, the filmmaker builds the scene's space around what is called the axis of action, the center line, or the 180° line. Any action—a person walking, two people conversing, a car racing along a road—can be thought of as occurring along a line or vector. This axis of action determines a half-circle, or 180° area, where the camera can be placed to present the action." (2012, 233)[14] Another key element of continuity editing is the structuring of the scene around the gaze of the characters. „Continuity between shots, which has the characters' looks matching one another across cuts as they speak to one another or otherwise relate to one another, is identified by Burch as »the most crucial element of the Western editing system... it was this procedure which made it possible to implicate the spectator in the physical-mental space of the world of the film.« (1979, 158)" (Casebier 85)

[13] For a detailed description of continuity editing's principles, see: Bordwell – Thompson 2012, 232-255.
[14] Variants of the 180 degree rule in the case of more than two characters in the scene: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HinUychY3sE (2017-05-02)

Despite its popularity and prevalence in the history of narrative cinema, continuity style has alternatives in editing. „Instead of joining shot 1 to shot 2 to present a story, you could join them on the basis of purely graphic or rhythmic qualities, independent of the time and space they represent." (2012, 255) These techniques are often used along with classical editing, to supplement, modify or challenge the meanings achieved by it. An ideologically more charged, prominent historical alternative to the continuity style is the soviet montage:

> „the meaning of editing is closer to the Hungarian expression of cutting, but it also connects to the fact, that the purpose of this procedure is usually to create and maintain a (spatiotemporal) continuity with specific editing techniques […], while the term *montage* is expressly used to refer to poetic editing solutions which creatively and subversively break the continuity of space-time and the sense of reality. The expression is particularly tied to the Russian montage school of the 1920's. Anyway, this duality – independently of usage – refers to two determinative and fundamentally different modes of juxtaposing filmic images, which are equally important in films of all eras in film history. Generally, it can be said that abstract, experimental films prefer the creative, non-conventional editing (montage), while narrative films prefer, but not exclusively utilizing the conventional techniques (editing-cutting), which support the understanding of the plot and the creation of spatial and temporal continuity." (Vincze 2010)

Naturally, continuity editing has proven to be the best way to convey an easily understandable story in cinematic form, but my interest is directed toward narrative films that utilize classical conventions but also – to differing degrees – violate their rules to achieve certain emotional, cognitive or intellectual effects which derive from the contrast between expectations of continuity and transgressive realizations of discontinuity. As Vincze puts it, „often it is exactly the amalgamation of the two methods that cause unique and memorable stylistic formation in films." (Vincze 2010) A narratively mild form of violation is the infringement of the 180-degree rule which was originally introduced in filmmaking to avoid the confusion of spatial relations (of the characters). In the „bathroom scene" of Kubrick's *The Shining* we see Jack and the waiter, Delbert Grady (who is depending on our interpretation some sort of mental projection of Jack, or a ghost) standing in the middle of the famous red lavatory. Their conversation proceeds in a direction where their identity is questioned and in a sense they become interchangeable. The visual presentation of the scene mirrors this situation by framing them from „both sides", in other words we have „medium long shots" in which they occupy the former position of the other person. The film intentionally plays with the principle of the 180-degree rule to give a subtle visual clue regarding the connection of the two characters. It is a fine example of a basic narrative

situation where a principle of classical editing becomes visible by its violation to achieve a certain artistic effect. Of course, the viewer does not have to be aware of these rules to be affected by their transgression. Consider an even stronger example from *The Lord of The Rings*: *The Two Towers*, when the „evil" and „innocent" personalities of Gollum are consistently framed in a classical shot-countershot structure to give the impression of a conversation between two, spatially separated entities. It is a case where an aspect of a mental reality is projected to the spatial dimension by camera movement and framing.[15]

Tim Smith argues that the understanding of scenic continuity obviously does not lie in the visual perception of actually continuous images (after all since the 1910's, scenes are not tableaus but fragmented views of a totality[16]), but not even in the recognition of perfectly matching details (of the represented object) and shots (as the act of representation). Just as shorter, closer shots „analyze" or edit a previously introduced fictional scene based on what is important visually or narratively („analytical editing"), if we have wider, longer shots, we usually edit a shot ourselves, by focusing on different visual details („theatrical editing"). These are generally not randomly chosen details but carefully placed „attentional cues" which overarch multiple shots, and can grant a strong sense of integrity despite the possible „continuity errors" on the perceptional level. (T. Smith 2011, 5) Based on Todd Berliner's and Dale J. Cohen's research, I want to show that as a consequence, it is not just the iconic nature of the film image which imitates our impressions of the world, but from a certain perspective, classical editing (which is usually regarded as *the* artificial component of film) also imitates human perception.

In addition to *Másnap*, my examples will be from films that intentionally utilize this insight in order to create another layer of meaning in their narrative. These films often deal with perceptual distortions in their themes (such as dreams, hallucinations, etc.), but the interesting aspect is not the actual representation of an explicit hallucination but when film language (in implicit small details) reflects and resonates with these themes. (There are many examples where these distortions never get mentioned or referred to in the plot, so the viewer has to „naturalize" or give meaning to them.) I will focus on the construction and irregularities of filmic spaces: how these films build up a scene, orient the viewer about the space, what kind of continuity errors these spaces contain, in what extent the rhetoric of the film makes these perceptible, and how these details affect the audience when they try to understand the narrative that unfolds in these spaces. Therefore, these films create two

[15] Gollum's scene from the film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbzFmkHEv1Q
[16] See: Gaudreault 1988, 12-18.

viewer „positions". The first is the regular, innocent, curious and ideal authorial viewer, the latter I want to call the analyst/detective who not just experiences or enjoys the film, follows (or more likely get confused by) the narrative and its „message" or the author's statement on a subject, but who is looking for these hidden clues in order to better understand what is really going on. (And she suspects a lot more is going on. Sometimes the point of the movie is that a crucial thematic moment is not explained. I am not saying that by analyzing these details one can solve the puzzle but these details are incentives to try to solve them with „closer analysis".)

Joseph P. Magliano and Jeffrey M. Zacks[17] draws our attention to the fact that 95% of the editing processes are cuts, which is a paradoxical technique that disrupts continuity on the primary level of perception, but at the higher cognitive level of narrative comprehension its aim is to ensure continuity and to became transparent or „invisible".[18] There are several explanations for the non-obtrusive nature of cuts in classical editing; Magliano and Zacks regard it as a natural cognitive reaction of the recipient when faced with an *unnatural sensory information* based on their understanding of storytelling and narrative apprehension:

> „An alternative reason that cuts are not perceptually salient stems from the nature of continuity editing. The purpose of continuity editing is to tell a story by creating a spatially and temporally coherent sequence of events and actions (Bordwell, 1985; Bordwell & Thompson, 2006) with the end result of enabling the viewer to perceive a sense of causal cohesion across cuts. One could contend that many cuts are invisible because they are created such that viewers perceive a strong sense of situational cohesion across the cut boundary." (2011, 1.1)

Stephen Heath in his seminal article on *Narrative Space* also poses the question: How can we understand the fragmented cinematic space as a totality? Heath thinks the answer lies in the dimensionality of filmic representation, because filmic space is no longer two, but not yet three dimensional. He cites Rudolf Arnheim who thinks that „[f]ilm gives simultaneously the effect of an actual happening and of a picture." (1981, 40) Arnheim states that the individual images of the film does not give us a strong sense of space, and montage would

[17] Magliano, Joseph P. and Zacks, Jeffrey M.: The Impact of Continuity Editing in Narrative Film on Event Segmentation In *Cognitive Science* (November/Deccember 2011) Volume 35, Issue 8, pages 1489–1517. (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3208769/)

[18] „However, approximately 95% of editing boundaries are *cuts* (Cutting, 1995), which constitutes the splicing together of two camera frames. The juxtaposition of the content of two edited frames can be jarring and contain little feature overlap, but most often, a cut is intended to convey a continuous flow of events and be "invisible" to the viewer (Murch, 2001)." (2011, 1.1)

be impossible if it did. „It is the partial unreality of the film picture that makes it possible." (1981, 40) Heath concludes that the space created on the screen is a special filmic construction, which can be recognized in its difference with real space, but „that difference is the term of an ultimate similarity (indeed, a final »illusion«)" (1981, 41). According to Heath, the filmic image is ideologic precisely because it is mediated through the immaculate renaissance perspective („the final illusion"), where the spectator is always placed at the perfect spot, from where (without any distortion) she can perceive the development of the events before her – thus excluding any other interpretation of vision itself, and all ambiguity that rises are emerging from the thematic, story level.[19] I have two observations regarding Heat's argument. First, I want to emphasize that the ideological nature of the visual track of cinema is not fully realized in the literal perspective of a single image/frame, but in a sequence of interconnected images (or shots) that gives the feeling of control over the reception/consumption of the narrative for the viewer. Consequently, continuity editing can be closely associated with this ideology. Second, I would like to draw attention to the fact that not all films are structured in this way: examples from mainstream or art movies (like *Másnap*) where continuity editing is problematized, made visible or reflected upon, are exactly the cases where this concept of a consummate, perfect vision and the idea of an „immediate narrative truth" is problematized on a fundamental level. (With a metaphor from the fine arts, we can call these cases *anamorphic distortions*.)

Continuity created by cuts does not mean that the time covered by the juxtaposed shots (time of presentation) equals the length of diegetic time (represented time), because individual cuts often represent smaller or larger leaps in time. Thus, time of the discourse is usually less („ellipsis") or the same („scene") as the time represented by the sequence, though it is possible that the presentation takes more time than the referred interval.[20]

> „Continuity editing is important for the management of perception of spatial and temporal ellipsis. Films rarely depict all of the sub-events that make up a larger event. For example, one shot may show an actor approaching the stairs of a building and the next shot may show the actor entering that building. In such cases, viewers are intended to perceive these events as being roughly continuous in space and time." (Magliano – Zacks 1.1)

[19] Heath's insight is not new just more elaborate, but it can be also found in Baudry (1975).
[20] Genette mentions the *descriptive pause*, as an example for this kind of relation between the two types of time. (1983, 99), but in the case of movies, the audiovisual freezing of diegetic time is much less common that for example slow-motion techniques in a visually important scene.

For narrative continuity, or for the representation of a continuous diegetic spacetime, actual temporal or spatial continuity is unnecessary. What does it mean that cuts create narrative continuity? Let's see an example where the big twist of the movie depends on this principle or activity of the viewer who, in order to make narrative coherence, fills in the blanks between the shots, created by cuts. In *The Sixth Sense* (1999), this convention is exploited and used to deceive its viewers, whose presuppositions are turn out to be wrong, but this mechanism is in accordance with the author's intentions. In the story, Malcolm Crowe (Bruce Willis), a child psychiatrist is heading home and approaching his house from a street in Philadelphia. We see this from a bird's eye view. Then a cut occurs and in the next shot the camera is placed inside his house, and Crowe enters a room through an open (or unseen) door. We assume that a brief amount of time has passed between the two shots, but nothing important happened, and we make the most economical hypothesis/explanation about the missing time interval: namely, that Crowe opened the front door and stepped inside. We probably wouldn't even notice anything worth mentioning precisely because we are able to reconstruct the missing details without encountering any interpretational difficulties or narrative contradictions. In other words, the viewer is authorized to conclude that these segments can be omitted because of their narrative indifference, ordinariness, uneventfulness, because they do not meet the requirements of „tellability". Similar scenes of transitions between locations occur several times during the film, but the narration always cuts away from the critical moment. Ultimately, Crowe almost disappears in the doorway, and in the next moment he appears inside the house. The ellipsis encompasses a minimal time interval but we never hear the sound of the door. The point is that up until the very end of the story neither Crowe, nor the viewers are aware of the fact the psychiatrist died after the very first scene of the film. With this information, it becomes clear that we never see Crowe opening a door because as a ghost, he is not capable of manipulating physical objects. In fact, we never see him opening a door through the entire movie. If something like this had been shown in the film that would increase the details where the director actually had to „cheat", that is, to show something untrue or distorted by Crowe's perception (which events are minimalized in this film) in order to maintain the „cover story" of him being alive. Even the cellar door is closed when he tries to walk down to the basement,[21] but in the following

[21] The author's purpose is to make all scenes deceptive in a way that all of them can be interpreted in two ways to have a coherent story, therefore the film does not contain sequences which are exclusively represent the dead protagonist's perception of reality. Although the main strategy of the narration is not *misreporting*, but *underreporting*, the cellar door is the only important object in the film, which turns out to be presented inaccurately in accordance with Crowe's misperception of it. In one of the last scenes, it is revealed that

shot, we see him already walking down the stairs. The film intentionally and systematically omits the moments that are crucial for the „right interpretation" of the scenes, thus the viewer can reconstruct a coherent story which will prove to be false by the end. From another perspective, the elaborate device's communicational purpose is both the representation of Crowe's absent knowledge of his own situation (through a *focalization* of his restricted knowledge) and the deception of the audience through equivocal situations. The effects of continuity editing is exploited, prompting the viewer to make false assumptions.

Füzi and Török emphasizes that we need the principles of the continuity system, because „a film is built from fragments and this basic fragmentariness appears in several levels." They argue that „film constantly breaks the spatiotemporal continuity of the experiential space: we do not see what we would see with »the naked eye« from a point defined by the given space and time coordinates – instead we get the multitude of viewpoints, jumping from one location to another and time planes also alternate. How can it be that nonetheless we can orientate in filmic time-space, and perceive the series of shots as parts of one process? We are capable of this, *because by mastering the cinematic conventions* we learnt how to read correctly the syntagmatics of the shots, by which the film establishes another kind of (narrative) continuity." (Füzi –Török 2006, emphasis by me) Berliner and Cohen contests this belief that the junction created by a cut (the juxtaposed shots) can be understood as narrative continuity solely by the acquisition of cinematic conventions. They consider the widespread belief according to which continuity editing significantly differs from how we perceive our real environment as erroneous. In their research, they try to demonstrate that the cut performs a task similar to the „active perception" of the viewer. „We propose that, unlike other editing systems—such as Sergei Eisenstein's »Intellectual Montage« (45–63) or Yasujiro Ozu's »360- Degree System« (Bordwell, Ozu 89–102)—the classical editing system selects inputs similar to those selected by active perception. »Active perception« refers to the cognitive and perceptual processes for selecting and encoding stimuli in the physical world." (2011, 46-47) Because „[o]ur perceptual system […] encoding distorted and fragmentary spatial information, drawing a conclusion as to the source that gave rise to the information, and perceiving its own conclusion and not the distorted fragments. Hence, perceivers experience a mentally reconstructed world, not the physical world itself." (2011, 53) The notion of cut is usually used as synonym for classical

Crowe's wife stopped using the cellar and put a table in front of its door which seems to be invisible for her husband's ghost and the viewers. However, this momentum is nicely explained by Cole, that dead people „only see what they want to see".

editing or continuity editing, which „works as a surrogate for active perception, posing spatial questions and answering them, specifying spatial information that perceivers in the real world are accustomed to specifying for themselves." (2011, 47)

In their view, formal devices in films that employ the principles of classical editing are not only capable of remaining invisible and helping the immersion in the story because the audience have learnt the conventions of filmic meaning-making and using this knowledge as an automatic interpretational frame, but because (with regard to continuity) they perceive their real environment similarly. „Although panning or tracking might intuitively seem more consistent with our perception of the continuous environment, in fact edited images more closely resemble our common perceptual experience during visual transitions than do continuous camera movements. A typical eye movement performs more like a whip-pan than a pan and more like a cut than any other cinema device." (2011, 49)[22] Their final conclusion is that „classical editing and active perception are analogous in that they tend to create discontinuous images that the perceiver later integrates into a continuous space" (2011, 50)[23]

I cite their insight to shed some light in general on the persuasive and cognitive force of visual editing (shot juxtaposition) in cinema and in particular the poetics of *Másnap*. In Janisch's film, we can interpret the viewer's confusion not only as the result of an unusual mode of presentation or an incomprehensible situation, but a viewing experience caused by a sensual impression which seemed to bore the marks of something familiar, where we can smoothly apply everyday schemata of visual comprehension (active perception / continuity editing), but which turns out to be completely strange. In psychoanalytic terms, it can be described as the experience of the uncanny. Berliner and Cohen's suggestion draws our attention to the fact that a rhetoric violating important principles of continuity editing (the match on action in this case) can achieve a particularly powerful effect concerning the disorientation of the viewer, because in this sense, it is not only an infringement of a convention, but an infringement of the way we learnt to perceive reality and understand our visual environment.

Although the artificiality (conventionality) and medium specificity of the local sense of continuity is the subject of serious debates (such as Berliner's arguments for the mimetic

[22] A whip pan is a quick camera movement, where between the endpoints of the movement only a blurred image or indistinct streaks can be seen.

[23] Naturally, this does not mean that narrative films could not contain more complex temporal and spatial relations than the ones we encounter in the percpetion of reality. As Füzi and Török reminds us the simultaneous presentation of multiple viewpoints can only be achieved by the radical breakdown of continuity.

nature of the cut), the knowledge of cinematic codes, tradition and narrative context is necessary to properly understand even a scene containing a very simple chain of actions. Since the understanding of the mentioned contextual factors are largely automatized in the viewer, sometimes exactly a divergence from the traditions is needed to raise attention to the constructed nature of the pairing of certain formal techniques and their usual meaning.

1.1.3 Syntactics of Sites and Semantics of Sights

Másnap questions the ideology of the „immaculate renaissance perspective" and breaks this perfect vision of narrative film in two levels: The first concerns the film's discursive techniques and editing strategies by constructing ambiguous, impossible, unnaturalizable spaces that bridge external and experiential realities, the second concerns the dubious relation between fictional referents and their visual representation.

One of the most intriguing scenes occur after the Traveller had woken up on the train and run into the reeds with only his handbag with him, where he finds three objects: a discarded bicycle, a cloth bag, and the head of a dead lamb inside the bag. After he looks into the eye of the animal, he notices a small object under his shoe, and bends down to pick it up. When he lifts up the snailshell to take a closer look, he notices that it is pierced in the middle. Then the Traveller realizes that the scenery has changed: he is no longer in the middle of the reeds, but at the edge of a country road where a truck picks him up moments later. This is the same truck which the protagonist was travelling on in the opening scene of the film.

On a technical level, the sequence draws attention to the convention of *match on action* (when an action or movement starts in one shot and continues in the next one), and to fully understand its effects, it is necessary to describe the scene shot by shot.

(B1) The first shot before the discovery of the shell shows the Traveller and his environment in a long shot, to establish the location of the action and to orient the viewer about the spatial relations between the character and his surroundings.

(B2) I the next shot we see the Traveller's face in a close-up, slightly from below (therefore, all we see in the background is the blue sky), as he notices something on the ground with a worried expression on his face.

(B3) In the third shot only the Traveller's shoes and the grass is visible in a close-up, and as he moves his foot, the snailshell appears from under his shoe.

(B4) We see his face again; the shot is similar to B2.

(B5) This shot involves a crane movement: It starts off with the parameters of the third shot when the hand of the Traveller appears as he reaches for the shell and lifts it up till the height of his eyes, while the focus is on the object and his hand. Because of the focal plane and the body of the protagonist, the background remains blurry and unrecognizable. It is a feature of the spectator's attention that it neglects small anomalies and discrepancies in the image in order to maintain the mental construction of a unified space of the scene.[24]

(B6) The sixth shot is an extreme close-up of the Traveller's hand as he holds the shell in a point of view shot.

(B7) The second moving shot returns to the frame which was interrupted at the end of the fifth shot in order to dilate the space, opposing the movement of the Traveller's turning head. The shot displays a new location, a deserted road. After the truck drives off with the Traveller on board, the camera does not follow the vehicle or the character in any way, but remains still.

The curiosity of the scene that it is narratively framed by the falling asleep and awakening of the hero (at the house where he meets the strange girl), which suggests that the sudden spatiotemporal changes are the expression of a dream-logic or the associative connections created by the character's mind. But the continuation of this strategy in the linking of shots and scenes beyond the frame of the dream interferes with this comfortable interpretational possibility. The technique is repeated in a scene, where the Traveller wanders in a very dark room, and his only source of light is a glowing lightbulb in his hand. After it goes out, the screen becomes pitch black. Then he discovers a window with a curtain, through which a dim light floods the room. (D1) The first shot is completely dark, when the silhouette of the Traveller's back becomes visible as he approaches the window. We are witness to the beginning of a movement of his hand as he opens the curtain. (D2) In the next shot, we see the Traveller's face from the other side of the window as he finishes his movement and looks through the glass. The camera starts to dolly backwards and it becomes clear that he is standing at the window of a train.

The convention of match on action[25] is defined by Magliano and Zacks in the following way:

[24] SMITH 2011 (Continuity in reality: 10-14. and in narrative film: 15-16.)

[25] „The match on action also serves the continuity, when a certain or move, action which started in a specific shot ends in the following one, suggesting both temporal and spatial continuity." (Vincze 2010)

> „creating a sense of causal continuity in action is arguably a primary function of continuity editing (Bordwell, 1985; Bordwell & Thompson, 2006), and action can be perceived as continuous even when space and time are not. Continuity of action is largely maintained by having an action start in one shot and continue in the shot following the cut." (2011, 1.1)

The authors argue that „[a]dherence to the 180° system ensures that the motion across shots will match in term of its flow across the frames that comprise the shots" (2011, 1.1)

> „interweaving actions that occur in different locations across cuts should lead to the perception that the events in the different locations are occurring concurrently in the story world (Bordwell, 1985; Bordwell & Thompson, 2006) and will likely converge in the story world (Magliano, Dijkstra, & Zwaan, 1996). On the other hand, breaks in space and time across a cut boundary should lead to the perception that there is a break in story time and space (Magliano et al., 2001; Zacks et al., 2009)." (2011, 1.1)

The fundamental dynamics of continuity is created at the level of shots: number 3, 5 and 7 are each other's visual continuations, number 5 returns to a frame where 3 ended, 7 returns to where 5 ended. These repetitions help the viewer to get a consistent, coherent sense of space. Shots 2 and 4 are practically eyeline matches for 3 and 5, depicting the observer in order for the next shots to represent the observed object. But shot 5 reaches a resting point after this visual tension with an „inner cut", in which it synthesizes the former dichotomic system by displaying observer and observed in the same frame. Shot 6 highlights the features of the object even more when the camera is placed more clearly at the place of the observer. Despite the fact that the scene tightly follows the Traveller's perception until shot 7, only shot 6 can be considered as a subjective point of view shot. Shot 7 is the most complex one in the scene in terms of camera movements and dramaturgy. The question regarding narrative continuity is the following: In exactly between which two shots occurred the change in the location? There are multiple ways in which we can understand this question. My approach can be considered phenomenological in a certain sense, because it is important that I am not looking for an answer in a strictly technical level. The events of the film's narrative and its diegetic places are fictive in their nature, that is, they are not just „the clones" or „fictionalized versions" of the actual locations of the shooting. If it hasn't got any rhetorical significance in the movie, then it is only a technical parameter in how many actual locations the shooting took place. What we can safely state is that the rhetorically important change (the recognition of the change by the character and by the viewer) does not overlap

with the technical one (the „real cut"), since the shot after the crucial cut confirmed the viewer's minimal expectations in the perception of continuity (the character is still standing, continuing the movement he started in the earlier shot), and only the dilatation of the space unveils the fraud. The repetitions (recurrent images) which can be found in the seven shots just amplify the apparent permanence of space and time in order to give a greater effect for the occurring rupture. Viewers only recognize the change of the setting in shot 7, but if we carefully compare the images we might notice that in shot 3 the grass was already too short for the shot to take place in the reeds. Yet, the identification of such technical parameters will not bring us closer to a correct interpretation or diminish the effect of the scene, because the film's main strategy is to disjoin the technical suture (the moment of the cut) and the dramaturgical turn (change in the framing by an inner cut or „zoom"), to erase the clear boundaries between the two locations, and to mislead the audience with careful guidance of their attention.

The movie's action-space is an interesting theoretical subject even beyond the direct cognitive effects of the editing, due to the discrepancy between its fictional referents and their visual representation. *Másnap* was shot at numerous locations in Hungary, the director himself stated in an interview[26] that „we had at least ninety locations from the Bükk Mountains through Káli Basin till the Mecsek Mountains" (Hungler 2003),[27] yet the completed film encourages viewers to construct its venues as the adjacent scenes of one small region. Generally speaking: even if the interior of a house and the external view of the building were shot in completely different locations, the film's narrative can join them and create a fictional representation of a non-existent house, likewise it can present the same scene as two completely different fictional locations (Janisch plays with these possibilities in his earlier film, *Hosszú Alkony*).

In *Másnap*, the narration makes the viewer lose her confidence to an extent that identifying simple objects („the signified") by their visual signifiers can be a problem, and we would need some other (clearer, „narrative", mostly verbal) confirmation which we usually do not get. In one scene, the Traveller shows a picture of the house he is looking for to a woman, who says that she and her husband live in that house and the audience see the

[26] Since I find the occasional use of directorial interviews and public statements helpful for interpretational purposes, I sympathize with the moderate actual intentionalist's view who pays „attention to the text, to the author's oeuvre, to the culture context, to the author's publicly available biography, and so on." (Carroll 2000, 82)

[27] It is an interesting addition that the large baroque hotel in *Last Year at Marienbad* (whose title probably ironically contains an exact location) was also created by using a surprisingly high number of real-life shooting locations. (Wilson 2006, 69)

(not so good quality) photograph and the building, but still cannot be sure if they refer to the same object in the story, and this is not the consequence of the visual appearance of the photo and the building (they don't match exactly). If the Traveller had acknowledged the correspondence, the viewer would have accepted it as a fact. The visuals cannot be taken at face value, the seemingly realistic image is detached from the fictional reality (the fictional statements) constructed by the verbal (explicitly narrative) dimension.

That is, although a fictional representation can be created by selecting multiple, indexical signs to record (with actual locations and/or studio sets and backgrounds), classical narrative cinema tends to hide this synthetic nature of its referents, and prompts its audience to make narrative sense out of the iconic nature of its signs.[28] *Másnap* in the global level of determining its space of action follows the rules of continuity editing, which does not mean that the connection between the represented places are meticulously detailed and clearly understandable for the viewer. Classical narratives usually emphasize only the key elements of geographical linkages that are the most important for the events of the narrative itself, often producing a special type of artificial space that only exists in the diegesis.[29] An extreme example for the gap between the circumstances of the shooting and the created fictional space is a scene from David Hemmings' *Just a Gigolo* (*Schöner Gigolo, armer Gigolo*, 1978) where it seems that David Bowie whose part was recorded in a Berlin location, and Marlene Dietrich whose part was shot months later at a studio in Paris were actually in the same room, and Bowie is listening to the singing of Dietrich.[30]

During the comprehension of the space of the film, the dominance does not lie in the technical side of the recording, but the rhetorical pursuit to maintain or expose the illusion of continuity. In one scene of *Másnap*, a literal physical model of the established fictive „landscape" appears in a room corner with every little object that is important for the protagonist's journey in this space. This is the only sequence when we get a (fake) overview of the whole scenery. The obviously simplified and unproportionate model does not clarify any correlations regarding the spatial setting of the film, but we can easily interpret it as a metaphor for the viewer's mental modelling of this space. This is confirmed when the Traveller recognizes his own reality in the details of the scale model. With the mise-en-abyme like structure, the director pays a tribute to his favorite movie, *The Shining* (Stanley

[28] For further details on the indexical/iconic nature of cinematic signs, see the chapter on narrative conceptuality.
[29] The expressions „artificial landscape" and „creative geography" came from the russion film scholar, Lev Kulsehov, who described the phenomena in the 1920's. (Kuleshov 1975, 5)
[30] http://www.bowiegoldenyears.com/justagigolo.html (2016-01-29)

Kubrick, 1980) which is in itself a dazzling example of creatively exploiting anomalies lying in the spatial construction and object representation of classical narrative films. There is an example in the film where both the image – referent connections and spatial relations are problematized in one object. Its iconic setting, the enormous hedge maze next to the famous Overlook Hotel is revealed in different versions throughout the film: we see the maze itself when Wendy and Danny (Shelley Duvall and Danny Lloyd) are heading towards its entrance to explore the enormous place and we see a drawing of it in front of the real maze. Meanwhile, Jack (Jack Nicholson) rambles in the halls of the hotel and discovers the model of the Maze in the Colorado Lounge. At this point we can conclude that the drawing on the board and the model depicts two, noticeably different mazes, therefore one of them necessarily represents the „real one" inaccurately. The next shot is even more exciting: we see the maze from a bird's eye's view as if the camera took Jack's perspective while looking at the model, but simultaneously we hear Danny and Wendy talking to each other, and as the camera zooms into the center of the maze we can spot them as two tiny moving figures. Unlike the drawing, the maze shown here is perfectly symmetrical along a horizontal axis.[31] And these are all different from the maze in which we see the characters walking or chasing each other: for the shooting, only the quarter of the „whole" structure was built, which was enough to film the necessary scenes.[32] *The Shining* plays with the perceptibility (and the significance of this perceptibility) of the difference between the visual representations of the object and relativizing the actual sight (and actual site!) of the maze by highlighting it as an abstract concept when connecting the model to the actual one by Jack's eyeline match. In numerous sequences, Janisch's film prevents the viewer to perceive the space of the scene as a coherent whole, and what is a hidden or discursive manipulation of space-reception in *The Shining* (Jack's gaze is only metaphorically towered over his family in the maze) transformed to an outright, foregrounded disruption of spatial continuity, which is posed as an interpretational problem. (The Traveller's transgression to these virtual spaces requires an explanation.) The two movies are different in their placement of their tricks which make use of the synthetic nature of fictional spaces.

*Másnap'*s narrative does not achieve its effect because the film uses far apart shooting locations to create its fictional spaces or because it utilizes loosely fitting sites to create

[31] Adam Savage (the host of the popular TV show, *Mythbusters*) encountered the same problem when he decided to build the exact replica of the „Shining maze": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRAqx8stEnY, 2017-05-05.
[32] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8o-n6vZvqjQ&t=201s, 2017-05-07.

spatiotemporal units, but because it does not want to cover up these established methods of filmmaking (as mainstream cinema does) or does not want to use them just as a „background" (in Kubrick's film they are not problematized at the level of the story or narrative comprehension) but showing them as anomalies in an audiovisual universe. Therefore, *Másnap* expresses its main thematic conflict with formal, discursive devices which disturb the transparency of editing and function as an obstacle to seamless narrative consumption.

The purpose of this brief analysis of space construction was to show how continuity (and discontinuity) on the textual level of the film was used to generate complex narrative features and how perspectivation techniques can form the basis of expressing extraordinary perceptions and subjective experiences. The analytic scene construction[33] in *Másnap* relies on the audience's cognitive schemata in order to break the pattern by introducing an unexpected scenic turn. With the manipulation of continuity, *Másnap* continuously exploits classical editing to express its hero's perception of subjective time *and* to present an inherently contradictory story.

1.1.4 Attentional Clues and Change Blindness

A key scene in Michelangelo Antonioni's *The Passenger* (*Professione: Reporter*, 1975) is worth exploring to demonstrate how easily meanings attached to perceptual continuity and discontinuity can be changed by other contextual elements. In Antonioni's film, temporal planes change from present to past without any spatial or even any apparent discursive discontinuity.[34] David Locke (Jack Nicolson) is a reporter who finds the dead body of a man he recently met (Charles Mulvehill) in a room of an African hotel. Locke decides to take the identity of the dead man, and starts to swap their passport photo. He is sitting at the desk of the penurious hotel room and tampering with the pictures when we hear a knock, then a dialog starts between Locke and the dead man. The phenomenon is confusing at first, seemingly a representation of Locke's memory (as an audio-flashback). But at the beginning of a long shot, it is revealed by the camera that the conversation is just a recording (which seems perfectly logical given that Locke is a reporter). The long shot starts on the cassette player and the camera pans right to show Locke's back, when he meaningfully looks on his left at the direction of the balcony. The camera follows the direction of his gaze and through

[33] For the elaboration on the concept, see: BERLINER – COHEN 50.
[34] Vincze (2010) drew my attention to this scene.

the open window Robertson, the dead man appears. After the trick with the sound, this is another interpretational problem for the increasingly suspicious viewer. When Locke also appears in the balcony and the two men continue their conversation „in real time", it becomes clear that we see and hear a flashback, therefore the time of the scene changed gradually, without a cut. The return to the present is equally continuous both from the perspective of the images and the sounds. Antonioni plays with the editing techniques that mostly influences the perception of discontinuity and continuity and conventional meanings attached to them: besides the sophisticated representation of the gradual immersion in a memory he draws attention to the cut (also regarded as a formal element that can link events in the discourse from different periods of story time) and attaches its conventionalized meaning to another technique: the continuous camera movement (which is formally the opposite of a cut: the absence of a cut, the incessantly spinning frames). The temporal leap can only be deduced with the help of the narrative context: The dead man lives and walks, and Locke, the reporter cannot be in two places at the same time. (The temporality of the flashback is also heavily determined by the conversation heard on the soundtrack, inasmuch at one point this recording directly gives way to the visually presented „live speech".) Anywhere else, a cut that marks the continuity of space and time would be little of analytic interest, but when Antonioni inserts one in the middle of this flashback it becomes a hilarious discursive pun.

This raises the question: How can be the control and the misguidance of the audience's attention be this successful? How is that these small mistakes or incongruences just interfere with the viewer's experience of continuity when the rhetoric of the film brings them to the fore and if not the audience are likely to miss them? Tim J. Smith in his article on the issue comes up with a solution and calls it the „*Attentional Theory of Cinematic Continuity"*. He addresses the problem of why we assume spatial continuity between shots despite minor errors in the alignment.[35]„The key assumption of AToCC is that viewers do not and should not construct a detailed spatiotemporal representation of the depicted scenes. Such effortful cognition is redundant for the perception of most important elements of a cinematic narrative." (Smith 2011, 15)[36] According to Smith during the assembly of the shots the most important factors are the deliberately placed *attentional cues* like: (1) off-screen sounds, (2) conversational turns, (3) motion, (4) gaze cues, and (5) pointing gestures. The

[35] In addition to the fact that we are often indulgent towards them in fiction and don't attach much importance to them.
[36] This article is actually a summarized version of his dissertation. (Smith 2005)

list can be supplemented by a couple of other visual cues such as (6) certain kinds of lights and lighting, (7) dominant, highlighted colors, etc. „The combination of attentional cues pre-cut, and matching minimal expectations post-cut allow viewer cognition to precede seamlessly from shot to shot, scene to scene, sequence to sequence, and across the entire narrative." (2011, 5)

According to Smith editing in film not only occurs with cuts, but viewers also edit and select in the case of longer, wider shots; therefore, the viewer's perception can be orientated and manipulated through a series of shots by these attentional cues. It is an interesting observation that we want continuity so much that if it fails to occur before our senses (this is another lesson of the Kuleshov experiments), the brain tries to correct the „error" and inserts the perceived information to a scheme: this is the basic mechanism that allows us to understand a scene fragmented by cuts, but this is also the essence of a phenomena called „change blindness".[37] Two psychologists, D. T. Levin and D. J. Simons made several experiments based on a mechanism that is tellingly appeared twenty years earlier in a surrealist fiction film called the *Obscure Object of Desire* (*Cet obscur objet du désir*, 1977) directed by Luis Buñuel. In the movie two actresses (Carole Bouquet and Ángela Molina) play the single role of Conchita, a poor Spanish maid living in Paris. The film randomly and unexpectedly alternates the players during the film. Aside from their different temperaments and ironic utterances like „I am myself", the different appearance of the two women are not thematized or mentioned explicitly in the story. Perhaps, for a while, viewers do not even notice the change or does not identify the two actresses as playing the same role. As the film progresses the actresses are not only alternated from scene to scene, but being switched inside a single scene. As the main story is a narration of Conchita's lover, Mathieu, it is possible to assume that in each situation we see an actress who is more appropriate to represent Conchita's actual behavior, or the different ideas of her personality as it appears in the imagination of Mathieu, or his audience on the train. But at the end of the film, she shows up outside Mathieu's narrative played by both actresses. (It is worth

[37] Branigan writes about a hauntingly similar mechanism that occurs during the viewing of a film: „As a spectator engages the procedures which yield a story world, something extraordinary occurs: his or her memory of the actual images, words, and sounds is erased by the acts of comprehension that they require. Comprehension proceeds by cancelling and discarding data actually present, by revising and remaking what is given. A new representation is created which is not a copy of the original stimuli nor an imperfect memory of it. In comprehending a narrative, the spectator routinely sees what is not present and overlooks what is present. For example, the viewer of Nick Fury probably does not notice that the floor tiles of panels 9, 12, and 14 have disappeared in panel 16; or that the shoulder strap of the second robot mysteriously changes shoulders in panels 14, 15, and 16; or that color schemes change drastically from panel to panel. In The Girl and Her Trust a truly startling range of »mismatches« that are plainly visible are seldom noticed even by experienced viewers." (Branigan 1992, 83-84)

considering how hard it would be to turn this technique into a textual narrative and achieve a similar effect. Unwanted attention would be directed to these details if the author described her looks in two different ways.)

In the „door study" (Levin – Simons 1998),[38] several pedestrians are asked by the experimenter to help him find a location with the help of a map of the area. While the pedestrian explained things to him, two man, carrying a door passed through them and the man who asked for directions was switched by another different looking one, who carried the door. In approximately half of the cases the by-passer did not notice the change and continued to explain how the other can find his destination. The prominent aspect of the experiment is that the participants didn't notice huge changes occurred before them because their mind was occupied with other details. Why does our perception indicate continuity when there is none and why are we not able to recognize the change in situations like this? Smith argues that we think of our environment as continuous, unless there are clues warning us of the opposite: then an empirical factor overrides this a priori continuity. But why our brains assume the world as continuous? Smith's answer is that because our perceptual system does not seek objectivity, it tends to prefer certain patterns. The hypothesizing of continuity is the most economical way of perception which helped survival the most efficiently and cognitive models based on these assumptions were the most successful in getting empirical verification. „Indeed, if we noted all of the changes in the environment around us, as we scanned our eyes this way and that, our cognitive processes would likely become overwhelmed." (Berliner – Cohen 2011, 57)

Numerous scholars replied to Tim J. Smith's article on ATOCC in the 2012 thematic issue of the journal, *Projections: The Journal for Movies and Mind*. Greg Smith, for example, states that continuity is a controversial concept with multiple meanings and Tim Smith's article is really about attention, not editing. To prove this, he comes up with an example from television, which is „[i]n many ways […] the same experiment as in the Levin and Simons study", but without a „cut" (G. Smith 2012, 60). The commercial warns the drivers of London about the presence of cyclists in the road.[39] The first half of the short sequence depicts a situation from classical crime fiction: in a wealthy British mansion, the owner is lying dead in the middle of the room and the detective lined up the widow, the butler and the maid as potential murder suspects. There is also another police officer present

[38] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWSxSQsspiQ, 2017-05-05. See also their article on change blindess in film: Levin Simons 1997.
[39] The commercial can be watched here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubNF9QNEQLA (2016-02-01)

in the room. The monologue of the detective and the interrogation of the suspects are composed in a way where after a full shot of the room, the camera focuses on the talking character in a medium shot. The scene is one continuous long shot, and the different framings are achieved by the movement and zooming of the camera. After every character has spoken, we get a full shot again, and the detective arrests one of the suspects. Then he directly turns to the viewers and asks whether they paid as much attention to details as him, because there are 21 things that have been changed during the brief sequence, between the first and last full view of the room. These details are shown by the repetition of the scene but from another perspective (recorded by a more distant camera) where we can see the actions of the staff and how they redecorate parts of the room which are currently excluded from the field of vision of the first camera. It is revealed that not only the viewer's prime suspects, the small objects in the character's hands, but their clothes, the furniture, and even the dead man himself is replaced in a matter of seconds. The cognitive moral of the story can be read at the end: „It's easy to miss something you're not looking for." According to Greg Smith „[t]he fact that the same processes govern the way we view a single shot seems to indicate that Smith's model is primarily about attention, and that editing is simply a primary means of shifting the audience's visual attention." (2012, 58) „[B]oth film and comics probably depend on the manipulation of attention more than a systematic, ecologically grounded cognitive modeling of space." (2012, 60) I should say that I partly disagree with this criticism. Let me defend the view that Smith's argument is at least partly about editing. Because Levin and Simon's experiment and the British advertisement both contain „editing" (a disruption in the continuous flow of visual data) that is independent of the attentional activities: for the test subjects the door that obstructed their vision for several seconds was essentially a „cut", therefore they saw „the actors" in two separate stages. The advertisement has no cuts, but in terms of the shown information the camera highly restricts the viewer's access at some points, thus the term „internal editing" can be fruitfully applied here. The scene works because the viewer concentrates on the attentional cues mentioned by Tim Smith, moreover besides the visual (movements of the cast) or audio stimuli (conversation) the audience tries to follow and understand the narrative thread, therefore the careful observation of the other elements is simply too much for their cognitive capacity. However, the replacement of the objects would have been much harder if the whole setting were shown all along, so I would like to regard editing (even if it operates with „internal cuts") as a special way of orienting attention.

However, consideration should be given to Greg Smith's claim according to which the principles of continuity editing are not that systematic as some scholars like to emphasize and the most important criterion for a smooth narrative experience is not the continuity of space-perception or the clarification of spatial relations but related to the rationing of new information. According to him, the problem with a cut within 30 degree is not that the background „jumps" behind the relatively same-looking character, but because the new angle does not satisfy the requirement to display a new, important piece of information for the viewer, therefore this type of image becomes disruptive because the change wasn't motivated by a narrative reason.

1.1.5 Continuity Breakdowns

Thomas van den Berg (2013) in his essay video distinguishes between two kinds of „continuity breaks" which he (incorrectly) understands as two types of „cinematic unreliability". I strongly oppose the idea to describe continuity breaks of any kind as „unreliability", as I see greater benefits in applying the expression to more specific *narrative* situations. I discuss van den Berg's model here, because despite his potentially misleading terminology, it innovatively describes techniques that can be closely associated with perspectivation as an authorial rhetoric. He distinguishes between two types of continuity breaks: *local* (inside a scene) and *narrative* (between scenes), which is often only retrospectively reconstructed by the viewer. He connects the presence of local continuity to narratives where the techniques of classical editing dominate the film's discourse. He argues that movies featuring „classical cinematic unreliability" leave this aspect of the narrative intact: local continuity is maintained and the film provides a thematic key for the correct interpretation of its narrative (it can be a character's irregular mental state, split personality, madness, supernatural ability). With this key, the audience can reframe the story, reconstruct a coherent and meaningful narrative and understand the confusing events.[40] In van den Berg's view, films like *The Sixth Sense*, *Fight Club* (1999) or *A Beautiful Mind* (2001) „adhere to local continuity" (2013, 6:05) and at the level of local space construction, they operate with well-established schemes, therefore their technique can be labelled „reliable unreliability". From our perspective, the important aspect is that hermeneutic issues (the recognition and understanding of a coherent story) rise on the narrative level. Other films

[40] The post-factum recontextualization of the film narrative is called „reframing" by Füzi and Török. (2006)

like van der Berg's case study, *Chasing Sleep* (Michael Walker, 2000) belongs to a second category. He interprets the explicit or latent break-down of *local continuity* as another type of unreliability which is much more rooted in the medium of film (against narratives in other media). Although his distinction and examples are interesting and worth examining, he inappropriately blurs the concepts of unreliable narration, internal focalization and other textual properties of the films. First, neither narrative nor local discontinuities are a sufficient or necessary condition for unreliable narration, which is a concept I want to reserve for represented character narration, therefore not even *The Sixth Sense* or *A Beautiful Mind* are right examples for this narrative strategy. Surely, a local discontinuity (a continuity mistake) can cause a serious confusion in the viewer, but it can be a purely discursive dramaturgical device, it can signify a distorted subjective perspective or express an inaccurate narration. It varies from film to film what meanings these techniques are associated.

Chasing Sleep is a good example of the radical breaking down of local continuity while maintaining narrative coherence: the structure of individual scenes seemingly fulfill the requirements of continuity editing but they actually violate them. Viewers do not even notice these minor trespasses, because narrative continuity requires them to „overlook" these mistakes, and interpret the scenes according to basic narrative frames (scripts and schemata). From a certain aspect, the story is very similar to *Másnap*, as it is centered around the experiences of a middle-aged English teacher, Ed (Jeff Daniels), whose wife went missing and he (along with the audience) gradually realizes that he might have murdered her but buried this traumatic memory deep inside himself. In one scene, a detective asks Ed to bring him his disappeared wife's photo and journal. Ed walks up the stairs to the second floor of his house, enters a blue room, picks up the journal and the photo from the desk, walks back to the detective and hands over the objects.[41] Viewers rarely notice that Ed did not come back from the room upstairs, but from his downstairs study. The crucial cut happens during the picking up of the journal. When Ed reaches for the book in the blue room, the camera is approximately placed at the height of the tabletop and directed toward the open door of the room. After the cut (we suspect a 180-degree change in the angle) the camera is outside the room where Ed resides and we see him as he repeats his gesture of picking up the journal. At this moment, the camera and Ed is at the ground level again, in the yellow room, which has a completely different arrangement than the blue one. Another significant difference is that Ed holds the book in his left hand, instead of his right in which he holds a photograph

[41] The scene from *Chasing Sleep*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6ffXso55nA (2018-01-12)

now. The juxtaposition of the shots is both temporally and spatially faulty, but these mistakes are still barely noticeable. ATOCC and the continuity of the overall actions of the protagonist (match on action) can explain why we overlook the errors in the scene, moreover we naturalize the temporal overlap, the repetition of a crucial action not as a mistake in the film's realism, but as a discursive device, an emphasis or confirmation of continuity: the film shows Ed twice, from different angles, as he takes the diary from the desk. It is not impossible to notice the deception but the concentration on the movement of the actor and the curiosity for the narrative outcome dominate this segment in a degree that it prevents the viewer to detect the illogical and discontinuous details of the „background".

Van den Berg's remarks and the analyzed scenes draw our attention to the way Walker's and Janisch's films not only *contain* continuity errors but creatively integrating their possibilities into their rhetoric. One might easily interpret these „discrepancies" as apposite expressions of the mental state of a character and (as innocent viewers are not aware of these errors) the characters' unawareness of their own situation. (In *Másnap*, this becomes the key issue: we do not know anything about our hero and assume that the „errors" will characterize him, but the connection remains highly ambiguous.) Van den Berg uses *Chasing Sleep*'s rhetoric to point out the relevance of the cognitive approach, according to which, narrative (global) continuity is less like a textual quality and more like a product of the viewer. He emphasizes that „»continuity is not inherent to the film, but rather a process that takes place in the mind of the viewer.« In other words: We search for clues to build schemata, infer within those schemata until they are broken or confirmed, then adjust and start over again. In the meantime, we follow what we perceive as continuous and coherent action" (2013, 11:18) But make no mistake: authors (filmmakers) can and are taking into account and counting on these cognitive capacities and the effect of their compositional techniques to their audience when creating the film. Walter Murch, who worked with Francis Ford Coppola in films like *The Godfather* (1972) *The Conversation* (1974) or *Apocalypse Now* (1979), stated in an interview that „one of the things you have to develop as an editor is a very strong intuition about where is [the viewers'] attention. And under most ordinary circumstances you are carrying that attention around without doing violence to it. It's like a cup full of liquid that you are carrying and not want to spill anything. And as a result, people feel the invisibility of what you are doing."[42]

[42] *The Cutting Edge: The Magic of Movie Editing*, Wendy Apple 2004, (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U76MBDKQe8s, 2016-02-02.)

Since the boundary of perceiving continuity is not exactly punctual, Berliner and Cohen try to phrase the problem cautiously: „If spectators perceive film space as coherent by default, then filmmakers can assume that spectators will connect spaces unless spatial information falls outside the accommodation ranges of the processes required for perceptual continuity." (2011, 60) And as to how filmmakers do this we can refer to their assumption that „to produce stimuli that fall within the accommodation ranges for perceptual continuity, classical editing tends to follow the patterns of active perception." (2011, 50) And as we have seen, there is a particular field of play available for filmmakers, because active perception tends to distort reality for the sake of its own effectiveness.

The key mechanism of films utilizing „local discontinuity" is the play with this boundary. But because these films heavily rely on classical editing (at least, they simply cannot bypass its ubiquity and its influence on how we comprehend movies), the intentional, strategic use of these resources (the rhetorical incorporation of irregularities) are often indistinguishable from real continuity errors in the sense of accidental editing mistakes. The ambiguity is especially blatant in cases where the narration does not foreground the given error as a poetic element, with which it wants to achieve an aesthetic effect.

The Shining, edited by Ray Lovejoy, is especially remarkable in this respect, because it deploys an entire range of phenomena concerning distortions of space perception, object placement, object structuring, and spatial orientation, from the unnoticeably inscribed impossible spaces of the hotel, to the confusing objects which create a distressing atmosphere. From another, more problematic aspect, these phenomena can be examined from the perspective of authorial intention: instead of interpreting them as subtle rhetorical constructions, several elements can just as easily be regarded as simple continuity errors.[43] Rob Ager called attention to the problematic construction of the Overlook Hotel, considering both its outside view and the arrangement of its inner spaces.[44] The most famous

[43] The problem is especially relevant because it questions the myth that Kubrick was a perfectionist and obsessed with even the slightest details in his films. But many strange details seem to be unmotivated as we interpret them as continuity errors: the pine tree in front of the hotel appears in different places in different scenes; at the end of the film, the knife in Wendy's right hand appears in her left in the next shot and again in the right in the following one, etc.

[44] Ager's video on *The Shining*'s space construction: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sUIxXCCFWw (2017-05-06) Text on the video: „For anybody who still thinks the spatial anomalies in the Overlook Hotel are just errors, Google »shining a light in room 237« and read the Guardian interview with Jan Harlan, Kubrick's brother in law and exec producer of The Shining. In the interview, Harlan confirms that the sets were designed to be visually impossible to disorientate the viewer." (http://www.theguardian.com/film/2012/oct/18/inside-room-237-the-shining, 2016-02-09) Jan Harlan, the producer of the film stated in 2012 for *The Guardian* that the impossible spactial stuctures in the hotel were intentional and that „the interiors don't make sense" (http://www.theguardian.com/film/2012/oct/29/how-we-made-the-shining, 2016-02-09) It is a lesser known fact that the film had an alternative ending which was cut by Kubrick after the film had been already released.

„irregularity" is the impossible window in Jack's employer's office, which indicates an external space behind the room where there is actually a corridor of the hotel. Similarly, the spatial relation between the hotel and the hedge maze becomes problematic when we see a panoramic shot of the hotel and its environment where the maze, what we saw in a previous scene very close to the building, is nowhere. Did the author of *The Shining* overlooked the irregularities of the Overlook hotel? Can we interpret all of them as subtle clues that describe the mysterious nature of the building? There is a large scale of phenomena and while some of them could be the result of inattentive editing, others have to be intentional manipulation. A chair disappears and reappears in the background while Wendy is having a conversation with Jack who becomes more and more annoyed by his wife's chatter. (Why would someone move the furniture in the background?) The maze-like rug pattern changes under Danny who plays with his toy cars and rocket in the halls of the hotel.[45] (This alternation is a little more complicated to account for, because the crew had to rearrange all of Danny's toys to another position.) When Halloran shows Wendy and Danny the cold storage room, they clearly enter the room at another point than the one they leave it. Of course, all of these instances could be simply the result of the assembling of two slightly different takes of the same event, but it is unlikely that such number of mistakes went unnoticed.

The local inconsistencies of alignment in *Chasing Sleep* are not completely hidden from the viewer, its rhetoric (from the perspective of focusing the audience's attention) can be placed between *The Shining*'s delicate scenic tricks and *Másnap*'s highlighted spatiotemporal breaks. Van den Berg argues that in *Chasing Sleep* we find „not continuity mistakes that go unnoticed (like hairdos changing over shot-reverse shot), but rather the cueing of perceptual expectations that in fact facilitate transgression of our ecological processes." (2013, 15:30) Consider this scene which is very similar to the one we find in *Másnap*: When Ed begins kissing with his student, Sadie and the scene continues in the bedroom without any disruption of the action, then the narration is prioritizing a certain kind of „emotional" continuity (a discursive force) against diegetic reality to maintain the

Unfortunately no footage survived, just the details of the script. According to that, the scene took place in a hospital, where Ullmann visits the convalescent Wendy and informs her that the police thoroughly searched the entire hotel and they „didn't find the slightest evidence of anything at all out of the ordinary". The omission of this scene bears great significance for the understanding of the film, because Ulmann's words would have explained much of the (fantastic) events and the ambiguity surrounded their interpretation as a manifestation of character subjectivity (banishing the story to the domain of the uncanny).
(http://www.theoverlookhotel.com/post/41259062113/screenplay-for-the-deleted-original-ending-of-the, 2017-05-06)

[45] http://www.idyllopuspress.com/meanwhile/30410/the-shining-how-the-kubrick-carpet-trick-works/, (2016-02-09)

intensifying eroticism of the scene without a clumsy change of location (similar sequences can be found in *The Graduate*). It seems the technique has a strong discursive purpose that diminishes its intelligibility as a representation of subjective space/time perception of a character. The kissing sequence suggests a local (spatial and temporal) continuity, but by its end it becomes clear that narrative continuity was created by a technique similar to a montage-sequence (2013, 33:26) in which a thematic unit is created by juxtaposing shots of similar actions which are actually separated in diegetic time or space. „A sequence like this is not uncommon in narrative film. If there would only have been a soundtrack underneath, in which case it could signify a multitude of similar actions spanning a certain amount of time. The only problem here is its underdetermined nature. […] Lack of cues for framing, thus falsely implying a priori continuity." (2013, 30:52)

An even more obvious editing trick is used in the only scene that takes place outside Ed's house. The film connects two dramaturgically very different spaces (the present of Ed's house and the space of memory/fantasy) with the movement of the camera and the continuity of the hero's gaze. The darkness in Ed's cellar becomes the screen for the memory-flashback when the camera starts to zoom into the blackness and a tiny dot of light appears in the middle of the screen. This light grows with the camera dollying forward until it expands into a new location, then Ed steps into the hospital room where his dying mother lies in the bed. Instead of utilizing a cut to sharply separate the two scenes, or the clichéd technique of cross fading from Ed's contemplative look to the hospital scene, the film applies a metonymic spatial structure to make the planes of reality and the psyche continuous.

Comparing the strategies of three groups of films we can conclude that, in *The Shining* and *Shutter Island* the „matching mistakes" enrich our interpretation of the story, but basically (maybe with a few exceptions) remain invisible, without the viewer ever becoming aware of them. Therefore, the oddities never explicitly obstruct narrative comprehension (the understanding of the story) because they never really became a part of the story. Their significance stays at a „local" level, they are not thematized neither by the characters nor by the discourse, thus it is easy to miss them. Both Kubrick's and Scorsese's film make use of the device of thematic representation of distorted perception (mostly by showing us the hallucinatory perceptions or subjective visions of characters), but the two phenomena usually remain distinct from each other. The *contents* of subjective perception almost never depend on the accentuation of continuity mistakes or the violation of the classical film language which at most *reflect* thematic issues, and does not create them.

Chasing Sleep also foregrounds phenomena which question the objective, impersonal nature of the primary diegesis and which are part of this thematic dimension (a finger crawling at the floor, a giant baby in the bathtub, piano music from the nursery, etc.), and techniques which shatter the continuity of time and space (and which are connected to local discontinuities) remain at the verge of perceptibility. This means that the audience is not forced to interpret them as a direct representation of the perceptional reality of the character – they remain discursive techniques that *can* be connected to a mental state. The distortions are justified by Ed's drug abuse, insomnia and possible guilt, but the difference between the thematically/narratively subjectivized and the „locally" discontinuous elements is their connectivity to Ed's mind. While the former elements can be considered as something that is mediated through a deep, *internal focalization* of Ed's fake perceptions, the latter are very much suitable for creating ambiguity: because they are not just at the verge of being perceptible, but at the border between being exclusively a discursive device and being a mimetic representation of a character's perception of reality.

This rhetoric of ambiguity is intensified in *Másnap* where the technique can not only be considered as a reflection on classical space construction, but (while the general tone of the movie is very serious) also as a playful „deconstruction" of the mind-game/detective genre. *Másnap* does not represent radically subjective experiences by fantastical visions, but by focusing the audience's attention to its textual mismatches and temporal ambiguities. In a number of mind-game films (*Memento*, *Shutter Island*) techniques and glitches on the perceptual level usually only reflect or supplement the narrative/thematic issue, but they do not generate new hermeneutic problems. In this sense, the central problem in *Másnap* is essentially a formal one, where the discontinuities in the scenic level, the malfunction of continuity editing *creates* the thematic/narrative issue for both the viewer and the protagonist.

Scenic discontinuity can be applied in many ways, exploiting learnt conventions and basic perceptual features, it is a flexible tool that can be used directly as a hidden, covert, subtle representation of visual delusions, indirectly as a metaphor for unstable mental states, or more explicitly but ambiguously, where the anomalies are less likely to be representations of the subjectivity of a character, and more likely as a discursive self-reflection: a commentary on film, stories, and the structures of cognition in general. Whether we link them to a character's psyche or not, these „errors" should not be automatically interpreted as unreliable narration, because even if the discontinuities have a device rhetorical impact and possess meaning on the narrative-level, as my examples demonstrated, they are not

represent a faulty *act of narration*, but the *perception* of a character or simply a pure discursive (authorial) of

1.2 (Dis)continuity on The Narrative Level: Non-linearity

Before turning to the analysis of perspectivation on textual and narrative levels, I would like to show how the arrangement of events represented in *Másnap* results in paradoxical causal relations, henceforth a story with an unnatural concept of time, which cannot be easily interpreted as the figurative representation of a real (but subjective, internal) experience.

> „Among Robbe-Grillet's most surprising devices are the sudden »transits« from one narrative sequence to another. These may involve a change in setting, time, character, narrative perspective, or all of the above. They may occur from one paragraph to the next, but they may just as easily take place from one sentence to the next and, on occasion, even in midsentence. Wherever they are found, transits occur without warning as if they were a continuation of the preceding narrative. The result for the uninitiated reader can be confusing, especially with hard-to-note mid-paragraph or mid-sentence transits." (R. C. Smith 2000, 34)

Roch C. Smith's statements about *Le Voyeur* are uncannily fitting for certain aspects of *Másnap,* whose plot is nonlinear and confusing in a very specific sense: its spectator can never be sure if a scene takes place before or after the time of the murder, because as soon as a few minutes into the movie, we recognize that the scenes are often not following each other according to a coherent chronology. The narration does not make it clear how much time has passed between two, seemingly continuous scenes, or if we see an earlier time interval than before. As a consequence, we soon lose our ability to figure out the complicated space-time relations. The primary rhetorical goal of the film is to represent this chaos, which affects not only the audience but the protagonist as well.

David Bordwell draws our attention to the fact that time in cinema has no such markers as in verbal languages, thus „[t]he temporal relations in the fabula are derived by inference; the viewer fits schemata to the cues proffered by the narration." (1985, 77) It is apparent from this quote, that signals of „absolute time" in shots and scenes are not filmnarratology's primary object, apart from a few exceptions (in the case of historical movies the given date helps the viewer to tie the scene to a well-known, real life event) time is considered as a matter of relations *between* shots and sequences, that is, this inferred knowledge is important to understand causal relations, and in my argument, to shed light on

perspectivation techniques. Related events can be represented in two ways: simultaneously and successively, but a certain mode of representation not necessarily reflects the chronological relation of the events. Simultaneous depiction (for example, the split screen method) is less conventional, and much less common (partly because it requires much more concentration from the viewer), than the successive representation of events, which signals the relation between them, but not necessarily depict their duration realistically. It is also a popular method to present an event (or timeframe) from different perspectives with different amount of information at multiple, strategically important points in the narrative. (*Rashomon*, *Vantage Point* [2008])

In *Másnap*, the problem is exactly the determination of temporal relations between successively presented scenes, although the continuously appearing, small objects seem to offer themselves as a compass for the viewer to reconstruct the fabula of the film. Erzsébet Bori highlights, that „the same images, places, figures, objects and motifs appear again and again. The recurrences occur in the form of variational repetitions: placed in a new context, in a different perspective, or order of events. In the process of repetitions and recurrences, the core of the apparently distinct, divergent moments and the logic and organizing principles of the film narration are slowly revealed." (16) She adds that *Másnap* „continues the bold experiment of *Hosszú Alkony* [the director's previous movie], to transcend the [...] realism of the film." (16) Gábor Gelencsér adds that Janisch „creates variations for the theme not in its everyday sense but in the stricter musical sense of the word when not only the »musical idea«, but the theme itself remains recognizable." (2004b, 12)

These critics tried to grasp the core of the narrative by relying on false indicators of logic and coherence, while they failed to recognize their real function in preventing a consistent and unambiguous plot to be established. Bori lengthily discusses the cognitive difficulties caused by the nonlinear structure:

> „The skillful, meticulous elaboration of *Másnap*'s narrative and the disruption of linear story and chronology means that it is impossible to fully comprehend the film in one viewing. The subtleties of the variational repetitions, important details and motifs get lost. It has significance when the hero travels with a bicycle, and when on foot; if he has his handbag or not; if his hand is bandaged; what time it is and when did his watch stopped working; if the radio is audible; if the glass of the patience game is broken… Although I saw the film multiple times, I could only put it all together and reconstruct the »real« order of events from the fragments and mosaic pieces when I watched it on DVD again and again, countlessly rewinding and forwarding it, meanwhile making notes." (2004, 17)

The essence of the film's rhetoric gets lost in Bori's description, because even if we attempt to recover the fabula, the obtained story will defy the basic laws of narrative logic, in spite of „the right arrangement" of events. The „time" of certain scenes (or their place in a hypothetical fabula) are impossible to determine. Any „story" we get will be illogical, in spite of the „right order". Several scenes suggest two contradictory states of affairs at the same time: for example, that the murder has already happened and that it is only going to happen. Bori in her brief analysis does not consider it necessary to even schematically describe the reconstructed fabula, therefore I cannot dispute her solution without knowing her version of the „real" order of events. The present argument's starting point is exactly the inevitable paradoxes that emerge in such reconstructions to which Gábor Gelencsér successfully points out in the context of the director's oeuvre: „While his former films (although only afterwards) signaled the disruption of linear time, in this case, the elements are not only hard to arrange, but it is impossible to reconstruct the story, at least according to the logic of chronology and causality." (2004a, 6) Janisch himself contemplates on his third feature film eleven years after its release as follows:

> „I only understood it completely consciously while making this movie that nonlinearity, while it seems to refer to the chronology, the timeline of the narrative, is in fact [...] not about time, but the swapping, the interchangeability of causal relations. Another kind of approach to life, another kind of logic. Time is only a tool for us to achieve this logic. In this sense, *Memento*, for example, is not nonlinear, but a linear narrative, where time goes backwards in ten minute packages, from the end to the beginning. The logic, however, remains consistent despite the reversed time, and cause is followed by consequence." (Marx 2015)

Even though in my opinion, our conceptions of „time" and „causality" are inherently dependent on each other, Janisch's insight remains important. His distinction is crucial, but needs conceptual clarification, hence I offer a narratologically more graspable opposition. I still consider the temporal structure of *Másnap* and *Memento* nonlinear, as this well-established notion only refers to a formal quality of the narratives: their difference from the linear presentation of events. A distinction should be made *within* the category of nonlinearity, as *Memento*-type, *linearizable* narratives (in which the sequentiality of the depicted events can be determined, the fabula can be retrieved) and *Másnap*-type, *nonlinearizable* narratives (in which this interpretational move is not possible without

encountering some serious logical contradictions: a single fabula is undeterminable or nonexistent).[46]

Even if he does not make it explicit, Gelencsér defines this impossible logic of temporality when he writes the following:

> „Although we encounter fictive worlds in the cinema, we can easily orientate in them by everyday logic. But as long as the logic of the images on the screen does not work by either real logic or the fictive logic offered by the film, then we face not only fictive, but a nonexistent, but still visible and audible illusion's realistic images which obey a way of cognition not given to us." (2004b, 14)

The unlinearizability of the film can be well demonstrated by the appearances of the snailshells; symbolic objects that question the rationality of the investigation (and the objectivity of the film's events). The origin and significance of the pierced snailshells are only revealed at two thirds of the film's running time: the girl makes her necklace[47] out of these objects which the Traveller tears off from her neck before the murder and keeps it with himself. At the end, the necklace becomes the proof of his culpability, when he accidentally whips it out from his pocket in front of Simon. It becomes clear for the viewer at the first appearance of the snailshell that the small object has a great significance: it functions as a clue that fits well into the crime-dramaturgy of the film, and its meaning clearly extends beyond the material features of the object. It is not particularly striking during the viewing that the Traveller bumps into snailshells in every turn, after all, the chronology of the scenes is not clarified, moreover it is not clear either if a scene takes place before or after the murder. This is important, because based on a linear narrative logic, both the material (at the level of diegetic space and time) and the subjective (at the level of the character's psychology) causes require that the appearance of the snailshells occur exclusively in scenes that take place after the murder. The material reason is simple: it is particularly emphasized that the shells are not only similar to the ones in the girl's necklace, but they are identical with them (they also have a hole in the middle), therefore the shells could only be found by the Traveller after the girl pierced them and after he acquired the jewelry made out of them. The subjective reason is connected to the personality of the Traveller. By linear reasoning, the shells could not

[46] The term „nonlinearity" has serious historical traditions and semantically also justifiable, that is why I do not see the point in rejecting it. In this sense, films such as *Pulp Fiction* (1994) or *21 Grams* (2003) belong to the first, while *Jacob's Ladder* (1990) or *Mulholland Drive* (2001) belong to the latter category.

[47] What was understood as a symbolic connection until this point, is revealed to be a metonimic one between the girl and the objects.

drive him to an act by a connection (between the girl, the necklace and the shells) which he has no knowledge yet, but they can remind him if the event has already happened. Thus, even if we interpret the (suspiciously easy) discovery of the shells as a subjective, hallucinatory experience of the Traveller, it is only possible after the event of the murder.

The first encounter with a snailshell happens in the scene that takes place in the reeds. After the Traveller lifted the small object that he found under his shoes, he finds himself at the edge of a country road. Our task is to define the time of these joined scenes relative to the time of the murder. When he finds the shell in the reeds, all the other objects he sees are either only appear this one time (the severed head of the lamb) or being too symbolic (the broken bicycle[48]) to reliably signal a chronology. The only valid observation we can make is that the object can be understood as the symbol of the murder. The second half of the sequence (the country road) chronologically precedes the opening sequence of the film: while in the first scene, the protagonist travels on the back of a truck, here we see the time period when its driver picks him up. The fact that the Traveller receives his bicycle at the end of this trip on the truck is a good indicator to place this scene before the murder, because in a later sequence we see him riding past the girl with the bike near the creek. It follows, that the discovery of the shell (at least the second half of the scene) can be placed before the murder, thus whichever option we consider more probable about the time of the first half of the scene, a linear story cannot be restored. We can choose between two, equally surreal situations: (1) the Traveller takes the shell with him from a post-murder scene to a pre–murder one. (2) He already finds it before the murder. At option (1), the hallucinatory nature (especially in the second part, that supposedly takes place before the murder) of the shell becomes a possible explanation, but the last shot in the sequence radically contradicts this reading: after the Traveller took on to the truck, the camera does not follow him or the vehicle any more, but focuses on the asphalt in an extreme close up shot, and starts scanning (tracking) it, and stops on the broken shell. It is important that the film shows us the object in the absence of the Traveller. In the case of the (2) interpretation, both the material and the subjective causality fails in connection to the shell, therefore the impossibility of linearization can be acknowledged without the exact placement of every scene in the film.

The shells cannot be lumped together with the other objects in the film as the representatives of the linear-objective dimension, because their appearance is more tightly connected to the internal logic of the Traveller's subjectivity. What is more important in the

[48] It is hard to decide whether this object is identical to the one that the Traveller used in previous scenes.

film's rhetoric is the discursive aspect: as this revelation gradually provides information about the relationship between the girl and the shells, and as it creates the narrative progression and moves the hero from observing to acting. It seems that the character's journey from a voyeur to a killer can be much more easily derived from the textual-discursive order (the presented order of events), than any kind of (unreconstructable) fabular time.

This example shows one of the most important aspects of narrative linearity (or more precisely: linearizability) as it was defined by Janisch, according to which, for linearization, more is necessary, than the mapping of (the often inaccessible or nonexistent[49]) objective, diegetic temporal relations and the appropriate arrangement of events. A concept of a chronologic order can be only meaningful, if causal relations also function consistently between the events.

Pál Czirják writes in an article about Janisch that „the rejection of linearity and causal order does not only apply to narration, but increasingly for the narrated storyworld too. The shown worlds thus become the inner worlds of the mind." (2012, 66) The difficulty in *Másnap* is not caused by the antagonism between the two major forces of narrative cohesion (the requirement to be coherent and articulate as a story *and* the requirement to be mimetic/realistic as the representation of a successive chain of events), because it is a general feature of narratives, that their structure can be explored along the usually cooperative, but often antagonistic logics of the discourse and the fabula.[50] Conflicting logics is *Másnap* do not correspond with the synthetic logic of representation and the mimetic logic of the represented and,[51] because both the logic that stems from the subjectivity of the character and the one that can be attached to a fabular order raise questions about the causality of the story, the techniques of narrative representation and viewer reception.

Albeit the quoted scholars have already pointed out the most important questions emerging from unlinearizability, the interconnectedness of character perspective and temporal structure in *Másnap* is worth highlighting again:

> „The identification with the protagonist is particularly interesting: the Traveller remains alien and unknown, without a past, even without personality, we don't understand his motives, and do not know what drives him. But because of the controlled perspective, we can't do

[49] Regarding the relation of non-mimetic (unnatural) diegetic time and the base concepts of narratology, see: Richardson 2002.
[50] As Jonathan Culler pointed it out in his extremely readable analysis of *Oedipus Rex* (2001, 188-208)
[51] These logics are often determined by or embedded in generic context. For example, mimetic logic in a realist drama: if a character dies he cannot return from the grave. It is synthetic logic in the case of a thriller that the tension must be increased by the concealment of the identity of the killer.

> otherwise, we have to step into his shoes, see with his eyes, think with his brain, and rely on his memories and perceptions." (Bori 16)

In this thought, lies the ultimate contradiction of *Másnap*: how is it possible to identify with a character, about whom we know nothing which would justify the unfolding developments of the plot, and at the same time the film suggests that somehow, we „see with his eyes" or his „memories" and „perceptions" determine the discourse? How can a film convey a nonlinear story through the protagonist's visual (and auditory) perceptions of vertiginous subjective time? In my view, the film failed to achieve this effect of identification (which reduces the sense of drama at the end), but nonetheless remains an intriguing case study of the interconnectedness of the visual and narrative sense of perspective and subjectivity.[52] I argue the key to solve this problem lies in the distinction and relationship between the literal (visual and auditory) and more abstract senses of perspective in film. In the following chapter I would like to propose a narratological model for perspectivation in cinema to adequately describe works like *Másnap*.

[52] Due to the scope of my subject, I only concentrate on the visual and narrative aspects of focalization, although I am aware of the importance of the auditory side of perceptual focalization in film.

2. Perspectivation

The two long sub-chapters indicate the main distinction I would like to make between narrative (2.1) and textual (2.2) focalizations. I try to shed light how narrative theory confused or neglected the difference between the strategies of textual and narrative subjectivation. On the one hand, there are images and shots (or sounds) which can be interpreted as a character's literal perspective/perception, showing what the character sees (or presenting what the character hears). On the other hand, there are rhetorical techniques whose purpose is to convey the narratively comprehensible knowledge of one character's past, personality, perceptions, desires, thoughts, dreams, fears or future plans. The latter can make use of the former textual strategies such as point of view shots, but they can be conveyed without them as well. But their relationship can be even more complex, for example, in cases where serious perceptional subjectivity is presented as diegetic facts or an apparently objective character-perception; or the opposite, where a film falsely indicates subjectivity by utilizing well-known cinematic codes. This can even happen at the level of editing conventions: the *POV fallacy* is a good example of a deceptive technique that exploits viewer's reliance and familiarity with continuity editing. By separating figures of narrative and textual focalizations and analyzing their relationship, I would like to raise awareness to different aspects (technical/rhetorical) and different layers (textual/narrative) of perspectivation to better conceptualize it in any narrative medium.

First of all, it is important to understand the concept of focalization as a discursive phenomenon, something that is part of the representational process and not an attribute or ability of the perceiving character. That is why I discuss (2.1.1) Bal's partition of focalizor and focalized (as subject and object) and suggest a revision regarding the referents of these terms by applying them to the narrator and the character. I summarize several theorist's views on filmic focalization (Deleyto [1991], Branigan's [1992] Thompson [2008], Kuhn [2009]) and analyze problematic cases of focalizational ambiguity, distinguishing it from other types of ambiguities that might raise in a film by comparing the narrative strategies of *Last Year in Marienbad* and *The Innocents*.

In the next section (2.1.2), I offer a revised version of Branigan's model of focalization, supplemented by the considerations regarding the textual dimension. In order to better understand the problems which structuralist models of focalization induced, I revisit Mieke Bal's and Genette's arguments on the subject and deal with the problematic concept

of Genette's zero focalization in detail. Beside the heavily metaphoric language of Bal's study that hindered theoretical clarity (and a transmedial/universal applicability of it), I identify and distinguish three elements as the sources of confusion, and I base my model on the separation of knowledge relations (between recipient and character), character focalization (defined as representation of physical perception/mental contents) and their intended rhetorical effects.

In 2.1.3, I investigate how the determination of narrative focalization in *Másnap* constantly bumps into hermeneutic obstacles. The troubles are caused by the paradoxical situation of following the protagonist through spatiotemporal ruptures, but knowing nothing about his character, motives, purposes or thoughts. By examining some persuasive textual evidence, I argue against the comfortable theory that the whole film represents the repression or processing of a traumatic experience and that the entirety of the narrative takes place inside the protagonist's head. I claim that the film operates with an unsolved tension between textual focalization (the evident but subtle tracking of every physical and psychological perception) of the main character and the possible and ambiguous narrative meanings of this strategy, resulting in ambiguous character-focalization.

The extensive sub-chapter on textual focalization (2.2) is the result of the general misunderstanding that confuses actual visual perspectives with the abstract theoretical notion of narrative focalization and subjectivation. This ignorance of narrative theory led me to appreciate the work of those who tried to consciously incorporate medial specialties to their inquiry of perspectivation in narratives. I base my core concept (2.2.1) on François Jost's and Sabine Schlicker's terminology who named cinematic strategies which represent visual and acoustic perceptions *ocularization* and *auricularization*, respectively. One possible point my criticism (2.2.2) touches upon is the relative obscurity of the scope of the former concept, which can easily be replaced with *point of view shot* if understood too narrowly and *character-focalization*, if interpreted too broadly. I try locate their field of significance between the exclusively technical and the narrative levels and argue (2.2.3) that ocularization is a wider and more sophisticated concept than the POV shot, which itself can cover a surprisingly diverse set of textual phenomena. Beside the specification of a subject's position and field of vision, ocularization techniques extend to the quality of perception and to the object of perception as well. I point out that the imitation of a subject's visual perception can be often overwritten by narrative and rhetorical criteria that distort this perfectly mimetic vision. Among different ocularization strategies I discuss the field of play in apparent distance between the object and the plane of the screen, other positional mismatches and

image quality (namely the focal plane). I conclude this section by analyzing some scenes from *The Innocents* and *E.T.*, to draw attention to the subject-establishing power of ocularization.

Unfortunately, in this study, only a few comments can be made on sound and auricularization (2.2.4), and they are mainly made from the perspective of their interaction with the visual dimension as these moments can heavily modify an already established visual perspective. I partly rely on Michel Chion's pioneering work in the matter. As sight is considered the dominant sense both in real life and in the reception and understanding of film (here, I am excluding the linguistic dimension), we always position sound relative to it: the basic distinction of „onscreen" and „offscreen" sounds are sufficient evidence for this hierarchy. Regarding the understanding of perspectives, what we hear is always compared to what we see. Cinematic soundtrack is still a largely uncharted territory for narratology which bears a vastly different architecture than its visual counterpart; it is enough if we consider the contrast between the generally clearly determined spatial coordinates of the cinematic observer and his visual perspective compared to the ethereal indeterminability of a richly layered soundtrack, where other factors than the spatial placement, such us quality or volume might play a greater role in perspectivation. The representational strategies of subjective hearing largely rely on its interaction with sight, or in several cases, narrative context. A complicating factor is the composite nature of a film's soundscape: non-diegetic sounds are more common than non-diegetic visual elements, and these purely discursive components are often used to (supplement or) express subjective experiences of characters. Non-mimetic components such as background music, various noises and other types of sound-effects can characterize protagonists, but it can signal the physical, emotional or psychological states of them. Should we still describe cases where non-acoustic subjective perceptions/experiences are expressed by sounds with the concept of auricularization? This question leads us to (2.2.5) figures of textual focalizations that represent non-acoustic or non-visual subjective (often entirely mental) experiences expressed by visual or sonic tools in the discourse. I briefly discuss this group to contrast them with genuine ocularizations/auricularizations, and examine the range of resources an author can utilize to represent extreme psychological conditions and complex human experiences like time-perception.

2.1 Abstract Perspectivation - Narrative Focalization

2.1.1 The Ambiguity of Focalization

In narratology, techniques used to represent a character's perspective are generally referred to by the umbrella term *focalization* after Gérard Genette. He introduced the term to avoid the confusion inherent in the simple expression of „point of view", which conflated the agent who „speaks" (hence, the concept of „voice") and the character „who sees" or „whose point of view orients the narrative perspective." („mood") (1980, 186) The purpose of this chapter is – through the critique and utilization of some relevant narratological theories – to offer a model of focalization which is suitable to describe and differentiate between literal (audiovisual) and abstract (narrative) perspectives in film.

Let me start with a brief terminological clarification. Mieke Bal introduces the useful roles of „focalizor" and „focalized" (in my understanding, these are closely related to the notions of „perceiving subject" and „perceived object"), but her description of these categories seems rather counterintuitive to me.[53] I follow the genettian paradigm and interpret every narrator as the focalizer of his own discourse, therefore both character and author can be a focalizer as long as they engage in the activity of narrative representation.[54] I want to keep the terminological distinction of focalizer and focalized, but with the former, I will refer to the activity of the agent of representation (the narrator), which concerns the selection of narrative information for rhetorical purposes; and with the latter, I will never refer to the narrative in its entirety, but to the object of a character's perception (or to the character as a perceived object), because the point of this relation is to refer to the character as a sentient entity, as a perceptive subject.

[53] In my discussion of focalization I solely focus on the relationship between the representing agent (the narrator) and the experiencing character. There are countless counterexamples to my approach where the multitude of agents are mobilized in complex equations to describe the phenonmenon. A typical example is Göran Nieragden's essay (2002), who revisits Bal's system by analzing the identity relations between four elements: Character, Narrator, Focalizer and Agent.

[54] Phelan is in polemics with Prince and Chatman, and the debate is centered around whether narrators only mediate/report a story (Prince/Chatman's position) or they can perceive it as well, and if they can convey this perception towards their narratees (Phelan's position). Phelan regards focalization as part of the narrative act , but not as the selection of information, but as a particular perception of the events of the narrative (Phelan 2001, 57) It is disputable how appropriate is the application of the term „perception" if we compare the phenomenon to the sensory experiences of the fictional characters or think about the temporal gap between the narrator and the narrated events, but at least the issue what was hidden in the debate between Genette and Bal, is thematized here.

Markus Kuhn rightly notes that „in almost every narratological model of focalization and narrative perspective, the camera perspective (in a technical sense) is not understood as the only factor for determining focalization and/or narrative perspective (focalization/narrative perspective ≠ camera perspective). To analyze focalization, one has at least to take into account the complex interplay between camera parameters, montage and auditive elements." (Kuhn – Schmidt 2014, 28) He emphasizes that focalization can only be determined in a series of shots, and it is often very challenging to characterize all sequences with a specific focalization type, therefore, it is always important to highlight the ambiguities and uncertainties of these situations. (Kuhn 2009, 263) I go further and argue that narrative units do not necessarily correspond to units created by editing. As Branigan argues, „[t]he units of narration, like codes of narrative, do not exist on a material level but on the level of meaning, of intelligibility, of reading. [Therefore] we cannot say that the unit of narration must be the shot or the sequence" (1984, 50) and the opposite is also true, the continuity of „material units" (as Branigan calls them) does not necessarily signal a narratively comprehensible meaning. Consider the simple fact that a scene is made up of several shots and a film consists of hundreds (if not thousands) of them, but a single long shot can be used to create an entire narrative (*Rope* [1948], *Birdman* [2014], *Victoria* [2015]). Therefore, I will only characterize narrative units with focalization and use the concepts of *textual focalization* in relation to formal units that appear at the textual level of the film.

The two decisive theoretical texts on the subject, Edward Branigan's *Narrative Comprehension in Film* and Celestino Deleyto's *Focalization in Film Narrative* was published in the early 1990's. Branigan distinguishes between eight „frames" of narration, which serve as reference points for the transfer of information and the degree of subjectivity.[55] He places the information conveyed by focalization (1992, 100) at the „deepest" levels of the model, where explicit (character) narration is not a necessity, but not

[55] According to Branigan, the basis of every narration is the unequal distribution of knowledge between author, narrator and characters. His „frames" of narration can be used to characterize what source it originates from, what is its relation to the diegesis and how the conveyed information changes the antecedent distribution of knowledge in particular narrative situations. But these frames are quite different, some of them is a part of every fictional narrative, while others are optional. For example, at the highest level (1) there is the historical author, and it is followed by (2-4) different non-character narrators (extrafictional, nondiegetic and diegetic narrators), which sometimes gives the feeling of unnecessary propagation of agent types. In the next levels, there are the narration types that mediate different depths of character subjectivity, first (5) the non-focalized character narration, at which point the emphasis shifts in the model from the agent of narration to the quality of the conveyed information.

excluded either.[56] Branigan classifies the access to character's utterances as „external focalization" (level 6), while in Izabella Füzi's interpretation, the gist of his „internal" type is that we „can gain access to information, which are inaccessible to a diegetic observer, but viewers can identify with these intuitions, visions, fears, hallucinations, etc."[57] The „surface" subtype (level 7) „manifests itself in the level of perception", internal depth „is manifested at the level of thought (dream, hallucination, desire, etc.)" (Füzi 2006).

Deleyto uses the same term to describe verbal narrative and filmic audiovisual phenomena, leaving no room to use „focalization" for specifically narrative aspects of cinematic rhetoric. Hence, I propose to apply a different terminological frame for the description of textual features.

Kristin Thompson outlines a similar distinction to Branigan's surface and depth focalizations when she distinguishes perceptional and mental subjectivity in films. Unlike Branigan, she does not hierarchize the two, but rather draws attention to the problematic nature of this distinction, assuming there are many transitional cases between objectivity and subjectivity: „Right in the middle of the continuum between the pure cases we find ambiguous cases. Filmmakers can create deliberate, complex, and important effects by keeping it unclear whether what we see is a character's perception of reality or his/her imaginings." (2008)[58] According to Thompson, it is relatively easy to identify perceptional subjectivity: „The camera is in the character's place, showing what he or she sees. The microphone acts as the character's ears. Other characters present in the scene could step into the same vantage point and observe the same things." (2008) If this substitutability is not possible, then it is a mental event, which can be only perceived by that particular character. *Focalizational ambiguity* emerges in the cases where this question is not easily answerable. She mentions two important examples, *The Innocents* and *Last Year at Marienbad* (*L'année dernière à Marienbad*), both were released in 1961, and both utilize the quality of *ambiguity* as a basic organizing principle of their narrative. *The Innocents* is the most influential adaptation of Henry James' novella, *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), and *Marienbad* is adapted

[56] Some theorists classify the so called autodiegesis (self-narration) as an instance where the character narrates and focalizes his former self. Genette (1988, 78) thinks these cases should be called „prefocalized", because the character narrator is obliged to justify how he gathered the conveyed information.

[57] As Branigan writes, „[internal] focalization represents the fact of character perception, even if we may discover later that the character misperceived and even if our misperception about the character turns out to have other consequences in our ongoing experience of the story." (1992, 102-103)

[58] It is necessary to emphasize that although Branigan's graded model suggests rigid borders between situations (this is mainly implied by the categorical distinction of the agents at level 1-4), he is talking about a continuum as well when he considers the different manifestations of focalization, and emphasizes the difficulty of classification in individual cases. (Branigan 1992, 86-87)

from the screenplay of Robbe-Grillet.[59] Thompson does not emphasize it, but it is important to note that while *The Innocents* builds on the genre codes of the ghost story[60] and does not go beyond the framework of classical narrative cinema[61], while *Marienbad* pushes the limits of narrative comprehension with its experimental rhetoric, fugue-like variational structure, annihilated linearity and radical uncertainty of the meaning and context of individual events. The difference between the two films is in the degree *and* nature of their ambiguities. As Bordwell and Thompson state (1992, 391-396), the ambiguities in *Marienbad* does not mean the diversity of possible implicit meanings behind the story, but affect our understanding of the film in a much fundamental level. Many articles about *Marienband* are simply attempts to determine what happened in the film, what is the story actually.[62] „Typically, a film's plot – however simple or difficult – allows the spectator to construct the causal and chronological story mentally. But *Marienbad* is radically different. Its story is impossible to determine. The film has only a plot, with no single consistent story for us to infer." (1992, 391) The major sources of this ambiguity are the contradictions of space, time and causality that emerge on multiple levels. (1992, 392) Emma Wilson observes the following in his monograph on Resnais:

> „We become aware that there is no layering of past and present, that the »memory« images are perhaps conjured in the imagination, choreographed, often on the basis of the very material of the present. The similarity between the »memory« and »present« images, pursued to the extent that quickly we have no sense of how to categorise any image we see, forces attempts to see the images chronologically to break down. […] Instead we may come to understand the film as built out of a vertiginous series of virtual images, each a variation on the encounter between the man and the woman. These are not »memory« images but mental images, pictures of their encounter as it is or might be, or might have been, conjured in the imagination out of the words the man speaks." (2006, 75-76)

[59] It is not beside the point that it is the same Alain Robbe-Grillet who wrote the novel (*Le Voyeur*) that inspired the story of *Másnap*.

[60] The narrative of *The Innocents* obviously possesses the quality of the fantastic as defined by Tzvetan Todorov: „First, the text must oblige the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living persons and to hesitate between a natural and a supernatural explanation of the events described. Second, this hesitation may also be experienced by a character; thus, the reader's role is so to speak entrusted to a character, and at the same time the hesitation is represented, it becomes one of the themes of the work." (1975, 33)

[61] Classical narrative in film can be understood both in the local (perceptual) and global (narrative) levels, because the work should maintain the sense of continuity at both levels, as I detailed their functions and differences in the previous section. *The Innocents* does not violate blatantly the conventions of continuity and coherence at any levels.

[62] „many critics offered widely varying interpretations of it. When faced with most films, these critics would have been looking for implicit meanings behind the plot. But, faced with *Marienbad*, their interpretations were attempts simply to describe the events that take place in the film's story" (Bordwell – Thompson 1992, 391)

She enforces her argument about the „floating position" of the images by an interview with Resnais, who made a comment about the subjectivity of the film: „one never knows if the images are in the man's head or in the woman's There is throughout a movement between the two." (2006, 76) Wilson claims that the man's narrative (according to which he knows the woman from before) is a wishful fantasy, with which he tries to induce a „false" memory in her, and the woman apparently accepts this game.

According to this interpretation scheme[63] the whole of the narrative is a projection of a complex structure of desires, and its details can be explained if we think about them as subjective contents (dream-images or fantasies) that are filtered through the psyche of the male or female protagonists. Because Thompson also cites the film regarding the problem of focalization, she presumes that it can be understood in relation to the perspectives of the characters. Countless studies have chosen to hypothesize internal focalization (subjectivity as a relevant account for the inconsistencies) as a global interpretational strategy to solve the problems postulated by the film.[64]

Since the presence of high degree ambiguity primarily affects the narrative interpretability of the film, the above line of thinking illustrates very well why I do not want to describe the problematic rhetoric of *Marienbad* exclusively in relation to focalization, as I do it with *The Innocents*. In the birth of interpretations like Wilson's, two factors play a crucial role: on the one hand, the spectacular poetic aspirations to systematically eliminate a coherent story and obstruct narrative cognition, on the other hand the nevertheless recognizable, but controversially appearing narrative elements (scenes, characters, events, action, dialogues). This tension motivates the interpreter to infer a coherent frame that can serve as an explanation for the syntactic that differ from the familiar cognitive and cultural schemes of narrative films and storytelling, and gives a „master key" in the hands of the viewer.[65] That is, in my view *Marienbad* is not interpreted as a „consciousness-film", because we recognize the structures of memory or fantasy in it (whatever preconceptions we

[63] Robert Stam writes about the film: „A film like Last Year at Marienbad might be regarded as itself a lengthy subjective »insert« composed of hundreds of shots." (Stam – Burgoyne – Flitterman-Lewis 2005, 43)

[64] Even among the philosophical approaches we can find some that connects it to focalization. See: Bramann 2004.

[65] The more intense are the presence of the known, ordinary elements of narrativity in a subversive narrative full of logical contradictions or parts that are difficult to relate to each other, „consciousness"-type interpretations will become more dominant, in which the represented elements are explained as something which is analogous to the structure or functioning of the mind in order to establish/reconstruct an „underlying story" which can serve as a relevant explanation for the textual disruptions. See: Alan Shaw's (2004) monograph-length study on David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive* (2001).

have of them), but because we try to „naturalize" incoherent and contradictory elements according to narrative schemes. Of course, as a highly sophisticated and self-reflexive work, this type of reception is among its author's rhetorical intentions. The uncertainty of character-focalization only appears at the endpoint of this mechanism, as an additional issue *after* a strong interpretational commitment. But even at this point, it is not about the choice between understanding the narrative as the representation of an objective reality or the psyche of a character, but if it is the man's or the woman's mind we have access (or someone else's).

The story of *The Innocents* requires a choice from the interpreter and maintains its duality throughout the narrative: does the governess see real ghosts or they are simply the projections of her mind? The application of the term *ambiguity* is justified, which is in close relation to the problem of character-focalization. It is an undisputable fact that both in the novel and in the film the governess sees things that she interprets as paranormal phenomena. At this point, Thompson's (2008) definition of perceptional and mental subjectivity requires refining, exactly because the genre evoked by this example. The issue is not only between the choice of understanding the detection of ghosts as perceptional or mental forms of subjectivity, because Thompson implicitly based her definitions of these categories on a realist framework. In the case of a ghost story it is perfectly conceivable that certain individuals in the possession of supernatural powers („mediums") can perceive phenomena that are inaccessible for others. This way we can talk about perceptional subjectivity when the „replacement" of the perceiving character would result a different perception. *The Innocents* complicates this formula with the ambiguity of the fantastic, but one (traditional) interpretation of the movie assumes this exact possibility: Miss Giddens and maybe little Miles and Flora can see the ghosts that are invisible for Mrs. Grose and other members of the staff, but this does not prove that they are not real in the fiction. It is important to point out the difficulties in seizing represented subjectivity with the appropriate concepts to show the presuppositions and limitations of a narratological approach which is based on a realist model (more specifically: everyday, „natural" narratives) where we try to describe the characteristics of (popular) genre fiction, avant-garde or experimental (film)texts.

It can be concluded that while in *Marienbad*, uncertainties rise even at the stage of (re)constructing the story, in *The Innocents*, the debate is centered around the interpretation of character perception, and ambiguity plays a role as the quality of the key events. Therefore, these examples brought by Thompson can be contrasted very well along the planes of story (re)construction and interpretation of a story. Consequently, I find ambiguous

focalization as a more adequate expression to employ in the latter case, and Bal's concept of focalization with an ambiguous source („in which it is hard to decide who [is focalized]" – 2009, 118) seems a more appropriate choice in the former. The lesson to be learned is that focalization is not necessarily a fixed, textual feature of the narrative, but it can be a complicated interpretational issue.

However, in the case of distorted perceptions, the theoretical question about the distinction between „surface" and „depth" (Thompson's perceptional and mental) focalizations remains. How can we conceptually separate them to create practical categories? I argue that the ontological status of images is a different question than the depth of focalization, because no matter if the ghosts are real or not, the governess perceives them. The ontological ambiguity does not make this perception questionable. Therefore, the distinction between „surface" and „depth" is not between „perception" and „mental process", but between a character-independent factor: the ontological status of the representation (objective, diegetic and subjective contents). The problem is the overlap between the two categories: a mental process can also be a sensory perception and this is especially important in the case of distorted perceptions. Should we redraw the line between unconscious and conscious, or objective and subjective processes? Or perhaps between stimuli (self-independent) and response (self-generated) type phenomena?[66] Or should we create a third, mixed category between the purely „physical" (sight, hearing) and purely mental (thought, imagination) categories for perceptional-mental impressions (hallucinations, dreams, etc.)? I reject this latter option because of the category of feelings like fear, hate, love, etc. which cannot be adequately categorized in such a system, as they are often independent from consciousness and manifest themselves both in physical and mental forms.

Although I keep the surface-depth distinction for practical reasons and draw the line between what is described as an „objective" perception and mind generated contents (distorted perception, thought processes), I wanted to draw attention to the possibility of another partition from the perspective of consciousness: that „normal" and „mental" perceptions are conceptually indistinguishable for the characters (and sometimes, even for the viewer), and very different from other mental processes like thought.

In my model, I will supplement this aspect with the description of the textual level, which will help to clarify if these processes appear as a perception for the subject or not,

[66] A stimuli/response distinction won't solve the problem either, because there is always already a response (mental process) in every perception by which the subject can actually perceive its object.

therefore both perceptional and „subjective" aspects will be accounted for without the need to create another category of narrative focalization.

2.1.2 A Typology of Narrative Focalization

Because focalization is a concept closely related to narrativity, many scholars tried to specify, supplement or replace it in relation to the textual characterization of film. Some theorists simply call the subjectivity manifested in shots „cinematic focalization", (Mainar 1993, 154), others seek more precise terms such as „optical perspective (Schmidt 2013) or „optical viewpoint" (Coier 2013). Deleyto uses the expression „textual focalisation" for the representation of subjective perception by the point of view shot (1991, 175-6). while his distinction is commendable, the term itself is not too informative. Deleyto mostly identifies this focalization with the position of the camera, which decision becomes the source of many conceptual inaccuracy in his descriptions: As if the activity of external focalization would be performed by the camera as an autonomous agent (in this case its position is outside every character), and in the case of internal focalization the character becomes the „focalizor", therefore the „external focalizor may [completely] disappear." (1991, 169)

For my purposes in the context of film, I would like to make a distinction between the sensory/perceptional (visual and acoustic) and the narrative (knowledge/information based) qualities of focalization techniques, therefore I want to use an *additional* set of concepts to adequately describe the textually manifest modes of representing perception. Branigan's method (to utilize the well-known, literary-based terminology in a new medium) is insufficient, because I want to analyze not just the narrative features of the work, but *also* the medium specific phenomena that establishes these features. For these reasons, we must not fall into the trap of exclusively studying these textual features and call them „filmic focalization",[67] because the narrative created by the filmtext will still have a special kind of dynamics (the distribution of information between the characters and the viewers), which I will continue to call *narrative focalization*.

Considering this distinction, we should be cautious of narrative theory's visual metaphors („Focalization is the relationship between the 'vision,' the agent that sees, and

[67] Following Deleyto (1991), a number of studies identify focalization in film with point of view shots (or at most mention the eyeline match and the shot-countershot structure), for example: Bálint 2011.

that which is seen." – Bal, 109),[68] which are often used to describe the abstract mechanisms of perspectivation with sensual expressions that can be highly confusing for the distinction I want to make between film-specific (textual) and narrative focalization. Hence it is not enough to replace the old (literary) terminology with a new (filmic) one to refer to the medium-specific ways of information sharing, but in addition to keeping the term, which refers to narrative characteristics, it is desirable to introduce new concepts to describe the techniques which I referred to as *perceptual focalization*. Unlike Branigan, I do not think of focalization as an alternative, or subtype of narration, but as a characteristic of it.

Before describing my classification, I slightly modify his model, because I do not consider his distinction between „nonfocalized" and „focalized narration" is useful, with which he practically smuggles back the category of Genette's zero focalization. I would like to separate zero focalization from other types of character focalizations (external, internal) and show how the characteristics it describes are qualitatively different than the object of the other categories.[69] My claim is that this type is deservedly criticized so much (or being stigmatized as redundant by Bal), because it does not describe „perspectivation" – the quality/depth of the information conveyed about a particular character by the narrative (this is what I call character focalization), but it measures our knowledge about the narrative events in general relative to the character's knowledge (I call this the axis of knowledge-relations).

According to Genette's definition (1983, 188-189), zero focalization refers to the lack of restriction of information, and it is customary to apply for two kinds of narrative situations (or for the combinations of them).[70] On the one hand for larger units of the

[68] Chatman analyzes the difference between metaphorical and literal uses of „vision" and „viewpoint". (1990, 139-160). Branigan also warns us about the dangers of Bal's description (1992, 232). Sabine Schlickers draws attention to the inaccuracies in Genette's original formulation of focalization. The simplification of the question, „which character's viewpoint orients the narrative perspective" to: „who sees?" (Genette 1983, 186) is so much burdened with metaphors of vision, that the author involuntarily reduces focalization to the visual aspect. (Schlickers 2009, 246). According to Manfred Jahn „[p]erception, thought, recollection, and knowledge are often considered to be criterial features of focalization, and all these mental processes are closely related to seeing, albeit only metonymically or metaphorically." (Jahn 1996, 243)

[69] Köppe and Stühring (2016) argues that Genette's „zero focalization" cannot be reduced to the combination of the external and internal types, that is, it cannot be characterized as the mix of these two. Therefore – they argue – Bal rejects the concept for the wrong reasons, when she rechristens it „altering focalization". For me, the most important conclusion of their argument is that the narrative dynamics described by zero focalization should be understood along a completely different axis (it compares the knowledge of a character and the narratee regarding the facts of the narrative) than the situations described by the external or internal types (which are related to the representation of a single character's subjectivity). Therefore, when I reject the term, I do not do it because of the reducibility of the described situation, but because I conceptually separate the axes of character focalization and knowledge relations.

[70] Nelles prefers the term „free focalization" insted of „zero" which suggests negativity. He claims the narratorial „omniscience" cannot be equated with this type, because for „free focalization" it is enough if the narrator's knowledge is greater than the character's, and this can be the case in an autodiegesis. (1990, 369)

narrative, when we have access to the knowledge of more than one characters (which situation can be described by the alternation or simultaneous co-existence of different internal focalizations), and on the other hand, when the narration conveys information that cannot be attached to any character's knowledge or experiences (Genette 1988, 73), hence the formula that: narrator > character. That is, the „knowledge" of the narrator is greater than the character's. In connection to the first type, the unnecessity of the concept does not need to be detailed: its scope is too wide and the phenomenon it refers to can be characterized by other terms. The second situation is more problematic: first, it cannot be covered by the terms of external and internal focalization, second, the concept of „unrestricted information" feels strange if we want to characterize focalization in relation to characters.[71] (The zero category is too wide because it can contain the in-depth mediation of character perspectives and the complete lack of it, where the characters are not even the objects of the narration.)

However, regarding another detail, I want to defend Genette's system. According to Tillmann Köppe's and Tobias Klauk's critique (2013), Genette approached the question of focalization exclusively from the aspects of quantity (of the transferred information) and accessibility (by the recipient). It always depends on a „restriction" of a hypothetical and inconsistently defined „whole". This approach is insensitive to a possibility which plays a significant role in notions like „viewpoint" and „perspective", namely to refer to a specific object by different (or possibly infinite) ways. The peculiarities of this description can be especially important during the analysis of a particular representation in a fictional narrative, because the creation of the referent coincides with the act of representation. When Genette talks about the extent of the access to the facts of the narrative, he confuses the referent and the act of representation, which we should always interpret in order to „gain access" to the referents.

The insight of Köppe and Klauk is important with respect to their distinction, but I think even if Genette's claim is unclear, it can be saved with a conceptual clarification. At this point, it is worth using Bal's terms to illustrate the problem, where A (the narrator), B (the „filter" character) and C (the referent) signify the elements involved. Köppe and Klauk

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He supplements Genette's tripartite system with the cases of homodiegetic „prefocalization" which answers to the question whether „the narrating self tells more than, the same amount as, or less than the experiencing self knows" (1990, 370).

[71] Markus Kuhn also notices the problematic nature of this notion which he tries to resolve in the following way: „I will thus maintain the term »zero focalization«, despite its sometimes inopportune implications, and use it only to refer to the relation of knowledge between narrative instance and character and not to the limited or unlimited knowledge of the narrative instance per se, which would require a complex model of perspective." (2009, 263)

suggest that Genette in his definition of focalization only highlights the access to the referents/facts of the diegesis (C_{sum}), that is, which facts (C_1, C_2, C_3, etc.) are conveyed by a given narrator (A) through different characters (B_1, B_2, B_3, etc.), or beyond them. The function of B-s are practically to serve as access points for C-s (because certain C-s can only be accessed through a B): $A \rightarrow B_1 \rightarrow C_1$; $A \rightarrow B_2 \rightarrow C_2$; $A \rightarrow B_3 \rightarrow C_3$, etc. In other words, they argue that while Genette incorrectly places referents (the „what"?) to the place of the mode of communication (the „how"?), therefore hypothesize fixed referents (objective facts, absolute truths, etc.), they draw attention to the fact that certain narratives can refer to a single fact (C_1) in many ways, and this reference occurs with the mediation of character perspectives in the case of internal focalization: $A \rightarrow B_1$ or B_2 or $B_3 \rightarrow C_1$, where C_1 can be different in every act of narration, because of the different perspectives of the focalized characters or viewpoints (B_1, B_2, B_3). Their point is that no referent is independent of an observing subject position.

In my opinion, the two approaches can be reconciled with the consideration of the following aspect: when Genette talks about a restriction, it does not necessarily mean the audience's access to the „objective facts" or events of the diegesis, but can include the mediation of perspective, knowledge and perception of individual characters, thus category „C" in his model includes all the B-s (the whole concept of internal focalization is based on the accessibility of these elements), that is, I interpret Genette more concessively, where referents are inseparable from filtering visions. ($A \rightarrow [B_1 \rightarrow C_1] = C_I$; $A \rightarrow [B_2 \rightarrow C_1] = C_{II}$; $A \rightarrow [B_3 \rightarrow C_1] = C_{III}$) In this sense, *the facts of the narrative* include „metareferences" created by character-perspectives, which designate the interpretative or evaluative attitudes of characters concerning the narrative facts/events, therefore they refer not only to the (often elusive) diegetic truths of the represented narrative, but the textual referents of representation.

Therefore, I share Niederhoff's view on Genette's system, who concludes that „[t]he passage [in Genette] synthesizes two models: a quasi-mathematical one in which the amount of narrative information is indicated by the formulas derived from Todorov; and a more traditional one based on the metaphors of vision and point of view, which is derived from Pouillon and Lubbock. That these two models are not equivalent has been shown by Kablitz (1988)." (2013, 5) Theories of focalization after Genette can be nicely described by their proximity to the poles of this duality. (For example, Bal's theory is much closer to the point of view model.)

Because both the „information-based" and „point of view" aspects are useful elements in characterizing a narrative situation, instead of rejecting one of them, I only make explicit the difference and supplement them with a third factor. After Niederhoff (2011 and 2013),[72] I characterize narrative focalization with three, non-independent aspects in my model, which (although seeks universality, but needs medium specific supplements) in the case of film is completed with another element, textual focalization. With the three aspects of narrative focalization I describe (a) the relation of the narration and the characters, (b) the change in knowledge relations and (c) the induced effects:

1. narrative focalization
    a. character focalization: the quality/depth of the mediated subjective experience
        i. *external (actions, behavior)*
        ii. *internal- surface (environmental perceptions)*
        iii. *internal-depth (mental perceptions, thoughts, feelings)*
    b. knowledge relations: the recipient's knowledge of relevant information
        i. *character > recipient*
        ii. *character = recipient*
        iii. *character < recipient*
    c. narrative function: the configuration's role in the narrative, the intended effect
        i. *surprise, shock, mystery, suspense, tension, ambiguity, confusion, deception*
        ii. *identification, empathy, sympathy, etc.*
2. figures of textual focalization (in films)

[72] Niederhoff thinks the point of view metaphor is better to describe the subjective experiences of characters and he applies the term focalization to the selection of such narrative information which do not relate to the subjectivity of characters, but its primary purpose is to has an effect on the audience. (2001, 1-21) In addition that I utilize his excellent distinction between focalization and effect, I have two observations. First, the expression „focalization" is so common and established in narratology that it is unnecessary to reintroduce the broad notion of „point of view" with its unsolicited connotations. Second, because it is confusingly associated with both the „point of view" and „information-based" models, I further distinguish between character focalization and knowledge relations.

It is crucial to note that narrative focalization characterize narrative *situations*, thus one type can dominate the whole narrative, but it can vary and divide the structure into smaller parts.[73]

Aspect (a), as it can be seen, is not only tied to a narrative situation but always to a specific character, because what is internal focalization for one character, is an external one from the perspective of another, and only in this sense we can talk about the simultaneous presence of multiple types of focalization. Based on the point of view model, I seek the answer for the questions of different degrees the narration conveys the actions, behavior, perception, knowledge and mental contents of particular characters. Based on Edward Branigan's (1992, 100-107) and Burkhart Niederhoff's (2001, 1–21 and 2013, 5) definitions I distinguish (i) external (the narration depicts a character's behavior, actions and communicative acts), (ii) internal-surface (the narration represents a character's sensory, environmental perceptions), and (iii) internal-depth focalizations (the narration accesses us to a character's mind and conveys information about mental perceptions and conscious mental processes), however I slightly reinterpreted them from their original usage. With the adjective „environmental", I want to emphasize that the information contained in this type perception is not exclusively generated in the subject's mind, but its source is an external stimulus which the subject perceives without any rhetorically relevant distortions.

These are not always consecutive stages, that is, an internal depth focalization does not require the access to the knowledge on the surface level, therefore it is not uncommon in films that the subjective nature of the story (that some events of the narrative were only the product of the hero's distorted perception) is only revealed at the end of the film. The rhetoric of deception has already played a crucial role in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), but it was a particularly popular twist in mind-game films around the millennia: *Open Your Eyes* (*Abre los ojos*, 1997), *Fight Club*, *The Sixth Sense*, *A Beautiful Mind*, *Identity* (2003), *The Machinist* (2004), etc. Sometimes the representation of a mental process frames the whole narrative, leaving no room for any external, objective reality (this is a popular interpretation of the films *Jacob's Ladder* [1990] and *Mulholland Drive* [2001].

The category (a/iii) basically covers two types of events: a conscious mental activity (thoughts, imagination – these are often narrativizations without a communicational intent and an external medium) or experiences independent of consciousness (mental perceptions,

[73] Genette distinguished between fixed, variable and multiple types of focalization dynamics (This latter category means that the same event is represented from the perspective or position of multiple characters. See: Genette, 1983, 189-190), which became a consensual basis for most theoretical writings on the subject (see: Rimmon-Kenan 2002, 79.)

visions, feelings) Therefore it is not necessarily the case, that the recipient's knowledge = character's knowledge (as Genette states), because it can happen that the „knowledge" of the character or the recipient is superior than the other party's.

The axis of knowledge distribution is (b), where I examine the transmission of relevant information in the relation of character and recipient.[74] It is important that I speak of the narrator/character relation, because in a *fictional* discourse without an external referent, it is more consistent logically to study how the author/narrator delivers the information instead of asking how much he „knows" about a character or the events of the narrative. Here, it is expressly the (conscious) knowledge what counts from the part of the character, not only the perceptions available for him. (At the event of a hallucination it is possible that the character and the viewer encounters the same perception, but the viewer's knowledge is superior if he is aware of its subjective/distorted nature.)

In (c), I characterize the individual strategy-types with their identifiable rhetorical purposes (from an authorial perspective), and (from the perspective of the viewer) effects, about which it is important to note that they are not identical with a given focalization strategy or knowledge relation. The elements of this category do not form a coherent system to cover the whole range of possibilities like the options in (a) and (b), the purpose of their enumeration is to distinguish some important notion from the elements of the previous categories. Elements in (c/ii) are concerned with the relations between the characters and the viewer.

All three categories (a, b, c) can change independently of the others, since the reason of their distinction was the fact that there is no one by one correspondence between the elements of (a) and (b). And although they do not determine each other, typical patterns and tendencies can be identified (sometimes these are called genre characteristics). A particular configuration in character focalization (a) can result in different effects and vice versa. Nuancing Branigan's idea (1992, 75), it can be said that in the determination of a narrative function, in addition to the existence of a particular knowledge-relation, its change can also play a big role in the elicitation of the intended effect, therefore elements of (b) does not directly correspond to elements of (c) either.

[74] By „relevant information" I mean information that is important for the narrative progression. And by progression, I refer to Phelan's formula who defines it as „the synthesis of the textual mechanisms that generate and guide a narrative's movement from beginning through middle to end with the trajectory of the audience's response to that movement." (Phelan 2006, 116)

2.1.3 Focalization in *Másnap*

Following the above characterization of narrative focalization, I return to the questions of perspectivation in *Másnap*. Which kind of information the film conveys about the central character and how our knowledge regarding the relevant story facts change during the progression of the narrative?

It is not completely irrelevant to quote the director who defines his own poetic aspirations as follows: „I like the kind of vision that deceives. The kind of which it is not instantly clear, that it is a vision. I do not understand a vision as a formal device, but how a person gets lost in reality. That a part of reality starts to become a vision. Not because it is really a vision, but because you do not have control over your reality." (*Másnap*, DVD extras) It highlights the central problem of the film which basically makes focalization as a formal problem.

Although *Másnap* operates with strategies and techniques very much like the ones found in the modern consciousness film (*Marienbad*, *Mirror* [*Zerkalo*]), and mind-game films (*Memento, Lost Highway*, *Mulholland Drive*),[75] there is a strong sensation in the audience that we cannot get any closer to the protagonist's experiences, character, or his motivations. (The relationship with *Marienbad* exists on an extrafictional level, since both films are related to the writings of Robbe-Grillet.) The viewer cannot be sure about the Traveller's thoughts, feelings, and whether he simulates his general confusion, because the film is highly incommunicative in this respect. Therefore, we cannot empathize with the character and remain indifferent toward his fate. At best, the horrible deed of this shy and polite man shocks us. As he finds out more and more about the girl, the event of the murder drags the hero in like a gravitational center, but his motivations cannot be understood by any possible arrangement of the events.[76]

It seems that – perhaps because of the uprootedness from (linear) causality – the memory (or knowledge) of the murder honestly absent from the mind of the Traveller, but haunts him as a mysterious presence, as an inevitable and necessary occurrence. It seems that the real arc of the hero's „journey" is only crystallized in the light of the sequentiality

[75] See: Gelencsér 2004a, 6. and 2004b, 14. It is not incidental that the only extensive analysis of Janisch's feature film trilogy I am aware of can be found in the „Mind-dream-film" (2012/2) thematic issue of *Metropolis* journal.

[76] Monika Fludernik regards the goal-orientedness of the characters as a key element of narrative organization and draws attention to the fact, that a narrative theory is blind without paying attention to the higher level semantic teleologies that organize the narrative to a real unit. (1996, 16)

of the discourse: the presented order of events become determinative in the symbolic (and synthetic[77]) process of initiation to the sin. Yet, this knowledge-dynamics is not identical to the experience horizon of the hero. Although these situations are far from determinative in the dynamics of the narrative, our knowledge of the facts of the narrative is occasionally superior than his, because there are a couple of scenes and segments where the Traveller is not present. Other parts also suggest that the viewer's knowledge is not identical to the character's, because we can never know what the Traveller experiences, knows, or how much information surfaces from his unconscious as mental response to certain triggers. This uncertainty of knowledge relations is partially the consequence of what I tried to describe as the nonlinearity of the narrative.

Genette's definition of „external focalization" might seem as a good starting point to describe this situation regarding the „depth" of information conveyed about the character's experiences,[78] but the film's rhetorical strategy is more complex, because the Traveller's audiovisual experiences can be very easily interpreted as the projection of the contents of his mind, and not as external events.

Therefore, I claim that the focalization (as the relationship between narration and character) is ambiguous, but it does not adequately describe the overall mechanism of narrative sense-making, as this strategy is embedded in a broader ambiguity of narrativity, where the central question is the (im)possibility of the creation of a „logical" story. As it is suggested before, ambiguity arises, because it is impossible to decide whether it is the protagonist's distorted perception of reality or the general rules of this narrative fiction that prevents us to reconstruct a linear (or coherent) story. All attempts for a solution seems to lead into an impasse, our investigation (which is called for by the film) is destined to fail.

An important strategy of the film is the ambiguity of the relationship between the nonlinear narrative and the Traveller's perception of his reality. The mapping of this aspect cannot be done without serious interpretational moves, due to its narrative complexity and the subversion of classical film language. It is also already an interpretation if I claim that the discursive order of events is clearly the projection of the protagonist's subjectivity or the representation his experience of time, but a lot of signs confirm this theory. The ambiguity of focalization is further increased by the fact that not all changes in scenery occur in a

[77] Phelan originally elaborated his conceptual system for three aspects of fictional characters (mimetic, thematic and synthetic), but his terminology works just well with respect to other, more abstract or complex elements of the narrative. See: Phelan 1987.

[78] „the hero performs in front of us without our ever being allowed to know his thoughts or feelings" (Genette 1983, 190)

(syntactically) unusual way: sometimes the cut placed between shots juxtaposes two scenes chronologically, in other cases an earlier event is presented after the cut. Both possibilities are deduced with the help of emerging material traces (small objects), dialogues and references to events. Which cinematic and narrative tools are usually utilized to help the viewer interpret the focalizational strategy of the narration, but *Másnap* intentionally avoids them? The narration is not only categorically underinforming the viewer by the careful selection and placement of the scenes, but the lack of thematic reflections (verbal affirmations) also makes it difficult to orientate among diegetic spacetime relations. The protagonist seldom reflects unequivocally to the anomalies of time, space and narrative logic, and the film avoids situations where the lack of these reflections would be striking.

There are three interpretational schemes which we can consider to account for the relationship between the formal peculiarities of the film and character subjectivity: we can understand the structure as (1) a pure discursive distortion, an authorial strategy that has nothing to do with the character's perception, (2) as a representation of the character's perceptions, and there is a third option where (3) the structure is understood as the expression of a post-factum „narrativization" of the events, that is, if the whole narrative is interpreted as a retrospective stream-of-consciousness of the hero.

According to the discursive interpretation, linearity is exclusively the feature of the presentation and independent of the character, hence in its most extreme version, the function of this formal play is to mix up the puzzle pieces for the viewer and delay that understanding of the plot and the motivation of the characters (think of Iñárritu's *21 grams*). But in the current case there are multiple arguments against this understanding and in favor to assume a relation between the film's temporal structure and its protagonist. It is enough to look at the thematic indicators: the Traveller lost his sense of time in the medium of this rural world, his wristwatch stopped (an elegant nod to Robbe-Grillet travelling-salesman), his journey is segmented by a series of faintings and awakenings, and owing to the discourse, the viewer gets into the same position.

But, for example, the most striking narrative-cinematic technique in the film, the simultaneous utilization of match on action and the spatiotemporal break highlights the relationship between the Traveller's perception and the discursive level, suggesting that the Traveller crosses the boundaries of spacetime with the viewer. (This elicits the metaleptical[79] effect of the protagonist being able to travel along the sutures of the film.)

[79] For the concept, see: Genette 1983, 234-235 and Genette 2004.

It can be argued that the loss of the perception of linear time is reflected in the discourse in a way that this psychological-physiological condition which would have been hard to grasp in its original dimensions is not only staged by thematic elements, but the experience was literally given a medium by the character who passes through the nonlinear plot. As it was already mentioned, the film does not only differ from a *Memento*-type rhetoric by the chaotic/indeterminate layout of the chronology of its events, but by the fact that none of the possible rearrangements would lead to a perfect story: the riddle of the film is unsolvable by a linear, narrative logic with a coherent causality. But whatever strong signals we get regarding the correspondence between the discourse and the character's perception, this aspect is not without issues either.

It seems that the unlinearizable plot of the film eliminates its own narrative qualities, dissolves in its own visual aesthetics and the internal emotional and experiential dynamics of the mind become the primary organizing principle. But does the film fully confirms this mechanism by the nonlinear structure and can the narrative be described by internal depth focalization? There are multiple scenes in the film, which downright goes against the basic representational requirements of a consistent internal focalization (whether it is surface or depth) by removing the perceiver from the scene, leaving no semantic loophole for this kind of interpretation. Thereby every kind of character focalization ceases to exist in the referred parts. One of these parts is the shot that contains the broken snailshell on the road, and the Traveller has surely left the scene. The other one is the six-minute scene with a cross cutting (parallel editing) in one half of which an invisible menace watches the girl, and in the other half the camera is following Simon, as he runs toward the reeds, but instead of the girl he only finds a pierced snailshell (we even get point of view shots from the boy's perspective). It is not extraordinary that a fundamentally subjective narrative is interrupted by brief „objective" sections, or sections which lie outside of the protagonist's perspective. If we recognize a change in focalization in these scenes (the first one is not character-focalized, in the second one, Simon's perspective prevails), then we have to acknowledge that what we see is objective and real (because no one is near the snailshell in the first case to identify the represented sight with a subjective and potentially distorted vision, in the second one, we get a representation of the same event through the perspectives of two persons), therefore the Traveller's perception is justifiable and authentic regarding the key details (because these do not contradict with the representations encountered in the parts that focalize the Traveller, or at least the contradictions are not between the representational modes and logics of the subjective and objective parts). Because these scenes are woven into the nonlinear narrative,

they strengthen the sense that the spatiotemporal jumps are independent of the Traveller's subjectivity and mind, that diegetic time is moving on its linear path and the author decides which moment is worth displaying. That is, if we (necessarily) assume a change in focalization (from internal to none), then we must accept the existence and objective nature of the elements (snailshells, the event of the murder, the reality of Simon's character) that function as an obstacle to reconstruct and understand the story. My point is, if the snailshells exist independently of the Traveller at those times and places where the protagonist finds them, then the logic of events is self-contradictory, and nonlinearity not only characterizes the Traveller's time-perception.

Our third hypothesis was the assumption that the discourse depicts the consciousness of the protagonist and not an external reality, therefore the structure of the film can be explained more easily (even those parts where the Traveller is not present), because throughout the logic of a memory/fantasy/dream prevails and the narration is organized by a retrospective perspective.[80] The benefit of this assumption is that details which remained contradictory in the perception-interpretation[81], can be explained by it. Memory is understood here as a phenomenon connected the unconscious processes of the mind.

Based on the formal characteristics of *Másnap*, the interpretation of the plot as the representation of a mental activity compiled of memories and fantasies seems justifiable: the Traveller suppressed his knowledge about the murder and the film is the presentation of how this knowledge resurfaces in his mind. (Think of *The Machinist* which manifestly utilizes this formula.) In *Másnap*, the mental contents are not projected to a real spacetime (like in *The Beautiful Mind*), and as a consequence, the temporal planes of earlier/before and later/after become indistinguishable (something similar happens in *Jacob's Ladder*). The film exclusively consists of subjectivized images of the past, filtered through the Traveller's mind. The focalized object (the mind of the Traveller) is orienting the discourse from a visually not displayed temporal position which is necessarily located after the referred events. This assumption can explain how the protagonist can find pierced snailshells before the murder: the individual events are mixed, merged, or altered, following the associational

[80] „For me this film is an attempt, still very crude and very primitive, to approach the complexity of thought, of its processes." - stated Alain Resnais about *Marienbad*. (http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xcozf0_robert-benayoun-alain-resnais-arpen_shortfilms, 2017-05-16) „Ce film est pour moi une tentative, encore très grossière and très primitive, d'approcher la complexité de la pensée, de son mécanisme". (Benayoun 2008, 105-106)

[81] Understood at a textual level, „perception focalization" in this case means a special narrative situation, when ocularization does not necessarily occurs, but the time-perception of the hero is represented by the discursive order of events.

and emotional logic of his mind. Subjective narrative frames that represent absurd perspectives are not unknown in Hollywood (classics like *Sunset Boulevard* [1950] utilized the figure of the narrator who tells the story of the events that led to his own death), but in these narratives the frame is signaled in some way, or they are an embedded narration, with a character-narrator (whose presence is typically indicated by a voice-over), who recounts the events from the afterlife. Can we assume this kind of focalization if the frame is not manifested in any medium or form, and exists only as a logical explanation for the confusing temporality and muddy logic of the events in the narrative? At a textual level, the question is unanswerable, we have fewer clues to justify this reading than in *Mulholland Drive*, but the openness of the film is not the only issue with the stream-of-consciousness interpretation.

An essential feature of *Másnap* stands in stark contrast with the classic scheme of suppressed and resurfaced guilt, because nothing indicates that the murder is a traumatic event for the character, which he has committed out of fear, or in a hopeless situation, and which had to be suppressed later. The Traveller is completely determined in the scene, his intentions are unquestionable, and because we do not know his personality, we cannot perceive a change in his character. The mental-projection reading or any other psychologizing interpretation becomes untenable exactly because his absent (perhaps even nonexistent) motivation.

I do not question the local appearances of textual focalizations (for example point of view shots), only the existence of internal depth focalization as a global organizing principle which would allow a reading of the whole plot as a mental construction, and could explain the especially narrative features of the film (mainly the relation between narrative progression and the nonexistent story). Explicit editing anomalies and material clues in the background operate a perfectly antagonistic logic, and these logics are connected to the focalization techniques in the film. These two levels are simultaneously play a role in the construction of the scenes: while the level of the objects (the bicycle, the handbag, the cut, the binding, the map, the labyrinth toy) indicate the stability and robust causality of diegetic spacetime (the communication of these parameters only exist between author and viewer), while other elements disrupt this order and function as indicators of subjectivity (the violation of editing conventions, the appearance of snailshells, the inaccessibility to the hero's knowledge, motivations, desires and fears). The objective clues suggest that with their help, a coherent and linear story can be assembled, but the subjective layer of the film assumes the enforceability of an associative, inner logic. Therefore, both logics appear to be decoys, as they create the quality of ambiguity together.

It can be concluded that the film not only depicts the deviancy of the character's time perception (a subjective impression of time), but it breaks up the linear, temporal and causal logic of the diegesis. This attribute of the narrative is not explained by genre conventions or by eccentric aesthetics alone, or by the „rules of the storyworld", but it is masked as the deviant perception of the protagonist, by an apparent internal focalization of his subjectivity. In other words, not all factors that complicate narrative comprehension can be understood as the consequence of the focalization of the Traveller. A consistent fabula cannot be recovered from the narrative of *Másnap,* but not because of the limited access to this fabula, but because the reversal and lack of cause and effect relationships are present independently of the Traveller's perception of them. The discursive (authorial) and perspectival distortions constitute the essence of *Másnap's* poetics, and none of them can provide a satisfactory explanation for the nature of the emerging ambiguities. The film becomes confusing because it simultaneously represents a radically subjective and paradoxical experience of time and an unnatural storyworld. This is the reason that makes hard to determine which elements belong to the general unnaturalness of the narrative and which elements are the representation of the distortions elicited by character subjectivity.

As it is outlined above, in *Másnap*, the description of focalization is a major issue because of the tension between the visual (textual, local) and narrative (abstract, global) levels. While the character's knowledge, thoughts, interpretation and attitude toward these situations remain unknown to us, individual shots tightly follow the subtlest changes in the hero's attention: apparently, scenic changes are adjusted to the objects of his gaze and his perception. I wanted to draw attention to the different possible meanings (and levels) of perspectivation by arguing that it would be a mistake to interpret the presence of these *textual* features as a direct indication of internal focalization (as the term is understood in a *narrative* sense), despite the fact, that in narrative cinema, they usually the markers of it. In the following chapter, I concentrate on the analysis of the textual level of narrative films and the formal techniques they utilize to signal focalization by textual manifestations of perspectivation.

2.2 Cinematic Perspectivation - Textual focalization

2.2.1 Concepts of Perceptional Focalization: François Jost and Sabine Schlickers

The following quotation can be regarded as symptomatic of theoretical discourse: „If a film follows a character through spatio-temporal attachment then the film is said to be externally focalized through that character. If a film has clear subjective access to the inner thoughts, the dreams, the perceptions, or even, to a lesser extent, the point-of-view shots of a character, the film is said to be internally focalized through that character" (Houtman 2004, 2) Houtman's enumeration tries to bring rather heterogeneous elements to a common platform. The expression, according to which „a film has access to […] the point-of-view shots" is simply disregarding the difference between the act and the object of representation, because the point of view shot[82] – unlike the other concepts, which are comprehensible only in a narrative level – is a more technical expression, not an attribute or possession of the character, but a representational device of the film. With the introduction of a more accurate conceptual frame, this tension can be relieved.

Because focalization is a narratologically over-charged term, it is useful to introduce expressions for the description of medium-specific perspectivation which do not have similar implications of implicit narrativity. In the following, I will present an alternative conceptual system for textual focalization, draw attention to its weaknesses and inconsistencies, and slightly modify it in order to properly characterize rhetorically complex film sequences.

Sabine Schlickers (after François Jost) introduced a pertinent alternative terminology[83] for sensory impressions expressed in visual or auditory form: these are the notions of ocularization and auricularization, after the Latin words for eyes and ears. I will use them for the description of textually explicit, perceptual phenomena, while keeping focalization to describe the more abstract notions of knowledge-relations at the narrative level.[84]

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[82] In contrast to many scholars (Mitry 1997 and Füzi – Török 2006) I will refer to the shot that can be described as „completely identical to the visual perspective of the character" as a *point of view shot* or *POV shot*, and use *subjective shot* in narrative context in reference to the contents of the image.

[83] Jost's concepts are studied by Robert Burgoyne (Stam – Burgoyne – Flitterman-Lewis 2005, 94), and Schlickers' system is used by many others. Markus Kuhn, another prominent figure of contemporary german filmnarratology states in relation to the study of cinematic narrativity, that for the sake of precision „my proposed concept of focalization is understanding it, as Sabine Schlickers and François Jost do, in terms of knowledge, i.e. the relation of knowledge between the narrative instance and the character, and separating it from questions regarding perception in the narrow sense. In the context of the visual aspects of perception (seeing) I will use the term »ocularization«, and the term »auricularization« for the auditory aspects (hearing)." (Kuhn 2009, 263) Nelles finds the concepts useful in relation to certain literary works (for example Robbe-Grillet's *La Jalousie*): „The terms […] would be useful for discussion of those rare cases in which the precise details of a character's physical sight line or hearing ability are in fact specified in a written text and call for close analysis." (1990, 378)

[84] „I therefore aim to distinguish once more between »seeing« and »knowledge«" (Schlickers 2009, 246)

Taking out the „external" category from Genette's system, Schlickers distinguishes between zero and internal ocularization and auricularization,[85] which essentially signify the presence or absence of subjective perception. Internal ocularization occurs during a „subjective camera position" or at the presentation of mental images („mindscreen"), although Schlickers does not clarify this latter concept. (2009, 248) Despite the heuristic value of her system, at certain points, it requires refinement or further elaboration. In passages following the definition, she seems to move away from the wider interpretation of ocularization when she writes that „unlike zero ocularization, internal ocularization refers to subjective images which can be ascribed to a diegetic agent. Here we can often find the use of the »subjective camera« mentioned above, in which recording takes place almost completely from the point of view of one character. However, subjective images can also be created by the use of montage, lap dissolves, fade-over, color fade, slow-motion, distortion of sound, music and other devices." (2009, 249) With the first sentence, Schlickers interprets images that can be related in any way to a diegetic observer as internally ocularized ones. This is confirmed by the second sentence, when she uses the expression „here […] often" to describe the appearance of the point of view shots (with the „subjective camera" being only a synonym between quotation marks). That is, inside the larger set of internal ocularization, exists the POV shot and another, mysterious category, from which she excludes those „subjective images" that are not identified as subjective because of their visual perspective or framing, but because their meaning is conventionalized this way, or maybe they could be understood as subjective by the narrative context. Then she gets to the point of acknowledging that not all subjective images are ocularized, for example, in the classic flashback we see the character who remembers or tells the story from an external position (the camera occupies a „neutral" position), therefore the image, albeit implies internal focalization (at the narrative level, as long as it is a visualization of a character's mind content), is not internally ocularized. At this point, her concept of the „mindscreen" becomes questionable, which she uses just once in her definition, and afterwards she rather works against the usefulness of it when she places non-POV, but still subjective images outside internal ocularization. „Thus a segment of what a character remembers is not tied to internal ocularization. Instead, conventional flashback-structure first shows the character in zero

[85] It is worth mentioning that Jost talks about two types of ocularization: zero and internal, but at the internal type he distinguishes between homodiegetic and heterodiegetic versions. He finds the concept of „external ocularization" contradictory. (Jost 1983, 204)

ocularization and only then slides into this character's visualized flashback which itself is mediated in zero ocularization" (2009, 249)

In other words, when Schlickers re-defines internal ocularization, it will become completely dispensable at the description of the classic flashback, which cannot be considered as a „mindscreen", based on this latter definition. Mindscreens can only refer to subjective mental contents that are presented by POV shots (i.e. they can be understood on a narrative level): „In film, dreams and memories are thus visualized from the characters' interior perspective while the characters see themselves as acting characters from the outside. We cannot describe ocularization as internal in this context (since then the character of the dream would not be visible). Nevertheless, this flashback-structure has become conventionalized as a subjective form of remembering or dreaming and must therefore be described as internal focalization." (2009, 249) This passage shows why ocularization should be used *in addition* to focalization, but does not shows why it should be used *instead* of the POV shot, since internal ocularization is practically reduced to its synonym.

The fact that Schlickers uses the new concepts not instead of focalization, but instead of the POV shot is progress from the viewpoint that before her, many scholars used focalization to describe both the narrative and the textual levels, which often led to conceptual confusion.[86] Even Schlickers, in her initial definition, confused narrative („mindscreen") and textual („ocularization") concepts when she considered every „subjective image" as internally ocularized as long as they can be related to the perception of a diegetic agent. No wonder that at later points in her essay she contradicted with her initial definition.

Her adjectives also needed to be reconsidered: with the categories of textual focalization, there is no need to differentiate between surface and depth levels, since they refer to perceptional phenomena, which are, by definition, at the surface level, and it is a

[86] As we see, the issue again touches the difficulties regarding the distinction between technical and rhetorical axes of the film. How technical is the expression (and how textual is the phenomenon) of the POV shot and compared to it, how different are the concepts of ocularization/auricularization and focalization? „Although ocularization can always be defined in purely technical terms, when looking at the specific semiotic-narrative context we can only classify it in its interplay with focalization." (Schlickers 2009, 249.) I want to reflect to this issue by taking the simplest example: to determine the subjectivity of a single image, it is often necessary to look at its immediate context, to inspect the previous or the following shots. The linking of the observing subject and the observed object in consecutive shots is an artificial, but conventionalized technique, therefore it is part of the „grammar" of narrative film. In this sense, the difference between „subjective" and „objective" shots can be regarded as a technical distinction (articulated exactly by their difference in the juxtaposition), because their meaning is largely determined. Still, there are countless examples, where exactly this link is problematized (among others, in the pseudo-POV shot of *Másnap*), revealing the rhetorical foundation of this connection.

matter of narrative comprehension that they can express *depth focalization* (dreams, hallucination, etc.). Therefore, it is enough, if the characterization of perceptual situations are divided into not ocularized – ocularized, not auricularized – and auricularized types. After the identification of the presence of subjectivity in the image or soundtrack, the technical aspect can be further specified, examining which aspect of the film signals the subjective quality (but among which is never the difference that can be described by the surface/depth opposition).

2.2.2 The Scope of Perceptional Focalization

The definitional problem of the terms of perceptional focalization is related to the question of their scope: to what extent should they refer to more simple/technical, and more complex/interpretational properties? Schlickers' initial definition suggests that subjective contents beside POV shots (for example if a character remembers an earlier event and in the flashback, we see the remembering character) should be regarded as „internally ocularized" (2009, 248), since an external, diegetic observer cannot perceive these images. But because their subjectivity is only revealed by the narrative context, she decides somewhat confusingly in favor of the more direct, technical definition and describes these shots with „zero ocularization". With my definition of ocularization, I want to take a position between the above two, because if we define it too broadly, it will be blurred with the concept of (the knowledge and information based) focalization, if we define it too narrow (as ultimately Schlickers does), then it basically describes the POV shot. By an intermediate definition, I mean that the notions of perceptional focalization should be only used to cover meanings that can be inferred from the context of the film-language, the „grammar"[87] of the film, that is, I characterize a pre-narrative, medially defined process of semiosis.

Therefore, ocularization in most cases characterizes units not larger than a shot, because two shots that contain the ocularization of the same character's sight is rarely juxtaposed by a simple cut.[88] But a rhetorically meaningful change can also occur inside a

[87] The use of the term is justifiable, because in this case it does not apply to the film-narrative, but to the conventions and principles of continuity editing. Walsh draws our attention to the difference between narratives and grammars when he argues that the concept of film grammar is wider and looser than a verbal langue's, because „[g]rammars are medium-independent abstractions that can be used to characterize the structure of digital semiotic systems, such as language, which use discrete signifying units; but narrative is capable of articulation in both digital systems and analogue systems such as visual imagery, which are graded or scalar. Narrative, then, is not essentially a digital system, and it is not amenable to grammar." (2007, 105)

[88] The guiding principle is simply the basic logic of mimesis: we can only talk about a „visual rupture" in the case of extreme mental or physical conditions, for example if a character fades. But the representation of such

shot, which can divide it to distinct types of ocularization. The characterized segment in the case of the acoustic dimension can be either larger or smaller than the shot (which is the basic unit of film editing), because the soundscape of a film that supplements the visual track often operates by an entirely different rhythm. In general, non ocularized sequences make-up most of the narrative film's shots, but since they are not affected by the characters' subjectivity I will not discuss them here.

By the unnecessarily wide definition of ocularization and auricularization, I mean if we determine the quality of a given segment by taking into consideration the narrative frames: if we characterize every shot in a dream or a subjective flashback as ocularized, because we know that it is a subjective vision of the character. The frame can be marked by a cinematic device, but they also become a narrative device and influence the understanding of the following or preceding sequence as a narrative framing.

Naturally, the boundary between a meaning achieved by a local (textual) and a narrative context can be the subject of debate, if only for the fact, that the language of narrative film (continuity editing) already favors techniques and editing solutions that facilitate narrative comprehension. Still, the distinction is worth introducing as a theoretical auxiliary line, to approach these hardly definable phenomena from the perspective of two well-articulated dimensions.

Focalization is not replaced, but supplemented by these concepts, which can determine the narrative perspectives appearing in the work. With these concepts, we can specify which sensual aspect (mostly visual or acoustic) and which exact technique are utilized in the textual level of the film to represent a particular type of focalization. With the asymmetrical typology of narrative and textual perspectivation, I also wanted to express that there is no strict (one to one) correspondence between the elements of the two systems (it does not behave as a bijective function). I can describe the snailshell scene from *Másnap* as internal-surface focalization of the main character, because it conveys information about the visual perception of the hero, but I only characterize shots B3, B5 and B6 as ocularized with the help of different cinematic techniques. In the case of shots B3 and B5, the camera tightly follows the visual focus of the character, and shot B6 is a POV shot. In the other shots, the

an event requires more than the juxtaposition of two POV shots, because the cut with its momentary nature cannot properly illustrate the time passed during the unconscious state. In these cases, a marked transition, or at least a dimming and brightening image is required for the film to make the experience comprehensible. Exceptions violating this rule can be mostly found in films that utilize the POV shot more extensively than mainstream narrative cinema.

camera shows the subject from a neutral position and remains uninterested towards his visual perception.

But why is it useful to introduce these concepts in the place of perspective or POV shot, if they are used for the same technical, local and textual phenomena and virtually become synonyms with the traditional terminology? First, their field of significance is less metaphoric and proliferative than perspective or point of view, and second, they distinguish and systematize visual and acoustic aspects of the film: auricularization is an aspect in film which got undeservedly little attention earlier. (There is not even a unified and widespread expression regarding the analogue for „point of view" in sound). The third criteria concerns ocularization, and it is a stipulation I introduced: that this concept is worth distinguishing from the literality and seemingly objective definition of the „POV shot", and applying it to a wider spectrum of visual perception. (I want to compensate for the predominance of the viewpoint paradigm, that the major determinant in visual imaging is always the position of the vision's source and the frame defined by it.) Just as Schlickers defines auricularization: not by one highlighted, dominant criterium, but generally as „acoustic subjectivity" (2009, 250). I suggest narrowing down the definition of the new term to a degree that it should not refer to the same phenomena as the term used to characterize narrative units (focalization), but it should not simply substitute the reference to a technical quality (POV shot) either. It should refer to a set of techniques which are used to represent the perception of a character. Naturally, the presence of a specific cinematic device can only be understood as a display of a character's perception if it fits and cooperates with the surrounding semiotic context of the film. I try to show that the exact spatial position from where this perception originates and the field it can cover is not the only aspect of vision that can be displayed and understood as the representation of a subject's visual perception. Of course, the position of the observer is crucial, the subjectivity of a shot is usually determined in relation to this factor (whether the camera occupies the position of the observer or not), and it is undoubtedly the most prominent aspect regarding subjective vision and the information seen on the screen. But despite all the above, I want to draw attention to the artificiality in this seemingly immaculate iconic correspondence between form and meaning, and to the possibilities of rhetorical distortions in this mechanism. As a consequence, the set of phenomena called „POV shots" should be interpreted as a larger, looser category (but still smaller than the subjective shot), in which big differences can be detected among the individual examples, therefore they need to be studied more extensively.

The alignment of the tools of representation (the position, angle, movement of the camera and the microphone) and the moving/acting characters in a broader sense can be identified at the textual level, because in most shots and scenes of narrative films the „camera" and „microphone" are not just placed in the same spacetime as the central characters but their parameters and behaviors are choreographed to match their movement, path,[89] or what is more important for us, their gaze, or visual attention,[90] and the soundtrack mediates the audible stimuli which can be heard by their physical capabilities and from their position.

2.2.3 Ocularization

By widening Slickers' definition of ocularization (she practically identifies it with the point of view shot), I would like to consider any visually explicit expression of a character's optical perception as an ocularization strategy. This can be achieved by the visual emphasis on (1) the subject's position, (2) on the quality of perception or (3) on the object of perception. Despite that I regard these cinematic devices as parts of narrative film's grammar, there are no exclusive correspondence between their form and the carried meaning, and they can often only be understood in a larger context. Ocularization can be realized through the unique configurations of point of view shots, camera focus, distance between the framed object and the camera, and the quality of the image. I will continue to use the term *point of view shot,* because it is a determinative device of ocularization as the most intense and widespread filmic rendition of the visual perception of a subject. It is especially suitable to signal a subjective perception, because contrary to the looser eyeline match, it can be attached to a fully individual spatial arrangement. While an object can appear as a match for several character's gazes, therefore, the image of the object is not interpreted as subjective (see Branigan's [1984, 116] concept of interlocking POV), an image shown in a point of view shot of a particular character clearly signals the spatial position of the observer (thus implicating a subjective perception).

[89] Moreover, a technique can become visible simply by a camera placement that does not grant the best access to important visual elements of the scene (for example, if a character is covered by an object while he speaks), or if it remains insensitive toward the movement/actions of a character and shows a narratively irrelevant part of space. Or if a shot is held longer than the on-screen action could justify, and the camera lingers there after all relevant action has ended or all characters has left the scene. In these cases, viewers are instinctively start to look for a reason, a narrative function for the technique.

[90] Probably because of the adjustment to the principles of continuity editing (to facilitate narrative comprehension), it can be evinced by empirical studies that in narrative films, actors direct their gazes to each other 70% of the time during a conversation, while in real life this number is only 30%. (Browne 2004)

Few narratological works deal with the typology and structure of POV shots, most of the time only its relation to subjectivity is highlighted, but its internal patterns are just as diverse as their narrative function. Some works on film theory distinguish between „subjective" and „point of view" shots, but mostly they are used as each other's synonyms.[91] As I have already mentioned, I use the two terms in agreement with Stephen Heath, who points out that the identification of them could be misleading, because the subjectivity of the image in this case only means the match between the space occupied by the camera and the character's point of perception, that is, only their spatial coordinates coincide. A subjective image can be created by many other configurations, therefore the two concepts are not necessarily overlapping. (1981, 46) However, I do not share the conclusion of Heath that because of the multiple figures of subjectivity, „a true subjective image would effectively need to mark its subjectivity in the image itself." (1981, 47). This condition would unnecessarily narrow down the range of subjective images, and my purpose is the widening of this category. The most detailed study of the internal structure and configurations of the POV shot is Branigan's 1984 book, the *Point of View in the Cinema* (especially chapter 5, 103-121). I will explicate some important aspects of their design which are only briefly mentioned in Branigan's study.

I want to follow an assumption of Peter Verstraten, who claims that „[t]he desire for suture is so deeply embedded in filmic grammar[92] that it matters little whether shot B is filmed from the exact position of, and at an equal distance to, the character in shot A. If this is not the case, shot B is not a 'literal' subjective shot but an 'approximate' subjective shot." (2009, 12) It is also an important feature of these techniques of subjectivation that to some extent they are capable of performing the function of mapping a subjective perception with the complete absence of point of view shots.

The first and foremost quality is the framing of objects, or the apparent distance between the object and the plane of the screen, or from another perspective, the object's size in comparison to the size of the frame. The basic point of view shot shows the object from the exact position of its viewer, but in many cases the image is just a highlighted segment of the sight that the character can actually see. This restricted, or „zoomed" image theoretically separates the positions of the diegetic character and the viewer of the film (the viewer being

[91] A refreshing exeption can be found in Jean Mitry's 1965 book, who describes an intermedial category, the *semi-subjective shot*, for a frame composition where both the character and her field of vision are displayed (1997, 214).
[92] Verstraten also points out some blind-spots of suture-theory. (2009, 102-104)

closer), nevertheless, the shot is not interpreted as objective. (Branigan calls this technique „metaphorical framing" - 1984, 123) In fact, it is easier to understand it as the presentation of the character's attentional focus (Branigan 1984, 124), which is a mental factor, not a strictly sensory one. Branigan is similarly permissive on the subject: „if other cues are sufficiently strong – such as camera angle and movement, repeated character glances, narrative context, etc. – then a certain play is permitted in camera distance and in the composition of the point/object shot." (1984, 116)

The representation of visual attention can be achieved without a POV shot, with an eyeline match. In this case, the subjective quality of the image is determined by the character's perception despite the noticeable difference between his field of vision and the real audience's.

The manipulation of point of view distances can fulfill other functions than representing attention. As the plot of *Másnap* is about to reach its dramatic climax, the Traveller looks down from the cliffs and notices something among the bushes, at the foot of the hill. He leans forward, to inspect the object which turns out to be the dead body of the murdered girl. (1) In the first shot we see the Traveller from the waist up, standing on all fours, stretching forward, photographed from a little below, with the sky behind him. (2) Next, the edge of the cliffs and the small body in the bushes are visible in the point of view, eyeline match shot, which even imitates the slow movements of the character. (3) In the next shot, the Traveller is in the frame again, but only his head and neck is visible, highlighting his facial expressions. (4) The fourth shot shows the lifeless body again, this time we get a closer view than in the second shot. The features of the body became more detailed, its identity as a human being is confirmed here. (5) After this, we see the Traveller's face in a full close-up, stressing the strange mix of curiosity, recognition and concern. (6) Finally, the inexorable certainty of the body that diagonally bisects the screen answers the possible doubts of the character. It is worth noting that the consequential images of the body are not just zooming on it, but compared to previous shots they are slightly rotated as well. Throughout the scene, the camera symmetrically approaches the girl and the face of the Traveller, in order to show the image of the more and more detailed body as a reflection of the protagonist's growing sense of recognition.

Where the presentation of a psychological process and the symbolic significance of the observed object by the changes in framing is more important than the physical reactions of the character, the film utilizes a technique that is almost opposite to this kind of parallelism. When the Traveller finds the head of a dead lamb, displayed in a close-up point

of view shot, he makes a step back, and the frame becomes a medium shot of him. In the next shot, the object of the gaze, the eye of the dead animal is shown in an extreme close-up, hence the spatial relation of the camera to the two objects (the observer and the observed) changed in opposite directions. With this move, the film prioritizes the mental event over the physically adequate representation: as the character trying to get rid of the thoughts triggered by the sight of the lamb, the film places him in a greater distance, but it is also revealed, that his escape was not successful, as these thoughts flood him through the close-up of the lamb's eye. In the examined cases, the projection of point of view is often inaccurate, yet, it is not a question whether we understand these shots as the representation of subjective perception, moreover, it is also not the subject of heated debates whether they depict a character's actual point of view.

The POV shot is similarly interesting in one of the scenes of *The Innocents*: when Miss Giddens sees the ghost of Miss Jessel face to face to little Flora at the pavilion next to the lake, we get two types of subjective images. (1) After a non ocularized shot of Miss Giddens' face, (2) the ghost can be seen in the reeds, and (3) in the third shot, again, the face of the governess, then (4) a larger frame, where Flora is also visible beside the ghost. The film authorizes the viewer to understand both 2 and 4 as Giddens' POV, but the images differ significantly. She has not moved between the two shots, therefore the cause of the difference cannot be the change in distance between her and the observed object: its reason is the staging of the narratively relevant characters. In 2, the emphasis is on Giddens' perception of the ghost, in 4, it is the relationship between the girl and the ghost. Both of the shots represent the attention of the governess, by showing what is important for her at the moment, thus the establishment of the frames depend on the requirements of the narrative situation. Meanwhile, the spatial position of Giddens is represented inconsistently by these two shots. It is not only that the subjectivity of a particular shot can be only interpreted in a larger context (first and foremost a shot of her face and eyes is needed to understand the following one as her vision), but that POV shots can be just as much determined by other factors than the character's literal field of vision, as an objective shot. In this case, the difference between 2 and 4 shows the non-mimetic focus and artificiality of the images. In other words, the shots are determined by a mental component, therefore the images can be described by the interplay of two important factors: (1) the literal perspective of the character (which takes into consideration the character's position and the position of what she sees) and (2) the highlighting of a detail (which overwrites the real spatial relation between subject and object by showing only a specific part). This is the result of an authorial choice alone for the

achievement of a rhetorical purpose, which might have been realized by other means of editing, for example by camera focus (by blurring the environment and sharpening only the plane in which the given detail is located).

The play with distances is eligible for expressing other perception-related notions, such us an introduction of a new character. It is not only realized through the level of observable details, but the dynamics of framing, which brings into play the concepts of strangeness and familiarity. A scene from *Másnap* shows the extreme close-up of the slowly awakening Traveller's face, and the dramatic starting point for the scene is the appearance of the daughter of the host, who wants to talk to the guest and ask him if he would kill her mother. (C1) First we see the girl in a full shot from the precise point of view of the hero. As their dialogue continues, (C2) the face of the man is presented in close-ups, while the girl can be seen in full figure in the reverse shots. The curiosity of the sequence is that the shots depicting the Traveller's face are not interpreted as POV shots of the girl, because we have seen similar shots of him before she entered the room, and her presence has not changed the nature of these frames. The film rather implies that this face and its expressions belong to an already familiar, cinematically established, visually well-known character. (C3) When the frame shows close-ups of the girl's face, it is not happening because the camera moves towards her, but because she approaches the Traveller. (C4) At this point the girl is standing next to the man and we get the same type of shots of their faces, and by the time she is moving away, the camera handles her as a known entity. Therefore, in the final section of their dialogue (C5) she also gets medium or full close-ups. Her character moved back to her original position, but in the level of framing she is kept close to the viewer, indicating her relationship to the (male) gaze that structured the scene. Meanwhile, another noteworthy thing happened concerning the placement and angle of the camera.

In point of view shots, the frame can mismatch a character's position in other means than distance, and the most explicit signal for this is the gaze of an on-screen character. While in terms of distance the first half of the scene in *Másnap* was adjusted according to the physical position and perception of the Traveller (the camera never parted from him, never showed a detail in the room that the Traveller could not have seen), and prioritized him over the girl, the second half establishes a visual symmetry between them. In this proximity, it becomes apparent when we see the girl's face in a close-up, while talking to the Traveller who lies in the bed, that she is not looking into the camera directly, and after this shot, the Traveller is framed similarly. (Or, it can be said that the imperfection of the POV is revealed, because the change happens between the POV and the slightly modified

view without a cut, inside a single shot.) The absence of the observer and the presence of the observed results that the boundary between POV shot and an eyeline match (which usually gives an external image of the object) is blurred, and an intermediary quality is created. One possible reason for the commonness of this technique („approximate point of view") is that (classical narrative) cinema does not want to break the viewer's aesthetic illusion[93] with a character who seemingly talks directly to us, opening up the closed, self-contained, total space of the diegesis, through which the viewer's attention would refocus on the artificiality of the representation.[94]

Even though, it is an explicit aim for some movies to elicit particular effects through characters talking to the camera. In the courtyard scenes of *Rashomon* (1950) the viewer has to identify with the invisible judges, in a famous scene of *The Shining* (1980), one of the favorite and in many ways most influential film for Janisch, there is a mirror in front of the protagonist who talks to the camera and for a couple of moments we cannot be sure if he talks to himself, to the viewer (metaleptically), or as it turns out a character from his imagination (or in another interpretation, a ghost). When the detective of *Shutter Island* (2010) interrogates the patients about a missing person in a prison hospital, the frontal photographing of both him and the patients during their dialogues can be interpreted as a metaphor that he is unconsciously investigating himself. In *Másnap*, there is one uncanny moment like this, which is also (and not incidentally) the dramaturgical climax of the film. When the Traveller, who is ripped out of the spatiotemporality of reality, sees his alter ego in the reeds and realizes that he is the killer, then his other self looks back on him and looks directly into the lens of the camera. The point of view shot is a strong indicator of a sentinent character's presence, because the cinematic creation of a subject is primarily done through the establishment of its point of view. If there is no one at the other side of the camera's position when a character looks in it, it elicits the effect for the viewer, as psychoanalytic theory says, of being suddenly exposed to someone else's gaze while peeping from a safe and hidden spot.[95]

It is not incidental, that the ghosts in *The Innocents* are usually appear as the object of vision, and they cannot return the gaze of the governess from their own position, there is no countershot in the structure. With the progress of their manifestation, the ghosts get an

[93] See: Wolf (2004, 325–51).
[94] Metz (1982, 58-80, 91-7); Ben-Shaul (2007, 111); For the comparison between early film's exhibitionist tendencies and classical narrative, see: Gunning (1986, 382); Gaudreault – Jost (1999, 49); and Török (2013).
[95] Just as when the killer looks back, there is only the voyeur behind the screen, who sees the world and himself in a virtual canvas. This can be interpreted as the short circuit of the suture.

increasingly stronger presence by their cautiously appearing ocularization, to indicate their establishment as subjects. The symbolic (and formal) endpoint of this progress is the last scene, in which (for the first and last time) an over the shoulder shot appears to signal Quint's field of vision and control over the situation. The fantastic ambiguity remains throughout the whole narrative, since the visual dynamics never go as far as a POV shot of a ghost. The film also maintains the ambiguity with another technique: at the end of the hide and seek sequence, the governess hides behind a curtain when behind her back, at the other side of the window, the ghost of Quint appears just before Miss Giddens could have noticed it. Up until this point, the ghosts have been appearing only in POV shots of Giddens, but this shot is discursively unmarked, that is, it cannot be related to the perception of the woman. For a brief period of time, the visual composition suggests the reality and objectivity of the vision, before it becomes a shot that is ocularized by her visual attention, although a final and reassuring explanation about the status of the ghosts will never be established. In this sequence, internal focalization is constructed (it is certain that the film depicts the perception of the governess, the only question is the reliability of this perception) by objective (non ocularized) shots, or shots that contain objective parts. It is a common rhetoric for films that utilize the strategies of deception to present subjective visions by visually unmarked images which can be only interpreted as subjective retrospectively, with the help of the narrative context. These are the most common situations that can justify our distinction between the concepts of focalization and ocularization.

There are some rather unusual framings in several shots of *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982), whose significance can be only interpreted in a metaphorical level, in the story, it is not thematized explicitly. Verstraten draws attention to the interpretation of Sasha Vojković (2009, 102-3), who noticed that the scenes featuring E.T. and Eliott, the little boy who took in the alien, contain an interesting visual asymmetry. While we often see the boy from the perspective of the alien, we never see E.T. from Eliott's POV – argues Vojković, only from behind the back or over the shoulder of the boy, and this asymmetry is only resolved at the end of the film. I agree with the conclusion of her interpretation, according to which E.T is the physical manifestation of the boy's fantasy. This is confirmed by their psychic relationship (if E.T. feels something physically or emotionally, Eliott will feel it too) through which E.T. appears as a close friend or a substitute for his absent father. The most powerful visual expression of their connection is in the scene where E.T. repeats the words „home", and points to the direction of the window of Eliott's room. Then in an inserted shot, we see Eliott as the shadow of the alien's finger is projected exactly to the middle of his forehead.

However, I reject the claim that the over the shoulder shots indicate that Eliott is incapable of „subjectivizing" and that is why we do not see E.T. in his POV shots as we see him in the framing of E.T.'s gaze. In my interpretation, similarly to the ghosts of *The Innocents*, E.T.'s status as a filmic subject is doubtful at the beginning. Vojković's analysis is based on the first encounter of the boy and the alien and her argument is convoluted because she misinterprets the subjectivity of the individual shots in that scene. When we see Eliott's face, it should not be understood as the ocularization or POV shot of E.T., but as the exclusion of E.T. from the frame in order to make Eliott as the sole object of the viewer's attention. As the over the shoulder camera accentuates a „vision with" Eliott, this element is absent with E.T., precisely because his lack of autonomy/subjecthood. Shot and countershot equally marks Eliott as the visual center of the scene and E.T.'s image is dependent on the presence of the boy. The character of E.T (as a fantasy-projection) can only be manifested completely (but not as a shot-structuring subject), when Eliott falls asleep in the armchair: that is the first time we see E.T. in the frame without Eliott also being there. The next shot is also telling: we see the sleeping boy side faced at the right side of the frame, with a lamp illuminating his head, and E.T. at the left side, whose figure is also illuminated by another lamp. It is not hard to read this elegant visual composition as an indication of Eliott as a dreamer and E.T as his projection.

It is worth to mention a technique that is often used as a formal play and breaks the POV paradigm within a single shot. It points out the contextual and rhetorical foundation of textual perspectivation and that an image or shot can be deprived of its ocularized status by raising certain expectations and not fulfilling them by the utilization and violation of a convention. In a famous scene from Antonioni's *Blowup* (1966) the protagonist (a nameless photographer) returns to the park where he accidentally photographed a dead body which he only discovered during the development of his work, but the body is gone when he arrives to the scene. While he examines the place where the body was, he looks up to the foliage of a tree which is swaying in the breeze. (1) First, we see his gesture from a higher position, as the character raises his head to the direction of the sound of the wind, than (2) we see the waving branches from a low angle, and the blue sky behind them. We immediately identify this sight with the photographer's perspective. (3) At this point, the camera starts to descend and without a cut, we return to the figure of the photographer, who is looking at a completely different direction, therefore the first segment of a shot which was understood as a POV shot is reinterpreted as an objective one. This technique can be regarded as a delicate breakdown of scenic continuity, because it is not only a continuous transition between subjective and

objective sights, but one that recontextualizes the once established meanings of certain frames. The phenomenon was cleverly given the name *POV fallacy*.[96]

The continuation of scene D in *Másnap* is a variation on the second half of scene A (A9-A11), where I highlighted the violation of the technique of match on action. D3 directly evokes A11 by showing two distant figures running on the hills: a man chasing a girl. This shot is instantly identified as the POV shot of the Traveller who watches them from the train, because in the previous shot we saw him looking through the window. But in D3, he suddenly steps into the frame from the left, overwriting the putative meaning of the shot.[97] Time and space is radically disrupted twice during this three-shot scene, although the lack of reference points makes it impossible to tell if the second change occurred simultaneously with the cut or only later. D3 is not only understood as a POV shot, because of the conventions of continuity editing, but because it is a repetition of the events and scene-construction of scene A, that is, it serves as an internal visual context and cognitive scheme to which the film did not remain faithful.

Sequences like these warns us that not only particular cases of character-focalization, but even techniques of textual focalization or certain POV shots are always a matter of interpretation and determined by their medial and narrative context,[98] therefore Schlickers' claim that ocularization and auricularization can be defined by strictly technical parameters (2009, 249) should be treated with reservations, even if we understand them as narrowly as possible. POV fallacies question this technical identification by recontextualizing seemingly subjective shots. Strategies that deconstruct POV shots are not always call attention to themselves, sometimes it is done completely imperceptibly like in the Irish TV series, *The Fall* (2013-2016). In the second scene of the pilot episode, we meet Paul Spector (Jamie

[96] The scene in question: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wSvXuSE8Gg (2017-02-27) It is less obvious, but a similar technique can be also found in *The Innocents.* The curiosity of the scene that because of the fast pace of editing, the viewer likely overlooks the fraud: Miss Giddens plays hide and seek with the children, when she discovers the portrait of Peter Quint in a little music box in the attic. The door starts to creak, the governess glances up and frightenedly stares in front of herself. The next shot shows a hand on the opening door and a blurry figure glides through the frame. After the cut, we see Miss Giddens again, as Miles surprises her. It is revealed that the second shot of the door and the hand was not a POV shot, because it happened behind the back of the governess.

[97] An important shot is edited out from the end of this scene, in which the Traveller can be seen standing in the dark room again, as he closes the curtains on the window. This version of the sequence was still in the movie in the original 2004 version of the film, but Janisch decided to cut it out for the 2009 DVD release. The shot narratively framed the scene, strengthened its vision-like nature. With the omission of the recurrence of the framing location, the ambiguous status of the scene is emphasized, none of the locations (the train and the room) are more realistic (narratively) than the other.

[98] Verstraten mentions a similar example form *Kill Bill Vol 1* (2009, 103-4), Chatman finds one in Fellini's *Dolce Vita* (1978, 161), where a transition from a subjective image (a character looks into the camera) to an objective one (the protagonist appears) occurs without a cut.

Dornan) the main character, a serial killer, as he looks into the mirror in the bathroom of a house where he has just broken in. It is clearly indicated that the image is a full frontal POV shot, where the character looks straight into his own eyes. The position of the camera is at the eye level of Spector and imitates the character's every movement. As he is taking off the mask that covers his face, the object also appears before the camera, reduplicating the gesture we see in the mirror in front of us. But then something strange happens: Spector glances to his right hand and jacket-pocket, but we still see his face frontally in the mirror, as if the camera forgot to follow his eye movements and instead focuses on the image in the mirror. After a few seconds, the camera returns to the position of the diegetic character's eyes and moves along with the character when he takes out his camera from his pocket and takes a picture of himself. We see the picture appearing in the screen of the camera. The anomalous movement of the camera does not become disturbing, or even visible, because the film places us in an already unusual visual situation, where the subjective, POV image simultaneously has the properties of an objective shot (the object and source of the gaze is identical, both is present on the image). Therefore, when the film violates a convention which is expected in a POV shot, expectations related to an objective image overwrite them and the subjective „frame" is temporarily forgotten.

Disruptions in POV shots is not a new development in narrative cinema, directors experimented with it decades earlier. In *Dark Passage* (1947), we do not see the face of the protagonist until his plastic surgery, therefore the first half of the film utilizes plenty of POV shots. Sometimes whole sequences are exclusively made up of the POV *shots* of Vincent Parry. The plural form is justifiable, because although the POV image only meets the requirements of realistic representation if it is continuous, we nevertheless encounter several cuts in these scenes. Two types of joints can be described in the film, which connect a POV shot to another one. The more conventional one marks a temporal ellipsis and links two scenes like a montage. For example, when Parry arrives to Irene Jansen's apartment, a cross-fade is utilized to emphasize the elapsed time between the two sights. The authenticity of subjectivity is weakened to a greater extent by the sudden cuts where the film does not indicate such temporal ellipsis. As soon as Parry, the escaped convict arrives to the building where Jansen lives, his attention is directed to the man who approaches from the stairs, and after a cut we see Jansen in the elevator, while presumably she also glances in the direction of the stranger. This shot is seemingly objective, because only this would justify the cut and the framing whose only purpose is to show the woman's reaction. But then, Jansen turns to the camera which starts moving towards the elevator. This way Parry quasi posteriorly takes

the place of the camera, and the image becomes a POV shot. In another scene, when Parry hides at the place of his old friend George, we encounter another strange cut, which could be also interpreted as an editing error that breaks the illusion of subjectivity. When George takes out a key from a drawer, the camera suddenly changes its position, seemingly in order to have a better visual access to the small object. Beside the already mentioned reasons, it is easy to miss the illogical nature of these cuts, because at the moment of the cut the editing works according to the conventions of classical film language (altering objective and subjective shots), and the film only reintroduces the subjectivity of the image afterwards.

After the examination of the properties of POV shots and the field of vision, let me briefly discuss an ocularization strategy which is related to the quality of individual shots.[99] The utilization of the relation between the camera's plane of focus and the objects of the mise-en-scène can also be an efficient tool to imitate perception. A film can create a completely blurry image or can highlight objects of visual attention, which are situated in the focal plane. Usually this method is combined with some type of „imprecise" point of view shot. When Mari Törőcsik's character in *Hosszú Alkony* wakes up from her long dream in a bus, all she can see first is a blurred spot of light, from which her glance turns to a blurry human face who is talking to her. The subjectivity of the shot is confirmed by the camera movement. When the image slowly becomes sharp, and the outlines of the face become recognizable, it becomes apparent that the gaze of the man is not directed towards the camera, that is, the shot is again, an imperfect version of point of view. There are examples when anomalies connected to a character's visual perception are represented in a spectacularly „artificial" way, without point of view shot, but signaling the subjectivity with the quality of the image. In the thriller *Split* (2017), when the psychiatrist who lost consciousness earlier begins to regain it, the film shows her in an external shot, where the focal plane and the position of the character clearly do not match, hence her body (and everything else in the background) gets out of focus. As she approaches the focal plane in the front, her image is getting sharper, indicating that her perception is becoming normal again.

In summary, the techniques of ocularization often contain the point of view shot, or borderline instances of it, but they can also abandon it completely to represent an aspect of

[99] For the relation between subjective perception and the quality of the image, see the examples of the marked vision of the machines in *The Terminator* (1984) and *Westworld* (1973). Close to the end of the latter film, we get a POV shot from an android's perspective, but the image „forgets" to present his vision appropriately. We saw earlier that the robot sees the worlds in a very low resolution, but in this scene, only the position of the camera is identical with his position, the quality of the image remains „objective" or human-like.

a character's visual perception. I highlighted three important parameters: (1) The manipulation of the distance between the camera and the object, which revealed for us that the point of view shot is not necessarily coincides with the precise physical imitation of the spatial parameters of perception. (2) The distortion of pure subjectivity can be unveiled by the orientation of onscreen gazes, which questions the origin of the offscreen sight. The difference between the observing character and the observing camera position is introduced to maintain the illusion of the totality of diegetic space or for other rhetorical reasons, without the information retrieved from the image being meaningfully different for the character and the spectator. The emphasis lies in elements of the mutually perceived sight. (3) At last, I mentioned the quality of the image and an essential element of it, the focal plane, which can signal subjective perception even without a point of view shot.

2.2.4 Auricularization

Changes in the film's audio track are often organized by completely different dynamics and segmentation than the visual one. There is no widespread expression for acoustic subjectivity similar to the one that is used for describing the visual dimension, and narratological studies are still at a very rudimentary stage in the mapping of this area.[100] Regrettably, the detailed discussion of this topic is beyond the limits and scope of this study, nevertheless I would like to raise some important issues regarding the relationship and configurations of sound and subjectivity in film.

Diegetic sounds are not organized in a successive sequence like filmic shots, the visual continuity is regularly interrupted by editing for the sake of a better intelligibility and a proper access to the desired details of the diegesis. Non-diegetic sounds can be a key component in the dramaturgy of the scenes (as a background music, it can increase the tension), therefore it can have a highlighted role in the characterization of an event or character, but it is not representing a sensible (acoustic) aspect of the diegesis. However, diegetic sounds can play a crucial role in the establishment of the spatiotemporal unit of a scene made up of individual shots.[101]

[100] A promising development in post-classical narratology is the publication of the book *Audionarratology* (2016), which is a collection of essays focused on the relation of music and storytelling. It discusses many genres and platforms where narrativity and music interrelates, but tellingly, none of the arcticles deal with the mechanisms of sound in film and its impact on narrative articulation.
[101] See: Füzi – Török (2006): 2.3. The space creating effect of sound.

The most important aspect of this process is related to the distinction between off-screen and on-screen sources of sound.[102] A popular strategy in the creation of the scenic unit is the dissociation of the boundaries of diegetic sound-units and cuts. It is a frequent technique to complete the visual cut with the continuity of diegetic sound in a way that in the first shot, we see the source of the sound (on-screen sound), but in the second, we do not (off-screen sound). Typical examples are the dialogues in which the first shot shows a talking character, and the next one shows the listener while we still hear the first character's voice.

My starting point is Füzi and Török's statement that „what we perceive as the unit of sound and body in the film (the adjective „audiovisual" also refers to this) is actually the result of the functioning and often posterior assembling of two different media and apparatus (the camera and the microphone)." (2006) The „point of hearing" (POH) is an even more artificially determined factor than the POV. It is a lot harder to talk about the presence or absence of auricularization, since sounds and hearing is related to film and space in a completely different way than sight, which always has a singled-out point, therefore sharper boundaries and more clear differences in quality. (There are, of course, exceptions, if we think about dark, blurry or distant images.) The representation of simultaneous perspectives is not as frequent as the richly layered filmic soundtrack which can be compared to a shot with multiple semitransparent images layered on top of each other. In most cases, because of the dialogues which are posteriorly synchronized to the images and the great degree of manipulation of other diegetic sounds, the localization of the point in space from where the „hearing" occurs is unnecessary, because it is impossible to determine if the character's subjective perception is represented realistically from its POH, or from the position of the camera.

A good example of the separation of the positions of camera and microphone[103] can be found in *Chasing Sleep*. Every time, when Ed talks on the phone, the voice of the person on the other side of the line can be clearly heard, even if the camera is not around the protagonist. But when other characters talk on the same phone, we only hear their voices, and not the other person's. It is more disturbing, that when Ed calls the police, we hear the voice of Paul the detective as if he was present in Ed's house. Likewise, in *Sex, Lies, Videotape* (1989), only one character can be seen on the screen, but when we hear the person

[102] For the terms, see: Chion 1994, 73-80.

[103] In reality, the sound can come from multiple points of the space (and it can be a completely different space with different acoustic qualities than the one we actually see), but for the sake of simplicity, I assume a single point for the source of the sound, because the other, more technical aspects are not relevant in this example.

from the other end of the telephone line, his voice does not reflect the acoustic experience of the onscreen character, nor an external observer's. The typical „telephone voice" is missing, both characters' voices sound like if they were present in the visually represented scene.

M. Night Shyamalan frequently uses the technique to separate the location of the camera from the point where diegetic sounds are conveyed. Ocularization and auricularization can work independently, for example in the case where a distant character's hearing is represented. In a scene from *The Sixth Sense*, Cole and her mother (Toni Collette) are waiting in a traffic jam caused by an accident. The camera is at the other end of the line of cars and slowly approaches them. When it is approximately three cars away from them, Cole's mother starts to talk, and we hear her as if we are sitting in their car. The scene is strange, because the volume of her speech remains constant the whole time (technically the position of the microphone and the quality of the voice recording is fixed), while the visual distance between the „camera" and the source of the sound is continually decreasing, and by the end of the shot, the point of hearing and seeing will roughly coincide, thus the sensual situation is „naturalized".

In a scene of the director's following film, *Unbreakable* (2000), the camera is placed near a group of kids at a playground, but while their shouting is barely noticeable, we clearly hear the dialogue between the two blurry characters (David Dunn and his son) in the background. The scene acoustically accentuates the voice of the more distant figures, while visually highlights the object of their attention (the crowd).[104] While the film, through its multimediality, actualizes an unnatural viewer position with different medial focuses, the audience seldom notice the strangeness of the situation, because the concentration on narrative aspects drains their attention from this type of discrepancy. In these scenes, the distance of the characters and the camera is far greater than the proximity that the volume of their voice suggests, yet we hear them as if we were standing next to them.

The question emerges whether it can be considered as auricularization if the film highlights the acoustic perception of a character in this way? This proposition points out that most of the time we determine sound relative to the image track and assume some kind of subjectivation if the soundtrack grants us access to a sensory perception that the image track does not justify in itself. But if the quality of the sound does not clearly suggest an individual (for example distorted or supernatural) perception, then it is hard to determine the

[104] See also Bordwell – Thompson (2012, 277) about a similar shot in *Jurassic Park* (1993).

subjectivity of it. When, in the accident scene from *The Sixth Sense*, the point where we perceive sound and image finally overlap, we still cannot identify it with the boy's perception, the rest of the dialogue is witnessed (at least visually) from outside their car, leaving both characters in the frame.

In Brian de Palma's *Blow Out* (1981), Jack (John Travolta) records sounds for a movie in a park with his special shotgun microphone, when a couple spots him and comments on his suspicious activity. During the scene, viewers occupy Jack's position in the sonic space, who is capable of recording quite distant sounds if he directs his microphone towards the source. While the position of the camera changes multiple times (a medium closeup on Jack, a closeup on the end of the mic, closeups from the couple in which Jack is a distant figure), the couple's dialogue remains clearly audible. An even better example for auricularization is the mysterious sound in the next minute, which Jack records with his device, and whose source serves as the central question in the plot, therefore its „meaning" is only revealed at the end of the film.

Two compositional principles blend in the technique where a sound can be attached to a character's perception, but a certain quality of the sound does not match with this perception. In the mentioned scene of *A Beautiful Mind*, Nash hallucinates Marcee as she plays balls and jacks in the floor of his house. We hear the sound of the toy and we see the girl, because Nash hears and sees them, but the quality (volume) of their sound does not depend on Nash's proximity to the hallucination, rather on the position of the camera-microphone. The volume of the toys becomes lower when the camera is placed closer to Nash and further away from its visual source. Despite that both Nash and the viewer is being aware of the hallucinatory nature of the girl and her activities, this strategy feels more natural from the perspective of audience perception, because unlike our previous examples that subordinated the processes of perception to different rhetorical purposes, it does not break down the illusion of a physically unified, organic subject-position.

Here we can find a parallel with the visual dimension: In spite of the „unmarked", objective quality of the sound, the film authorizes the viewer to attribute the sound to a character's perception, but only by a larger narrative context, without any technical parameters that suggests the subjective nature of the sound. For the usefulness of the concept of auricularization, it is worth to expand the considered technical parameters beyond „point of hearing". It is clear by now that in contrast to the visual track (where not only the object of the image, but the position of its source can be easily deduced by its textual properties), in many cases, the qualitative aspects of sound can only be interpreted in relation to the

visual dimension. According to the strict definition of auricularization, we could only describe our example situation as Nash's internal focalization, because despite the representation of Nash's perception (illusion), the volume does not align with Nash's actual position, but adjusts to the actual location of the camera. More generally, the physical dimensions of the sound do not reflect the perception of the focalized subject, but it is projected into an objective diegetic space. But there is a textual peculiarity in the scene, which offers a solid medial base for the subjectivity of the sound: in the shot which shows Nash side-faced and his physician frontally, we cannot see the little girl, but still hear the sounds she makes. Consequently, acoustic subjectivity is signaled by the tension between the visual and audio tracks.

Michel Chion points out another critical issue of acoustic subjectivity: „[W]hat can we say about the so-called internal voice of a character who can be seen in the image—the voices of his conscience, of his memory, of his imaginings and fantasies?" (1994, 74) He is struggling to place this type of sounds in his model where he distinguishes onscreen, offscreen and nondiegetic types, inasmuch this sound is not present in the space of the diegesis, but it can be attached to a character; it is not a purely discursive element, and its source (the character) is visible in a certain sense, but from another perspective it is not (as it is a result of a mental activity). He tries to define them as „subjective internal sounds" (1994, 76), which remains somewhat inexpressive regarding his earlier criteria. This is why I propose to describe auricularization together with the focalization of the narrative situation, where the former refers to the technical properties of the sound and its relation to the represented space and the characters, and the latter refers properties that can only be understood in a narrative context, such as the ontological status of the sounds.

No visual analogue has the same intensity and dramatic effect in film narratives as nondiegetic background music and sound effects which often has a great role in the expression of subjective contents. In a scene of *The Innocents*, Miss Giddens cuts the roses in the garden of the estate when all environmental sounds – the singing of Flora, bird chirping – fall silent. Giddens is blinded by a strong flickering light (the effect can be seen both in a POV shot of the governess and a closeup shot of her face). At this moment, a figure appears on the tower of the mansion, who can be only seen in shots ocularized by Giddens. The status of the whirring sound that can be heard simultaneously with the appearance of the sharp light is also ambiguous. The question in not simply if the sound is objectively present in the story or only Miss Giddens imagines it, but if it is a diegetic effect at all. Is it a realistic representation of the woman's perception? Is it auricularization or is it an acoustic

representation of an otherwise intangible physiological state for dramatic purposes? (A similar question emerges in relation to the sharp light, because we do not know if it is a visualization of a mental state or a genuinely visual perception.) The vision ends suddenly: Giddens drops the scissors and the rose she held in her hands to the birdbath filled with water, and as if this event breaks the spell on her, it restores her perception of the external world. The light vanishes and the sonic space of the garden becomes accessible again. Auricularization – if any – was achieved by the exclusion of the sounds of the outside world.

There is a quite interesting relationship between subjective experiences and sounds in Roman Polanski's psycho-thriller, *Repulsion* (1965). Carol (Catherine Deneuve), a mentally instable young woman locks herself in an apartment and imagines that an unknown man breaks into her room and rapes her. While the visual dimension confirms the presence of the man, its status as a fantasy is inferred by the single sound effect that can be heard during the scene. The ticking of the clock – that is actually present in Carol's room – is amplified to an irrational degree during the presentation of the traumatic events, therefore according to the most plausible interpretation, her hallucination only encompasses a visual (and supposedly sensual) aspect, but the sound represents the objective, external auditory perceptions of her. The distorted form of a real acoustic perception mixes with a subjective, but non-ocularized vision which nevertheless suggests an internal depth focalization of Carol.

2.2.5 Other Types of Textual Focalizations

Extradiegetic sound and music can also express certain aspects of subjectivity, but describing them as „nondiegetic" means that they are not a representation of a character's actual perception, but more often an expression of emotional or mental states. Therefore, I base my reading of *Másnap*'s snail scene (B1 – B7) on the assumption that ocularization is not paired with auricularization, no matter how tight is the link between the protagonist and the nondiegetic sounds. Despite all the similarities with the light and buzz in *The Innocents*, in this case, it is not ambiguous at all, whether the sounds are a representation of his sensory perception, because they only exist at a discursive level. Extradiegetic sounds are so loud, that they almost completely extrude the environmental soundscape: we can hear a chant accompanied by rattling noises on the top of a constant whir and a barely audible ticking of a clock. This dense wall of noise is broken by the aggressive sound of the truck's engine, and finally terminated by its honking, signifying the end of the immersion in subjectivity

and the return to the spacetime of the diegesis, snapping out the Traveller from his literal trans-state. As the truck moves away and its sound fades, the ominous soundtrack also disappears. When the camera arrives to the broken snailshell, the only thing that can be heard is the chirping of the birds. This also confirms the connection between the nondiegetic sounds and character subjectivity. The noises and the music do not represent what he actually hears, but characterizes his mental state and the situation. They do not describe his character in general, but illustrate what he experienced during the sequence. We can see how problematic is the concept of „auricularization", especially when we want to characterize a non-acoustic experience which is represented by sound, and how differently it is articulated, overarching the boundaries of visual editing. This acoustic „subjectivity" is maintained almost throughout the whole sequence as a continuous flow, while the visual track was segmented by shots.

It is important to note that the discussed concepts of perceptional focalization were generally homogeneous with regard to their input (the represented senses) and output (the means of representation) medium. Even distorted, „mental" experiences were distinguishable as visible or audible perceptions. In ocularization, the position, quality and object of vision are represented by visual signs, and auricularization is the representation of acoustic stimuli by audible signs. But this symmetry does not always hold, moreover, especially exciting techniques of textual focalization can be found in cases (assuming that they are not representational clichés) where a film tries to convey a non-audiovisual experience with the utilization of sounds and images. The fast editing, extreme closeup shots, intensive colors and amplified micro-sounds in *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* (2006) is an acknowledgeable attempt to illustrate unpleasant smells, but the representation of time-perception may belong here as well.[105] The issue of the representation of mental processes generally conceptualized by the metaphors of sound and visuality (such as the internal monologue, visible fantasies or daydreaming) is much more problematic. Ocularization and auricularization primarily refer to the input media of perception, but they were thematized

[105] Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958) is the archetypic example of representing the sensation of dizziness and agoraphobia, because this was the first film where cinematographer Irmin Roberts used the famous „dolly zoom" or „vertigo effect". It basically means when the camera zooms in to the object in the foreground, and simultaneously dollies away from it, thus the framing of the object approximately stays the same, but the perspective distorts, which becomes apparent in the changing distance between foreground and background and their relative proportions. Since then, the technique can be found in a wide range of films, representing completely different experiences: Stephen Spielberg used it in *Jaws* (1975) to express a shocking recognition of a shark attack in a beach, Sam Raimi used it in his western, *The Quick and the Dead* (1995), to express the concentration of the duelists. In *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001), it signifies Frodo's ominous intuition about the approach of the Nazgûls. (See this montage video on the history of the technique: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIpMtL68G8w, 2018-01-22)

as distinct theoretical concepts, because symmetrically, film also has the same two medial channels as an output, therefore the textual focalization of these two types of stimuli is the most widely used and easily describable option in a film. To maintain the logic of the established system, I find it expedient to only call ocularization and auricularization those perceptional contents that are perceived as visual or acoustic stimuli by characters, and refer to other types of physical or mental perceptions by a distinct category. However, these strategies are closer to the semantic categories of narrative focalization, because of the medial translation, they need to be evaluated in their narrative context. Film does not have „natural" or „iconic" tools to directly display them, so if there are some conventional meanings attached to representational techniques, individual films can modify this to a great extent, or, a certain type of mental or medium-dependent experience can be expressed with a wide array of devices. Therefore, techniques in this heterogenous group should be described as rhetorical strategies of individual films. (For example, there is no widespread technique/form to represent the sensation of pain.) A categorical distinction can be made between physical perception (smelling, tasting, tactile/haptic impressions, physical pain, temperature, force and weight sensations, sickness, drunkness, etc.) and purely mental processes (joy, fear, trauma, etc., and maybe the hardly classifiable time-perception), also signaling the means of representation. Even more than with the visual and acoustic types, distinguishing between „external" and „internal" forms of these rare and very specific representations is unnecessary, because they only become interesting if they are represented „internally", from within the subject.

3. Mediation

After the detailed description of different forms of perspectivation, I would like to turn from the questions of subjectivation to the possibly more complex process of narration and lay down some general principles about the concept of the narrator. In order to examine the mechanisms of character-narration in fiction film, I want to outline a theoretical background both about narrative representation and cinematic narration.

In the first part (3.1), I will focus on the most controversial elements in the models of narration (not just in film) from a rhetorical point of view: the structural position, fictionality (3.1.1) and identity (3.1.2) of the (film) narrator, (3.1.3) the question of seriousness of fiction (speech act theories), (3.1.4) its difference from the author and the distinct senses of the „narrative voice" will be my main topics. The nature of „the narratorial voice" will be a recurring issue throughout my study of narrative agency. Before I turn my attention to film, in this chapter I touch on several areas of confusion which largely influenced theoretical discourses and facilitated the dominance of pan-narrator theories today. I argue that it is optional for a fictional narrative to have a narrator who is distinct for the author, as I understand the concept as a function, where the narrator is either the (nonfictional) author (creating a narrative representation) or a fictional character (a represented narration created by the author), with no third option.[106] A narrator can either create a non-fictional or a fictional discourse and the concept of its „voice" can be interpreted in several ways. I want to understand fiction as a certain mode of narrative discourse (as a serious and special type of illocutionary, rhetorical act) in order to eliminate the fictional narrator as a structural necessity and regard it as an optional resource for the author. This is necessary to make the fundamental distinction between perspectivation and character-narration (represented act of narration) and justify my narrowed-down scope of unreliable narration by excluding cases of the representation of distorted character perspectives/perception.

In the second part (3.2) I turn my attention to the questions of the relationship between narrative representation and its medium to illuminate (from a rhetorical standpoint) how narrative representation works in cinema. Instead of purely enumerating its differences with verbal (oral and written) forms, or regard language as the essential vehicle for

[106] Besides Walsh (1997, 2007), Nielsen (2004) also argues in favor of the possibility of an "impersonal voice" in fiction, which does not necessitates the establishment of a fictional narrator character. He also argues in favor of the optional narrator thesis from the perspective of Genette's focalization categories. (Nielsen 2013)

narrativity,[107] I try to nuance their relationship based on Walsh's reasoning, and argue that both verbal language and audiovisuality are forms of expression (*codes*) through which a more fundamental mode of cognition, *narrative conceptuality* can be accessed. In contrast with Walsh, who claims that in a certain sense, narrative is always medium-dependent as long as we consider mental representation as a medium, I argue that external media and mental representations of narrative concepts should be distinguished for an easier understanding of the difference between narrative sense-making and narrative representation. I emphasize that the seemingly definitive, determinant and dominant nature of verbal narrative actually lies in its historical, cultural and artistic prevalence opposed to the relative novelty and artificiality of the institution of cinema. But this apparently one-sided and hierarchical relationship between verbal and audiovisual storytelling can be seen in an entirely different light if we consider *dreaming*, one of our most fundamental and distinctive cognitive abilities, as a mode of narrative sensemaking.[108] I compare several narratological approaches to examine the concept of medium (Rimmon Kenan [1989], Ryan [2014a, 2014b] and Walsh [2007]) and its relationship to narrativity to identify the assertive nature of linguistic expression as its prime difference from the audiovisual form and to introduce the concepts of *explicit* and *implicit narrative representation*, to contrast different media's distinct attitudes toward narrativity.

3.1 The Mediator: Film and Narrator[109]

3.1.1 Against Pan-narrator Theories

Following Richard Walsh (1997, 2007), Gregory Currie (2010), Jan Alber (2010), Tilmann Köppe and Jan Stühring (2011) I want to argue that from a rhetorical perspective, in any fictional narrative, the presence of a *fictional narrator* is not a structural necessity but an optional feature of representation, only a possible resource for the creator(s).[110] First I outline

[107] Let alone the idea which identifies language with narrativity, as language is both wider than narrative sense making and also only a particular type of expression.
[108] Unfortunately, as this study is not focusing on the topic of dreaming and narrativity, for further elaboration, see: Walsh (2010c)
[109] For my understanding of intentionalism, see: Phelan 1989, Carroll 1990, Levinson 1996 (especially the chapter: Intention and Interpretation in Literature) and Alber 2010.
[110] Tobias Klauk's formulation of the claim is clear enough to quote here: „A fictional text contains a fictional narrator if and only if it authorizes readers to imagine a fictional character who tells (parts of) the story. Some stories feature such narrators, some don't and some have them only for parts of the text." (Klauk 2015, 206)

some relevant theories by the above-mentioned scholars and then I raise some problems for them which arise in the medium of film. These problems do not arise, because in film, the utilization of a narrator or a narrative voice is optional, while in verbal/textual/literary fiction it is inevitable. I argue that the rhetorial resource of a fictional narrator is a mere possibility in both.

Köppe and Stühring point out two major types of theoretical commitments in narratology: pan-narrator theories[111] and optional narrator theories. „Pan-narrator theories (PN) maintain that all fictional narratives have a fictional narrator that is to be distinguished from its author. In addition, proponents of PN typically hold that fictional narrators can be 'implied,' 'effaced,' 'covert' or the like." (59) On the other hand, „[o]ptional-narrator theories (ON) deny that all fictional narratives have a fictional narrator. According to ON, a fictional narrative without a fictional narrator is possible, and there is no theoretical need to postulate the existence of a fictional narrator in every fictional narration." (59)[112] There is another significant approach to the same issue, which Sylvie Patron describes as the following: „The question divides ›communicational‹ theories of narrative, according to which communication between a real or fictional narrator and a narratee is constitutive of the definition of narrative, from ›non-communicational theories‹, also termed ›poetic‹ theories of fictional narrative, which consider that fictional narrative, or a certain type of fictional narrative, and communication are mutually exclusive categories." (2010, 253) While both the optional-pan debate and the communicational debate seem to cover the whole range of theoretical spectrum where someone could stand regarding the nature of narrators, and beyond their dichotomies there cannot be logically a third standpoint, Köppe and Stühring never questions the fact (which is fundamental for them) that all narratives are the product of intentional acts of communication. Therefore, I want to point out that they do not establish the same division. Patron continues: „According to these [poetic] theories, fictional narrative is not, or is not always, an act of communication. To the question »who speaks?«, they reply that, in certain fictional narratives, nobody speaks – or more precisely, the question is not asked since it is not pertinent. These theories also aim to rehabilitate the function of the author as creator of the fictional narrative." (253-254) Register that although these distinctions would roughly divide a defined set of fictional narratives to similar groups (whether there is a fictional narrator in the text or not), they are not operating at the same

[111] For the significance of PN in the description of unreliable narration, see: Klauk 2011, 40-42.
[112] In the history of this debate, Käte Hamburger (1973) questioned the structural necessity of the narrator on philosophical, while Ann Banfield (1982) did it in linguistic grounds.

level, so their claims are not identical. According to Köppe and Stühring, optional-narrator theories are superior than pan-narrator theories, therefore their claim is that a *fictional* narrator is not necessary in each fictional narrative. According to Patron, poetic theories are superior than communicational ones, therefore her claims are: 1) there is not necessarily a narrator in each fictional narrative, 2) not all fictional narrative is communicational. I want to argue in favor of ON, which is also Patron's first point, but I cannot accept the second assumption she mentions. The act of narrative representation can be non-communicational,[113] but only in the case where narrative representation is just narrative meaning-making. At a primary level, narrative representation as a *mental construction* inside one's mind[114] always exists before *communication* if we understand this latter concept as one that requires two agents: a sender and a receiver. This representation can be verbalized (or more broadly: realized by an external medium), and still can be just an „articulation" whose purpose is to make narrative sense of experiential data. But when it is originating from the authorial-narrator and directed to a recipient, then it is an act of communication, and this is especially the case in the creation of fiction. Inside fiction, the mentioned non-communicational narrative discourse can be represented, but that does not make the whole fiction non-communicational.

While negotiating with the issue of narrators, I parallelly have to account for a narrative feature that is unavoidable to discuss, because most theories are heavily rely on its various senses: this feature is the fictionality of the work, because „a plausible theory of fictional narrators depends on a theory of fiction". (Köppe – Stühring 60) Walsh claims that „the concept has only been put to the most cursory use outside the fictional context because the narrator, thus understood, functions primarily to establish a representational frame within which the narrative discourse may be read as report rather than invention." (496)

Köppe and Stühring's definition of fiction is twofold, and tries to incorporate rhetorical as well as constructivist approaches (which generates a pragmatic position): „According to the Institutional Theory of Fiction (ITF), a text is fictional, if and only if it is intended to be approached in accordance with the rules and conventions of the institution of fiction, or if readers have agreed upon treating the text in accordance with these rules and

[113] Patron herself acknowledges this in a footnote: „non-communicational theories are really theories of optional fictional communication" (253) where it seems she simply replaces „narration" with „communication".

[114] This is why Richard Walsh uses the term „articulation", instead of „communication", to describe the act of narrative representation, because the latter term „has two questionable implications: the first is that narrative is intrinsically social — but may it not be private, especially if its scope includes mental activity?" (Walsh 2010b)

conventions independently of authorial intentions." (60) Their point is that narrative texts have no formal attributes, by which one can determine their status as fictional or nonfictional. Instead, they determine two rules which should be followed in order to consider a work as fictional: „Rule 1 (R1): Readers of fictions are invited to engage in an imaginative activity based on the sentences of the text." (60) „Rule 2 (R2): Readers of fiction are neither justified, solely on the basis of the fiction, in regarding as true what they are authorized to imagine, nor are they justified, solely on the basis of the fiction, in ascribing any such beliefs to the author of the work." (61) That is, we are not justified to believe that the events described by the sentences of *David Copperfield* (their example) are true, or Dickens intended them to be truthful. This general statement does not mean that a fictional narrative cannot contain assertions that are true. For example, if we read or it is inferred that „Budapest is the capital of Hungary" in a contemporary novel, we take it as true and assume that the author also knew that it is true, because we have an external knowledge of the world to which these proper names refer to, and not solely on the basis of the sentence in the fiction.

Köppe and Stühring quotes the opening passage from Dickens' novel: „Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show. To begin my life with the beginning of my life, I record that I was born (as I have been informed and believe) on a Friday, at twelve o'clock at night." (Dickens 2004,13) They say that in this case, it is not only that the reader is authorized to imagine a particular state of things, but „[r]eaders of these sentences are invited to imagine that a person reports and comments on his birth. These imaginings are both guided and authorized by the work." (60) Now consider the following example from Patrick Süskind's novel, *Perfume*: „In eighteen century France there lived a man who was one of the most gifted and abominable personages in an era that knew no lack of gifted and abominable personages. His story will be told here." (Süskind 2006,8) In my understanding *David Copperfield* is an example of character-narration, and *Perfume* is in the mode of authorial narration. Köppe's and Stühring's stance is clear on the subject: „The concept of a [fictional] narrator, that is to say, is not part of the *explanans* of the concept of fiction." They formulate the difference between my two examples as follows: „it is possible that a particular text generates the fictional truth that a narrator reports certain things. […] Other novels, however, do not generate fictional truths about someone reporting (or narrating, for that matter) anything." (61) I agree with Gregory Currie, who argues that „[t]he postulation of an internal narrator is neither a general necessity nor the default option; it is something that calls for

evidence." (2010, 69)[115] Walsh based his insight on a similar thought when he establishes a strict dichotomy in the matter: „author of a fiction can adopt one of two strategies: to narrate a representation or to represent a narration. […] »Representation« is a matter of (fictional) information in »to narrate a representation«, but a matter of (discursive) imitation in »to represent a narration.«" (1997, 505)

Köppe and Stühring enumerate a number of key arguments against pan-narrator theories in the form of a refutation of arguments of these theories. I will go through the ones which I consider to be important for the understanding of the agency behind narrative representation in cinema.

The „analytic argument" claims that by definition, there must be a narrator in every narrative, because a narratorless narration is meaningless. (see: Chatman 1990, 4) PN, as Köppe and Stühring explicated it, is more specific in this sense, and claims that every fictional narrative must have a *fictional* narrator. „The Analytic Argument so far only establishes that there is a narrator and not that there is a fictional narrator." (2010, 63), therefore the argument is not incorrect, it just does not confirm PN. How can these two seemingly contradictory claims that „there is a narrator for every narrative and […] to deny that there is a fictional narrator for every fictional narrative" (2010, 63) be reconciled? In fact, there is no real conflict between the two assertions, Köppe and Stühring suspects that the source of the tension is an improper usage of the notion of narrator, because it „is commonly understood as meaning the same as 'fictional narrator'" (2010, 63), but in the rhetorical school of thought, the narrator is not an autonomous and distinct ontological position, but a function, that can be filled by the author, therefore it is not strange „for a non-fictional narrator to narrate a fictional narrative." (64) Note that this view is completely against the structuralist tradition and Genette's claims when he wrote that the identification of author and narrator „is perhaps legitimate in the case of a historical narrative or a real autobiography, but not when we are dealing with a narrative of fiction." (1980, 213-214) and later that „the main point of *Narrative Discourse*, beginning with its title, reflects the assumption that there is an enunciating instance—the narrating—with its narrator and its

[115] According to Currie, a proper narrator is always also an author of the discourse, and he makes a distinction between internal and external narrators: „Bearing in mind an earlier distinction, we can say that Watson is the internal author/narrator and Doyle the external author/narrator. If Doyle had represented himself as an agent within the stories, as someone who knew Holmes and told of his adventures, and thus had told a fictional story partly about himself, he would thereby be an internal and an external author/narrator." (2010, 67) Although, it becomes clear from other passages that Currie does not distinguish nonfictional and fictional author-narrators, but hetero and homodiegetic ones (e.g. narrators who produce a factual or a fictional discourse) with these terms. (Accordingly, the author becomes an internal narrator in nonfiction – 2010, 69)

narratee, fictive or not, represented or not, silent or chatty, but always present in what is indeed for me, I fear, an act of communication" (1988, 101)."

According to the „argument from creation […] [i]t might be claimed that at least some narrators are indispensable for the fiction because it is their voice that creates the fiction in the first place. […] Thus, the claim that the fictional narrator creates the world of the fiction entails that the fictional narrator is causally efficacious in our world. The latter, however, is wildly implausible. No fictional narrator can create (or alter) a real text." (Köppe and Stühring 2010, 67-68)[116] Although perfectly logical, it seems to me that this argument is not really relevant in fictional context, because its assumption is not that widespread than of its exact opposite, where the fictional narrator is deprived of her creative powers and functions as a mere interpreter of her reality. To illustrate this opinion, Walsh quotes (499) a representative statement from Genette: „The narrator of *Père Goriot* 'is' not Balzac […] even if here and there he expresses Balzac's opinions, for this author-narrator is someone who *'knows'* the Vauquer boardinghouse, its landlady and its lodgers, whereas all Balzac himself does is *imagine* them" (1980, 214, my emphasis) We can call this „the argument from knowledge"[117] which assumes that the creator of the fiction is the author, and all the narrator does is *report* its events, therefore Genette's argument does not account for the fictionality of the text, but simply dismisses it with the introduction of a fictional agent. As Walsh has put it, here, „[t]he function of the narrator is to allow the narrative to be read as something known rather than something imagined, something reported as fact rather than something told as fiction." (1997, 499)

Köppe's and Stühring's third argument is in close connection with Walsh's former observations about genettian thought: „The Ontological Gap Argument claims that only fictional narrators can have access to fictional worlds." (2010, 64) and „only a fictional person (a fictional narrator) can tell real-life persons (readers) about the goings-on in fictional worlds." (2010, 65) This claim begs the question about the flawed logic of its two statements: if real persons do not have access to a „fictional world" and fictional persons,

[116] Gregory Currie argues that the creation of a narrative is inseparable from the telling: „I say that, for virtually all cases of narrative we are likely to come across, there is no distinction that should or can be made between authors and narrators, for there is no distinction to be made between narrative-making and narrative-telling. Recall the point that narratives are communicative artefacts: things made in such a way as to communicate, and not merely to represent, their stories. True, someone might write a story which someone else reads out, or writes down, or otherwise assists in making available to an audience; that is not the author/narrator distinction as it functions in discussions of narrative." (2010, 65-66)

[117] This widespread argument also forms the basis for many PN models in film narratology: „[O]nly the narrator can produce truth functional discourse within what is manifestly a fictional construct. In other words, within the overall narrative contract in which a fiction is related to an addressee, there is another level in which a narrator tells the truth about the fictional world." (Burgoyne 1990, 6)

how come a fictional person can communicate with real readers? Ontological approaches often result in these kind of paradoxes or unanswerable philosophical questions that do not bring us closer to the understanding of how the creation and reception of fiction works.

Köppe and Stühring aptly summarize the inherent tautology lurking in PN: „Proponents of PN often, and always mistakenly, think that we need the author – narrator distinction to account for the 'distinction of fiction'; that is, that we need the distinction in order to explain what differentiates fictional from non-fictional discourse." (2010, 67) The most illustrative example of this claim is in the definition part of the article of „Fictional vs. Factual Narration" in *the living handbook of narratology*: „in factual narrative author and narrator are the same person whereas in fictional narrative the narrator (who is part of the fictional world) differs from the author (who is part of the world we are living in)." (Schaeffer 2013, 1)[118] „This argument, however, cannot be right, since the very notion of a fictional narrator can only be explained on the basis of a theory of fiction. The Distinction of Fiction Argument simply gets the order of explanation wrong, and in fact it faces a circularity problem." (2010, 67)

„The Argument from Mediation" claims that since every fictional narration „display some sort of mediation", and the only „mediating voice" is of the narrator's, „all fictional narratives have a fictional narrator." (2010, 69) But there is a difference between „mediation" („narrating a representation") as a rhetorical process and the „display of mediation", which is the product of a recursive representational act, and a broader variant of what Walsh formulated as „representing a narration." While the former is essential, the latter is optional in narrative texts. Although there are several ways we can understand mediation, Köppe and Stühring concentrates on a highly foregrounded form of it in linguistic media, and ask the question if explicit commentary or evaluation of the facts of the fiction necessitates the presence of a fictional narrator who would be the conceptual origin of such reflective passages. They establish that there is no general answer of „who does the evaluating", it is always dependent on the individual text, and „a matter of interpretation" (2010, 71), therefore the presence of a narrator remains contingent: „every passage of evaluative telling confronts us with a number of possibilities: the evaluating could be done by some fictional agent, e.g. the fictional narrator, or a certain fictional character, etc. Alternatively, the evaluating might be understood as an invitation for the reader to

[118] Schaeffer adds: „But this […] definition is better seen as a consequence of the pragmatic definition of fiction", which contains the following distinction: „factual narrative advances *claims* of referential truthfulness whereas fictional narrative advances no such claims." (Schaeffer 2013, 1)

imaginatively evaluate a certain fictional state of affairs in a particular way, or the evaluating might be done by the author. In this case, the evaluating would not be done by some fictional agent." (2010, 72) Consider the following passage from *Perfume*: „it was clear as day that when a simple soul like that wet nurse maintained that she had spotted a devilish spirit, the devil himself could not possibly have a hand in it. The very fact that she thought she had spotted him was certain proof that there was nothing devilish to be found, for the devil would certainly never be stupid enough to let himself be unmasked by the wet nurse Jeanne Bussie." (Süskind, 19) These are the words of the authorial-narrator of the novel, but clearly reflect the thoughts of a character called Father Terrier of whom the narrator stated earlier that „[w]hat he most vigorously did combat, however, were the superstitious notions of the simple folk" (2010, 18), therefore the first two sentences can be regarded as free-indirect discourse. These evaluative sentences are masked as authorial predications, unmarked by any grammatical or discursive signs of subjectivity (such as: „he thought", or „the priest wandered") and are only attributable to a character by their semiotic context. Moreover, it is a highly ironic passage, considering that the devilish baby in question, the protagonist of the novel becomes a narcissistic serial killer feared by the whole city of Grasse. The people's dread is verbalized in another tricky passage of free-indirect speech in chapter 47: „Apparently he possessed supernatural powers. He was most certainly in league with the devil, if he was not the devil himself." (Süskind, 199) The story would be incoherent if these passages from the beginning and end had institutional powers, as fictional assertions which create fictional truths. But let's assume they express the reflections and evaluations of a „narrator" who also reports the events of the story. Is this kind of use of language alone sufficient to create a fictional agent? If it is, and a fictional entity is created, how is it distinguishable from a fictional character? To answer these questions, I would like to analyze how rhetorical theory interprets narrative levels and the nature of fictionality.

3.1.2 The Identity of The Narrator

In my understanding, most of the problems in pan-narrator theories emerge as a consequence of the view that every fiction is understood as a distinct ontological realm (a „world") instead of seeing them as rhetorical acts, thus most of their concern is to resolve the seemingly paradoxical transgression of the ontological barrier by the process which they term „mediation" or „report." After we established that „there is no need, theoretical or pragmatic, to postulate a fictional narrator for every work of narrative fiction" (Köppe – Stühring 74),

we must ask the question whether Walsh is right in assuming that the narrator is not different than any other sentient fictional entity known as a character. A variant of the analytic argument can be found in the work of Monica Fludernik, who acknowledges the „covert" nature of some narrators, but nonetheless assumes their presence as a necessity: „In texts that do not display linguistic markers signaling the presence of a speaker (I, deictic elements, expressive markers, stylistic foregrounding), the presence of a narrator is merely implicit, 'covert.' Here, according to my own proposals, the insistence on the presence of a speaker constitutes an interpretative move, in which the reader concludes *from the presence of* a *narrative discourse* that *someone must be narrating* the story and that therefore there must be a hidden narrator (or narrative voice) in the text." (Fludernik 1996, 622, my emphasis)[119] A telltale sign in this type of thinking that Fludernik does not specify or pay particular attention to the fictionality of this „voice", because if she did, it would bring to light some serious issues. It can be deduced that she excludes the author as the source of this discourse, otherwise she would not use the adjective „hidden", and for the same reason, also the fictional narrator-character whose „voice" is always explicit. What is left is an abstract theoretical concept, of which Walsh (1997) formulated his reservations as follows:

> „to treat a represented instance of narration as ontologically prior to the language doing the representing is to press the logic of representation beyond representation itself and make the subordinate term superordinate, that is, to assert a paradox in the name of logic. Yet this assertion is exactly what the idea of covert narration demands: Even when the representation of a narrator is not sustained, the whole discourse is interpreted as a unified narrating instance because the narrator, a local representational *issue* of the language, is translated into its global, literal *source*." (507)

Walsh examines the genettian categories of narrators in order to show that all of them can be described either as a character, or the author. Four categories are established along two conceptual axes: „between *homodiegetic* and *heterodiegetic* narrators (a matter of person; that is, in place of the common distinction between first- and third-person narrators, a more

[119] Fludernik is much more permissive about the assumption of a „narrator persona": „when one has clear linguistic signs of a speaker's (writer's) "I" and "his"/"her" subjective deictic center" (Fludernik 2010, 123), but she makes clear that she rejects „the obligatory narrator proposition because I need to see linguistic evidence for a speaker in the text and do not want to hypostasize the existence of a narrator for texts in which there are no such evidential markers." (2010, 124)

exact contrast between involvement and noninvolvement in the story), and between *intradiegetic* and *extradiegetic* narrators (a matter of level; that is, the distinction between a narrator who narrates within a larger, framing narrative, and one whose narration itself constitutes the primary narrative)." (1997, 497)[120] With the first distinction, it seems Genette only describes the possible involvement of the narrator in his own discourse as a character: „the narrator absent from the story" or „the narrator present as a character in the story he tells" (1980, 244),[121] and he never clears the relationship between these narrator types and the fictionality of their discourse, but he incriminatingly cites the examples of Homer and Flaubert (the authors of fictions) as heterodiegetic narrators, and fictional characters who tell about their own lives from *Gil Blas* and *Wuthering Heights* as homodiegetic ones.

For most narrative theorists after Genette, these two expressions were utilized in their models to describe the nature of narrators, usually highlighting the ontological relationship between the agent and his story: „narrative discourse recognizes two different narrative beings moving under the same name: one, the heterodiegetic narrator, inhabits only discourse time and space; another, the homodiegetic or character narrator, also speaks from discourse time and space but previously inhabited story time and space." (Chatman 1990, 145)[122] In fact, these accounts are closer to Genette's other categorical division between extradiegetic and intradiegetic narrators which refer to the difference between the narrative agent of the primary discourse and the optional („embedded") discourses framed by the former. In mainstream post-genettian narratology, homodiegetic narrators are interpreted as being separated from their discourse and themselves as characters only by time (this is the distinction between discourse and story time), while their heterodiegetic counterparts exist in a different plane of reality.

Even Walsh fails to clearly elucidate the important fact that in this sense, homodiegetic narration (which is derived from Genette's extradiegetic category) is just

[120] The second pair of narrators are also known as „framing" and „embedded" types. (Kozloff 1988, 32)

[121] Strictly speaking, the adjectives „homo-„ and „heterodiegetic" say nothing about the structural position or properties of a narrator itself. The same narrator can be homodiegetic in relation to one discourse (when he was involved as a character) and heterodiegetic to another.

[122] The problem with Chatman's structuralist model that it does not pay enough attention to the fundamental distinction between a nonfictional and a fictional agent of narration, or the differences between the act of narrative representation and represented acts of narration. Chatman's inaccurate identification of two concepts seems to be widespread in narrative theory: the set of character-narrators and homodiegetic narrators are not necessarily the same, because this category only defines the modality of the discourse, the relationship between narrator and her chosen discourse (as fictional, factual, or a mixed category, etc.) If he tells a story as an (institutionalized) truth-discourse, he becomes a homodiegetic narrator, if he tells a fictional story, he is a heterodiegetic character-narrator (this is what Genette calls the „heterodiegetic-intradiegetic" type – 1988, 128).

another word for conveying nonfiction, and heterodiegetic narration signifies the act of representing a fictional discourse. (Note that it is not just a difference between colloquial and academic use of language: these categories are rarely used to describe an author of a novel, but almost exclusively used to refer to fictional narrators[123], or utilized within models which hypothesize fictional narrators for every discourse.)

With the combination of the parameters of level and involvement, Genette gets four classes of narrators (1988, 128) of which Walsh shows that they are either a fictional character or the author: „The two intradiegetic classes are relatively straightforward. These narrators are simply characters, within a narrative, who relate a story in which (respectively) they are and are not themselves involved." (1997, 497) The extradiegetic categories are much more challenging. Walsh sees the „extradiegetic narrator" as a categorical mistake: „In what sense, then, is the extradiegetic a diegetic level?" and draws attention to the inherent inconsistency lurking in Genette's formulation, who „requires it to be such, since the primary narrating instance may be fictional, and so represented—and he insists anyway upon an irreducible distinction between the narrating instance and the authorial »literary instance« (229); but he also requires it not to be diegetic, since the primary narrating instance may be addressed to »you and me« (229)." (Walsh 2007, 90) We can observe how Genette positions this agent outside the diegesis, but inside fiction: „Gil Blas is an extradiegetic narrator because, albeit fictitious, he is included (*as narrator*) in no diegesis but is on an exactly equal footing with the extradiegetic (real) public; but since he tells his own story, he is at the same time a homodiegetic narrator." (1988, 84)[124] Genette says that a figure like Blas (as a narrator) cannot be a character, because he is „off-diegesis" (1988, 85), although he is a homodiegetic narrator and identified with a character in the diegesis. „The relations of person freely cut across the relations of level, with no effect on their functioning." (1988, 85) I share the claim with rhetorical theory that he is only „extradiegetic" from the perspective of *his own* discourse, which is, for Genette, the „primary discourse" of the work. What really bothers him and many others in a novel like *Gil Blas* is the fact that a character is only established by his own discourse, through his own words, with no manifest authorial

[123] An inherent contradiction in Genette's standpoint that he acknowledges the existence of „extradiegetic narrators" (moreover, he created the category) who are not part of the world they describe (a character can tell a fictional story and becomes an author/narrator), but he subscribes to a variant of PM, and insists to a notion of a covert narrator in fiction, who is not „extrafictional", because of the need of an agent that „knows" or „reports" and not „imagines" things.

[124] Lesage's novel begins like this: „My father, Blas of Santillane, after having borne arms for a long time in the Spanish service, retired to his native place." (2009, 22)

voice framing it.[125] He creates this extradiegetic, but intrafictional position because it seems impossible for a fictional character to create the diegesis he lives in. It was no accident I used the term „voice", because as I see the issue, it mainly concerns the diverse meanings of this concept, which I will explicate in detail later. But it can be already stated that a character's narrative-producing-voice is conceptually quite different than the real „primary discourse" of Lesage, whose „voice" de facto creates the character's as an object of representation, and as a major element of the fictional narrative. It is logical to draw the conclusion that „[e]xtradiegetic homodiegetic narrators are indeed characters, and if there is any meaninglessness lurking in that formulation, it can be located in the concept of the extradiegetic itself. Narrators are always outside the frame of the stories they tell: »Extradiegetic« appears to have the additional force of placing the narrator outside representation. But if the narrator is fictional, where would that be?" (Walsh 1997, 498) For Walsh, a narrator outside diegesis is outside representation, therefore outside fiction and can only be understood as the author, but this is only the case in the last type: the extradiegetic heterodiegetic narrator. This is the type of discourse where the narrator is not characterized and cannot be identified with represented characters, and someone – I should add – who tells a story as fiction. Walsh claims that „the one irreducible fact underlying the impulse to attribute such narratives to a [fictional] narrator is that these narratives are fictional." (498)

Walsh's aim is not to submit himself to Genette's system, but to illustrate that classical narratology's need for these distinctions was a consequence of the fact that „acts of narrative representation are themselves among the possible objects of narrative representation, that one of the things a story may be about is the telling of a story." (2007, 88) He considers this feature of narratives as one of the main sources of confusion in narrative theory. His adherence and subsequent critique of the two distinctions can be traced back to his preoccupation with Plato's „more fundamental" conceptual framework. On these grounds, he proposes a model which better elucidates the basic logic of representation: „these distinctions […], although undeniably useful, are not finally well-founded in terms of their own theoretical premises, and they actually point towards a somewhat different paradigm in which the salient fact is simply the recursive possibility that one of the many

[125] In this case, he clearly ignores the paratexts of the novel, from which the first is „The Author's Declaration." about his work: „My purpose was to *represent* human life historically as it exists" (Lesage 10, my emphasis). The second one is more problematic, since it looks like the hero addresses the readers of the book: „Reader! Hark you, my friend! Do not begin the *story of my life* till I have told you a short tale." (11) But there is the clear distinction between reading the novel as an autobiography (which only takes into account the embedded discourse) or properly understanding it as a piece of fiction (which is the primary discourse of the work).

things a narrating instance may represent is another narrating instance, or in Plato's terms, that narrative diegesis may give way to narrative mimesis." (2007, 90) I previously listed many arguments (explicated by Köppe – Stühring) against pan-narrator theories, which are in accordance with Walsh's views on the matter, but I have to mention one important approach to fiction to which I adhere.

3.1.3 Speech Acts and Fictionality

Rhetorical theory sees fictionality as the product of particular speech acts, and this perception can be lead back to John Searle's work. His most significant insight was the recognition that fictional discourse, in general, has no textual markers that will identify it as fiction, because it depends on „the illocutionary stance that the author takes toward it, and that stance is a matter of the complex illocutionary intentions that the author has when he writes or otherwise composes it." (325) In other words, fiction works by non-linguistic, „horizontal conventions,"[126] a special contract between authors and readers. He also correctly distinguishes it from lies whose function is to deceive, while with fiction, one has no such intention. Ironically, Searle's central idea stems from a rejection of an assumption which will be my primary claim regarding the nature of fictionality: „Let us begin by considering one wrong answer to our question […] According to this answer, […] a writer of novels is not performing the illocutionary act of making an assertion but the illocutionary act of telling a story or writing a novel." (323) For Searle argues that if fictionality would operate completely different types of speech acts, its language would lose its original, „normal meaning", and fiction would be entirely incomprehensible for the reader who has not learned these new set of semantic rules, exclusively applied to fiction. But since, this is not the case, fictional language must operate with the same type of meanings as truth discourses, and „the author of a work of fiction pretends to perform a series of illocutionary acts, normally of the representative type." (325) He also denies that fiction is a figurative (or nonliteral) use of the language, and names its processes as „nonserious" illocutionary acts, and precisely the *seriousness* of the representational act is the second point, where my

[126] „I find it useful to think of these rules [of genuine assertion] as rules correlating words (or sentences) to the world. Think of them as vertical rules that establish connections between language and reality. Now what makes fiction possible, I suggest, is a set of extralinguistic, nonsemantic conventions that break the connection between words and the world established by the rules mentioned earlier. Think of the conventions of fictional discourse as a set of horizontal conventions that break the connections established by the vertical rules." (Searle 1975, 326)

rhetorical approach differs from his. For him, fiction is a non-deceiving, playful form of pretense or make-believe,[127] a „pretended performance of illocutionary acts".[128] Searle even calls fiction a „parasitic" language game (326), and tries to distinguish it from the „figural uses of language". While he problematizes the unified view of fictionality, Searle also makes a distinction between fiction as a genre and fictionality as a quality which has become one of the central issues for contemporary theories of fictionality.[129] („Most fictional stories contain nonfictional elements" [330]) As a consequence, he identifies assertions whose purpose is not to establish a fictional fact, but, for example, to make a general comment: „»Happy families are all happy in the same way, unhappy families unhappy in their separate, different ways.« That, I take it, is not a fictional but a serious utterance. It is a genuine assertion. It is part of the novel but not part of the fictional story." (332)[130] But how do we know that this sentence is intended to be taken seriously, while others are not, if there are no explicit markers of fictionality, except the „horizontal rules and conventions" which apply to the work as a whole? He acknowledges that a work of fiction is not all about propositions that lack truth value, to tell about something nonexistent, but they are almost always nonfictional in another, implicit level, but remains rather vague in his formulation of the argument: „Almost any important work of fiction conveys a »message« or »messages« which are conveyed by the text but are not in the text." (332)

Tobias Klauk successfully points out how Searle deconstructs his own premises by needlessly renouncing the assumption that fictional works only contain fictional discourse, because the problem is that we can find serious utterances not just in fictional works, but inside fictional discourse as well. Even for Searle, the real issue is with utterances that are simultaneously serious and contribute to the fictional story.[131] Klauk's solution to fiction's capacity to include elements of assertive speech acts is by locally reintroducing them through a double negation: „that the conventions of fiction in general suspend the normal requirements of the speech act rules is perfectly compatible with the idea that in some cases

[127] Kendall Walton (1990) wrote an entire book in favor of the view that figural representation in general and fictional representation in particular is best conceptualized as „make-believe". Because of the diverse media of the artifacts he studies, he naturally does not assign it to speech act theory. See also Gaut (2004, 236) who also treats the „make-believe" view as fundamental in every kind of fictional narration.

[128] His view is shared by Frank Zipfel (2001, 185–95) in his monograph about fictional discourse.

[129] See the articles: *Ten Theses about Fictionality*, *Ten Theses against Fictionality* and *Fictionality As Rhetoric: A Response to Paul Dawson* in the 2015 January (Volume 23, Number 1) issue of the journal *Narrative*.

[130] Would Searle's opinion be the same if this sentence had been uttered by one of the characters of Anna Karenina? For a discussion of this problem, see: Klauk 2015, 206-210.

[131] If I rephrase Klauk and say that utterances that „contribute to the story" have an institutive function (to use Genette's words), does not it become a clear indication of a specific type of serious speech act of fiction which can be understood as a request for the reader to imagine a certain state of things?

the conventions of fiction themselves can be overruled by more local conventions, which reinstitute the original speech act conventions. [...] The imaginary, local genre conventions suspend the more general conventions of fiction, and thereby the original speech act rules for assertion are in force." (190-191) Klauk examines several cases, and he finds the most striking examples among apostrophes (the direct addressing of readers) and „utterances of true sentences about real objects or actual situations in fictional texts without fictional narrators." (201)

Seriousness enters both Searle's (and in a greater extent) Klauk's system of fictional speech acts sporadically and implicitly, or on occasion on a „global level", but neither of them question the pretended (nonserious) nature of fictional speech acts in general („an utterance that presents all the formal features of assertions but does not fulfill their pragmatic conditions" [Genette 1990, 36]). Walsh draws our attention to a certain view of fiction, which does not treat it as a second-order discourse, but defines it in positive terms (instead of underlining its lack of seriousness or referentiality), and sees it as integral in the constitution of any kind of narrativity. A form of this view is popularized by Hayden White (1973) and can be traced back to the thought according to which „very little of the meaningfulness of narrative can be seen as independent of the artifice of narrativization." (Walsh 2007, 39) This approach stresses that „the categorical difference between real and imagined events is overwhelmed by the artificiality of narrative representation in either case: all narrativity, from this point of view, shares in the properties of fictionality. The ontological status of the events themselves […] comes to seem of marginal interest at best." (2007, 39)[132] Fictional narratives become a reference point, from where all non-fictional genres can be seen as a subcategory with strict „rules of authentication", such as the requirements of veracity, objectivity and referentiality, if necessary, supported by evidence and justified by multiple sources. (2007, 39) This view can also explain the lack of „textual signs" of fictionality.

In the criticism of the speech act theory of fiction, Walsh reminds us to Genette's fairly sophisticated response to Searle's formula: „For Genette, fictional texts are indirect speech acts that imply, by means of pretended assertions, acts in the category of »declarative illocutions with an institutive function« […], that is, acts declaring the existence of a fictional world." (1997, 502)[133] Walsh sees Genette's stance as a compromise with Searlean thought,

[132] See also: M. Smith 2009.

[133] „by pretending to make assertions (about fictional beings), the novelist is doing something else, namely, creating a *work* of fiction" (Genette 1990, 37)

in which „the description of fiction as pretended assertion does not exclude the use of fictional utterances to perform some other, serious illocutionary act." (1997, 501), and he takes an even more radical stance, deducing that Searle's line of thinking required the necessary structural position of a narrator: „[t]he assumption is that fiction and irony are »nonserious« speech acts and so require a distinction between their actual and pretended speakers." (1997, 501)[134] Although I agree with him on the subject of leaving the pretense approach and the pan-narrator theory, one probable fault in Walsh's thought is his automatic assumption about Searle's pretense formula, that it inevitably requires a „narrator persona". An excellent counterexample for this non-sequitur is Klauk's (2015) argument, who does not reject the pretense formula but acknowledges narratives without fictive narrators. Walsh's following articulation of his argument seems much more acceptable to me: „The purpose of the narrator is to release the author from any accountability for the »facts« of fictional narrative." (1997, 500) Therefore, to get rid of them, we must abandon the idea of pretense entirely. „An author can seriously narrate a fictional narrative because its relevance is not a matter of information. Its falsehood, or indeed any adventitious veracity, is beside the point." (1997, 504) Walsh highlights that while fictional discourse does not comply with all of Grice's conversational principles (they can be considered as a more elaborate version of Searle's list of rules for assertions), neither does other speech acts which are considered as „serious" in his system. „Grice's »Cooperative Principle« states the criteria for the successful performance of a serious speech act in a few general maxims. One of these is the first maxim of Quality, »Do not say what you believe to be false«; another is the maxim of Relation, »Be relevant« (1975: 46). The literal illocution of an indirect speech act manifestly disregards the Cooperative Principle, typically by being irrelevant, but also by being false." (1997, 502) Just as a conversational implicature, a fictional speech act's literal meaning (its illocutionary power as an assertion) only serves as a vehicle for its real pragmatic function in which it becomes relevant (by its context of presentation) for example „as an invitation to contemplate, to interpret, to evaluate - as something worthy of display, something »tellable.« Its relevance is not informative but exhibitive: The question of its truthfulness is therefore not applicable as a felicity condition" (1997, 504)[135] Walsh insists that a satisfying model of fiction should treat its utterances as „serious authorial speech acts", which renders the default

[134] In contrast to what Walsh suggests, I would like to clarify that Searle considered irony rather as a figural use of language than a fictional one: „However, it is important to see that irony, like metaphor, does not require any [artistic] conventions, extralinguistic or otherwise. The principles of conversation and the general rules for performing speech acts are sufficient to provide the basic principles of irony." (Searle 1979)
[135] For a similar account of fictionality see: Korthals Altes 2014, 112-119.

narratorial position unnecessary. In a crucial theoretical move, he rejects the notion of authors who pretend to be narrating characters for the idea of authors who represent narrating characters. He supports this claim with the distinctness of authorial rhetoric and narratorial personality in a phenomenon that has a central importance in the present study: „The possibility of unreliable narration demands this, because when such unreliability occurs, the narratorial slant itself (rather than the events of the narrative) is the object of the author's representational rhetoric: The distance between author and narrator is essential to interpretation." (1997, 504) Walsh claims that this sense of pretense is incompatible with the representational act, and while I do not dispute the seriousness of fictional illocutions, I tend to be permissive, and through the concept of „mimesis" I claim that this nondeceptive form of pretense includes a form of representation or at least historically representation is a derivate of such ritual behavior.

3.1.4 Authorial Personality and Represented Characters

It is exactly the lack of Walsh's theoretical rigor, that prompts many narratologists since Booth's *Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961) to assume another intermediary position between the (real) author and a fictional character. A fair summary and recent example of this tradition is Gregory Currie's (2010, 69-73) argument, in which he hypothesizes two kinds of possible agents: the well-known entity of „implied author"[136] (a term coined by Booth) and his theoretical innovation, the „second author". „It sometimes happens that we need to postulate an external narrator distinct from the real author, because the *voice which presents the story* to us cannot, for some reason, be identified with the *voice of the author*. (2010, 69, my emphasis) Dorrit Cohn argues that inter- and extratextual interpretative perspectives can help differentiate between authorial ethos and a covert fictional narrator in the text. She claims that there must be a narrator in *Death in Venice*, though he is „not a character physically present in the fictional world" (1990, 799), because certain passages outline a figure by an „obtrusively sententious and judgmental discourse" (1990, 799), who has a personality that is clearly not Thomas Mann, characterizing this figure as a „narrow and opinionated moralist" (1990, 797). For Currie, here „the author constructs a story according to which a narrow-minded and unforgiving person writes a story about a man who falls unhappily in

[136] „We can imagine an implied author distinct from the real one, or we can imagine, of the real author, that he or she has a persona different from the person he or she actually has." (Currie 2010, 70)

love with a young boy and dies." (2010,71), therefore it is a strangely embedded story, with an implicit (silent) framing (2010, 72-73).

Both Cohn and Currie are wrong in their reasoning. It is relatively easy to point out the lack of coherence in Currie's argument: when talking about the author's construction of a person, he acknowledges the fictionality of this „second author", and gives no proper explanation on what basis we should distinguish it from a represented narrator or any other fictional character. Cohn's answer is subtler, but in her text, it is not clear whether her primary reference point is Mann's public personality, or his attitude and ideology in his other works. Both forget that on the one hand „the difference between authorial and narratorial personality must be established in textual terms (it is Mann as author, not Mann as public figure, who concerns us here)" (Walsh 1997, 506), and on the other hand we can just as easily resolve this tension of inconsistencies at an intertextual level, without an additional agency. According to Walsh, what causes the problem is the prevalent, but faulty view that regards authorial personality as necessarily uniform. „Personality, after all, is not monolithic, not timeless, not unitary, not even necessarily coherent. Indeed novelists […] are likely to attitudinize in diverse ways in their writing. Such mannerism remains an aspect of self-presentation and should not be granted an independent identity." (1997, 506) I do not find the concept of the theoretical construct of the implied author particularly useful, whether we position him inside (Chatman) or outside the text or fiction (Phelan), arguing that this entity is a projection/product of the real person behind the narrative or a (re)constructed agent by the audience. First: authorship is always an artifice, a social contract and construct. Second: all non-textual parts of the narrative must be implied/inferred or constructed by audience cognition, therefore it is unnecessary to single out this one element, or regard it as somehow different.

The fictional narrator is an issue „involving creative work and [it is] not something inherent in narrative as such." (Walsh 1997, 507) „[W]hether a text has a fictional narrator comes down to whether the text authorizes imaginings about a fictional narrator. There are clear cases where this is the case as well as clear cases where this is not the case (or so we have argued). Sometimes, however, it will be unclear whether a text authorizes imaginings about a narrator." (Köppe – Stühring 74) In Thomas Mann's narrative, the author created a discourse without a fictional narrator character, however some disputed the identity of this „voice" based on different contextual expectations regarding an integral authorial ethos. In Daniel Handler's „Lemony Snicket" books (*A Series of Unfortunate Events*), a fictional narrator occupied the position of the real author who was „silent" through the whole

narrative. (Austin 2013) The underlying theoretical questions are these: How much and what kind of characterization (here an especially telling term) do we need to understand a voice as a representational expression of a fictional character? How useful is the voice metaphor and in how many senses do we use it, if in one case it signifies an authorial utterance and a *means of* representation, in another a fictional character's discourse and an *object of* representation? In the latter case the authorial discourse is seemingly absent, giving the impression that the fictional agent is the primary source of the discourse instead of being a product of it (Genette's extradiegetic category).

To properly understand this apparent paradox, Walsh proposes a distinction between three senses of narrative voice. It will be particularly important for us, because it can be seen as an effort to conceptualize narrative agency, intent, mediation and representation in a transmedial frame. „I propose to treat voice as it is applied to a representational *act*, an *object* of representation, and a representational subject *position*. That is to say, in this scheme, the metaphor of voice may be understood to encompass voice as *instance*, as *idiom*, and as *interpellation*." (2007, 87 - my emphasis)

Voice as an instance refers to the representational *act* and *the agency* behind it. It „is any particular use of any medium for narrative purposes" (89) It's scope is wider than linguistic acts, and encompass an entire range of rhetorical activities. Because it is understood metaphorically, voice „is as inherently a part of film and drama as it is of the novel, and as crucial to understanding the rhetorical import of narratives in those media." (89) Style would be another proper term to capture what Walsh means here, by invoking „discourse features understood in their relation to meaning, as conceived within the field of stylistics, rather than as the expression of subjectivity" (94) From this perspective, Genette's narrator categories appear in a different light. They are not simply equal versions of representational types, but their relation is hierarchical: at the top, the hetero- and extradiegetic narrator can be seen as a „pure" instance. At the other side of the boundary, derived from this, all other categories (intra or homodiegetic ones), where „the instance is itself an object of representation" (2007, 92) While they function as instances under the authority of the author's fictional rhetoric, they are more pronounced as idioms.

Here, Walsh also makes a crucial distinction between narrative *transmission* and narrative *representation*. Narrative transmission means „something channeled through discourse", the „mediation of a prior narrative discourse", but narrative in its primary sense always more than quotation: it is a semiotic articulation of a story – it is narrative representation. This conceptual dichotomy can problematize the distinction between the

invention, the articulation and the mediation of a narrative: think about the widespread but misleading distinction between authors and narrators (pure tellers) who cannot be considered as authors. For Currie, „[t]he author of the letter, novel, or poem is its narrator in the proper sense: the person whose intentions have to be understood if we are to understand what is being communicated to us. In this respect, there is no difference between the author of fiction and nonfiction, as long it is in narrative form. The author is the narrator: the teller whose point of view does so much to illuminate the narrative itself." He notices that „I might communicate with you by letter; that requires a postman to deliver the letter. The postman does not thereby take on the role of narrator in our communicative exchange." (2010, 66), and by analogy, it is not a sufficient condition for narratorship, if someone or something „gives voice" to a discourse (and linguistically manifests it in textual or verbal form), therefore functions as a mere technical conduit. It can be linked to the process which takes place when a surveillance camera records footage of a particular portion of space, or when a technical apparatus projects light and sound to a piece of canvas: it is narrative transmission, but not narrative representation. The capabilities of a television set to broadcast an interview or the proper use of a messenger's vocal chords does not make it/her a narrator in the proper sense (who creates narrative representation), although they mediate semiotic content to us though sounds, images and language.

However, the television interview of Forrest Gump, or a fictional messenger's „narrative voice" is both an instance (of his own embedded narrative) and an „idiom", an object of representation. „In fiction, transmission is an element of the rhetoric of represented telling—that is, representing an intrafictional narrative discourse as if you were transmitting an extant discourse." (2007, 88) For Walsh, „media cease to function transmissively (i.e., as technological conduits for independently semiotic content) as soon as they themselves become semiotic— which is to say, here, representational […]. So while it is possible in nonfiction for a narrative instance to be transmitted within a framing instance, the appearance of such hierarchies of transmission within fiction is itself a product of representational rhetoric." (2007, 92) The transmission becomes only a representation of a transmission, because – as I understand Walsh – transmission only signifies the technical capabilities and display processes of certain media, and it does not really have to be narrative at all. What makes it more than just the mechanical act of writing or recording footage is the agency and its rhetorical purposes and intentions behind it, which are *articulated* through a specific media (the length of the quotation, the framing of the picture, the pragmatic contexts of the presentation, etc.). This is the aspect that Walsh calls narrative representation, and (in

my view) this is why it is also incorrect to identify voice (as instance) with language alone, which is only a certain type of code used by this agency. He points out that „[t]he apparent fragility of the distinction between narrative representation and narrative transmission (which is obliterated in equal measure, though in different ways, by Stanzel's »mediacy« and Gérard Genette's »narration«) arises because of the prominence of the fact […] that acts of narrative representation are themselves among the possible objects of narrative representation" (2007, 88) that is, they can be recursive.

But there are more problematic cases. Currie (2010, 73) asks us to imagine a situation, similar to what happens in *One Thousand and One Nights* where a character tells a story of which she is not the author of (unlike Scheherazade, this hypothetical character tells a story exactly as it is written by someone else, hence not even the articulation is hers), but chooses which ones to tell, and has a particular purpose with it (to postpone her own execution by a cruel husband). Are her intentions and purposes with the storytelling enough to become more than a postman? What appeared here is intention and an agent who does not invented or articulated the story, but utilized it. In my view, stories can be used for diverse purposes and that does not make someone automatically a narrator of them in the representational sense. A very similar case is Pierre Menard's, as an author who reinvents an already written story (*Don Quixote*) as a philosophical experiment, in a historically different context and his only creative act was the recontextualization of the discourse. Inevitably, both examples are misleading, because they cite an already embedded story, where Menard and Scheherazade are already fictional characters. My claim is, that we differentiate between represented and real persons on a wrong basis when establishing criteria for narratorship. From one angle, the distinction seems perfectly acceptable, because – as Walsh says – we cannot apply the systematic rules of narrative representation to represented narrations, but the problem is, that many theories tend to confuse other categories, such as mediacy/transmission and representation.

A further problem arises in connection to an effective definition of a character narrator. We are inclined to understand a *fictional character as a narrator* who satisfies a few basic conditions: one of them that its discourse must be linguistic in nature, it must have the capacity to literally tell a story (regardless of agency or intent behind this telling).[137] But if a character decides to recite a long quote from a book (a narrative work), at best, her authorship comes into question. We evaluate these cases according to different notions of

[137] This argument will be detailed later.

the narrator, because it seems that narratologically, the utilization of a linguistic discourse is only a required condition, not a satisfactory one. This is where the problem of voice-over in film will come into the picture. What is usually called a „narrator" in a film is not the same what rhetorical narrative theory calls a narrative instance: he is just a conduit, a material tool for expressing a narrative (or certain parts of it), and in this sense, there is no „character" created by his telling, and no framing (the creation of another narrative level) occurs, it is a device for the authorial-narrator of the work, the only narrative instance that articulates the narrative. Fairly straightforward examples for these impersonal, „technical" voices can often be found in documentaries. In other cases, usually in fiction, the heterodiegetic voice can be associated with a character (presuming a framing discourse), but not necessarily. It always depends on the rhetoric of a particular work.

There is a fine line between merely „transmitting" stories and producing a „representation". For example, how can we conceptualize an agent who juxtaposes a string of stories to form a never ending, multiply embedded structure to avoid death? What if Scheherazade tells the events with her own words and sentences, therefore significantly rearticulates them? How much control and creativity one has to pour into the work to consider it as an author-narrator? Although I won't answer these questions now, it can be seen that authorship and narratorship are socially, culturally and historically, epistemically constructed, artificial concepts, not ontological categories. Luckily, when dealing with the rhetorical legibility and internal structures of fiction films, these cases can be considered extreme and rare, and better be conceptualized in conjunction with particular rhetorics of individual filmtexts than basic structures of cinematic storytelling. The difference between transmission and representation, or technical and rhetorical sides of narration will become especially important in film, because of its multimedial structure. On account of its iconic nature, the audiovisual display of cinema seems impersonal, but most of the time constitutes an integral part of the work's rhetoric and carefully controlled by a representational agency. A character narrator or a voice-over narrator does not necessarily control other, nonlinguistic channels of the discourse, and in some cases, they should not even be regarded as a separate agent. A heterodiegetic voice-over's sole purpose can be the transmission of a crucial piece of information or a concise description of certain events, without him ever being represented as a fictional character.

For Walsh, voice as idiom can be understood in relation to particular objects of representation, more specifically and most often its purpose is *characterization*. It is the „mimetic dimension of the narrative discourse, its capacity for representing the discourse of

another." (2007, 93) In the act of diegesis, voice has a significance regarding the events represented by it, while in mimesis, it „invites evaluation of the character whose discourse it represents". (2007, 93-94) Although voice as idiom „always constructs a distinct subject (even if generic), by virtue of its objectification", it is not the same as perspectivation. Walsh explicates this by referring to a determinative but much debated genettian concept, saying that „[f]ocalization, on the other hand, constructs a subject position only, which may or may not be aligned with a represented character" (2007, 96) The concept that has close ties with voice in literary narratives is free indirect discourse. It „is a form of discursive mimesis, whereas focalization is a feature of narrative diegesis (not, I hasten to add, of narrative transmission: it is a product of representational rhetoric, not an information conduit). Where FID [free indirect discourse] and internal focalization coincide, these are two sides of the same coin, the one oriented towards the represented discourse, the other towards the subject position constructed by that representation." (2007, 96)

At this point we can rightly ask: isn't perspectivation of the instance (through focalization) always presupposes or creates an idiom from it? Isn't an authorial voice's characteristics (its abstract or literal point of view, style, attitude, mannerisms) render it also as an idiom, an object of representation? This is the phenomena for which Currie came up with the notion of the „second author" who „is speaking ironically or in some other pretend mode and in doing so manages to create a consistent impression of narrating from some stable, imagined perspective." (2010, 70) For Walsh, the ideological stance reflected in these characteristics (another metaphor for it could be „vision") demands a third sense of the voice which has to be separated from the questions of represented objects of the fiction. This is the „subject position" created by focalization (2007, 98) he describes with the term „interpellation.", „an organizing concept for ideology" (2007, 100), and this is the sense that is closest to Bakhtin's use of voice. Opposing it with idiom, he is „contrasting a sense of the term in which it represents the expression of a particular subject with one in which it discursively insinuates an ideological nexus with the potential to constitute a particular subject (represented or otherwise)." (2007, 101) The key feature of interpellation is its discursive quality, that „it need not be representationally embodied or owned by a character, or a narrating character, or indeed the author" (2007, 100).

With the introduction of this distinction, my main goal was to show that the presence of a narrative voice (or more abstractly a narrative discourse as instance and interpellation) does not necessarily imply the creation of a narrator character (as an idiom), for which purposes, however, it is undoubtedly suitable. With this step, I wanted to support a certain

type of optional narrator theory, which I will try to reinterpret for cinematic narratives. Continuing (and connecting) two of Walsh's thoughts: when the author becomes the narrator, there is no personality created like when a character becomes one (who is already fictional). Even, then, he says: „fictions can include embedded narratives for reasons that have nothing to do with characterization, and in fact the latter may be an undesirable distraction. In such cases idiom defers to instance; this is commonplace in film, where a character's narration typically progresses in quick succession from diegetic verbal discourse to voice-over, to impersonal filmic narration." (2007, 94)

3.2 The Medium: Film and Representation

3.2.1 Medium and Narrativity[138]

The purpose of my detailed discussion of Walsh's formulations of voice and fiction was to prepare the predicament that in spite of their apparent differences, narrative discourse operates very similarly in all media regarding representational agency. Surface features and all too evident metaphors of each media tend to predispose academic discourses to make conceptually inaccurate and biased statements. What I try to outline, is not a universal or even a medium-independent narratology (though in a special sense of medium), but quite the opposite: to *consciously* incorporate mediality in the model. Where it matters, I take into consideration the code, the materiality of the medium and its cultural embeddedness, but when the issue can be better understood in relation to another level, I should be able to rise above the technicalities and peculiarities of the media in question. For example, theorists often neglect that large part of literary narrative is recursive in a sense that they represent a story about a character telling a story, but always emphasize a character-narrator's framing role in a film. Besides the use of an inaccurate or broad sense of narrative voice, the „reason, presumably, is that verbal narration is a native human faculty, whereas cinematic narration is a sophisticated technological extension of human narrative powers" (Walsh 2007, 91), that is, the nature of the medium makes rhetorical features more visible in one case and latent in the other. Because of the omnipresence of metaphors in our descriptive language and the heavily technical nature of film, I will pay special attention to the distinction between the

[138] On the medium-dependency of narrative, see: Herman: Towards a Transmedial Narratology (51-), Jan-Noël Thon: Transmedial Narratology (1-31), Ryan: Intro (2004a, 1-10)

questions of rhetoric, intention and agency on the one hand, and the semantic and material tools of articulation on the other. These aspects can be understood as answers to the questions of „who represents?" and „with what tools?" Narrative representation consists of the co-operation of these two, practically inseparable sides: on the one hand the activity of abstract agents linked to the rhetorical side (character narrators and the author), on the other hand the conceptual tools (the code of the medium) and their material realization (the artifact) are both essential for the narrative to be established. Both are present in verbal and audiovisual discourses but their emphasis changes according to the medium. The linguistic form of narrative representation is not important because it is the dominant form or so to speak archetype of narration, but because it is a semantic substance closest to a domain without which there is no narrative understanding. The basis of narrativity and any kind of story is not language itself, but *conceptuality* in its etymological sense. Every narrative must be understood along the lines of some fundamental and very specific concepts, such as event, character, time, causality, etc. This does not necessarily mean that narrative logic is always abstract logic. The notions of concreteness and abstractness are both encompassed and only make sense inside the domain of conceptuality. The description of basic sensual experiences is considered to be linked to a „concrete" way of thinking, but nevertheless, it is conceptual as it distinguishes the experiencer subject, different types of senses and particular instances of events that occurred in time. These basic narrative concepts can be expressed most explicitly and are readily available in the primary communicational form of our species: language.[139] In order for a film to be narrative, we should be able to understand it along these concepts. But it also requires an additional step of deciphering images and sounds (even with the occasional presence of textual and verbal supplements) to understand them as constituents of a narrative. This is not to say that a narrative can be fully translated from one medium to another, because „pure narrativity" is a theoretical fiction, and narratives always encompass such non-narrative, aesthetic, semiotic, material and contextual features that cannot be detached from their medium, and which influence the process of their creation, structure and reception.

In the following, I present three typical postclassical attitudes towards media through prominent theorists' thematically connected texts to see how they build on and challenge

[139] For this claim, see: Ryan (2014b). Ryan and Thon argues that language is both „native" for narratives, because it „was among the first media in which stories were told" and for theory, „because classical narratology was developed primarily with literary fiction in mind" (2014a, 2) They argue that there is a large range of narratological concepts, among which we can find both medium-free, and medium specific ones. (2004a, 3)

each other's ideas. The basic difference between Slomith Rimmon Kenan's, Ryan's and Walsh's approach is the significance and role of language in their understanding of narrative representation.

Rimmon Kenan in her 1989 article reminds us that despite linguistics was the master-discipline for classical narratology, it „was mainly applied to non-verbal aspects of narrative (such as its succession of events or »story«) rather than to its verbal medium." (1989, 158) She argues that narratologists „abstracted the story from the discourse (or »text) and analyzed either its »deep structure« (e.g. Levi-Strauss, Greimas) or its »surface structure« (e.g. Propp, Bremond, Pavel, Prince)" with „the assumption that »story« is a medium-independent structure, [therefore] it logically excluded a study of language (or of cinematic shots, mimed gestures, etc. in other media)." (1989, 159) She argues that linguistic structure should be analyzed extensively in relation to stories, and that prior theorists failed to do this. She considers language both as an act, and as medium. (Although as an act – especially if performative act – she probably meant *parole*, the concrete usage of language out of Saussure's dichotomy.) In her most important insight, she proposed an approach which would place and analyze the familiar but overly abstract terms of literature-based narratology such as story, discourse and character in their medial environment and recognized that „events themselves or even their presentation in iconic media, like mime, dance, and theatre, do not form a story until they are told – which is why narratological studies of »story« are in fact studies of verbal accounts (by the narratologist) of (sometimes) non-verbal events." (1989, 160-161)[140] We should translate this initial attempt to create a transmedial narratology based on verbality as a need for a fuller understanding of the relationship between narrative conceptuality and various media. „[O]ne may say that the chronological and causal relations usually required to turn an aggregate of events into a story are not »things in the world« but *concepts we impose on the world* in order to apprehend it, and how do we impose such linkages if not through language?" (1989, 161, my emphasis) Rimmon Kenan is definitely right here, just hastily restricts the process to a specific system of symbols instead of a more general cognitive faculty.

There are seemingly two strange consequences if we treat language as Rimmon Kenan does: First, „narrative language" becomes both as a semiotic object, a symbolic structure which contains meaning *and* as a tool for understanding, or in other terms: an

[140] As Walsh points out, the event in its basic sense that is relevant to narrative theory is also „a product of narrative processing, an instance of cognitive chunking in which the mind negotiates with temporal phenomena." (2007, 111)

„object of interpretation" and a „means of interpretation". (Walsh 2010, 105) Second, narratives in linguistic media will appear as „unmediated" or „less mediated" as opposed to other types, because it directly offers us „language", the determining factor by which every narrative must be articulated, because the core concepts of stories are inseparably tied to language. This second consequence can be successfully disproved, if we replace language with a broader notion, to see that language is also a technical channel for transmitting narrative representations. (For the question of difference of linguistic and all other forms of narrative, I will return later.) However, the first is more problematic and stubborn, because it persists even after this substitution. It does not matter, if we change „language" to „conceptuality" or to „narrative representation" (as Walsh does), we encounter the following issue: If narrative sensemaking (by language or conceptuality) is a way for us to understand temporal phenomena in the world, how do we understand narratives (language, conceptuality)? Therefore, the question for me is not whether narrative understanding is dependent on language, but whether narrative conceptuality is medium-dependent at all and if it is, in what sense or degree? Without getting into the monumental philosophical debate about the relationship of language and thought, I argue that during the viewing of a film the audience do not „verbalize" the sensory data in a strict sense to comprehend the narrative and reconstruct represented events, but *impose certain concepts* (event, causality, etc.) on it by forming mental representations out of the data. Although the source „data" is already verbalized, the same process applies to the reading of a book, where the same cognitive faculty is activated to create mental representations.

In this respect, I share a platform with Ryan, who defines narrative as „a mental representation of casually connected states and events that captures a segment in the history of a world and of its members." (Ryan 2004b, 337), and as well as with Walsh, that the „narrative faculty, on this view, is not a species of the linguistic faculty, but something quite distinct, more inclusive and more elemental in its systemic logic." (2007, 105) For the understanding of the differences between their views, I need to explicate some terminological distinctions.

As I define media with relevance to representation and narrative, first I must make a distinction which is often transparent in literature, but quite perceptible in film due to its technical equipment (apparatus). The material dimension which provides the instruments for narrative communication is often confused with an element what always has a material aspect, but theoretically distinguishable from the former. This essential aspect of media is called the *code* by Roman Jakobson and W. J. T. Mitchell. The latter wrote about the origins

of the concept supposedly already present in Aristotle's *Poetics*: „Aristotle says that representations differ from one another in three ways: in object, manner, and means. The »object« is that which is represented; the »manner« is the way in which it is represented; the »means« is the material that is used. What I am calling »codes« here are basically the same thing as Aristotle's »means« — that is, language, musical forms, paint." (Mitchell 1995, 13) Mitchell is not very precise when he makes an equation between these two terms. Code has a subtler meaning; to use the saussureian terminology: it signifies the form, not the physical substance. Therefore, it is slightly misleading to use the two concepts as synonyms, because code is a lot more abstract than the physical material that is used for creating a representation. It is not a physical-material object, but a conceptual entity called the sign vehicle by Saussure. Marie-Laure Ryan differentiates between three senses[141] of medium: semiotic, technological and cultural. (2014, 29) She describes the code as „semiotic substance" which „encompasses categories such as image, sound, language, and movement. These basic types of signs can be further analyzed in terms of spatiotemporal extension, signifying dimensions […], sensorial impact (auditory, visual), and mode of signification (iconic, indexical, or symbolic). Examples of semiotically based media categories are mostly art forms" (2014a, 29)

To unlock the information encrypted in the code we always need a key (for different languages, images, musical forms we need different keys), we must know the meanings associated with the basic semantic units of the code to properly comprehend and interpret them. It is an abstract system rather than a sensual, palpable, visible or audible material manifestation. The code's function is to articulate its content in a particular form. Nonetheless the artifacts constructed out of these systems must take on a material form, as it were they must gain some sort of physical presence as they become artistic or simply communicational utterances. None of these substances can exist without transmitting vehicles.

The technical (or technological) dimension in Ryan's typology refers to the „mode of production" and „material support" of semiotic systems. The condition of physical materialization is the presence of „mediating objects". In the case of literature, the code is human language, the mediating objects (for example) are ink and paper which might carry

[141] Her distinctions are derivable from Rimmon Kenan's definitely useful warnings: „it is important to avoid confusion between 1) technical and semiotic properties of the media themselves; 2) properties of specific languages; and 3) properties of the individual style of a given author, producer, text, film, and the like" (1989, 162)

the code. The material characteristics of these objects are not carrying any information regarding the meaning of the code, at least not in themselves, but indispensable in the process of conveying it. For example, language is a digital semiotic system (a symbolic code) that can be transmitted through verbal articulation, or the technological system of writing (which is itself another type of visual and symbolic semiotic system). Ryan argues elsewhere that the first two (much more abstract) categories are both incomplete if they are used separately, because „[t]ransmissive senses represent media as merely the technological conduits of essentially autonomous meanings, whereas semiotic senses do not provide for the conceptual separation of medium and message that is necessary if we are to understand narrative as a structure independent of any medium, and transposable between media." (2004a, 17) For Ryan, writing and film are both „multilayered modes of production" (2014a, 29) and have strong cultural dimensions („the public recognition of media as forms of communication and the institutions, behaviors, and practices that support them." – 2014a, 30),[142] but while technologies like writing record and transmit other media (language), technologies like film (photography, sound recording, etc.) „capture life directly" (2014a, 30).[143] This is basically a distinction between media that utilizes indexical and non-indexical signs, and the apparent directness is just the consequence of the dominance of this (indexical) mode of signification in its semiotic system.

As a reaction to Ryan, Walsh argues that a narrative representation is by definition always an articulation, and articulations necessarily presuppose a medium,[144] because

> „there is no conceptual level of narrative between the formlessness of mind-external data and the semiotic framework of representation, in which some medium is inherent, whether mental or technological: narrative ideation is itself medium bound, in the perceptual and conceptual apparatus of mental representation. Narrative, on this view, cannot be medium independent: it is always dependent on representation in some medium, although it is capable of harnessing several. In other words, my position implies that the semiotic sense

[142] For the sociocultural-historical sense of the cinema, see: Gaudreault – Marion 2002.

[143] I want to add that film as a cultural phenomenon, also often incorporates symbolic semiotic systems, such as language, in various forms.

[144] „A medium, minimally, is a vehicle of semiosis, which is present at the ground level of cognitive processing, in the articulation of sense data in the perceptual system. The necessary condition for semiosis, here, is articulation, rather than communication in any restrictive »external« sense: semiosis is always, even within the mind, a contextually situated and dialogic process. The idea of representation is not intelligible without a medium. The media of narrative mental representations, then, are the mind's own perceptual and conceptual systems." (Walsh 2007, 104-105)

> of medium does indeed supply a necessary and sufficient definition of medium for the purposes of narrative theory, while the transmissive sense involves a range of more or less contingent, more or less technological extensions of the concept." (2007, 104)[145]

Therefore, the first two categories of Ryan are not tantamount in the understanding of the relation between media and narration. While the medium as semiotic substance is essential and a core concept, the external channels of transmission are peripheral in his model. For him, Ryan's idea of pure narrativity as a medium independent phenomenon is also questionable. If Walsh's line of thought seems confusing, it is because – as he hastily admits – he implicitly utilized two different senses of narrative representation that can be paraphrased as „making sense of a narrative" and „narrative sensemaking".[146] Basically, his claim is that we could not make sense of highly sophisticated, artistic narratives (like a novel or a film, which are already „narrative representations") without our ability of narrative sensemaking, that is, our cognitive capacity to narrativize sensual data in the world. In this sense „making sense of stories is making sense of sense-making" (2007, 106) He adds that „[t]his elemental reciprocity between narrative process and narrative meaning is what I mean to capture in the word »articulation,« which means both the creation of significant relations between parts, and the expression of such relations; in narrative, fundamentally, these two are the same." (2007, 106) Moreover, Walsh states that we are capable of making sense of stories, because we have the ability of narrative sense-making, in other words „both across and within media, narrative representations are intelligible in terms of other narrative representations. Narrative sense-making always rides piggyback upon prior acts of narrative sense-making, and at the bottom of this pile is not the solid ground of truth, but only the pragmatic efficacy of particular stories for particular purposes in particular contexts." (2007, 106) But exactly what kind of prior representation can help us to understand a narrative if stories always need other stories to understand? The idea of „piggybacking" is crucial here, since it means that higher level phenomena come into being by clinging onto lower level phenomena. It means that we can understand highly sophisticated forms of narratives by knowing some very basic ones. Walsh mentions the notions of „[s]cripts and schemata" which „are not abstractions [like linguistic signs] but templates, general purpose

[145] Fludernik christened it the „no-mediation thesis" (2010, 123), in spite of the fact that it claims a mediation occurs even in narrative understanding, not just in narrative expression.
[146] Walsh references Herman (2003, 12-14) for the explication of this duality.

representations, which serve as tools of the cognitive project of the narrative faculty." (2007, 105)[147]

Monika Fludernik understands Walsh's stance as an argumentation for a radical untranslatability of stories from one media to another. „[S]ince in his model fabula is not prior to sujet, stories in different media do not transform a common plot (story) in different ways, but that each establishes their own fabula. He goes on to argue that sujets (discourses) in different media are medium-dependent (this in agreement with most narratologists) and that (in disagreement with the narratological community) plot (fabula) is likewise medium-dependent" (2010, 124) Fludernik thinks that the medium dependency of fabula is an exaggeration, at best. „One will of course agree that in some media it may be difficult to grasp what is the plot of the narrative and that certain conventions help one to do so (clearly, the convention of the flashback requires a learning process, too); it is also true that one will need to understand at some point that a represented object is not the real thing […]. But such conventions of representation apply to all types of media (including non-narrative ones) and not to specific media in specific ways." (2010, 125)

I think Fludernik misunderstands Walsh, because he does not claim that each specific media produces specific fabulas for a given „story" or „plot", but argues that narrative (in a performative and cognitive sense as a whole) always exists in relation to some medium, and specific representations produce specific understandings and interpretations. Because as Walsh claims, fabula is always an interpretation of the sujet, and of course, this *interpretation* can be made into another sujet in another external medium (linguistic, theatrical or filmic representation) (2007, 66-68). In my understanding, Walsh's concept of fabula is first and foremost another sujet in an internal medium: mental representation, therefore it is not a substance, but a relative notion, apprehensible only by its relation to a specific narrative representation. And as a matter of fact, if there is an external medium, narrative understanding always need its cognitive faculties *as a medium* to process it, therefore it is doubly medialized. Fludernik's confusion is understandable, because as I mentioned, Walsh uses the term „medium" in two (for me, very distinct) senses: first, to refer to „the mind's own perceptual and conceptual systems" (2007, 105) (internal sense)

[147] „»Schema« is also used as a synonym for »frame« (Minsky 1975) to refer to mental representations of objects, settings or situations. A restaurant schema/frame, for example, would contain information about types of restaurants, what objects are to be found inside a restaurant, and so on. The term »scenario« is also sometimes used for situational knowledge (Sanford & Garrod 1981). A »script« (Schank & Abelson 1977) is a temporally-ordered schema; it describes a reader's knowledge of stereotypical goal-oriented event sequences »that define a well-known situation« (422), so that a restaurant script would contain knowledge of the actions and sequence of ordering food, paying bills, and so on." (Emmott – Alexander 2014, 2)

and as the background of narrative expression in artifacts (external sense), and these external vehicles are peripheral to him exactly because narrativity is not dependent on them to such a degree that it is dependent on mental representations.

For me, medium as the cognitive faculty of the mind is very different than the diverse set of „external media" with different susceptibilities toward certain core or optional concepts of narrative; in other words, they all have different degrees of efficiency to express particular concepts (or if you like: a different amount of cognitive effort is required from the recipient to comprehend a particular concept). Now, the semiotic (rhetorical) and the material (technological) sides which were inseparable in conceptuality (in Walsh's model), gain particular significance in external media, because of the transferability of semiotic systems through different type of channels (see my remark to Ryan's distinction). That is why I use the expression „conceptuality" (which is undoubtedly linked to a cognitive capacity, Walsh's internal medium) when referring to „narrative sensemaking", and use „medium" when referring to „external media". To sum up, I distinguished between three aspects of narrative representation which are in connection to some sense of medium:

1) *conceptuality* (narrative sensemaking with an internal medium: the mental representation of narrative, the arch-conduit which is inseparable from the semiotic aspect)
2) *code* (the semiotic substance: language, sound, images, movement)
3) *technological conduits* (the vehicles of narrative transmission – ink and paper, actors, objects, camera and projector, radio, television, computer)

Along with the logic of Ryan's distinction, the medium of film can be defined as a technological device (the material vehicle of the film stock) which has the capacity to carry the semiotic substance of images and sounds. From a walshian perspective, the question is the usefulness of the incorporation of the technological device into the model of narrative representation. What does the cinematic apparatus have to do with narrative meaning and representation if these semiotic objects are completely transportable and can be displayed by computers, DVD players, televisions and cine-projectors? Why do we need the non-semiotic sense of media to understand narrativity? I claim that in some respect, the study of technological channels is still very important, because they form and influence the recipient's comprehension of the narrative, or they can play a role as a thematic part in the narrative.

The significance of technological conduits is more peripheral opposed to conceptuality and its forms of expression (code), but if it becomes an object of representation (as voice can become an idiom), its significance considerably increases. In my classification, I distinguish two different sets of phenomena that range from thematization to explicit self-reflection, and from mimesis to embedding. In the milder form of self-thematization, the actual medium only serves as a thematic subject in the narrative (like *Tropic Thunder*, a movie about moviemaking), but the reflexive momentum can be more intrusive as in *Fight Club*, where the filmstrip becomes visible at one point during the movie. In some cases, the connection between the thematized mediation and the narrative itself can help understand a specific work's structure and meaning. *Adaptation* (2002) serves as a good example, where the film is basically the story of its screenwriter's unsuccessful attempts to adapt a book to the big screen. If I defined narrative representation (as an object of interpretation) as a twice-medialized process, there is a third level in fiction, because it is often (but not always) a narrative representation (the author's discourse) of a specific narrative representation (a fictional narrator's discourse) composed of general narrative representations (the mental discourse of narrative conceptuality). The intradiegetic continuation of this „framing process" is generally called embedding. Technologies of narrative transmission here become especially important in film, because of the misunderstandings surrounding a substantial part of academic writing on film narrative tend to confuse the possibilities and abilities of fictional narrators, film narration, and film as a technology for transmitting narrative.

The second, more important aspect regards the medium as a formal boundary to narrative representation. There are different types of experiences that a book, a film and a ballet performance can convey effectively. It means that the possibilities of a conduit shape the semiotic content. From a pragmatic standpoint, what can be represented in theatre is heavily dependent upon the attention span and memory of viewers, the technical capacities of the equipment, the abilities of the actors, the financial status of the institution, etc. One could object that theoretically there is no limit which concepts a theatrical play can express nowadays, because it can utilize audio recordings, movie clips, holograms, etc. But then we are not discussing the traditional configuration of technologies identified as „theater", but understand it as a cultural institution and activity that functions as a meta-medium, with the ability to encompass almost all kind of media (even film). This conceptual difference highlights the asymmetrical relation between technological mediums: a book is not capable of conveying moving images, film is limited in its capacity to convey tactile or olfactory sensations, but along with theater, besides acoustic and visual dimensions, it can utilize

abstract conceptualization (though not to the degree and with different effects than literature). The point is that technology influences, limits and specifies what kind of codes (and through this what kind of concepts) can be expressed with more ease or more difficulty.

My proposition is, that in some media, narrative conceptuality is more readily available than in others. This does not mean that it is generally harder to understand a film's plot than a novel's: but it is partly because narrative film relies on conventions, clichés and patterns, more extensively, utilizing familiar „frames, schemata and scripts" exactly because its semiotic substance is less directly conceptual. A possible objection could be that the extensive iconicity only helps us to formulate a story, because this is exactly what we do in the real world: navigating between dominantly visual and acoustic impressions and form a (mental) narrative representation out of them. In this sense, it should be easier for our narrative sensemaking to operate in this medium than deciphering the artificial symbols of language. This argument will not stand if I formulate the meaning of „understanding a narrative" more precisely: we do not want to form *a story* out of what we see and hear in a movie: we want to understand *the story* in the movie. We want the movie to form a story for us. (The interpretation or interpretability of that story in another matter.)

3.2.2 Narrative Conceptuality in Film

Media in its semiotic sense forms the basis for narrative rhetoric, but media in the transmissive sense influences the possibilities of these rhetoric, and optionally becomes „semioticized" by thematization, mimesis and reflexive moves. A special „restriction" occurs in media like film (which „captures life directly"), which necessarily has an extra step in articulating its signs, through the pre-narrative step of targeted and purposeful recording of external data. The technologies used here determine some basic qualities of the filmic signs. Opinions are divided in the perception of the role and significance of this process in describing the narrativity of film.[148] How much attention should filmnarratology pay to this quality of the medium in itself? It appears as a mere technicality from the perspective of a specific narrative discourse: moreover, certain semantic features (their correlation to reality) of the recorded signs (sounds and images) are generally „effaced" by becoming fictional: Actors are not playing themselves; a shooting can occur in Budapest, while the narrative depicts Moscow; moreover, scenes shot in the interior of several buildings can signify the

[148] For example, Bordwell argues that „all film techniques, even those involving the »profilmic event,« function narrationally, constructing the story world for specific effects" 1985, 12)

interior of a single one in the narrative. This is because the semiotic system of film contains signs that can be understood as indexical, iconic and symbolic at the same time, but the relevance of these aspects of semiosis is „activated" differently in different contexts.[149] The indexical nature[150] mostly gains relevance in nonfictional genres, where film serves as a method for documentation: one must shoot in Budapest in order to document life in the city. The iconicity of the signs is obvious (what matters in this case is not the cause and effect correlation but the resemblance between the signified and the signifier), but the application of particular editing techniques and traditions often results in symbolically comprehensible group of signs (along the lines of cinematic traditions or particular rhetorical techniques): flashbacks, voice-overs, onscreen texts, etc.

I claim that each media (with different types of signs) has a different relation to narrativity. Because language is our primary tool of communication, concepts are easier to express by a string of linguistic symbols, than by a continuous flow of audiovisual data (not just narrative, but any type). Language is a basic human cognitive ability, using symbolic signs to form concepts[151] to break down reality, in order to extract interpretable elements from it. Therefore, my proposition is to differentiate between direct and indirect, explicit and implicit forms of narration, based on the „distance" between the form of the media and narrative conceptuality.[152] It is by no means a dichotomy, but a gradual quality, changing not just with respect to media but individual narratives. With all this in mind, I would like to define the most explicit form of „narrative representation" in a strict, traditional sense, as verbal storytelling.

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[149] Peirce identified the dual nature of photographic and cinematic signs as a general feature and since, this became an academic consensus in classic film theory. See: Easthope (1993,2) and Pieldner (2012,192)

[150] See: Brown (2011, 45) on Bazin's theory of the indexical nature of photographic and cinematic signs.

[151] In her seminal book on art, semiotics and the mind, Susan Langer argues that „[w]hen we say that something is well expressed, we do not necessarily believe the expressed idea to refer to our present situation, or even to be true, but only to be given clearly and objectively for contemplation. Such »expression« is the function of symbols: articulation and presentation of concepts. Herein symbols differ radically from signals [I called them indexical signs - CsT]. A signal is comprehended if it serves to make us notice the object or situation it bespeaks. A symbol is understood when we conceive the idea it presents." (1953, 26)

[152] What I am getting at is similar to what Jean-Luc Nancy phrased as follows: „The image suspends the course of the world and of meaning—of meaning as a course or current of sense (meaning in discourse, meaning that is current and valid): but it affirms all the more a sense (therefore an »insensible«) that is selfsame with what it gives to be sensed (that is, itself). In the image, which, however, is without an »inside,« there is a sense that is nonsignifying but not insignificant, a sense that is as certain as its force (its form)." (Nancy 2005, 11) William Brown, who based his theory on Nancy, writes about film: „I should like to make clear that meaning via narration is a quality that emerges from the relationships between images in the case of temporal editing, and the relationship between what is onscreen and the implied elements that are offscreen in the case of spatial editing. In neither case, however, is meaning a quality that is inherent to the images themselves." (Brown 2011, 50)

A film as a whole can also possess narrative qualities, but how do we arrive to narrative conceptuality and how do we extrapolate a narrative by viewing it? Does our narrative comprehension operate significantly differently than in a reception of a literary work? I want to approach the question from a rhetorical perspective, that is, from the viewpoint of authorial narrative design.

What do I mean by saying that narrative conceptuality is more explicit in some media than in others? Let's take the concept of „event" as an example. In a novel, an occurrence of an event can be expressed by a single *assertion* in a sentence. „The king died." The noun describes the character in question, and the verb indicates a clear change in the character's state. In comics, let's say, this is articulated by a juxtaposition of two „panels". In the first one we see the king, lying in his bed, maybe talking to a priest, in the next image, the priest is closing the eyes of the king and saying a prayer for his soul. Richard Walsh criticizes Umberto Eco, who comments on the reader's understanding of this type of representation in a comic: „»obviously the reader welds these parts together in his imagination and then perceives them as a continuous flow« (1987: 24)." (2007, 107). Walsh's problem is that Eco's answer is not an explanation of how we understand a represented event, but it only describes a possible act of imagination, which is the same as we imagine a character's afterlife after a story's end.

By assuming „a continuous flow" in the reader's mind, Eco ignores the discreteness of the two states that constitute this event. „If we were really to respond to this sequence by subsuming it within a continuous flow, we would strip it of its status and meaning as an event." (2007, 107-110) In the comic form, the most important components of this event are singled out, while in film, we can say there is iconic temporality, but because „the death" is really represented in a continuous flow of images and sounds, the film has to emphasize the eventness in this process (the characters involved, the action, the change in state) in other ways. Through its iconic nature, film relies on the viewer's sensory experiences of the world and merely the knowledge one usually associates with such experiences in a greater extent than literature and even comics. Therefore, the rhetorical force behind the filmtext must work against the indeterminacy of relevance: presenting salient information, more specifically by showing certain important details onscreen, focusing on narratively functional characteristics of a scene, „cutting out" timeframes and actions that can be easily deduced, etc. (Notice that some of these discursive elements should be articulated *before* the (temporal) editing process, at the shooting.) Editing can also achieve similar effects like the discreetness of the comic panels, but films usually use continuous temporality, not just

selecting important moments, but presenting us a literally broader phenomenon: durations. However, editing often cuts up a scene to smaller fragments than an event, or two states of a change. Chatman writes that in literature, „the selection among the possible number of details evoked [is] absolutely determined", in film, „the number of details is indeterminate" (1980, 125). And not just the quantity of important details is indeterminate, but also the ideas behind these details has to be inferred. Hence no matter how clear is the action, the concept of death as an event always remains an interpretation, because as Chatman points out, what is missing in the audiovisual representation of film is its ability to make direct *assertions*. (In the right context, this scene could depict the faking of one's death as well.[153]) He writes „I wish to communicate by that word the force it has in ordinary rhetoric: an »assertion« is a statement, usually an independent sentence or clause, that something is in fact the case, that it is a certain sort of thing, that it does in fact have certain properties or enter into certain relations" (1980, 128) And since in film „the details are not asserted as such by a narrator but simply presented, […] we tend, in a pragmatic way, to contemplate only those that seem salient to the plot as it unrolls in our minds" (1980, 125-126) As I see it, the assertive nature of linguistic expression brings us closer to narrativity (narrative conceptuality) through its *selection* and *segmentation* of relevant information in its digital system. In film, as Roger Odin (1988) theorized it, once we attach „meaning" to the images, still nothing guarantees that these are narratively comprehensible meanings, so a second step is necessary: after *figurativization* (the recognition of analogical signs), they have to be *narrativized* (the evaluation if they can be fit to a narrative frame). In this way, the spectator has to construct the missing narrative assertions. Of course, some are authorized by the film and some are not. A film might seemingly authorize a meaning to later revoke it. (My explication of deceptive narratives will be in the next chapter.)

However, there are several techniques available for film to bypass the undesirable ambiguities that have risen in meaning. Of course, narrative films can take the easy way and explain everything to the viewer through voice-over narration or dialogue (often resulting in a film where the images basically function as an illustration of what is explicitly stated), but the film's distinctive capacity to tell stories begins with details beyond verbality, with editing

[153] It is also possible in literature for the narrator to assert the death of a character, that turns out to be only a pretense. But in this case, it is not an ambiguity emerged from the story's medial features, but a particular rhetorical move called deception. (This move can be verified by focalization, where the fake event in question is represented the perspective and understanding of one character.)

techniques.[154] Also, later developments in the plot can confirm the viewer's assumptions (repetition of important information was obligatory in mainstream Hollywood cinema). In this respect, comics are between film and literature: they can only assert with the incorporation of linguistic expression, but in their mode of representation they articulate a crucial dimension of the event: the inherent change that makes it more comprehensible.

Based on these considerations, I made a distinction between „explicit" (literary) and „implicit" (cinematic) forms of narration: While literature mostly tells „explicitly", film is capable of both,[155] and a medial form like the graphic novel is generally closer to some aspects of narrative conceptuality, therefore it can vary whether it uses verbality or images to tell a story.[156]

[154] Gaudreault's research in early cinema confirms this assumption of film language as a dominant factor in understanding the story. He explains that it was a widespread practice to employ a „lecturer" or „narrator" at film screenings, because as he „implied in this history of early cinema […] images are potentially ambiguous in meaning, and that a narrator not only helped the audiences to comprehend precisely what they were seeing, but that the narrator also fixed the meaning of the images for the audiences. This use of narrators took place before cinema developed the syntax of continuity editing, which itself allowed audiences, through further habituation, to understand or follow the meaning of the images without the help of a literal narrator." (Brown 2011, 49-50) See also: Gaudreault 1999, 125-134.

[155] Gaudreault elaborated a fairly different background for the question of agency in different narrative media. According to him, we have „to distinguish clearly between the two basic means for conveying a story which can be called narration and monstration […]. In keeping with my hypotheses, scriptural narrative is conveyed only in the mode of narration (despite some quite spurious indicators of monstration) whereas theatrical narrative is conveyed solely in the mode of monstration (despite some equally spurious indicators of narration)." (1987, 29) He argues that because film is spatiotemporally much more complex, „[t]he fundamental instance responsible for communicating the filmic narrative is composed of two parts. […] The filmic monstrator-narrator brings about syncretically the union, the merging of the two basic modes of narrative communication: narration and monstration." (1987, 34) I acknowledge the structural/semiotic difference in the organization of a continuous shot and a(n audiovisually) discontinuous film narrative, but just as I do not think there is a necessary mediating entity in literature, I do not see sufficient ground and indispensable need to separate two „communicational strategies" by two distinct agents, who control two levels of structural organization in film. My preliminary assumption is that the ultimate rhetorical power is in the hands of the creators/author (to whom the viewer can ascribe intention), with the occasional use of fictional characters as storytelling agents. Gaudreault's reason for the introduction of this double agency was the need to differentiate between the storytelling strategies of literature, theater and film. His model is the consequence of a perspective that is mixing technical and rhetorical elements with some unnecessary anthropomorphization: in other words, he infuses tools with agency, confusing non-discursive and discursive (or non-fictional and fictional) aspects of representation. Despite this slip, his question is legitimate and important: in what way we should account for the technical aspects (not just the medium, but also the production) in the rhetorical analysis of a narrative work?

[156] See: Csönge 2014 - Matéria, technika, retorika; Chatman 1990, 124 - the cinematic narrator; Patron 2010 - The Death of the Narrator; Gaut 2004, 234 - cinematic narration; Stam – Burgoyne – Flitterman-Lewis 2005, 98 - voice-over narration

4. Character Narration

Character narration and perspectivation is often confused, especially in the case of films where a character's voice can initiate a flashback sequence and later disappears, giving space to the audiovisual representation of the embedded story. Is the character still a narrator of that segment? Is he only a focalized object of the discourse or the focalizer of himself in this case of homodiegetic film narration? This confusion is especially noticeable in descriptions of internal focalization of distorted character-perspectives and unreliable character-narrations, because they often share similar rhetorical effects (viewer confusion) or purposes (deception), not to mention that in most cases, self-focalization is an important part of unreliable narrative representation. (While internal focalization does not necessarily involve character-narration.) The objective of this chapter is to synthetize my conclusions about cinematic techniques of storytelling, literal and abstract perspectivation, fictional mediation and the relationship of medium and narrativity, while focusing on rhetorically complex cases of character narration in film. I argue in favor of a restricted and narrower understanding of the (fictional) narrator through cases of unreliable narration and emphasize their difference with narratorless perspectivation. Through the analysis of well-known films with lying character-narrators and their academic (narratological) reception, I seek universal conclusions from a rhetorical standpoint about the nature of narrative representation in film and in general.

In the first part of the last chapter (4.1), I would like to prove that Walsh's theory on narrators can be applied to film as well. In addition to the claim that there is no need to hypothesize a fictional narrator in every cinematic narrative, I present cases that seemingly contradict with Walsh's simple partition, but I argue that these narrative situations involve different types of *pseudo-narrators*: they are either a rhetorical tool for the author (in this case no distinct agency should be assumed behind these voices), or a character in the discourse who falsely claims authorship over it. Especially in the first case, this line of argument is not evident, because the concept of a film author using another person's voice to communicate with the audience feels counterintuitive. But authorship itself is an abstract concept, a type of rhetorical activity in which a person can engage himself. My example is from the film adaptation of *Perfume* (4.1.1), in which, despite the voice-over narration, there is no character created with this act of storytelling. In a technical sense, there is a manifest human voice who creates a verbal discourse, but I claim, there is no character represented

by this tool (in the sense of an idiom); instead, the voice is simply used as a communicational channel (as an instance) by the author. Regarding the other type of pseudo-narrator, I analyze a short metafictional film, called *The Gunfighter* (4.1.2), to shed light on the true nature of the voice that plays the role of a classic literary device. The seemingly unreliable fictional narrator is not the producer or agent, but only a strange, bodiless and all-knowing character in the discourse.

The other problem with film with voice-overs, that there are apparently two narrators present simultaneously: one that controls language, the other controls audiovisual elements.[157] I would like to reject this claim too on the basis of a rhetorical understanding of narrative representation by distinguishing technical tools from rhetorical acts. I enumerate the possible configurations of character-narration in film with the help of Jost's and Gaudreault's (1999) excellent essay on the subject, and point out through several examples that although they are the representation of a narrative discourse, fictional rhetoric / character-narrated situations (mimesis of a diegesis) not necessarily follow the same logic and they can be fundamentally different than authorial discourses (simple diegesis).

The second part of the chapter (4.2) discusses some theoretical issues of mimetic types of unreliable narration (when the distortion concerns the facts of the narrative) from the perspective of agency, medium and its distinction from similar concepts. The first problem I address (4.2.1) is the scope of the definition which, in narratology, is almost always its wideness. The starting point will be Köppe's and Kindt's (2011) article on the subject who give a sophisticated and careful description with accurate wording, but still include narratorless cases of factual distortions. I claim that this part of their definition results in a paradox, therefore I suggest a revised version of their argument. The second problem (4.2.2) is its distinction from similar concepts such as ambiguity, deception and irony. In the third section (4.2.3), I formulate an important restriction about unreliable narration in film, by saying that any kind of perspectival or factual distortion without a fictional character narrator should not be considered as unreliable narration. I focus on two monographs (Ferenz 2008 and Laass 2008) which were published on cinematic unreliability in the light of this

[157] Peter Verstraten hypothesizes a distinct narrator for every medial channel, and a master-narrator that regalates the operation of both. This is exactly the theoretical stance which conflates the ideas of technical tool and rhetorical acts, and to which I argue against: „Since images and sounds can each tell a different story, I propose to divide the filmic narrator into a narrator on the visual track and a narrator on the auditive track. I proceed from the assumption that the narrator on the visual track is essentially deaf to all sounds, just as the narrator on the auditive track is blind to all visual influences. It is up to the filmic narrator to regulate the interaction between both sub-narrators. Because of this specific (and layered) 'identity' of the filmic narrator, the narrative techniques and stylistic procedures in cinema are inevitably fundamentally different from those in literature (or those in comics, music, painting, sculpture, and the theatre, to name but a few)." (2009, 7-8)

exclusion and provide a detailed criticism of their views. I conclude that unreliability can only occur in homodiegetic narration, as I understand this technical expression as the representation of a truth-discourse in fiction. I simultaneously utilize my examples to draw more general conclusions about the relationship of narrative representation and its media, and while highlighting cinema's unique possibility to convey multiple discourses with different agencies simultaneously, I emphasize the often deliberately neglected universal features of storytelling, which is still a blind spot for filmnarratology. An entirely different interpretational framework is utilized during the course of distinction (if this question rises at all) between technical and rhetorical aspects of a narrative, (perhaps because the advanced technological tools of cinema and the apparently natural, transparent nature of human language) even where it would not be necessary.

I deliberately placed my most important distinction between unreliable narration and focalization at the end of this theoretical block (4.2.4), because it is closely related to speculative questions which are best explicable through a complex, multi-channel medium like film. The thesis I want to refute is that experiencer characters can emerge as narrators of their own story if the cinematic narration „scenically" present what they perceive. Behind this statement, the implicit presupposition is not that between subjective experiences and their narrative representation, there is a muddy, intermediate area which cannot be defined by the exclusive application of just one of these concepts, but that (physical or mental) perception is always already a narrativized cognition, at least a presentable version of these experiences always possesses a narrative quality. I am not referring to the narrativization accomplished by the author, but the narrativization performed by the experiencer's mind. I would like to refer to the crucial difference between mental narrativization and narrative communication to justify the distinction between the representation of a non-communicative mental representation and the representation of a communicative act of narration, or from another perspective: character-focalization and character-narration. A problematic, but revealing subtype of this partition is the distinction between the presentation of a distorted perspective and unreliable narration.

In the third part of the chapter (4.3) I utilize my theoretical insights in specific examples and analyze a popular type of mimetic unreliability (the lying narrator) in Hitchcock's *Stage Fright* and briefly in its spiritual heir, *The Usual Suspects*. The academic reception of Hitchcock's film (4.3.1) is overwhelmingly concerned with the questions of narrative power over the embedded discourse and the authority of the lying character in the deception of the audience. This question is intertwined with the distinction between

perspectivation and narration: can we describe the cinematic presentation of a memory as a form of narration by the character? How does the recognition of the scenically represented lie complicates the interpretation of a flashback?

I survey (4.3.2) different approaches to the questions of narrative power and authority: one group of scholars accept the assumption that a character can have control over the images of his narration, the other group rejects this claim. I point out that the same implicit (audiovisual) narrative form (as a tool for the author) can express vastly different rhetorical acts: a flashback can denote a memory (an act of noncommunicational narrative sensemaking) or a character-narration (a communicational narrative representation). My point is that medium does not determine if a fictional character can be regarded as the narrator of a sequence which is presented by tools that are not available to her; different authorial intents can be realized by the same resources, and *from this aspect,* the question of medium is not rhetorical, but a technical issue. The intense debates around the relationship between the lying character and cinematic narration is fueled by the lack of this insight.

In the last two sections, I want to point out the wide rhetorical possibilities for an author to create a complex represented discourse and demonstrate the merits of my rhetorical understanding of narrative representation. Although fictional characters can be full-value narrators even if their discourse is represented in an audiovisual form, I claim, that no represented discourse (in any medium) is devoid of the marks of an authorial rhetoric. (4.3.3) The significance and visibility of the authorial agency's rhetorical purposes (that can be in line or completely contrast the character's purposes with the telling) may vary greatly, but its presence and influence on the discourse should be recognized in every case. As a complex example of theses dynamics, I analyze *The Usual Suspects* (4.3.4) in which there is a greater degree of authorial manipulation that is independent from the character controlled elements of the discourse. Here, the deceptive sequences greatly contribute to the reinforcement of the character's lie by complementing his misreporting with underreporting that justify his unreliable narration.

4.1 Character Narration and Discursive Voices

4.1.1 The Heterodiegetic Voice Over[158]

The question of agency in film becomes more interesting when interrelations between authorial acts and character discourses are being examined in their medial structure. In Walsh's original formulation, the *narrator* is either *the author or a fictional character* and there is no third *intermediary agent*. After my examination of the questions of narrators, fictionality, mediality and authorial persona, I want to prove the universality of Walsh's claim through the example of cinematic discourse, with a slight modification of its phraseology. In a narrative film, either the authorial discourse (the agency behind this are the creators, whose intentions the viewers hypothesize) performs the act of narrative representation (not the literal production, just as the pagination and printing is not the literary author's task), which can be implicit (using audiovisual signs) or explicit (using linguistic signs), or they can represent a fictional agent (character) who performs a similar task (a recursive move). Its authorial narration can be explicit (linguistic), implicit (audiovisual), the character narration can be explicit or effaced[159] (the linguistic narration of a character is transformed into an audiovisual narration by the creators).

General cinematic situations usually utilize implicit authorial narration (with no character narrator), or implicit authorial narration with effaced character narration that has explicit framing to mark its status (when a character starts to tell a story then the images also represent it, and his voice falls silent). The main difference with verbal narration comes from the utilization of film's multimediality: major strategies are the possible simultaneous presence of authorial and character discourses and the internal adaptation of a character's discourse.

Before studying voice-over as a form of character-narration, I want to address a problematic situation in which this simple model's validity can be refuted. To disprove the universality of Walsh's theory, one would have to find a case where the agency behind the narrative representation is neither a fictional character, nor can be identified with the creators (or as I will refer to it, the authorial discourse). In this respect, Robert Burgoyne found a possible candidate: „One area of ambiguity which is unique to film and does not seem to be covered by any of Genette's categories is the voice-over narrator who is not a character in

[158] The Pre-Narrative Monstrosity of Images: how images demand narrative (Brown 2011) Monstrous Cinema (Brown 2012) Gaudreaul/Jost: Enunciation and Narration 1999

[159] When I use the term „effaced" I never mean a „covert" or „implicit" narrator as it is understood in pan-narrator theories, but I always refer to cases where a verbal discourse of a character-narrator is translated into an audiovisual one.

the story, typically found in documentaries and in war films of the 1940s. Because this type of narrator is not really a character narrator, he or she is not exactly a heterodiegetic narrator." (Stam – Burgoyne – Flitterman-Lewis 2005, 98) Although Burgoyne claims they are not heterodiegetic and restricts their occurrence to a specific period and genre, I argue that this group can be identified with a category what Genette calls the *extra-heterodiegetic voice-over*, which still poses a problem for us, because it seems to be an entity that cannot be identified with a „fictional character", nor the author or creators. This device apparently violates the possible agents in my definition and it is more widespread, than Burgoyne's group of narrators, because a lot of examples can be also found in fiction films from the 1950's to the present time.[160]

The film adaptation of Süskind's novel will serve as a good example (*Perfume* 2006) for this kind of confusion. At the end of the short opening scene, which frames the narrative, the distinctive voice of John Hurt starts to tell a story, which is an almost exact quote from the beginning of the book: „*In eighteen century France* there lived a man who was one of the most gifted and notorious personages of his time. His name was Jean-Baptiste Grenouille." At the same time, we see the image of Grenouille's face, standing in chains before an angry mob, waiting for execution. This voice's counterpart in the book is an authorial narration. Neither there nor here he is a fictional character or even a contemporary of the characters: „*In the period of which we speak*, there reigned in the cities a stench barely conceivable *to us modern men and women*" – says the voice while we witness the birth of Grenouille. He is surely not occupying the same temporal plane as anyone else *in the story*, and he is aware of a contemporary audience. This storytelling device has almost the same features as the one in the book, with a few important exceptions. We get the same type of information from this voice, focusing only on the events of the story, and revealing nothing that could be interpreted as a characterization of a person behind the voice. But in the movie, „voice" is not just a metaphor, but quite literal, giving it an additional, sensual dimension. The second important difference lies in the cinematic context, which casts the voice as only one channel of (narrative) transmission among several others.

[160] Heterodiegetic voice-overs can be found in *Ikiru* (1952), *The Killing* (1956 – internal depth focalization), *Jeremiah Johnson* (1972), *Barry Lyndon* (1975), *Delicatessen* (1991), *Age of Innocence* (1993), The Hudsucker Proxy (1995), *Magnolia* (1999), *Amelie* (2001), *Y Tu Mamá También* (2001), *Dogville* (theatre, literature, film 2003), *Anchorman* (2004), *Little Children* (2006), *The Assassination of Jesse James* (2007), *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (2008), *(500) Days of Summer* (2009). More complex examples are *Mirror* (Tarkovsky 1975) – a character narrator whom we never see, *The Princess Bride* (1987): framing narration, *The Big Lebowski* (1998): it turns out to be a character, *Lego Movie* (2014).

How is this voice distinguishable from an authorial discourse then? Did it become a character solely because of the above differences from the book? Of course, it was a rhetorical choice to give this narration a particular tone and gender (which makes him more humanlike and individuated), but are these factors enough to regard it as a character or introduce a third type of (intermediary) agency only for film? Does this voice function as an instance only or an it is also an idiom? Or, with Köppe's and Stühring's expressions, does the film authorize the viewers to imagine a narrator character who tells a story? Sarah Kozloff states that non-character voice-over „narrators, along with the accompanying scenic presentation, are actually transmitted by the narrative agency I call the image-maker." (1988, 74)[161] Although I identified the „image-maker" with the author, the core of her idea, – that we cannot posit a distinct *agency* behind this voice – worth considering: „We experience a kind of merging together of narrator and image-maker, so that the voice ultimately becomes for us the voice of the image-maker" (1988, 74) Kozloff is right, but her assumptions are nothing more than conjectures based on „feelings" without convincing arguments.

If the same sentences uttered in the novel does not make him a character there, but make him into one in the film, then it is a case when the code of the medium affects the semiotic content, and has a serious and apparently unintended rhetorical effect. The sensual nature of voice-over makes viewers involuntarily assign a certain „personal presence" to it. (And this is why Köppe's and Stühring's expression in their definition of narrators – „imagination" – is misleading.) In my view, anthropomorphic features do not make a phenomenon automatically into a character, just as the author's style does not make the author one. It would be a hasty conclusion to regard the voice-over as an object of representation, instead of an instance of it. Surely, there is also an ethical position from which he judges its characters, but that is not different in the novel, and can be explained by what I called „interpellation" or subject position, which does not guarantee the creation of a character *in* representation. As Walsh demonstrated, in literature, the creation of a character must be done by an explicit rhetorical act, by an assertion of its existence. „The ironic spinster cleared her throat and observed, »It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune,« etc." (1997, 497) Without his addition, the first sentence of *Pride and Prejudice*'s narrator remains indistinguishable from an authorial utterance. But this voice is a necessity in literature to transmit the discourse. It is true that films rarely „assert" the existence of a character, they create them by presenting them

[161] „Voice-over narration has been used in so many films precisely in order to »naturalize« the strangeness of the image-maker, to link filmic narration to everyday, dinner-time storytelling." (Kozloff 1988, 48)

visually or audially, and voice-over is not even necessary to transmit the story. Hence, the character-effect, the „authorization of imagination" comes from the evaluation of a rhetorical choice, which deploys this already sensual voice to convey narrative meaning, instead of the impersonal machinery of cinema (implicit narration).

With respect to its fictionality, let's examine the storyteller's ontological relationship to the story in the film adaptation of *Perfume*. He claims, that „if his name has been forgotten *today*, it is for the sole reason that his entire ambition was restricted to a domain that leaves no trace in history: to the fleeting realm of scent." Here, the voice-over creates a playful impossibility: he refers to the protagonist as a real historical person, but stating that no one knows him „today". If one would object that the voice-over only meant that Grenouille is almost forgotten and it is his duty to tell his story, he would ignore the amount of details the voice-over knows about this unsociable genius and soulless serial killer (including the time he spent alone), which makes his statement suspicious anyway. The whole point of the story is his invisibility in society: Grenouille never really told his life to anyone, but once an acquaintance abandoned or parted ways with him, he/she died right away, thus he left really no trace of his existence behind in people's memory. Even after he became „famous" by his killings, at his execution, he released his magical perfume, which seemingly had a disorienting effect on people: „the people of Grasse awoke to a terrible hangover. For many of them, the experience was so ghastly, so completely inexplicable and incompatible with their morals that they literally erased it from their memories."

Even if the voice-over refers to the events and characters as „real", as Walsh argues, a fictional discourse is characterized by the fictional speech act which exercises a rhetorical power to authorize the viewers to image a state of things, without the discursive language formally being marked as fiction, and without the need of a fictional character narrator. On the other hand, this narrator provides information what seems to be at least beyond the protagonist's knowledge: „life expectancy in the tannery was a mere five years", but more like a perspective what is traditionally called „omniscience" and hereby let me call it simply authorial knowledge. Overarching from the framing scene to the (flashback scene of the) birth of the protagonist, this voice proves he is in a position that transcends the spatiotemporality of the audiovisual representation of the diegesis, i.e. it is not just a focalization technique. He is not just commenting on what we can see, or even what the protagonist thinks, but the narrator knows his future: „He did not differentiate between what commonly considered good smells from bad. At least *not yet*." With such foreshadowing, he

easily transgresses the representational synchronicity that film editing can only achieve with whole framing scenes.

There are two logical ways to comprehend the nature of this voice: (1) he is either a heterodiegetic narrator *and* a fictional character in a strictly verbal framing discourse or (2) he is a mere transmissional device for the creators. (But a special one that invokes the literary tradition of storytelling.) What does it take for a film to create a character? It is clear that the voice only has a commenting function, not „creating the discourse", he is not controlling the images or sounds, therefore one can object that he cannot be the „highest" authority behind the work. But this is beside the point if the voice, as I argue, is a mere transmitting device for the creators, a „delivery tool" of their thoughts in a multimedial representational environment, and its spectacular intrusion is authenticated by the traditional form of the literary storyteller. However, some viewers questioned whether this authentication was successful, and expressed their disappointment regarding the „cheap", direct method of verbally telling a story about senses. I think this criticism is the consequence of a represented voice, without a character behind it, even if he shares several formal qualities with a character. He explicitly narrates but there is no separate agency (an idiom), just the one that could have showed the story instead of telling it. It is similar (if less infringing) to the text at the beginning of *Fargo* (1996) which states: „THIS IS A TRUE STORY. The events depicted in this film took place in Minnesota in 1987. At the request of the survivors, the names have been changed. Out of respect for the dead, the rest has been told exactly as it occurred." Even if one finds out that the story is completely fictional, the text won't mean that there is a fictional narrator doing the representation, but it signals that the text is deceptive and toying with viewer's expectations and traditional frames of storytelling, because its rhetorical power lies in its ability to create confusion.

In its physical/sensible manifestation, a heterodiegetic voice-over narrator is certainly different than the „voice of the author", but keep in mind that „voice" in narratology was always just a metaphor for discourse. And despite the fact that this particular kind of discourse has a different function in film (because it only supplements the implicit – cinematic – narration, my claim stands, because there is no separate agency (I mean distinct from the authorial discourse) behind it, and this makes it a rhetorical resource for the diegesis (a cinematic authorial discourse). I agree with Gaudreault, that the voice-over narrator „does not have the same status at all as the *underlying narrator* of textual narrative […]. This agent's role is closer to that of a »scaffold« than that of a *mediator*." (2009, 75) My point is that the utilization of a voice (speech) as a device for narration is not necessarily a

representation of character, if its function is something else (for example, to convey abstract ideas quickly and efficiently). It is „a narrator" only in a non-narratological sense as a deliverer of a message, which is basically a tool (just as the camera, ink and paper or pixels in a screen), which lacks an autonomous agency. It is often related to the evocation of literature, therefore it is especially frequent in novel adaptations like *Perfume*. In *Pan's Labyrinth,* its role is to highlight an ancient way of storytelling (orality), and in the film, *Listen Up Philip,* it is used as a reflection on a thematic element (the protagonist is a writer). In the case of an extensive use of this device, such as the latter film, it is common for the voice-over to describe the character's inner thoughts and feelings. „For reasons unclear to him, the exchange with Melany caused overwhelming anxiety in Philip, who driven through the night to get here." The technique serves as a counterpoint to the brief and fragmented scenes we get to see from his life, it explains the context of the scenes and how the protagonist relates to these events.[162] *Stranger than Fiction* makes this identification between the voice-over narrator and the author explicit, as a self-reflective narratological statement, by staging a metaleptical situation of a man named Harold, whose life is narrated by an unknown woman. One day he starts to hear this voice in his head that narrates the things he does, or expressing his inner thoughts and even dropping some comments about the future consequences of his actions when Harold is resetting the time on his wristwatch: „Little did he know that this simple, seemingly innocuous act would result in his imminent death." The twist in the story that it is a voice of a famous writer, Karen Eiffel, who exists in the same reality as his character and she must take a moral decision whether to sacrifice a living human being to write the perfect tragedy.

4.1.2 Basic Situations of Character Narration in Film

„The weary gunfighter walks slowly through the saloon. The long miles from Cheyenne had taken their toll" – says the narrator. „Who's saying that stuff?" – asked the gunfighter, as he looks around to find out the source of this mysterious voice. In the basic situation of *The Gunfighter*, an eight-minute-long western themed short film, an unknown and omniscient „narratorial" voice can be heard by all characters in a little town's dusty saloon. The voice

[162] It is typical for heterodiegetic voice-overs to be in the mode of „internal depth focalization", because the thoughts and feelings of a character is a dimension that films cannot access directly (due to their medial features), in contrast to the physical sensations of a character, which can be rendered more easily (external focalization). An externally focalizing voice-over would be pointless.

shares embarrassing details of their lives and creates conflict between the hot-headed characters. After the voice reveals his homosexual thoughts, the gunfighter asks: „Why should we trust this voice anyway?" Then the voice mentions that „a ballet of death" is about to happen, and Tommy Henderson, who at the beginning wanted to shoot the gunfighter for a reward, concludes that „this voice wants us to kill each other!" But the voice continues to create tension and says that „meanwhile, the gunfighter saw his opening to shoot Tommy dead." The gunfighter fiercely protests against such claims: „No, no, no, wait. That one really is a lie. See? My hands nowhere near my gun." – and shows his hands to Tommy. Then the voice contritely admits his culpability: „Okay, you got me. That one wasn't true." At the climax of the scene, the gunfighter gives a beautiful speech about the possibility of change, cooperation, fairness and tolerance, and it seems to calm everyone down in the room. But then the voice tells another incriminating detail: „It was a good speech and things might have turned out differently if the crowd never found out that the gunfighter had just last night shot and killed the youngest son of John McCullers." As a result, only the town whore survives the following drift of bullets.

At first sight, this voice seems to be an extravagant variant of an *unreliable narrator*, as (1) it is characterized, it is a represented object in the discourse, and (2) it is also an agent who does (verbal) narrative representation with the capacity to lie. But is this voice really a manifestation of the author of the diegesis (the fictional audiovisual discourse) as a character narrator or the real authors themselves?

The fact that it can state things that turns out to be false in the narrative indicates that the voice only acts like an all-controlling authorial agent, as if his assertions can automatically enforce their truthfulness in the diegesis. However, it is not his performative act that causes certain events to occur, but the information shared with the infuriated and predictable characters. Culpability is an excellent indication of the creation of a fictional character. Unlike in *Stranger than Fiction*, the communication between voice and visible characters is two-way: the „narrator" is not only aware that the characters can hear him, but he uses his extensive knowledge to manipulate them. He does not really make anything to happen or force anyone to do anything, he just provides information. Since the voice is a representation (and travesty) of the convention of verbal (voice-over) narration, things can happen that would be impossible in a real act of narration. Now, what does the fact indicate that characters can hear him? The media of his representation (the oral form of language – his speech) becomes an object in the discourse, not just perceivable for the film's audience, but also for the characters. This infers a temporal simultaneity between his speech act and

all the other events of the film, that is, the usual difference between the time of representation and the time of represented events does not exist and the voice is subjected to the temporal structure of the diegesis. Temporally and causally, it exists within the diegesis, and when he narrates, his narration is homodiegetic, creating an embedded verbal discourse inside the diegesis that imitates some formalities of an authorial discourse (being a bodiless, all-knowing voice). Since another character can contradict him, it can be argued that he possesses the traits of unreliability as a character who lies, but not as an agent who represents and controls the primary discourse of the film. (A narrative with an actual unreliable narrator of the scene would be able to depict the gunfighter reaching for his gun, and at the same time authorize an interpretation that questions the veracity of such event.)

To provide practical and insightful descriptions for similarly complex narrative situations, I would like to examine the most common forms of character-narration in film, starting with the relationship between the highest agency of narrative representation and the storytelling characters. André Gaudreault and François Jost writes that „the primary narrator, responsible for communicating the filmic narrative, could be said to manipulate the diverse modes of filmic expression, to orchestrate them, make them function, and regulate their play in order to provide the spectator with diverse narrative information." (1999, 57) For me, the concept of the „primary narrator" is nothing more than an interpretive role imposed on the creators of the work to make sense of the artifice of their discourse. I reject the concept of „cinematic narrator" for similar reasons, if it is used to describe the authorial discourse. It suggests an agent that is part of the enunciation, instead of being the source of it (just consider the senseless concept of „cinematic author"). I can only accept this collocation if the adjective before „narrator" specifies the medium of the work where a certain character can be found: if literary narrator means a narrating character in a verbal text, and cinematic narrator refers to any narrator-character in a film. But it is usually understood in other ways, where the concept becomes inherently faulty, comprising incongruous elements: for example, (1) an agent who is different than the film's authors and characters (a kind of theoretical construct that I argued against in the first chapter) who actually creates the representation in an audiovisual form, and who is „the illocutionary source or instance of emission of the narrative discourse." (Burgoyne 1990, 4).[163] Or (2) a character whose verbal

[163] Schmidt's and Kuhn's protest against the term is based on its overly anthropomorphic referent: „With the exception of the character narrator and the cinematic device of the voice-over, the traces of a narrating agency are virtually invisible, so that the term »film narrator« is employed as hardly more than a metaphor." (2014, 20) My concerns are entirely different in nature.

(oral or written) narration is represented in a cinematic mode. I also reject this sense of the expression, because the cinematic adjective has nothing to do with the character itself or the activity of the character, but it refers to an authorial strategy, which is completely independent of him/her. Therefore, it is smarter to distinguish between the cinematic mode of (implicit) narration (with an authorial agency behind it) and represented (fictional) narrator characters, who are also authors (agents) of their own discourses, and whose discourse can be represented in explicit (verbal) and implicit (audiovisual) form. My aim with this formula is to separate agency and (external) medium (the tool/means of representation), rhetorical and technical aspects of narrative representation. This clarification is important, because many issues surrounding the definition and scope of unreliable narration and cases of focalization stem from the muddy definitions of the concepts they are based on.

In the following, I will rely on Gaudreault's and Jost's thorough and lucid discussion of narrative situations in film to examine possible configurations of character-related and authorial discourses. Their starting point is the frequent recursivity of narration that becomes more complex in cinema due to its „five modes of expression – that is to say, images, sounds, words, written materials, and music" (1999, 52-53) By stating that film „is always a double narrative", they refer to the cinematic potential for representing simultaneous and interlocking discourses allowed by the five channels of communication. In their understanding, in literature, „a verbal narrator tells verbally what another verbal narrator has (under)told verbally. There is a homogeneity of materials. It is notable that in such cases of narrative delegation the primary narrator is almost invisible" (1999, 53-54) and almost „literally drowned in the flow of words of the secondary narrator." (1999, 54), like in *The Thousand and One Nights*, where the author-narrator „gives up his role" to Scheherazade. This „paradoxical situation" occurs in cinema „to a lesser degree", because „it is relatively difficult to make invisible the presence of the primary instance, […] by interposing a secondary one." (1999, 54)

The typical, more narrow-minded form of this approach contains a strong presupposition about the possible „tools" that should be available for a certain „type" of narrative instance, regardless if it is a real or a fictive, represented agent. This confusion is partly caused by the acceptance of some form of pan-narrator theory, therefore all agents become a theoretical entity. This thinking often directly defines a narrator with its accessibility to certain tools of expression: in this sense, the „literary narrator" must have a capacity to speak *or* write (it is not accidental that the difference between these two are

mentioned far less frequently), a „cinematic narrator" must be able to mobilize the cinematic apparatus and create a narrative in the audiovisual form. Because of the asymmetry arise in cinema (cinematic tools are not available for characters, only for the authorial discourse), character-narrators are less likely to be acknowledged as real narrators, especially if their discourse is not illustrated by audiovisual tools.

Gaudreault and Jost are on the verge to successfully recognize the potential in film to teach narratology about the distinction of authorial control and rhetorical resources. They detect a „narratorial instance" that becomes „almost invisible" in literature by delegating a „secondary narrator", but less hidden in film where character-independent forms of narrative expression (image, sound) have a constant presence. The sought variable here is not the „visibility of the primary instance", because then we would have to identify it with certain forms of sensual manifestations or technical tools of representation. These tools should not be associated with the authorial agency of narration but to see them as resources for both the creation of a direct, authorial discourse (diegesis) or an indirect character discourse (mimesis). This way, not only the apparent literary paradox of an absent authorial control is resolved, but also the cinematic paradox of a seemingly impossible situation with a narrator who is incapable to produce a form in which the narrative is manifested. Since character-narrators are represented objects, the form of their discourse is not restricted by rhetorical resources available to them, because they are framed by fiction's already semioticized representation. Semiotic content and technical resources of rhetorical activities should be separated. Because fictional character-narrations are not just the transmission of an existing discourse, but inseparable from the authors' rhetorical purposes, smaller or larger authorial interferences are customary in them, albeit are usually more spectacular in a multichannel medium like film.

Along the lines of different authorial rhetoric, Gaudreault and Jost enumerate four basic situations of character-narrations using the example of *Citizen Kane* (1941). (1) In the simplest situation, the character is telling a story, and the film shows him and his telling. „In this case, the narrative is an audiovisual narrative, which tells us, by showing it, the story of Thompson, the journalist, paying a visit to Leland and making him (under)narrate his own story. Therefore, the narrative is truly double to the extent that the narrative voice of the filmic meganarrator, responsible for the audiovisual narrative, is simultaneous to that of the verbal (sub-) narrator, responsible for the oral (sub-)narrative." (1999, 54)

(2) In the second situation, the image of the character narrator gives place to his narrative, also displayed in audiovisual terms. „And as in the case of the primary narrator of

the written narrative, the filmic meganarrator erases himself in favor of a secondary narrator who, just as polyphonous as he, occupies the five tracks of transmission of the filmic narration. Here, too, we find identity between the semiotic materials of storytelling (the primary narrative which is the film *Citizen Kane*) and the semiotic materials of that which is told (the secondary narrative which tells of the deterioration in relations between Kane and his wife), and thus we confront a phenomenon of the primary narrator becoming invisible, a situation comparable, at least apparently, to the case of *The Thousand and One Nights*." (1999, 55) But the comparison is contradictory even by their own logic. Scheherazade in the tales cannot be equated with the „secondary narrator" in *Citizen Kane*, because it occupies „the five tracks of transmission". He can neither be identified with Leland, the character-narrator, who tells his story verbally. Because this secondary narrator is an entity similar to the „mega-narrator" of the film, we already have three narrators in this situation, not counting the „grand image-maker" (a term introduced by Metz [1974] to refer to the author of films). Why are all these agents necessary for Gaudreault and Jost? Because they link every one of them to a special form of expression (explicit or implicit narration: characters and „cinematic narrators") and to a particular narrative level (primary and secondary levels: mega-narrator and sub-narrators). Hence the absurd conclusion that the „primary instance" gives way to a secondary one when the recollections of Leland are presented. They had to assume these different agencies because they failed to distinguish between agency (rhetorical forces) and resources (technicalities). There is only one (represented) narrator in the sequence and that is Leland, the fictional character and an authorial rhetoric that decided to represent his narration in an audiovisual way, instead of showing the narrator-character himself and his act of telling. The primary agent did not erase himself in the process, giving way to another instance of implicit narrative representation, because the medial manifestation of the primary level is just as independent from the authorial agency as the tools used in the creation of the embedded one. The „erasure" theory only makes sense if we identify these technical parameters with an agency (and since it is harder to do this with any kind of author, a theoretical construct – the meganarrator – is invented) in which the agency and the sensual manifestation of a discourse always coexist. Consequently, the correct comparison would be between Leland and Scheherazade. But *Kane*'s difference from *The Thousand and One Nights* lies in the fact, that in the film, there is a rhetorical decision to represent the character-narration by more than one channels of communication at once.

(3) The third situation is where we cannot even hear the character narrator's verbal account, while the film presents us its contents in an audiovisual form. „Once the verbal

narrative of the secondary narrator (Leland) has undergone its transmutation, its transcoding, into an audiovisual language of which Leland himself is not a user, it becomes difficult to answer the question, who speaks and who is telling the story? It is either the grand image-maker speaking or the secondary narrator. […] This question must be asked because often such transvisualized sub-narratives give us information not available to the secondary narrator […]. In such cases, we must recognize that the meganarrator is the one responsible for that.[164] […] But how do we distinguish the respective fields of intervention of the filmic meganarrator and the verbal sub-narrators?" (1999, 55) Early sound film introduced embedded discourses very carefully with long transitions (superimposed images of the primary and secondary discourses), for the audience to fully understand the change in level. (The voice-over of the character often still heard long after the transition). What really happens in cases where a film-character narrates, but his narration is „illustrated" (substituted) by an audiovisual representation of his story (if the signals are strong enough to infer that it can be understood as the „transcoding" of a verbal narrative) is a representation of a narration which became a purely rhetorical phenomena, as it loses its original „medium" (which undoubtedly deprives them of some of their original semiotic attributes, but simplification is at the core of any representation). The difference between the tools of representation and the agency behind the discourse becomes more visible.[165]

If we define narrators as agents who „produce a permanently manifest narrative representation" (perceived by the viewers/readers as it occurred in the fiction), then a lot of well-known fictional narrators would not qualify. Note that this also frequently happens in literature, where the notion of „represented narration" is rarely challenged, because transcoding some aspects of speech – the digital system of language – into the even more rigidly digital system of writing, in nothing like cinematic transcoding, which allows much more information and detail to appear while replacing a digital medium with an analogical (iconic) one.[166] Therefore the character-narration in film (in my usage of the term) becomes „implicit narrative representation". It is technically the same as the basic mode of authorial cinematic narration: implicit narration occurs when viewers are authorized to create a

[164] It seems inconsistent that instead of a „secondary narrator", the „meganarrator" is evoked here as a responsible agent behind the representation.

[165] There is another observation from Gaudreault and Jost that reinforced me in my proposition to conceptually separate the form of the actual representation and the form of the (inferred) fictive existence of a discourse: „Unlike Leland's narrative, which is told to Thompson here and now, Thatcher's narrative has been written before, at a time prior to the moment where Thompson becomes aware of it. Nevertheless this apparently changes nothing in terms of the audiovisual narrative designed to illustrate the words of the filmic sub-narrator, Thatcher." (1999, 56)

[166] I will return to this question in connection to Hitchock's *Stage Fright*.

narrative from the stream of mediated data on the textual level, but they have to „translate" them to abstract concepts (which can be more adequately and easily grasped by human language) to became narratively cogitable. This is basically the definition of narrative sensemaking. The difference between „real-life" narrativization and the act of comprehending narrative films is the latter's design to facilitate this process of translation, allowing fewer possibilities of narratively intelligible versions, seeking clarity regarding the (reconstruction of the) events and other abstract elements of the narrative, resulting in more uniform „stories". I would like to call situations where the directness of one's discourse is violated by an „internal adaptation" from explicit to implicit form of narrative „effaced character-narration". Thus, the answer to the question of „who is then telling this audiovisual sub-narrative?" (1999, 55) would be that (as a representation of a representation) of course the character tells the sub-narrative that is represented by the authorial discourse in a form which gives an excellent opportunity for the real author to manipulate the discourse beyond the reach of its fictional author. Gaudreault and Jost seem to be somewhat puzzled when they contemplate on the difference between a character's and the authorial discourse: „How can we think that its contents, which visualize Leland's discourse, are a perfectly faithful representation of what he says? […] [I]t is hard to imagine that the contents of this sequence are in any way a literal transcription of Leland's words." (1999, 56) Indeed, they are certainly not, because there is an inevitable conceptual difference, which they fail to recognize between the represented object (the speech act of Leland, which is the *reference* of the text) and the act of its representation (which is the *content* of the text). Anyhow, from a rhetorical perspective, the explanations for the details that are unavailable for the character narrator in the discourse can be several. If the author decides to illustrate a verbal narration, it is an unavoidable characteristic of the medium that the images and sounds show us more than the information contained in the character's literal storytelling. Especially if these details of the representation do not have any rhetorical significance, or add anything important to our knowledge about the narrative. Naturally, it can utilize rhetorical strategies that we could not possibly attribute to the character, but the distinction of these elements are a matter of interpretation in each individual case.

(4) The fourth situation resembles the most to the case of embedded narration in a literary text for the homogeneity of the juxtaposed discourses: the „News on the March" sequence within *Citizen Kane* is a film in a film, which entirely takes the place of the primary diegesis, making it „invisible" during the test projection. In a sense, it is the opposite of the previous situation, because now the primary instance gives way to a manifest secondary

discourse. But as argued, the „primary discourse" should not be defined by its phenomenal (technical) parameters: the agent responsible for the form of the presentation of the embedded discourse is the author. His rhetorical choice was to use an image and soundtrack that exists inside the fiction, instead of a camera that occupies a specific position in the diegesis, but not an object in it. While no transcoding occurs, a traditional cinematic tool is eliminated to give way to an imitation of a filmtext. Just as it is eliminated when a character's point of view replaces the „objective view" of the ubiquitous camera-eye. In this case, it is part of the consensus to distinguish between the mode of representation (the position of the camera) and the referenced object (a character's sight / visual perspective) of the scene. If we want our model to be consistent, then we should add that the narrator of the nonfictional newsreel is not the shrill voice who speaks during the sequence about Kane's life and legacy, but presumably some of the men in the projector room we see after the clip ended. A colleague of them only provided his voice as a material tool to transfer information about the newsreel's subject.

A central element in this problem around which the film's rhetoric is organized is the discourse created or signaled by the character's voice. It is extremely important in my discussion of cinematic narration, as this voice ensures the presence of character-narration, a prerequisite of a specific type of distortion which can be labelled as unreliable narration. Extra-heterodiegetic (authorial) voices were analyzed in the previous section, and it was determined that they are devices for the author (with no independent agency behind them), therefore they are not voices as idioms and their characterization do not add much to the understanding of the narrative. But what kind of authority homodiegetic voice-overs possess? They usually „frame the primary discourse of a film" which means (1) they do not have visual representation, (2) they know the outcome of the events of the film, and (3) they represent a character's later self. Kozloff argues that „if behind the voice-over narrator one can always find the real narrator, the image-maker, and distinguish (in Feldman's revealing phrase) *another level of narrative*, voice-over narrators could never actually occupy the catbird seat, could never be responsible for the primary diegesis. They are always embedded within the image-maker's discourse." (Kozloff 1988, 45) Although their position is no different than a literary character-narrator's, who recounts the past, Kozloff rightly denies to give them same significance: „In Dickens' *Great Expectations* Pip is a frame narrator, but in Lean's version, even though we never see Pip narrating, the voice we hear is not the autonomous and consistent mediator of the story, but rather an embedded narrator relayed to us by the image-maker." (Kozloff 1988, 45) It is clear that even in the novel, the whole

narrative is presented as Pip's verbal discourse, who is not the author of the book, just a character-narrator. But his voice-over in the film only signals the subjectivity of the story, and used only intermittently as a device for communication. Its sole function is to summarize certain parts of the story, mostly after larger temporal ellipses, to give context and orientation to the viewer. The task of relating the events is divided between the impersonal and the personal modes of narration, giving the impression of objectivity and directness throughout the majority of the film. By contrast, „in many cases the voice-over narrator is so inscribed in the film as to seem as if he or she has generated not only what he is saying but also what we are seeing. In other words, films often create the sense of character narration so strongly that one accepts the voice-over narrator as if he or she were the mouthpiece of the image-maker either for the whole film or for the duration of his or her embedded story. We put our faith in the voice not as created but as creator." (Kozloff 1988, 45) Apart from its highly metaphoric nature, we can ask how well established is the idea behind this claim, that characters exercise control over other elements of the narrative?

A classic example of homodiegetic voice-over can be found in *All About Eve* (1950). Right after the credits, a male voice starts to tell the story of Eve Harrington. It is shortly revealed that the voice belongs to the theatre critic, Addison DeWitt. He introduces himself, while we see him sitting in a fancy room at an award ceremony. The voice-over is aware of an audience and seemingly knows what can be currently seen on the screen. In the first few minutes of the film, the diegetic environment is muted, only nondiegetic music and DeWitt's voice can be heard. Soon after he introduced the main characters of the film (Eve Harrington, the emerging young actress, Karen Richards, the wife of the successful playwright Lloyd, Margo Channing, a star actress and Max Fabian, a theatrical producer), the film also grants access to the acoustic dimension of the primary diegesis, as the chairman of the evening start to give his opening speech. Up until the point, when Eve reaches for the award given to her by the chairman, then the frame freezes and our narrator begins to talk again. Oddly, in the next shot we see our narrator with the frame unfrozen, but when the film cuts back to Eve (an eyeline match sight for DeWitt), we have the frozen image again. As if the moment is mentally immortalized by De Witt, emphasizing its significance in Eve's career. Then, we unexpectedly see and hear Karen's voice, remembering the time when she met Eve for the first time. Soon, a flashback is initiated and her voice fades. However, by the end of the dressing room scene, where Karen introduces Eve to Margo, she is not present anymore, because she leaves the building with her husband. From this moment, the sequence cannot be considered as a faithful representation of her memories. There is even a playful remark

from her, which can be interpreted as a reference to the strange narrative situation: „Funny, the things you remember and the things you don't." Does the scene have became an objective narration of the past halfway? Or was it all along an independent, objective presentation of the past? Was the initial voice-over narration just a plot device to motivate the flashback which constitutes the majority of the film? Things become more complex, when Margo Channing's voice takes over the narration, as she recounts her experiences with Eve. Then, after a while, Karen's and DeWitt's voice-over can be heard again, significantly during the transition from the narrative past, to the frozen image of Eve in the present.

DeWitt's voice occupies a strange epistemological position: it looks like he watches the film with us, comments on it and freezes the image at a certain point. And although it temporally frames the film and seemingly aware of a visual dimension (unlike the female voices who do not address any narratee), all this cannot be a fictional movie for him, in which he is a character, as they represent his reality and his memories. What we get here is a paradoxical combination of a homodiegetic narrator with an unlikely control over technical details (the existence of which he is not even aware of). But this paradox is ostensible and resolvable, if interpreted from a rhetorical viewpoint. Various momentums and elements in the film can be attached to various devices of character and authorial narration, and it is not always clear which form signals which rhetorical act. This is the consequence of the semiotization of narration in a fictional rhetoric, without fixed rules of correspondence between certain manifestations and their meanings. Unlike real acts of narration, relations between agencies and their tools can change without a warning, their possibilities are only limited by the author's cognitive and aesthetic considerations. They are not accountable by mimetic logic, and naturalization is a counterproductive strategy. The transmissive sense of narrative mediation is overwritten by the function-based rhetoric of fictional representation which always gives priority to a fictional agent and resource that is the most appropriate for its purposes, and every other aspect can be subordinated to this principle. In other words, we are not authorized to imagine a realistic situation as the explanation for the narrative framing of the film, where – for example – the three characters sitting in a projection room and commenting on the movie. The rhetorical purpose is the gradual presentation of Eve's true personality from the perspective of three other characters, as they slowly realize her deceptive nature. It is simply an inadequate question whether these verbal narrators „create" or „control" the visual channel, because technically, it is created by the filmmakers and technological devices, but in the fictional level, it is not necessarily a meaningful problem. A cinematic strategy is conceivable where the homodiegetic narrator is represented as an

entity who has total control over certain parts of the film's discourse, but these rules can be disregarded with no difficulty at any moment. The difference should be emphasized between real (pure instances) and represented acts (idioms) of narrative representation.

The character played by Bob Balaban in *Moonrise Kingdom* (2012) is often called an „on screen narrator"[167] or a „visible" voice-over narrator. He appears at various points in the movie, but instead of introducing the characters or the plot, he apparently shoots a documentary film about the history of the fictive Island of New Penzance. In his scenes, he directly looks into the camera and explains what we can see behind him. „We are on the far edge of Black Beacon Sound, famous for the ferocious and well documented storm which will strike from the east on the fifth of September. In three days time." The most obvious sign of his paradoxical existence is the tension between his physical presence in the spacetime of the narrative, and his apparent knowledge about future events and the characters. In the „documentary scenes", he is certainly aware of the presence of a recording device, and when low visibility requires it, he even switches on the lights, so we could see him better. At one point, he directly intervenes in the story when he helps the characters to find the two missing kids, which act moves the plot forward from an impasse. It should be clear by now that his naturalization as a time traveller or a supernatural being would be completely against the genre codes operated by the work, and his character should be explained by the slightly metafictional tendencies of Anderson's film. Although, it is doubtful if he is the part of the diegetic reality, he is certainly not depicted as someone who „creates" the discourse; he is not a narrator of the primary discourse in the narratological sense of the term, but a character who „knows" things and wanders through the diegesis in a strange, metaleptical way, and tells a story about what is going to happen in the island.

4.2 The Elusive Concept of Unreliability in Narrative Discourse

4.2.1 The Scope of The Concept[168]

It should be clear from this brief reasoning, that my main goal in this chapter is to restrict the concept of character narration in film to a well-defined group of phenomena.

[167] http://www.scene-stealers.com/blogs/moonrise-kingdom-movie-review-2/ (2017-04-19)
[168] Important developments for the concept are: Booth 1983 (origin of the concept), Riggan 1982, Yacobi 1981 (cognitive turn), Phelan – Martin 1999 (rhetorical turn), Zerweck 2001 (historical turn), Olson 2003, V. Nünning 2004 (historical-cognitive elaboration), Phelan 2007, Nünning 2005 and 2008 (synthetization of cognitive and rhetorical approaches) Hansen 2009 (cinematic application), Zipfel 2011.

Consequently, my proposition is to understand unreliable narration, as an even narrower concept, as a represented case of distorted discourse. My main concern is the distinction between unreliability and similar, related phenomena, for which we have other, better concepts like subjectivity, focalization, ambiguity, deception or irony.

The diversely conceptualized issue of unreliability is an area where the difference between authorial and character-controlled narrative rhetoric is exposed most spectacularly. Arguments about fictionality, narrativity, authors, intents, narrators and characters are all touched upon in the debates surrounding the topic, therefore it is an adequate area of study if we want to formulate our own understanding of fictional narration and perspectivation. It is not my purpose to present the entire history of the concept or the artistic device of unreliable narration,[169] therefore I will only highlight some problematic points from theory, which will prove useful to understand this mechanism in film. What interests me is the scope of unreliability in relation to the negotiation between authorial (rhetorical) and reader-centered (constructivist) approaches, the consequences of its discursive embeddedness and its function as a representational strategy to highlight the theoretical inaccuracies that has been written on the phenomena over the course of almost six decades. It closely follows from the previous arguments that I favor a narrowed down definition of unreliable narration.

While Ansgar Nünning, a prominent researcher of the topic was more focused on the wider approach to unreliability, a precise definition (with the implicit incorporation of a theoretical perspective) and explicit reconciliation of rhetorical and cognitive approaches was given by Köppe and Kindt (2011), who attempted to articulate a rhetorical definition of unreliability from the real reader's perspective. They place their concern on the axis of facts, describing mimetically unreliable narration. „UNmim–A states that we are invited to imagine that the narrator does not provide completely accurate information or all relevant information, this should be taken to refer to what we are authorized to imagine upon completion of our reading or on the basis of an interpretation that takes into account the narrative text in its entirety." (2011, 85) I could not agree more with the first part of their definition, which contains a reference to the reader's activity („imagine") and to the cognitive limits an author (through the text) imposes on their interpretational efforts („authorize"). Since Köppe and Kindt adhere to optional narrator theories, they claim that „[s]ome fictional narratives do not prompt us to imagine anything about the text of the work or about a teller. Instead, these narratives require us to merely use the sentences of the work

[169] For an exhaustive and thorough overview of the history of the concept, see: Sternberg – Yacobi 2016.

as a prop to imagine certain things based on their content." (2011, 84), or in other words, these works/passages are narratorless. „(UNmim–B) The narration expressed by a literary work W is mimetically unreliable if, and only if, W does not authorize imagining that there is a narrator; instead W *seemingly, or prima facie*, authorizes imagining states of affairs that are not completely accurate." (2011, 90, my emphasis) It is conspicuous that their definitions are based on a specific understanding of fiction (2011, 90), therefore their presupposition is that unreliability can only be meaningful in a fictional discourse. This is the point where my suspicions arise: How can a fictional work *seemingly* authorize certain imaginings in a narratorless discourse if it consists of performative assertions? How can something be false or inaccurate that an authorial discourse asserts without becoming incoherent and narratively uninterpretable by the revocation of this assertion? At this point, they cannot rely on Yacobi's perspectival principle as the source of the tension, since there is no subjectivity (or fictional character) with which an authorial discourse can be contrasted. They say two kinds of authorized „imaginings" may occur: „in unreliable narration there is a difference between seemingly, or prima facie, authorized imaginings and actually authorized ones." (2011, 89) In my opinion, if we are confronted with seemingly authorized but ultimately false „imaginings" (narrative facts), then it would be better to talk about a deceptive narrative, since the emphasis is not on the characterization of the storyteller, but only on the concealment and consecutive exposure of the distortion (with a possible revelation of the truth), and on the audience's sense of surprise, shock, or ultimate recognition of the trick. Köppe and Kindt add that in narratorless cases, „withholding relevant information" (that is „underreporting") is not enough to achieve an unreliable narrative. „Rather, the withholding of information that has the effect of preventing an accurate understanding of the narrated is what does the trick." (2011, footnote 16.) I argue that even this should not be a sufficient condition to hypothesize unreliability, because there are more suitable terms for these situations. I do not question the possibility of such narrative rhetoric, only its description as „unreliable narration." I claim that if such a possibility is realized there is always more appropriate ways to describe the narrative. For these reasons I accept the first part of their definition as a universally applicable description of unreliability but question the usefulness of narratorless unreliability.

4.2.2 Distinction from Ambiguity, Deception and Irony

From a rhetorical perspective, it is vital to clearly distinguish unreliability from several other concepts such as deception, suspense, ambiguity, and even irony, and define it as: *a strategy in which we are invited to imagine that the author represents a narrator who does not provide completely accurate information or all relevant information concerning the narrative.*[170]

Köppe and Kindt states that „omitting relevant information has the same effect as telling what is not true. We are misled about what is the case in either way, and this is what constitutes narrative unreliability" (2011, 85) Even if I accept that the two situations has the same effect on the narratee, this does not mean their causes are the same. (This was also important in the case of narrative focalization.) What they describe here is not narratorial unreliability, but deception, which is a perfectly understandable term in its own. Stühring argues that all deceptive narratives are unreliable, but not all unreliable narratives are deceptive, effectively making deception into a subtype of unreliability. „A narrative is thus deceptive if it justifies a belief about what is the case in the fiction that contradicts what all optimal interpretations have to say about the matter." (2011, 105)

Both Currie's vague and the German narratologists' (Köppe, Kindt and Stühring) permissive descriptions can be applied to the film *The Sixth Sense* in which the main character dies in the opening scene, but the viewers are led to believe that he survived the gunshot and continues his work as a child psychiatrist. Only at the very end, it is revealed that he is a ghost and only a young boy, a patient of his can perceive his presence and communicate with him. The film keeps this crucial fact a secret for most of its running time without showing us anything that did not happen, or showing events inaccurately, and achieves this by smart editing, *ambiguous* mise-en-scènes, skillfully choreographed dramaturgy and carefully calculated selection of presented information, in other words: extensive underreporting. A critic writes that in „*The Sixth Sense* the unreliable narration leads us to believe we are watching an unfocalised or objective narration, neutrally showing us the action, whereas, in fact, the film has been filtered through Malcolm's consciousness throughout, internally focalized through him and his misrecognition of his own reality." (Houtman 2004, 2) Despite the recognition of the source of the distortion in a perspectivation

[170] Naturally, the inaccuracy of the information that a narrator provides can be indicated inside her/his discourse (by an authorial rhetoric that pervades the character-narration) or by the utilization of another, reliable fictional narrator whose discourse is contrasted with the first narrator's. See Hansen's distinction between intranarrational and internarrational unreliability. (Hansen 2007, 241)

strategy (instead of a faulty narration), Houtman insists to call the film's main strategy as „unreliable narration".[171]

For Emily Anderson, the distinction between under- and misreporting actually matters and she criticizes their homogenization under the term „unreliability", stating that underreporting cause us to make incorrect inferences, but misreporting is better rephrased as lying. „And films that lie to us, that present events that have never actually occurred as if they have occurred, are deceptive in a fundamentally different way." (2010, 87) This fundamental way is the fact the they cannot reveal more information to correct our faulty assumptions, because in the absence of a fictive narrative agency they would have to deny the validity of previous information, which leads to the loss of the story's coherence and consistency. It is important to note that the damage is not inflicted on the logic of realist(ic) representation, but the inherent conceptual logic of narrative comprehension. She argues that films like Hitchcock's *Stage Fright* (1950) which actually „lie" to the audience, could not represent false events in a narrative context without a character-narrator, because it „would be the logical equivalent of »This sentence is a lie«—impossible to comprehend both rationally and according to narrative conventions." (2010, 87)

Complementing Phelan's and Martin's typology, I claim that narratorless cases of underreporting are not unreliable narrations, because they can be better characterized by deception (to name its effect of the viewer), or ambiguity or in some cases by perspectival criteria (internal focalization). Narratorless cases of misreporting result in incoherence or in a logical impossibility, no wonder there is not many examples of it (among narrative films). This is one argument, why the application of the phrase (unreliable narration) should be restricted to represented cases of telling.

How can we characterize the relation between deception, ambiguity and unreliable narration? In my opinion, unreliable narratives and deceptive narratives are two distinct sets that have an intersection, and the same applies for the relationship between unreliable and ambiguous narratives. A crucial trait of deception, that it characterizes a narrative by its effect on the recipient, as a cognitive effect, therefore it does not necessarily co-dependent or appear together with unreliability or ambiguity. *Forrest Gump* has an unreliable character narrator, without having a deceptive (or particularly ambiguous) narrative. *The Sixth Sense* is a deceptive film without unreliable narration (because there is no narrating character in

[171] Eva Laass rightfully notices that „the presentation is radically filtered through the subjective perception of a character" (2008, 07), but she works with a wide enough concept of unreliability to incorporate cases of internal focalization.

it). *Stage Fright* and *The Usual Suspects* are both deceptive and unreliable. But how can we characterize the narrative of *Rashomon* where the same events are conveyed by several contradicting eyewitness testimonies, before we have access to a final, true account of the story, or *Hero* (2002) where false, hypothetical and probably true versions of stories follow each other? Currie wonders if this type of narrative is also ambiguous on top of being unreliable in some parts. (1995, 24) He defines ambiguous narrative as „one which does not enable us to answer all the significant questions which arise concerning the story. [...] When is a question significant? [...] when it raises a question in the viewer's mind which it fails to answer, and where the raising and the nonanswering seem to have been intentional." (1995, 24)

Of course, ambiguity can touch on many aspects of the narrative, it „may relate to ethics (was Lord Jim a coward?), to motives (why does Quentin Compton commit suicide?), to facts (was Owen Taylor, in The Big Sleep, murdered?), or to anything else which may normally be questionable." (Rabinowitz 1977, 136), but from a narrative perspective, I should add, this nonanswering is important when it is in conjunction with the understanding of the (causality and outcome) of the story.[172] I want to specify Currie's claim about the compatibility and often simultaneous presence of ambiguity and unreliability[173] by saying that in *Rashomon*, the ambiguities are mainly *raised by* the contradicting accounts, that is, they are the effect of unreliable narration. The individual stories are believable, they do not have internal contradictions and only their juxtaposition places them under suspicion. Another difference is that while the ambiguities are resolved by the end of the film, we cannot say the same about unreliable narration, which is not a quality that emerged as a valid interpretational option at some point, and rejected or vanished by the end: they are part of the (understanding of the) story, not only a hermeneutic interpretation of it. By contrast, in *The Turn of The Screw*, the relation between two the concepts are reversed: the interpretational possibility of unreliable narration arises *as a consequence* of ambiguity and remains a potential naturalization strategy for the understanding of the text, very much justifiable by textual evidence: The author-narrator of the embedded story, the young governess either sees real ghosts or suffers from delusions and hallucinations. The conflict

[172] I have already discussed further aspects of ambiguities in the chapter on focalization.

[173] „[W]hile ambiguity and unreliability are distinct interpretive options, they are compatible, not merely in the sense that there is some-times no principled choice between them, but in the stronger sense that a single interpretation of the work may require the application of both." (Currie 1995, 25)

is not resolved in the text, therefore the interpretational ambiguity is an integral part of the work's rhetorical strategy.[174]

I believe, the difference between ambiguity and deception can be deduced from Köppe's and Kindt's distinction between suspense and unreliability: „For suspense, it is crucial that a particular information, usually concerning the outcome of a situation, is withheld from the reader (cf. Anz 2003). However, this does not imply that the reader acquires false believes concerning what is narrated or that he is mislead in any way." (2011, footnote 15.) If suspense can be understood as a narrative-future oriented ambiguity which causes tension in the narrative, ambiguity itself applies not so much to the obscurity of possible futures, but to the uncertainty of some present state or cause of things, usually concerning narratively relevant information.

One last notion should be addressed in this context. I argue that unreliable narration is not necessarily associated with any kind of dramatic irony, however there is prominent sub-type of it, where the two qualities are simultaneously present. According to Chatman, unreliability „entails a special kind of irony" which, unlike nonfictional irony in someone's verbal discourse is „»speaker-unconscious«: that is, the narrator is the butt, not the objects and events narrated." (1990, 153)[175] and „the narrator is being ironized in the act of narrating." (1990, 154)[176] While in an ironic discourse, a single act of „speech entails two conflicting messages, an ostensible one and an implicit one" (1990, 153), in unreliability, there is always more than one agency involved: it is a representation of an inaccurate utterance. The recognition of this inaccuracy is the rhetorical purpose of the author, but not of the unreliable narrator, who is unaware of the authorial framing of his discourse. However, this frame not always induces an ironic reading of the character's narrative. If the character is deliberately distorting the truth or upright lying, then he is very well aware of the quality and purpose of his narration, which might be hidden from his narratee and even the reader or viewer in a deceptive work. Jonas Koch acknowledges that this is a specific type of unreliability, and he is right in assuming that this sense of ironic discourse is closer to Booth's original definition of unreliability. For the description of the phenomenon, he

[174] According to Ferenz, the situation is similar in *American Psycho*, where „no clear and unambiguous signs about the character narrator's unreliability are revealed. He might be an »unreliable person«, but the fact that he might be an unreliable narrator as well, we find out only lose to the film's ending." (2008, 196) „In Bateman's (Davis's?) unreliable (reliable?) narration, ambiguity reigns." (2008, 177)

[175] It is an almost verbatim quote from Booth who calls these types „overt" and „dramatic irony". (1983, 304). See also: V. Nünning (2015, 132), Jahn (1998).

[176] Eva Laass warns us about the difference between ironic and ironized voice-overs in film: „Voice-over narrators whose unreliability is exposed by mechanisms of dramatic irony must not be confused with intentionally ironical voice-overs." (2008, 57)

reinterprets Cohn's concept of *discordant narration*, where „producer and recipient form an alliance of knowledge from which the fictitious producer is excluded and hence exposed to (mild) condescendence." (2011, 60) As a consequence, although Koch never explicitly states it, the emphasis is always on values and norms, and on the abilities of the narrator, not on the veracity/accuracy of the fictional facts. As logical result, it occurs more often in non-deceptive narratives. In Koch's analysis, discordant narration has to meet two conditions: (1) it has to be produced within the fiction (this is also my basic criterion for unreliability), and (2) „views or beliefs that are being expressed or implied in the production of its fictitious instance" has to be „refuted or ironized". (2011, 63) *Forrest Gump* is analyzed as an example of discordant narration,[177] that meets both conditions, but „not in a specifically filmic fashion", because the „production fiction" is a verbal narration, and because it is mostly ironized in itself, opposed to the viewer's external knowledge of societal and psychological norms and not other channels of cinematic communication. The film presents us the simple worldview of its protagonist through his account of certain events, while always revealing more than Gump intends to say. He recounts that the father of her girlfriend, Jenny „was a very loving man. He was always kissing and touching her and her sisters." The utterance only makes sense when the reader interprets it with an implicit message about Jenny being abused by her father. The complex rhetoric of what is said and what is suggested „does not seem very likely [to be] intended by the speaker." (2011, 59)

4.2.3 Unreliable Narration in Film

There are several theories of unreliable narration which attempted to establish models for specifically cinematic narratives. These theories are usually built on a literary model of unreliability and mostly concerned with the interactions and relationship between the different medial channels in filmic representation.

Dan Shen briefly summarizes the academic consensus on the subject in *the living handbook*'s Unreliability article: „Chatman (1978: 235–37, 1990: 124–38) extends the discussion of unreliability to film, where more dramatic effect may emerge, since a voice-over depicting story events may be belied by what the audience sees on the screen. Interestingly, the cinematic camera can also be used to mislead the audience temporally for certain effects" (Shen 2013, 26) In addition of being a prime example for the confusion

[177] The similarities between normative unreliability and discordant narration are confirmed by the fact that *Forrest Gump* is often analyzed as a normatively unreliable narration. (see: Laass 2008, 90-103)

between unreliability and deception, there are two major, interconnected theoretical problems in this rather sketchy description of the phenomenon, both related to the issue of its scope: mediality and agency. By contrasting verbal and visual channels of narration, it unnecessarily narrows down the possible configurations of how unreliability can be textually manifested in cinematic discourses, not to mention that the example of a simultaneous verbal and cinematic narration is not even the most common form of filmic unreliability. It is not clear if the „cinematic camera" is understood as a rhetorical device for the author or an autonomous and independent agent in her definition which (in the first case) can grant access to a reliable version of events or (in the latter case) distort the story itself.

I want to clarify these problems by relying on the rhetorical models I established as determinative in my approach in the previous chapters. My definition of unreliability closely follows my understanding of agency in film: Neither explicit verbal (voice-overs), nor implicit narrative representation („the camera") should be considered as a distinct agent per default or the presence of a fictional narrator should not be hypostatized behind them as they are simply possible rhetorical resources and representational modes (or communicational channels) for the authorial agency. Therefore, any kind of perspectival (perceptually available) or factual (narratively available) distortion (with the possible effect of deception) without a fictional character narrator should not be considered as unreliable narration.

I want to focus on these underlying issues of agency and medium that are implicitly present in most definitions of cinematic unreliability by examining two serious, monograph-sized studies on the topic from 2008, both from a German author. I want to point out some general disagreements between my understanding and their approach to the concept of unreliable narration in film.

For Eva Laass, narrative representation in film can occur in the form of explicit (=verbal) and implicit (=nonverbal) forms (these equivalences I find quite useful), and states that these two types are always hierarchized in a way, where implicit narration dominates the explicit form, because the basic „tools" (the primary level) of film is nonverbal, and verbal narration (as an optional device) necessarily implies the creation of an intradiegetic character. Thus these forms are strictly tied to communicational levels: „the level of action (NL1, the abbreviation »NL« representing the term »narrative level«), the level of explicit narrative communication (NL2), the level of implicit narrative communication (NL3), and the level of extratextual, indirect, non-ficitional communication (NL4)." (2008, 44) In other words, she pictures a system where an author *communicates* „non-fictionally" (NL4), a film

narrator *shows* (implicit narration – NL3), a voice *speaks* (explicit narrator – NL2) and characters *act* (NL1).

I think the connection Laass makes between forms (implicit/explicit) and hierarchies (of levels) are more spectacular than theoretically sound. In her model „[l]evels 2 and 3 together constitute the narrative discourse in films" and states that „the only code on NL2 is language, NL3 is constituted by a sum of heterogeneous non-verbal narrative techniques" (2008, 60), but in another passage, she admits that the hierarchization of verbal and nonverbal communication is more of a „cinematic convention", than a theoretical necessity. (2008, 57) I argued earlier that a literal voice (in film) is a broader category than „the comments provided by a personalised narrator" (2008, 57) and verbality can be used without characterization, (for example in heterodiegetic voice-overs), that could be placed in NL3. NL3 and NL2 should not even be distinct „levels", but different forms of communication by the same (authorial) agency. If NL2 is understood as a level for personalized narrators, then Laass needlessly creates two distinct levels (NL2 and NL1) for represented characters between which the only difference is the type of activity they are involved in. What happens with the level of action (NL1) if there is no personalized filmic narrator (no NL2)? Does it „move" one level higher (from NL1 to NL2) or will there be a vacant level between the implicit narration (NL3) and the action (NL1)? Neither option seems to make much sense to me. Even if NL2 is optional in her model, Laass makes a particular (admittedly frequent) type of configuration (where the audiovisual narrative [NL3] contains a verbal narration [NL2] which „comments" on the iconic action [NL1]) as a universal model for film narration. Her division of the communicational levels depends on unnecessary technical considerations, where the visual, auditory and verbal elements necessarily „belong to different levels in the film's communication system." (2008, 56)

According to my proposal, an author(ial discourse) can represent characters and actions either audiovisually (implicitly) or verbally (explicitly), and these characters can engage in the act of narrative representation themselves, which can be presented verbally or audiovisually, likewise. Even if the character's verbal discourse is represented as images and sounds, it is not a question of agency and communicational levels. As Laass rightly notices (2008, 43), cinema's unique possibility is its capacity to represent multiple discourses simultaneously. And for me, this is the only rhetorically significant difference with literary discourses regarding the relationship of agency and representation. The unmistakable presence of authorial „tools" in a character's discourse (like a flashback) is just a consequence of the larger medial gap between verbal (traditional) and nonverbal

(technological) media. We should recognize that even in literature, the character-narrator's discourse is always mediated by resources available for the author, only the encryption happens in a more customary and culturally conventionalized way. (And that is why Gaudreault and Jost says that in literature, a character's discourse „make[s] invisible the presence of the primary instance" [1999, 54])

From her definition of unreliable narration, Laass correctly excludes the devices of withholding crucial information (because this would include „virtually the whole genre of the »whodunit' thriller« - 2008, 47) and the representation of „subjective depth" (because the display of a mental state „may not necessarily inspire confidence in the veracity of the presentation" - 2008, 62) as sufficient criteria for unreliability, but her definition is still too wide with the inclusion of two very different narrative configurations: „we project narrative unreliability (a) if we perceive the presentation or interpretation of the film's story by an explicit narrator as subjectively distorted […] and/or, (b) if the implied author avoids (or fails) to frame the subjectivity of the presentation or interpretation with the help of specific narrative techniques (which will also have to be discussed.)" (2008, 29) The first part can be justifiably called unreliable narration: it describes the representation of a character-narrator and its inaccurate discourse. Although the second part is commonly accepted as a type of filmic unreliability, I argue that it is unpractical for two reasons. Laass explains that „we perceive the implicit narrative mediation as unreliable in the proper sense if, by cinematic standards, its specific narrative techniques do *not* indicate (clearly enough) that a presentation is »fallibly filtered«." (2008, 29) In other words, instead of unreliable narration, she gives an acceptable definition for an internally focalized deceptive narrative, which was not a condition for the first part of her definition. For this part, I believe, these criteria are the consequence of her confusion between a phenomenon and its effect, as both unreliable narration and internal focalization are often characterized as „deceptive narration". Therefore, the main cause of my dissatisfaction is the asymmetry behind her definitional criteria of parts „a" and „b".

Despite the definition's heterogeneity, its underlying logic is clear, if we see how she establishes criteria for a character to be a narrator: „I would argue that the level of communication chiefly involved is the most relevant criterion: a character fulfils the function of a narrator if the primary addressee of (the representation of) the story she recounts is not another character, but a heterodiegetic narratee." (2008, 46) It is not at all obvious what Laass means here. First it seems that these conditions must result in a paradox, because a character is never aware of a „heterodiegetic narratee", which is, from the perspective of the

character, extradiegetic and exists in a higher ontological level. In the least complex case, this is the real viewer. On the other hand, the purpose of representing a character-narration is *always* a form of authorial communication with the real audience (to convey information about the story, the character himself, etc.). Surely, Laass does not mean a strange metaleptical situation where the fictional character somehow manages to communicate with the viewer, but from the context it becomes clear that she means that narrative information conveyed by the character's discourse has to be relevant for the viewer's understanding of the narrative. But again, this is a factor the character is completely unaware of. Hence, it is really an extradiegetic criterion concerning authorial rhetoric. But Laass goes on and claims that since scenic representations of verbal discourses are witnessed exclusively by „heterodiegetic narratees", then it is a discourse that without a doubt fulfils a communicational function towards the viewer, and this is not assured in the case of a mere verbal exchange of fictional characters. Thus, her two criteria are: (1) the content of the discourse has to contain quality information for a „heterodiegetic narratee", and (2) it *also* has to be conveyed in the special mode of scenic representation (with implicit narration). Both seems to be unnecessary to me. Laass certainly has a problem with a character whose narration is plainly and directly told by himself. Regarding her first condition: as I understand narrative representation, a character's verbal discourse is mediated and shaped to communicate meanings with viewers as well, even without any „scenic" illustration of it. For the second one, I guess her logic can be formulated as follows: a character who uses language is not really a „cinematic narrator". For her, the unspoken important thing is the involvement of the authorial disourse's agency *and* medium in the communication. That is, it does not matter what happens in the level of „action", unless the authorial discourse „highlights" it by its own medial means. Then it is not surprising that she derives the scope of her definition of unreliability following the above logic: „I consequently apply the concept of unreliable narration only to scenically represented hyponarratives." (2008, 47) Even if I find this restriction illogical, I understand the reasons behind it: without any artificialization (which has to do something with the highly technological medium of the frame), the speech act of the character seems as plain „action" in the diegesis that takes place on the „story level" and not as a discursive factor (in the form of a „hyponarration") or a particularly sensual phenomena (which seems to be the condition Laass establishes for unreliability in the case of internally focalized perceptions). However, as a consequence, it seems strange that the narratorship of an agent depends on the mode of the representation of its discourse,

because what matters is not the explicit or implicit nature of narrative representation but the fact if rhetorical resources are applied to represent a character's discourse or not.

Laass adheres to the confusing concept of the „cinematic character-narrator", which involves the speech act of a character and a representational activity conveyed in the form of implicit narration. The term refers to cases where the authorial communication is foregrounded in the character's discourse. Her reasoning is typical in one strain of the narratological field and a consequence of several unfounded, but long co-present combination of arguments: (1) The conceptual frame established by the story/discourse distinction in a model of narrative communication promoted by Chatman stiffens the concept of narrator as a part of the discourse and characters as part of the story, and excludes them from the discourse.[178] That is why Laass needs an unmistakably discursive element which makes their action as a discursive and communicative act. (2) These elements (images and sounds) in cinema are the ones that trigger a greater psychological and cognitive effect on the viewer with their iconic and sensual nature. (3) The third source of Laass' view is the aesthetic imperative in narrative literature and cinema according to which (a) „it is better to show than tell"[179], and a condition stressed particularly for film, that (b) one should use the tools that is unique to this medium which can literally show things by re-presenting them. I do not want to contest the significance and effects of these (both academic and artistic) traditions, but examine them in the light of the logic and possibilities of narrative representation in multiple media. Conventions, cognitive factors, prior examples and affinities of the medium does influence and affect the construction of a narrative, but if we can establish a more unified concept (with a more consistent set of criteria) to describe a phenomenon, we should not base our definitions on possible effects of a rhetorical choice (the illustration of the verbal account of a character), but on the underlying logic of representation which sees technicalities as resources for specific rhetorical purposes.

We should see specific authorial rhetoric in their narrative functionality that can be based on cognitive (even folk psychological) criteria, such as the exploitation of the audiovisual mode of representation which is employed as a „reliable", and „objective" mode to contrast the „possibly unreliable" and fallible human utterances (see Laass 2008, 55).

The views advertised by Volker Ferenz in his book, *Don't Believe his Lies* are much closer to my understanding of a practical definition of unreliable narration and character

[178] These narratological „reflexes" are criticized by Phelan (2011, 58-64)

[179] Countless articles, essays and books have been written on the subject, a lot of them are „guides" for aspiringing writers and movie-directors.

narration in general. His primary aim is to argue against the unnecessary widening of the concept, which „should not be conflated with other narrative strategies, such as the notion of the uncanny, the idea of free indirect subjectivity, or the genres of fantasy film, horror film, or science fiction film." (Ferenz 2008, 72) Two major problematic areas are outlined in his study, both occupying a central place in the debates surrounding unreliability. The first is the issue of realism, which he approaches from two directions: genre conventions and art movies. The other one is the issue of subjectivity, more specifically the relationship between perspectivation and narrativization. In this matter, he is much more rigorous than Laass. One of his most pronounced statements is the categorical exclusion of narratorless situations: „only films in the classical Hollywood tradition that feature so-called pseudo-diegetic narrators – that is, character-narrators who »take over« their narratives – fulfil the precondition for unreliable narration." (2008, 4) He argues that this is a basic condition to fulfil the requirements of Yacobi's model: „Only in such instances will viewers attribute textual incongruences and referential difficulties to a character-narrator whom we treat like one of us *and* who can be given sufficient authority over their narrative and thus the blame for their unreliable reporting, interpreting, or evaluation." (2008, 46). His examples are *Double Indemnity*, *The Usual Suspects, Fight Club, American Psycho,* and *Memento* „In storytelling situations other than that, we are more likely to reach satisfying interpretations of such problematic story data with different recuperation strategies, such as the notion of the uncanny, the tradition of the art film, or the genre of the fantastic. Therefore, since we apply a characteristic such as unreliability predominantly to individuals, it doesn't make a lot of sense to attribute it to a theoretical construct like the cinematic narrator or impersonal processes of narration." (2008, 47)[180] My only problem with his formulation is the term „pseudo-diegetic", which is hard for me to understand and looks like a residue similar to Laass' need for an audiovisual presentation of the unreliable discourse. For Ferenz, not only the narrator is „pseudo-diegetic", he even places them on a „pseudo-diegetic" level (2008, 84), which is connected to their assumed capacity to „take over" the narration, that is, to control the cinematic (nonverbal) elements of the discourse. But this assumption is false,

[180] Alber agrees with Ferenz and points out the debate over such problematic cases: „At first glance, one might feel that a film like *A Beautiful Mind* (2001) also presents us with a form of unreliable narration because it uses a lying camera as well (Helbig 2005, Lahde 2006, Laass 2008: 28). However, upon closer inspection we realize that in this case, the camera presents us with the deranged perception of John Forbes Nash (Russell Crowe), a mathematical genius, who begins to endure delusional and paranoid episodes, and Nash does not relate his life through a narrative; rather, he is a focalizer who simply misperceives the world. […] Nash cannot misrepresent the world of *A Beautiful Mind* because he does not even try to narrate or represent it; rather, he inhabits it." (Alber 2010, 173)

characters are not capable of controlling the tools of a film's authorial narration: for example, images and sounds in a flashback. They stay at their original diegetic level, and only became extradiegetic in relation to their own discourse. They are represented as rhetorical agencies behind these discourses, but remain unaware and independent from the technical tools of (cinematic) representation. In special metaleptical cases where characters are seemingly aware of the presence of a „film" and its technical properties, such as the character-narrator of *Fight Club*, they only exercise power over the embedded discourse, which therefore has a redoubled frame. For Ferenz, distortions in narratorless situations does not affect the „reliability" of the discourse, instead comprehensible along the lines of other types of „recuperation strategies", therefore it is pointless to posit a covert „cinematic narrator" who can be made liable for the discrepancies. (2008, 57) This also shows Ferenz's preference of the cognitive approach, where the „unreliable narrator" is not a textual given, but a function for resolving and ascribing textual difficulties. (2008, 28)

He also draws attention to another type of undue ascription of unreliable narration which is based on intertextual reasons. „[T]he adaptations of literary unreliable narratives do not qualify for discussion under the heading of unreliable filmic narration automatically, because very often we witness a kind of un-making of narratorial unreliability." (2008, 39) Take the case of *The Turn of The Screw* and *The Innocents*, its most reputable adaptation. While unreliable narration is an interpretational possibility in the text's embedded autobiographical discourse, in the film, there is no such frame and the events occurred in Bly are presented directly, their narrator is not Miss Giddens. Although the same ambiguity about the supernatural thread is brilliantly maintained in the movie, it is presented through the perceptions (of the governess and not by a narration of hers. The film utilizes a special form of perspectivation (internal focalization) to achieve the same effect.

Clear cases of unreliable narration are *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920) and *Amadeus* (1984): „the film's flashbacks are clearly initiated and commented upon by Salieri" and „both Francis in [...] *Caligari* and Salieri in *Amadeus* reflect on a world rather than create a world, hence their narrating is potentially unreliable" (2008, 42) Of course, it can be said that they create their own versions of the world, but the emphasis is on the mode of the storytelling, which is by their purpose in their communicative situation is *non-fictional*. Ferenz articulates a justifiable restriction that applies for character-narrators is such situations, which I want to explicitly formulate as follows: *unreliability can only occur in*

homodiegetic narration, that is, it only makes sense when applied to truth-discourses in fiction.[181]

Ferenz claims that historically, „unreliable narration in film predominantly occurs where the »independent« cinema intersects with the »mainstream«." because unreliability, which is thought as „a modernist literary device, has been picked up and applied to the cinema mainly by those with roots in »independent« movements." (2008, 16) He even tries to situate the device between modern and postmodern tendencies: Because an unreliable narrative „often revolves around the question whether »objective truth« is easily accessible" (2008, 204), it can be said that „it retains certain »realist« categories, it hangs in the balance; it isn't »traditional« any more, can be said to be part of a »modernist« conception of narrative fiction, but is not yet »postmodern'" (2008, 15), which „would deem such a question rather naive and ultimately beside the point." (2008, 204) It has a dualistic nature, since it „holds on to traditional and realist means of storytelling", yet „picks up themes and […] storytelling devices that challenge its own aesthetic and ideological basis." (2008, 15) And this is why such extreme cases that lie outside of the concept of a „realist framework" of classical Hollywood films such as *Last Year at Marienbad,* or even *Lost Highway* and *Mulholland Drive* cannot be considered as unreliable (maybe with very strict interpretational restrictions), because in them, that „we face uncanny worlds and not unreliable narrators." (2008, 52)

I find the concept of „realism" slightly misleading here, because what matters is not the mimetic nature of representation, or an adjustment to any referential frame of external reality or a genre-bound truth discourse, but the principles of narrativity (storytelling) and the genre-independent internal consistency of the work.[182] The mentioned Resnais and Lynch films are not „reliable" because they lack realism, but because they apply the categories of narrativity more loosely. A sci-fi or fantasy novel has a bigger chance to be considered unreliable, because despite their divergence from realism, they adhere to narrative conceptuality much more extensively. Thus, I favor the argument of Laass, who says that „[a]s long as the narrative representation of story events and existents is consistent, we have no reason to doubt its reliability." (2008, 149)

4.2.4 Unreliability, Focalization and Narratorship

[181] There are debates whether it makes sense to talk about uneliability in non-fiction. See: Martens 2015.
[182] For a pragmatic model of unreliability, based on Grice's maxims, see: Heyd 2011.

In my study, the most important distinction is between cases of mimetically unreliable narration and perspectivation, especially the subtype that Chatman calls „fallible filtration" (1990, 149)[183], where the narrative is represented through the distorted perceptions of a non-narrator character. The problematic incorporation of this category is as old as the concept of unreliable narration itself. The root of the problem is the categorical confusion which appears even in Booth's seminal study, when he writes that „[w]e should remind ourselves that any sustained inside view, of whatever depth, temporarily turns the character whose mind is shown into a narrator." (Booth 1983, 164) Apart from a few minor differences, I share Ferenz's view on the subject. The main issue – as demonstrated by the case of the adaptation of *The Turn of The Screw* – is if the same effects (uncertainty and ambiguity) can be achieved by unreliable narration and fallible filtration, why and how should we differentiate between them in such situations? Ferenz designates the concept of narrative level as a starting point: „[f]ilters and narrators are divided by the story/discourse distinction. While narrators relate events, filters are constrained by events. As a matter of course, filters can narrate stories, even if they do not narrate the story of which they are part. And just like any other character as well, they can tell and narrate about their experiences, memories, and dreams. In film narrative theory, it is now well established that these lines are very often difficult to draw (Deleyto 1996)." (Ferenz 2008, 66) He refers to Chatman, who introduced this distinction in film narratology and claims that unreliability belongs to a discursive instance „who defines the story", while fallible filtration signifies „an instance *of* the story". While Ferenz's wording suggests that these „instances" might be on different levels, they only differ in the type of activity they are engaged in. Therefore, in my rhetorically sensitive reformulation, the statement reads as follows: the fictional agent represented in unreliable narration is creating an inaccurate secondary narrative discourse; the fictional agent represented in internal focalization (or „fallible filtration") experiences reality in a distorted way. No secondary narrative *discourse* is represented in the latter case.

Ferenz draws attention to two interesting problems which I would like to address for further clarification. In the first case, he restricts, in the second one, he widens the scope of narratorship, both times unnecessarily and incorrectly. At one point, he comes up with a surprising proposition. In contrast with „pseudo-diegetic narrators who appear to be in

[183] I want to avoid the expression „unreliable focalization" (Nünning 2008, 66), not just because the equally widespread phrase „narrative unreliability" and the common abbreviation „unreliability" creates further confusion of the two phenomena, but because of their structural differences that are explained above and in the chapter on focalization.

charge of the images we see and the sounds we hear" (2008, 70) he excludes a certain type of homodiegetic voice-over narrator from „the category of the unreliable narrator" (2008, 66), because this type of instance „merely functions as a focalizer, hence s/he cannot misrepresent the story events simply because s/he is not responsible for what we see. S/he can be fallible concerning her or his thoughts, but s/he cannot be unreliable in relation to the story itself." (2008, 72) Ferenz refers of cases where voice over has a commenting function in the film and mentions the subtle ironies and tensions in *Badlands* and *Days of Heaven.* This is a medium-specific problem, since two forms of (possibly contradictory) narrations are simultaneously present (though they are not at the same level). These voices are not the representation of a character's thoughts at the primary level, but they create a simultaneous discourse instead of an embedded one (which is maintained for the „pseudo-diegetic" voice-over). As interpreters and evaluators of the story, they are an evocation of a literary device. Ferenz elaborates that „[a]lthough they very often do a significant amount of narrating, they cannot be considered »true« narrators in that they usually do not assume the role of the source of the narrative in its entirety." (2008, 65-66) In my view, this is only because they are not the authors of both discourses, just their own. They occupy a subsequent temporal position (therefore a discursive level), compared to the one that the (implicit) cinematic narration presents us, and they usually appear as characters in the earlier timeline, the main discourse of the film. They do not create the primary level of narrative but a second one which is manifested as speech. The latter cannot affect the former as it is only a commentary on it, but in itself why wouldn't it be a full value narrative discourse? This voice-over narrator is not the author of the other discourse, but it is in a certain interpretative relationship with it, and the two are juxtaposed by the authorial discourse in order the create tension and reveal traits of both the optionally audiovisually and the verbally represented aspect of the character. In this sense, as a represented character, its narrating activity can be considered unreliable, even if (because the events are at the primary audiovisual level) it mostly falls into the category of normative unreliability and cannot be factual/mimetic.

In some cases, the temporal difference is clear between the voice over and the primary diegesis: in *American Beauty*, the information given by Lester reveals a situation in which he is already dead: „In less than a year, I'll be dead. Of course, I don't know that yet." Though this may be uncanny, it does not mean that it is necessarily unreliable, after all, he *will* die at the end of the film. The perspective is also obvious in *Badlands* when we hear the voice of the naïve Holly: „Little did I realize, what began in the alleys and back ways of this quit town would end in the Badlands of Montana." In *Days of Heaven*, the grammatical mode

alone signifies the temporal split: „We didn't know where we were going and what we were gonna do. I've never been on a boat before. That was the first time." This is where my earlier distinction between character focalization and knowledge/information-relations comes handy: Although the narrative conveys personal information about certain characters that stems from their subjective experiences, the voice-overs should not be simply considered as „devices" for focalization, since we do not get access to the perceptions and thoughts of the characters directly, but it is better understood as a narrativization from their later selves. While focalization can be studied regarding the relationship between the authorial agencies and their own subordinate discourses,[184] these voice-overs are also the representation of narrator-characters and not simply focalization/perspectivation strategies by the author.

I believe a similar voice-over can be found in the film adaptation of *American Psycho*, and I am not convinced by the claim that the whole narrative of the film is a case of an unreliable character-narrator generated discourse, as Ferenz argues. (2008, 163) I acknowledge that Bateman's possibly unreliable narration (he believes that he „caused a mayhem" and he is a serial killer) is far from simply being the thoughts of the character (he introduces himself and describes his daily routine to us), but I tend to regard it as a parallel discourse, juxtaposed with the implicit narration, with the purpose of evoking the film's literary origins.

Ferenz and Cohn calls *simultaneous narration* the cases where the experiencing I's and the narrating I's temporality collapse into one another: „Dorrit Cohn compellingly argues that certain forms of focalization, or, as she has it, reflectorization, such as the autobiographical monologue or the memory monologue, can have a number of narrator-oriented characteristics." (2008, 134) Ferenz recognizes the crucial differences of the situations from unreliable narration: „One might argue that the protagonist of *Memento* – as well as the protagonists of *Spider* and *The Machinist* – cannot be an unreliable narrator at all since he does not narrate, but merely functions as focalizer in »his« film." (2008, 134) He insists that despite the fact that *Memento's* voice-over is not directed to any extrafictional addressee and the image track is not controlled by the narrating-I, we „treat them" like narrators, not just „focalizors". „One cannot ignore the fact focalizers themselves are in a position to tell stories, even if they do not narrate to overall stories they are part of. In both *Memento* and *Spider*, we have only the protagonists' versions of »their« secondary stories,

[184] The author of *Badlands* and *Days of Heaven* simultaneously operate a direct discourse (the audiovisual, implicitly narrative, narratorless one) and utilize character-narrators (to convey their own discourse) in the form of occasional voice-overs.

and everything that contradicts their versions can also be attributed to their psychological development. [...] What we could say is that their experiences, memories, and imaginations – in these particular cases – are subjected to a process of narrativization." (2008, 134) I think, with this move Ferenz contradicts himself and after all widens the scope of not just unreliable narration, but the conditions for narratorship in general. His reasons for this can be traced back to the double meaning of „narrative representation" (as narrative sensemaking and making sense of a narrative) that Walsh examined extensively and which remains unreflective in Ferenz's study. He tries to grasp the situation with vague expressions: „With *Memento*, *Spider* and *The Machinist*, we enter a semi-narrative terrain that has been placed theoretically between interior monologue and homodiegetic narration." (2008, 134) First, an interior monologue as a conscious articulation possessing a verbal form is conceptually not the best choice to describe an activity that is the counterpole of a proper narrative representation. (A stream of consciousness would be a better fit.) Also, it is not a „less developed form of narration", because it does not necessarily have to do anything with narrativity. Second, what is exactly the difference between interior monologue and homodiegetic narration that places the activities of the protagonists from *Memento*, *Spider* and *The Machinist* between them? As character-narration is commonly understood, it is a narrative *act of communication* oriented towards a fictional narratee (character's discourse), framed by another act of narrative communication oriented towards a real audience (authorial discourse). At the other end of the spectrum, which is in my understanding the focalization of a mental activity of a character, is a *noncommunicative* activity oriented towards the self (I hesitate to call it a discourse), framed by an act of narrative communication oriented towards a real audience (authorial discourse). Hence the main difference is the (non)communicative nature of the represented activity. But how can something be noncommunicative and narrativized at the same time? I understand communication as a conscious activity that has an addressee other than the self. As Walsh demonstrated (2007, 106), narrative is not necessarily a communicative activity, narrative sensemaking (by mental representations) is simply the articulation of concepts and their relationship as a special form of thinking. The concept of „simultaneous narration" loses its meaning, if the only communicative agent in the process is the author, because then the character merely experiences and understands mental or sensual impressions in a certain way.

The protagonists of *Spider* and *The Machinist* are not narrators but experiencers of their own mental narrativizations, and they are subjected to a particular mode of

representation: internal focalization. In *Spider* and *The Machinist*, unreliability comes from the distorted re-narrativization of traumatic memories. It would make sense to say that in these films, the unconscious part of the protagonist's mind tries to „communicate" with their conscious selves, but the description itself pointed out the complications surrounding the crucial element of „consciousness" in this activity, which can be best defined as „preconscious" and in this quality, ultimately indistinguishable from perception. *Memento*'s antihero is not narrating the film we see, his voice-over is simply juxtaposed with discursively selected and arranged scenes. (He surely has not experienced them in the presented order, therefore the viewer's knowledge is always more than the character's.) He is telling a story to a mysterious figure on the phone, and creating a secondary narrative in which he *is unreliable*, because he tells the events inaccurately. This is not the narrative we see in the colored sequences, but the black and white parts in the hotel room (explicit character narration) with occasional flashbacks (explicitly *and* implicitly rendered character-narration). In this respect, Ferenz's counter-arguments are weak, because they depend too much on viewer intuitions, saying that „[a]lthough viewers know very well that the film as a whole is narrated by an external narrative agent – how else would it be possible to account for the backwards structure? […] we regard Leonard the originator of the story, even though, upon close inspection, he isn't" and we „treat Leonard as if he were the character-narrator of »his« film." (2008, 135)

My earlier proposition that all fictional narratives are communicational[185] still stands, with the addendum that they can represent non-communicational „narrativizations". This is the relevant difference between cases of representing communicative narrations (with external media and character narrators), and noncommunicational narrative representations. Following Yacobi (1981) and Chatman (1990), I consider the narrator as a consciously communicating agent, relying on the insight that „most comprehensive distinction is between speakers or reflectors who are and those who are not conscious of addressing an audience. […] Unlike even the most humble of dialogists, this monologist (with the possible exception of Bakhtin's monologic self-communer) is no speaker but the paradigm of the informant." (Yacobi 1981, 123) Therefore an „informant" or even a sentient entity who articulates mental representations that possess some degree of narrativity still does not qualify as a narrator. Neither the case of „simultaneous narration" which „possesses the character of self-communication" (Ferenz 2008, 134) and as argued, nothing more than a

[185] I reject Bordwell's idea, according to which not all „narration" is communicative in the light of Walsh's distinction between narrative sensemaking and narrative representation. See: Bordwell 1985, 64.

special case of focalization. We should not confuse it with communicational voice-over narrations, where „the speaker himself is invested with self-consciousness, […] [where] two communicative processes simultaneously arise and develop, the narratorial and the authorial, each with its own features, its own aims, and possibly (as in the epistolary novel, the frame story, the dialogue scene) its own addressee." (Yacobi 1981, 124)

Many definitions for unreliable narration (for example Yacobi's integrating mechanisms) are focused on the specification of the „unreliable" part and not on the „narration" part, thus her description fits cases where there is no character narration at all, just focalization. This is particularly prevalent in the analyzes of films. The formal category and widespread cinematic device of the *audiovisual insert* is particularly susceptible for ambiguity and misinterpretation in this respect. Apart from pure cases of perceptual focalization (or as I prefer to call them, instances of ocularization/auricularization), there is the subcategory of inserts that refract the spatiotemporal continuity of the scene: is it broadly called the *flashback*.[186] Despite its more or less unified formal characteristics, this concept incorporates two, narratologically very different situations that usually motivate the application of this device: a character-narration or a memory. Both situations are tied to a character's mental activity and include a mental „narrativization" of an experience, but character-narration manifests this representation as an act of communication towards an intrafictional narratee in an external medium (usually verbal language). Of course, both are communicated towards the viewer by the author in an audiovisual form. Because of their possible formal identity (effaced character-narration), context plays a massive role in their understanding as one or the other. As we saw it in *All About Eve*, an authorial rhetoric does not need to limit itself to a realistic representation of such discourses as we would require it from a real-life character-narration or an act of remembrance: a sequence can start as a character narration, and turn out to be a memory-flashback of another character, or the objective presentation of a third character's past. It becomes understandable why certain analyzes read a voice-over narration as a focalization of an onscreen character (forgetting the intermediary narrative agent) and clear cases of focalization as character-narration, if we consider that the same flashback (framed by a character's speech act) can signify an act of narration (a segment of a journal, an anecdote), or (framed by an act of remembering) internal focalization (a hallucination, a dream, etc.). But neither clear instances of voice-over narration, nor effaced character narration is a matter of focalization: Although I acknowledge

[186] For its many functions and historical forms, see: Maureen Turim's (1989) excellent monograph on the subject.

the existence of indeterminate cases like *All About Eve*, theoretically I do not prefer the slightly contradictory concept of „focalization of a narration" simply because an authorial discourse represents a character narration with resources only available for the author. Especially if its purpose is to expose the same amount of information that the character have already communicated to his narratee. Different modes of representation generally should not be considered different types of focalization, which always has to be understood as a rhetorical choice of an agency, not the necessary consequence of different medial forms. It is possible to utilize a specific mode of representation in order to convey a piece of information that achieves a dramatic effect better in that specific medium, but this is a discursive purpose, not a question of perspectivation. A focalization strategy can also be realized by a particular form, but that form not necessarily causes a specific type of focalization. A very good example for this disassociation are mimetic cases of unreliable narration.

4.3. Lying Character Narrators in Film – a Reconsideration of Agency and Medium

4.3.1 Focalization of a Narration? - The Lying Flashback in *Stage Fright*

The flashback scenes from Alfred Hitchcock's *Stage Fright* (1950) is „the canonic case of unreliable narration in classical cinema" (Bordwell 1985, 61) and has become the number one case study for illustrating the issues of unreliable narration in film. Johnny, the famous character narrator is not just normatively unreliable in his judgement or interpretation of past events, like Forrest Gump, but he is downright telling lies for his own interest. What caused sensation and confusion at the time it was released was the fact that the film audiovisually confirmed everything Johnny said. This technique raises fundamental questions about some (often misunderstood) features of cinematic storytelling and the nature of character narration. Although Kozloff found some precursors for this technique in silent films (*The Goose Woman*, 1925 and *Footloose Widows*, 1926), in contrast with *Stage Fright*, in these films „the audience has already been given the motivation for [the] lie" and „[w]e know [the narrator] is not simply narrating a scene lacking from the original narration of the night

before, but fabricating a story that never occurred. The audience, unlike the police in the story, are not duped." (1989, 50)[187]

It might be hazardous to mechanically utilize models of character narration and unreliability from theories elaborated for verbal or literary discourses, but there is less talk about the dangers of overconcentrating on the differences between literary and cinematic storytelling, and ignoring some of their basic similitudes that can be found in a more abstract (and more fundamental) level. Hence in this section, after surveying some typical interpretations of the sequence, I attempt to focus on the general theoretical consequences of the problem and demonstrate that characters in film can still be considered as narrators and have as much authority as any literary narrator over their discourse, despite the asymmetry between their verbal utterances and the audiovisual form of its representation.

The movie begins with a scene of a woman and a man (Eve and Johnny) in a car, who are fleeing from the police. Eve asks Johnny to tell her what exactly happened to him, why is he escaping from the law. The man starts to tell the story in which he got into trouble because of his lover, the famous actress, Charlotte Ingwood, who asked for his help in a murder. „I was in my kitchen, it was about five o clock. The doorbell rang and I went downstairs to see who it was." - says Johnny and meanwhile images corroborating this verbal narration begin to appear in the movie. Here the viewer witnesses all the indicators of a typical technique of the classical style: this is the subjective flashback. Charlotte, Johnny's mistress is standing in the door with a bloodstained dress and asking him to fetch her a clean one from her apartment where she killed her violent husband. He fulfills Charlotte's wish, and we see him entering the apartment, discovering the dead husband's body on the floor and trying to disguise it as a burglary. The long flashback continues up until the point where the movie began, but later the sequence turns out to be a lie regarding the central plot element. In the last scene of the movie Johnny confesses the murder to Eve. It was him, not his mistress who killed the husband. This kind of deception (or twist ending) was unconventional at the time *Stage Fright* was released, and Hitchcock himself said it was a mistake to trick his audience this way.

Most interpreters rightly characterized this phenomenon as unreliable narration, as unreliability is the field of two simultaneous rhetorical goals: in this case Johnny's intention

[187] „By positioning the false flashback so soon after a flashback to which it grants narrative truth value, and presenting the flashback with filmwork that matches that of film scenes we ordinarily take to be truthful accounts of narrative events, the film raises some unsettling questions about the truth value of cinematic narration." (1989, 50)

of telling a lie and convincing Eve of his innocence and the author's intention to first maintain Johnny's truth, then debunk his story as a lie. The base of persuasion for Johnny was his close relationship with Eve and his skill to come up with a believable and coherent story, for the author it was the recognition that „the ostensible reliability of the image is not intrinsic, but merely a convention" (Stam – Burgoyne – Flitterman-Lewis 2005, 103) which can be infringed.

Emily R. Anderson states that „in films that lie to or mislead the viewer, one character is almost always the *explicit focalizer*. If we take Johnny Cooper as an example, we would say that he relates his version of events to Eve Gill, while the cinematic narrator *focalizes through him,* presenting to the viewer what Johnny describes to Eve." (2010, 89) Mentioning the term of focalization is not a new development in this case, Turim has already used it in her book, saying „this »lie« is not one told by the film directly […] for the lying images are not claimed by an omniscient narration, but rather by a single character. The audience is led to ignore this difference, however, and in that sense the film plays a »trick« on its spectators. This sleight of hand on the part of the film makes it an example of how focalization can be used as a crucial element of narrative." (Turim 1989, 165) Turim basically states that there is deceptive internal focalization where the distorted quality of the story is hidden by the „cinematic narration" which focalizes the main character and gives his discourse an objective look. Once the truth is spilled out, the viewer reinterprets the flashback as controlled by Johnny's character. In my interpretation, there is no real character focalization here at all, because Anderson uses the pointless concept of „focalization of a narration". Therefore, I want to challenge the application of this narratological term which was elaborated to describe the relationship between a narrator and a character, not between two narrating instances or two narrative levels. Focalization in Hitchcock's lying flashback seems to make sense only if applied to the relation between the character narrator (situated in the embedding level) and himself as the embedded character as a „pre-focalized"[188] case of autodiegesis, where the main character is identical to the story's narrator. But what is really revealed by the sequence is not directly connected to his selfhood, personality, knowledge, or memory, but his agency as a mediator, his skills of intrigue. The flashback does not represent or explore his perspective of the diegetic world he is living in but

[188] One could see the concept of focalization as a redundancy when used for narrators in any kind of autodiegesis. According to Genette, this type of narration should be called „prefocalized" because the character narrator (as a character of the discourse) obliged to justify how he gained the presented information therefore focalization is not a choice but a requirement because he „submits a priori to a modal restriction, one that can be sidestepped only by an infraction, or a perceptible distortion." (1988, 78)

duplicating his rhetorical act, his intent of deception. Moreover, it is worth observing that most of the time the movie follows Eve's character: her knowledge is much closer to the viewer's knowledge than Johnny's. At first viewing, it is even possible to interpret the images of the flashback as Eve's vision of the story, thereby the viewer gets access to her imagination instead of Johnny's memories.[189] I claim that the audiovisual display of Johnny's rhetorical act is a representation of an unreliable character narration and a strategy of deception, not perspectivation, because the information shared by the flashback is not independent of Johnny's communicational purposes.

4.3.2 Johnny, The Narrator of Images

The question where opinions are the most extremely divided is the attribution of unreliability. Who is responsible for the lie in narratological terms: the character of Johnny or a non-anthropomorphic cinematic narrator or the author? Can a character narrator control the images we see? Where can we localize the source of this unreliability and why does this matter? Can the filmic image still be unreliable without having an anthropomorphic narrator? Or simply: Who is the narrator of the lying flashback? First, it is to be discussed how theorists tried to answer these questions and what presuppositions can be diagnosed in their opinions. Then, I would like to argue in favor of two, seemingly contradictory assumptions regarding the flashback: (1) the character is a full value narrator (despite the fact that his discourse is mediated through images) and at the same time (2) the implicit (audiovisual) narration has a significant rhetorical impact on the discourse and it is possible for the film to represent Johnny's narration and supplement it with additional meaning because of the nature of the relationship between his and the authorial discourse, and this relationship is not especially dependent on the filmic medium.

Basically, there are two approaches regarding the source of the deception. One of them says that Johnny's character is responsible for the lies presented in the film. According to Seymour Chatman, not „»the camera« narrates the false sequence »on its own.« Rather, everything that we see and hear follows Johnny's scenario. Thus, even when his voice-over

[189] „Casetti provides yet another solution, albeit a very unorthodox one, by proposing that the "false" images actually correspond to what Eve, Jonathon's auditor, imagines as he tells her the lie. Thus, the images are produced by the subjectivity of the character Eve, listening to Jonathan; Eve could be said to work in tandem with him to create this false homodiegetic narration: one character supplies the verbal discourse, the other the images. The extradiegetic narrator is thus relieved of his culpability of "duplicity" in illustrating the lie (Casetti 1986b)." (Stam – Burgoyne – Flitterman-Lewis 2005, 103)

falls silent, he remains the controlling, if unreliable, narrator of the flashback." (1990, 131-132) Chatman continues confidently: „At the narrative level, Johnny and Johnny alone »*produces*« the segment in *any narrato-logically meaningful sense* of that word, since every cinematic tool— editing, lighting, commentative music—works to *actualize* his lie. During these scenes, Johnny *prevails* over the cinematic narrator. He is »*responsible*« for the lying images and sounds that we see and hear." (1990, 132)

In *Flashbacks in Film,* Turim basically states the same: „If this flashback is a lie, its lie is Johnny's. The flashback is *truthful* to Johnny's narration." (1989, 166) But there is an important difference here, since the keyword being *truthful*, not *produces, prevails* or *responsible*. Therefore she's a bit more nuanced in her opinion and concludes that: „The film, while never itself lying, deceives its audience by *conforming* in its filmic means of expression to the interwoven fabric of Johnny's subjective account, and, in addition, lending it the assumed truth value of the filmic image." (1989, 167)

Robert Burgoyne builds on the concept of „impersonal narration" from Marie-Laure Ryan and says that a narrator without a personality „cannot lie about the fictional world, although the narrator can withhold information and cause the spectator to make incorrect inferences." (1990, 7) Clearly this is the case in films like *The Beautiful Mind* or *The Sixth Sense* where the narration does not misreport events but simply underreports them. (Anderson 2010, 87) The implication for Burgoyne is that „lying narration in film can only be engendered by the discourse of a personal, character narrator." (1990, 7) He argues that the wide range of cinematic resources are not reserved exclusively for the impersonal narrator. „The unreliable character narrator can *utilize images* as well as words, as seen in *Stage Fright*." (1990, 7) - he claims.

On the other end of the theoretical spectrum, researchers tend to think that cinematic narration has a greater, and the character a lesser role in the deception.[190] David Bordwell states about Hitchcock's film that „[i]t is not just the character's yarn that is unreliable. The film's narration shows itself to be *duplicitous* by neglecting to suggest any inadequacies in Johnnie's account and by appearing to be highly communicative – *not just reporting* what the liar said but *showing* it as if it were indeed objectively true." (1985, 61) Hence the narrative is not mysterious but deceptive. Bordwell undoubtedly touched upon something important here: even Chatman agrees that „the camera collaborates with, *subserves* the narrator by misrepresenting, »mis-showing«, the facts of the case" (1985, 131) or in my

[190] See also: Laass 2008, 28.

view, it *duplicates the rhetorical act* of the diegetic narrator in the axis of communication between the film and its audience. But Bordwell goes on: „as Edward Branigan has demonstrated, such personified narrators are invariably swallowed up in the overall narratorial process of the film, which *they do not produce*." (1985, 61) I guess Bordwell refers to phenomenon what I termed „effacement", when a character-produced discourse is being represented by implicit narration.

Gregory Currie goes even further in his argument against Chatman's view: „Johnny, like the other characters, exists within the story, and it is *no part of that story* that he *produced* and *edited cinematic images* in order *to convince* his *fictional fellows* (*and us*?) of his innocence – anyway a transparently self-defeating enterprise." (1995, 27) In accordance with Currie, Anderson claims in her article that „a viewer might understand a flashback as arising from a character's point of view, but would never assume that the *character* had *actually put the clip together*." And she argues it is „the narrator, who alone can *present* events to the viewer" (2010, 85) and characters cannot be „cinematic narrators" because „theirs may be the points of view to which we are privy, but they *cannot communicate to us*. They may see, but it is the cinematic narrator who speaks, as it were, who presents." (2010, 88)

Johnny is a fictional character, situated inside the diegesis and that is why he cannot communicate with the film's audience, not because he is incapable of utilizing the tools of the film: to edit shots, show images or produce sound. The problem is not with his potential as a storyteller but his structural position as a character. That is why I hypothesize a model where narrators like him cannot accost us directly, hence their lie would remain only a diegetic one, and even the transcoding does not make it an act addressed to the viewer. There are movies where a fictional character is directly addressing the viewer, and this act often creates an absurd scenario like in *Fight Club* or *American Beauty*. Think of the voice of the deceased Lester Burnham's character (played by Kevin Spacey) in the opening scene of *American Beauty* who describes the images of an American suburb the viewer sees onscreen. Or consider Tyler Durden (Brad Pitt) in *Fight Club* who points to the flashing „cigarette burn mark" in the upper right corner of the screen while the unnamed narrator played by Edward Norton is explaining the process of changing reels in a movie projector. Even if they are fictional, and the real recipients are aware of their narratorial status via *voice*-overs (we can even see Norton's character addressing the viewers), they are aware of a(n implicit) *viewer's* presence not only a diegetic *listener's*. Moreover, *Fight Club*'s narrator is not only aware of a visual presentation of the events for an audience, but he also knows he is in a

film. Therefore, rhetorically they are capable of communicating through images, as it were: referencing and manipulating them from a visually not presented narrative frame (like Lester's narration) or documentary-like intrusion into the (recreation of the) diegesis (like *Fight Club*'s narrator character).

The key to understand these character narrators is to posit another (nonvisual) narrative level, where these characters exist. This means another layer of narrative representation, not a direct communication between fictional characters and real viewers. However, this framing layer is rhetorically different (thematically made more reflexive of the work's medium) then the „main" diegesis: nonvisual, intermittent or presented as an embedded film. The recognition of the similarity between the represented situation in the framing layer and the viewer's relationship to the film is exactly the point of the rhetorical act behind these frames.

In my view, fictional narratives do not simply represent communicative acts, but they realize them as well. They are not „pretended assertions" as Searle calls them in his revision of the speech-act theory (1975, 324), but they create a real communicational situation between author and audience. In the case of character narration these acts possess a somewhat reflexive quality or recursivity, which means that these acts can represent fictional acts of narrative representation as their objects. I claim that the source of this confusion to situate unreliability comes from the lack of attention paid to the simple distinction of rhetorical and technical sides of these recursive narrative representations, to the difference that exists between the medium the work utilizes and the medium it represents. Of course, it is the author, not the unreliable character narrator who can utilize images in a film. Unreliability is not a question of „who actually put the clip together" or „how can a character edit a sequence", but if the narration represents the (fictional) discourse of a character or not. The rhetorical intent is from Johnny, but the form of representation cannot be his: A fictional (represented) act of narrative representation is independent of the actual semiotic substance through which it is mediated.

Chatman misunderstood the situation when he said that there are two *equal* narrative instances in *Stage Fright*: Johnny and the cinematic narrator, and using the movie to demonstrate that „it is the implied author who juxtaposes the two narrations of the story and »allows« us to decide which is true." (1990, 132) Chatman treats the scope and function of (implied) authors differently than the present paper. In *Stage Fright* the author inevitably frames the character's account whose narration is always embedded as long as one postulates a nonfictional agency controlling the whole discourse of the film. There is no benefit of

differentiating between this narrator's and the author's scope, function or power. Narrative representation in cinema in the widest sense (the combined application of cinematic resources: such as the apparatus, the choice of actors, the mise-en-scène, etc. – all in the service of storytelling) is considered to be equivalent with the creator's rhetorical activity.

This particular form of unreliability (with lying images) generated a serious theoretical debate about the meaning of „narration", although the roots of the issue are clearly present in simpler cases of effaced character narration. After all, regular „true" flashbacks (as audiovisual inserts) are not created by the characters either. Even if their frame contained a situation of storytelling, it could be argued that the act of remembering motivates the audiovisual presentation, not the narrative act itself. Some memory-flashbacks can be interpreted as something that the character experienced and what the film simply shows us as an objective reality of the past. The question of subjectivity does not arise in their construction. But even if we imagine that the audiovisual representation of the past is the content of a character's mind as a memory, then we could just as easily imagine that Johnny's lies are also in his mind as long as he imagines them. This interpretation of the scene would be a case with internal focalization, representing the subjective (mental) experiences of a character. In embedded fiction, the problem is more tangible, because the character is completely independent from both the contents and the images and sounds of the insert. His only connection to the insert is necessarily his narration, even if it is effaced character-narration. I suspect the debate bursted over a case of mimetic unreliability, because there was the additional factor of deception: images were considered reliable, whether they showed a fictional story, or presented a true account of events.

Thady Quirk, proclaimed as one of the world's first major unreliable narrators from *Castle Racrent* has a „handicap" like Johnny's. According to the book's preface Quirk is illiterate, so I could ironically ask the question: How is he capable to tell his stories about the Rackrent family in a written form? My answer is that the act of writing a memoir is a purely mechanical activity, and not related to the act of narration itself. But there is an intrafictional explanation in the novel for this discrepancy. A fictional editor is responsible for the notation, therefore we are not simply reading Quirk's oral testimony, but the textual transcoding of it. However, it is not the editor's own choice of words we read in the novel, the textual coding of Quirk's narration – even in the fiction – is only a matter of technicality. Of course, it can distort the character narrator's account, but this possibility is a general feature of all fictional representation. This distortion can be an unintentional „noise" in the communicational channel (for example incorrectly printed pages) or part of the work as an

intentional strategy with a rhetorical purpose: for example, in some editions of Michael Ende's *The Neverending Story* (*Die unendliche Geschichte*, 1979) different font colors are used for different passages to indicate the status of the passage, if it is a part of the primary diegesis or the content of the embedded fantasy world of a fictional book. In *Castle Rackrent*, the written form of Quirk's words is the product of a framing activity, they originate from a higher discourse than the character narrator's speech, plausibly from the fictitious editor of his memoirs. Furthermore, the author's discourse frames the editor's text as a novel. Just as authorship of a book does not mean that the author printed the book (especially not the latest edition of *Castle Rackrent*) narratorship of a discourse does not presuppose that the character is actually capable to produce the form the reader gets.

Chatman was wrong when he attributed responsibility to Johnny for the images, but he does makes a right distinction when he writes that „[s]tory, discourse, and manifestation must further be distinguished from the mere physical disposition of narratives – the actual print in books, movements of actors or dancers or marionettes, lines on paper or canvas, or whatever. This issue is resolved by phenomenological aesthetics, particularly by Roman Ingarden, who has established the fundamental difference between the »real object« presented to us in museums, libraries, the theater, and so on, and the »aesthetic object.«" (Chatman 1978, 26) Chatman understands „manifestation" as the textual surface of the work *coded* in a semiotic substance, the narrative externalized in a specific medium, which is the aesthetic object. The real object means its actual materiality of a particular instance (copy) of it. In narrative art, the difference between aesthetic and real object is much more significant than in fine arts. The aesthetic object is *Castle Rackrent*, the real objects are all the existing copies of it, or the digital string of data on an electronic storage media.

The most important insight of my argument is that the technical possibilities should be regarded only as rhetorical resources for the actants of the narrative (the character narrator or the author) and in interpretations based on narrative analyzes, technicalities should not be used as part of the reasoning if they are confused with acts of purely rhetorical nature. All the author (as a rhetorical force behind a *discourse*) has responsibility over is the artistic choice of the application of a particular semiotic substance (code), and not the creation of the physical manifestation (material structure) of the film(text). In this respect, a live-action film's indexical nature (the apparent necessity of real life object to be physically present in front of a camera) is just a contingency, part of a possible resource for the articulation of the narrative act. An agent of a represented narration is not even responsible for the employment of the semiotic substance of the discourse as the viewer actually encounters it. All a fictional

narration has responsibility over is the conceptuality (narrativity) of the discourse: if the story is incoherent or chaotic, we can attribute it to the narrator's verbal skills, mental condition or special purposes. But as long as Johnny's account is concerned, viewers are authorized to imagine that he told a consistent and believable story to Eve. However, we are not authorized to think that he created a film to persuade her.

The discrimination outlined is not merely a division between fictional and extrafictional segments of a narrative work, it is a line between the abstract activities of semiotic articulation (*narrative conceptuality*) and the tools of conceptual (*code*) and physical realization (*technological conduits*), or if you like semiotic and transmissive sense of the medium. Just as the physical object becomes the carrier of the code, the semiotic substance becomes carrier of a rhetorical force with an agency behind it.

Anderson writes that „Johnny does not assemble a crew, script and record a false version of the murder, and sit Eve down to watch it. And even if he had, *he would be the author of the clip and not its narrator*. No character can, at will, leap across diegetic boundaries to replace or even to manipulate the narrator, who alone can present events to the viewer." (Anderson 2010, 85, my emphasis) Since for Anderson, there is always a narrator in film, who is never the author and never a character, but a hypothetical „mediator" of the images and sounds and other elements, she cannot acknowledge my claim that Johnny is not just the author but also the narrator of the embedded discourse what is represented in the form of a flashback. With the rejection of the chatmanian need for a „cinematic narrator", Currie can attribute the narratorship to the character: „the deceptive images and their juxtaposition must be thought of as representations of Johnny's account, though we begin by taking them also to be representations of what is real with the fiction itself. They are thus attributable to the film's implied maker." (1995, 27) Unfortunately he does not draw the general conclusion that character narration is *always a representation* of an account, not just in flashbacks, or unreliable situations in film. With Walsh's expression: in fiction, the embedded transmission is completely „semioticized", and it is not the mediation (transmission) of an independent discourse, or an exhibited object. A character narration is always created, not just presented, and Johnny's case is only special, because it draws attention to the question of agency, intent and medium in the act of narrative representation. It is clear that a character can never assume an authorial position in film or in any other type of narrative, but as a narrator of his own discourse he is indeed the author of it, no matter how the representation came to being. Narrative articulation is inseparable from invention

and creation, for which the author-narrator[191] can utilize external media (which is a peripheral question from the perspective of narrative representation as a rhetorical activity). If we subtract authorship from the act of narration, then all we have left is the mechanical process of mediation or transmission of information. I am not afraid to use the two concepts together, because it will not mean that the author-narrator has to be accountable for the medium of a discourse (in the case of a character narrator, it is conceptual, for an author, it is a physical manifestation). „Johnny's presentation of the events" means a representation of a representation, where Johnny's rhetorical gesture is represented by the authorial discourse in the form implicit narration (moving images and sounds).

Many of the expressions used by scholars to describe the activities of the narration (such as: produce, actualize, show, edit, put the clip together) are inappropriate terms in their context for analyzing the operation of *fictional agents* of representation. They only make sense when they refer to physical activities of real-world entities or processes, like the performance of technological equipment (a camera or a projector). The author's creative act is not among these, because it is an intellectual activity, which concerns the production of the aesthetic object, therefore in narratological analysis these verbs have to be understood metaphorically and should be used with increased awareness.

This is the reason why it would be wrong to hold accountable a character narrator in a movie for this process (the material realization) saying that he „alone »produces« the segment in any narrato-logically meaningful sense of that word, since every cinematic tool - editing, lighting, commentative music - works to actualize his lie." (Chatman 1990, 132) Narrators do not have the power to mediate their stories because they are literally in possession of the tools that can produce the representation's material codes or physical form we perceive but because it is an act that the work authorizes us to imagine.

Still a lot of analyzes – blinded by the transparency and apparent continuity of the literary models of narration – confuse the technical and rhetorical sides in their explanation of similar narrative situations. When Currie argues that Johnny could not be the real narrator of the lying sequence because he, „like the other characters, exists within the story, and it is no part of that story that he produced" Currie confuses the narrator's role either with an extrafictional tool's, what is responsible for the physical realization of the flashback or with

[191] While conceptually I subscribe to the idea that narrators are also authors of their discourses, I refrain to use the term „narrator" for the real author of a text because as it is evident that authors are doing narrative representation in a narrative work, but in fiction I want to reserve the term for the activity of represented characters. Therefore by narrator I mean a fictional narrator, so I can simply distinguish between discourses with and without a narrator, which means the same as discourses with character and authorial narration.

the author's, who's decisions define the representational mode of the work. He is unsure whether Johnny wants to deceive the viewer or other characters in the film, or what is the scope of his actions.

The medialization (coding and materialization) of the narrative has nothing to do with the diegesis, nor with the communication between author and recipient which process still belongs to the rhetorical level. In literary fiction, the nexus between the medium of the represented discourse and the medium of the work are often completely transparent and continuous: the narrators of Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) or Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield* (1850) are writing their own life stories and the form of the literary representation of their discourse is substantially identical with the diegetic product of theirs. They are the narrators of their stories and authors of their books: we can read exactly the same sentences they wrote down in the fictional world. (Although we do not identify Copperfield and Flanders as narrators because they had access and resources to print their stories. And we do not identify Defoe and Dickens as the authors because of the same reasons.) In these cases, the real authors do not have „independent voices" or manifest discourse apart from the one that represents the character's utterance, but they are responsible for this representation (the creation and the medialization) and conceptual framing of the character's discourse. The result is one textual manifestation, with two discourses in it: the author's and the character's. The difference between the two types lies in their fictionality. The protagonists wrote autobiographies and the recipients read novels. Even if the speaker in a literary diegesis (the character narrator) produces a verbal discourse (like in Albert Camus' *The Fall*) what we perceive in the representation as a textual form seems just slightly different and easily re-convertible in our minds for both being an explicit form of narration. Writing is a tool traditionally used for coding speech, and the technique is conventionalized to a degree that the shift is inconspicuous and seldom detected because readers are accustomed to it.

In films, this distance between the rhetorical and technical aspects are more obvious, more evident, the technical side being more dominant. At least in fictional narratives there is always (to utilize Monika Fludernik's terminology) a duality between the „mediating function of consciousness" (1996, 36) and semiotic/material realization. Therefore, this distinction is not really between *metaphorical* and *literal* levels, and not between anthropomorphic (character) narration and non-anthropomorphic („cinematic") narration, but *rhetorical* and *technical* sides of the same process, between *articulation* and *transmission* (the latter is indispensable for communicative purposes). When we talk about the activities

of the author or creator, we still think of an abstract entity, an agency or organizing *principle*, who can do the editing and the adding of a soundtrack not because of the physical apparatus available to him, but because it performs symbolic acts, it is primarily sense-making, cognitive construction, and not the bricolage of an artifact. In this respect, even the real author of a work is never a real person, but always a theoretical/interpretive/social construction. If a character cannot „*actually put the clip together*", this does not make him less capable in the rhetorical level to be a narrator in a story, therefore these are bad arguments against the narratorial qualities of character narrators, because they confuse some fundamental concepts. What concerns me here is not the physical transmission of the narrative information, but the rhetorical activities of author and character. The issue of narratorial competence and power emerges in narrative films because some evident mimetic traditions of the genre link the form of impersonal narration to the authorial discourse and the verbal form to the characters. What makes a narrative level „cinematic" are the tools the author uses as rhetorical resources to present someone's story. The filmic devices of the lying flashback obviously overwrite the character's narration, who (both as teller and protagonist of the story) is incapable of communicating with images. The framing (cinematic) narration only quotes the character narrator directly in the transition from one narrative level to another (the simultaneous application of verbal and visual narration is the marker of this transition), then represents his utterance by means of its own medial resources.

It is not hard to imagine the story of the movie in the form of a literary narrative (a novel, for example) where a shift could be still recognized in the code only less visible than in the movie: in this hypothetical novel, the character's oral utterance would be replaced by a series of graphemes (letters), thus the text would represent the sound material of Johnny's words. In pure implicit narration, the medial gap is more significant and more spectacular between the medium of storytelling used by the character and the actual manifestation of it, created by the authorial discourse. The author had the opportunity to show the act of lying mimetically, without images, hence it is a rhetorical choice in itself to duplicate the character's own rhetorical act: lying. It means that the lie (with the aim of deceiving the communication partner about the truthfulness of certain events) functions in two different levels at the same time. In the diegesis, the object of the persuasion is another character, Eve, who only hears the story and being fooled because of her poor judgement of Johnny's personality, at the level of discourse, it is the film's audience, who are authorized to believe the lie for substantially different reasons, mainly because cinematic conventions and the absence of warning signals that would raise suspicion about the discourse's reliability.

Johnny is a character narrator whose „natural" discourse is presented to the viewer in an indirect, artificial way by the help of moving images and sounds. This is possible because character narration is not the imitation of a character's discourse (as Walton 1990 and Searle 1975 thinks), but the representation of it, and it does not have to restrict itself to realistic, direct display of a process. Mimetic representation does not expose the „thing itself" or wants us to believe that it does. Both Johnny and the author are important for the complexity of the sequence and the utilization of the flashback structure is an integral part of the film's rhetorical purpose to persuade the audience about Johnny's truth.

4.3.3 Authorial Manipulation in The Character's Discourse

I argued that character narrated sequences like my main example, with a strange surplus (in the rhetorical level) that cannot be attributed to the narrating character as a fictional entity inside the diegesis, should still be considered as an utterance of the character, but presented by a different medium which is not a conventional way of communication even for a fictional human being. By strange surplus I am mostly referring to the existence and some particular features of the flashback form, whose presence is an extrinsic rhetorical choice in itself. As it has been registered earlier, the authorial narration duplicates the character's gesture of deception, therefore even if he is not aware of the audience and cannot manipulate images, sounds or edit the sequence, the film can be „truthful" to his intent. Theoretically, it is not impossible to assume a film where we can link almost every *rhetorically meaningful* and *narratively significant* element to the character narrator, even if it is certainly not the case with our lying character narrator.

The authorial surplus is a special potential in a discourse which contributes to the representation of the verbal narration in a way that it communicates rhetorically significant extra meanings through channels and semiotic substances unavailable for the character. Therefore, the film can convey the rhetorical act of the character and independent authorial strategies simultaneously. An information is rhetorically significant if it fruitfully contributes to the interpretation of the narrative and not just being present as a necessity of the medium. (Lots of details can be seen in a film image that are surely not communicated by the character, but because of the illustrative, iconic and indexical nature of images, these marginal details cannot be absent from the film.) The surplus can be conveyed by a wide range of rhetorical tools, including the arrangement of the mise-en-scène, or the manipulation of actor-role relations. In *Cet obscur objet du désir* two actresses play one role

and in a great deal of other films (*Adaptation*, *Cloud Atlas*) one actor plays several roles.[192] Or it can be realized by abstract discursive devices such as coloring (for example with the alternation of black and white and colored sequences), camera angles, editing rhythms, non diegetic music (for example if the same music can be heard over two, seemingly unrelated scenes). In the following section, I attempt to examine if there are other significant aspects of the authorial surplus in Johnny's narration apart from the existence of the flashback.

Turim explores the characteristics of the lying flashback to show how the movie tries to authenticate it in order to deceive the viewer. Although she does not say it explicitly, her five arguments can help highlight the role of the authorial discourse in the character narration, thus it can be considered as a description of how a mixed discourse is established to authenticate a lie. However, only one of her observations can be considered as a media-specific rhetoric in the film.

(1) Turim notes that not the whole story is a fabrication, as Johnny is mixing his fable with true details, because he could not lie about certain events, for example him being in the apartment of the actress where he was discovered by the maid. Because this argument is mainly about the plot and the events, it is without any indication of a device that could be attributed to the author.

(2) The second is a bit more problematic: The flashback is detailed and remarkably accurate, coherent, with precise time and space coordinates, highly elaborated settings, props and objects. As Turim says: „We do get immensely plausible details that have the texture of an accurate narration." (1989, 167) (For example, when Johnny is looking at the picture of Charlotte.) Although mimetically we cannot explain the details that Johnny could not possibly see or probably did not mention, these are either irrelevant technical issues or conventional devices which remain unchallenged by the film's rhetoric. The film presents a fully realistic mise-en-scène therefore it could not omit the odds and ends, it uses conventional camera angles and third person shots of Johnny despite his subjective account. But these are part of genre and medium conventions not the rhetorical tools of this particular narrative.

(3) The movie greatly relies on the mimetically motivated tradition that characters can lie verbally, but the images we see are objective and represent the truth. This tradition is

[192] There is a long list of film utilizing both strategies in Wikipedia: (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_characters_played_by_multiple_actors_in_the_same_film and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_actors_who_have_played_multiple_roles_in_the_same_film) (2018-03-10)

confirmed by other flashbacks in the film indeed working this way. In other words, the big twist was based on a subversion of a cinematic code of which Johnny is certainly unaware of. The difference between Johnny's vision and what the audience sees in the flashback has no rhetorical significance, we follow Johnny and *functionally* know as much as his character in the second-degree narrative, while the objective camera (generally the lack of ocularization) establishes a certain sense of reliability, implying we are outside Johnny's subjective perception. In *Stage Fright,* the relevant tool is not the difference between Johnny's and the audience's vision, but a more fundamental one: the choice of showing Johnny's lie in audiovisual terms.

(4) In Turim's view, the function of the fantasy scene in the flashback when Johnny imagines the police process and it turns out that he was perfectly accurate in his imagining is to lay stress on the reliability of the thoughts and personality (in psychological, not ethical terms) of the character so we will doubt less about the accuracy of his evocation of events as far as the viewer knows he really experienced them. The narration's joke is that the fantasy sequence inside the flashback could be more real and accurate than the flashback itself, although it clearly signals the difference of the ontological status between the two. The juxtaposition of imagination and memory with realistic visuals opposed to a kind of palimpsest (montaged) images is undeniably an important factor which is outside Johnny's control.

(5) According to Turim, because Johnny evokes events that took place in the theatre (the last scene of the flashback), where Eve, his listener had been already present, „his version is authenticated by her acceptance of the retelling." (1989, 167) This argument should be reconsidered. She states that the theatre scene is supposed to convince Eve about earlier events, to „paint the full picture" for her, but it is not a satisfying answer in every aspect. Johnny is telling a sequence of events to her where she was already present. Conclusively, the scene is highly redundant, mimetically flawed in the context of the communicative situation between the two characters. Although it is perfectly sensible and functional in terms of communication between the film and its audience, because it reveals a key element in the plot: namely, how did Johnny escape from the immediate danger? It is a brief but meaningful digression which shows us a rhetorical gesture in which the character narrator's story is not supplemented by additional details but it exists for higher communicational purposes.

4.3.4 Simultaneous Discourses in *The Usual Suspects*

Authorial deception and unreliable narration is more apparent in the similarly extensively analyzed spiritual heir of Hitchcock's film, *The Usual Suspects* (1995). The opening scene takes place on board of a cargo ship in a harbor of Los Angeles, the location of the film's final showdown, where a lot of people are killed by mobsters. Here, we meet the already dying former cop, Dean Keaton (Gabriel Byrne), who is shot to death by a mysterious figure after a short conversation. The rest of the film is made up of an investigation and flashback sequences, whose narrator is the telltale named Verbal Kint (Kevin Spacey), a petty criminal and conman. Kint describes the events led to the murder of Keaton and his accomplices to the interrogating customs investigator, David Kujan (Chazz Palminteri). Kint got amnesty in exchange for his court confession, but before he could leave the police station, Kujan persuades him to tell every detail in order to find the responsible party. Kint tells the story how he and a couple of other small-time criminals (including Keaton) unwittingly started to work for the dreaded Keyser Söze, a mysterious and legendary figure of the criminal world. As it turns out, the crippled Kint was acting dumb all along and making up all the important details in his story to hide his true identity, and to match Kujan's preconceptions about the culpability of Keaton. We see characters appearing in his story who proved to be nothing more than Kint's fiction, who is in fact, Keyser Söze, the criminal mastermind behind all the bloody events. Kint uses the information of the documents placed on the wall of the police office to fabricate names, places and events for his tale.

The issue which divides scholars is again the attribution of the audiovisual dimension of the flashbacks. According to David Mitchell, the film's final effect is that it makes its viewer think that „it is Kint who has tricked us, not Singer. We end up saying »Yes, how clever, Kint made it all up to fool me (Kujan)« rather than »No, how annoying, Singer made it all up to fool me (the spectator in the audience)«." (2002) Tiffany Bergin states that „Kint lied to detective Kujan and he lied to the viewers of *The Usual Suspects*." (2014, 27) Their conclusion is misleading, because whatever effect the film has on its audience, the character narrator's discourse is necessarily an embedded one, therefore they are unable to communicate with the viewers, let alone to deceive them. It is the framing authorial discourse that adapts and presents their verbal narration as a combination of moving images and sounds.

At this point, the narratological debate about the lying narrator had a new element: it was not centered around the possibilities of a character's technical skills anymore, but the

question of which character's psyche can be linked to the images of the flashbacks and the rhetorical significance of the relation between the embedded sequences and the images of the primary diegesis. According to Mitchell, „Singer's answer is that the diegetic world we have been watching in those episodes is not some past objective reality, but the present subjective reality inside Kujan's head, as he visualizes the story that Kint is telling. It is not Singer's camera but Kujan's mind, cleverly manipulated by Kint, which has been lying to him, and to us. Kint is controlling the narrative." (2002) But an important detail contradicts this interpretation when in the final minutes of the film we actually see the version of the events suggested by Kujan: in this scene, Söze appears as Keaton on the boat. These images truly flash in when Kujan tries to convince Kint that Keaton was all along manipulating him because Keaton is in fact Keyser Söze. This was the presupposition of Kujan while he was listening to Kint's story and Kint was skillfully strengthened this suspicion. He evidently told his story in a way to highlight his own naïveté and Keaton's possible identity with Söze. The version in Kujan's head is the following: Keaton exerted political pressure to get immunity for Kint who will tell a story to the authorities in which Keaton has already left his dark past behind and forced into the fatal case by the circumstances, thus he appears as a victim. But Kujan thinks he sees through this trick and concludes that Keaton had a much bigger role in the events, he faked his death, but still pulling the strings as Keyser Söze. But he does not suspect that the whole story is a manipulation of Verbal Kint, the real Söze. The sequences that are really related to Kujan's idea of what really happened are the brief flashes of Keaton as Söze, not the ones featured previously where Keaton was shot to death by the criminal mastermind. None of them reflect what really happened on the boat, but they are constructed to represent the communicative intent of a character and the rhetorical intent of the author, to convince the other character, or the viewer about Söze's identity.

We get to see the scene of „Keaton's death" from several different perspectives. (1) At the beginning of the film, it is conveyed through the authorial discourse, without any voice-overs, therefore this scene cannot show us a lie without becoming incoherent or reveal the subjective nature of the sequence later. Since none of these options are implied in the film (it is neither a character focalized sequence nor a character narration), the employed rhetorical strategy can be described as pure authorial deception when the film intentionally conceals the identity of Keaton's killer. Apart from setting the central mystery of the story, the authorial intent behind this move is to back up Kint's later testimony about Keaton's murder. And it works well because this objective and impersonally presented scene is completely coherent with Kint's subsequent report at the end of the film. (2) In this second

presentation, we see Keaton getting shot in the back, while Kint is watching the events from the docks, but Kujan tries to persuade him that he did not really saw Keaton getting shot. The authorial intent towards the audience is to believe in the accuracy of Kint's account. (3) In the third version, there is no Keaton, and Kint only sees the mysterious hatted figure on the boat firing a gun, while he hides behind a large pile of boxes and ropes, therefore his sight is heavily restricted. Kint's intent with this version is to confirm Kujan's suggestion that he was scammed by Keaton. The author's intent is to make the viewer unsure about Keaton's role and Kint's comprehension of the events. Until this point, the audiovisual presentations were illustrations of Kint's narration, because Kujan's version of the events is illustrated in the following brief inserts where he tries to convince Kint that Keaton all along led him by the nose. (4) While Kujan, who was always skeptical of Keaton's repentance, is talking to Kint, the short flashes show Keaton as a man behind everything: he is cold, calculating and corrupt – a stark contrast with his previous presentation. Kujan suggests that Kint was scammed by Keaton who staged his own death. The film tries to convince viewers about Kujan's version, presenting the scene as a big revelation, the final twist of the movie, but attentive viewers may sense a bigger representational problem: if Kujan's version is true, then the initial sequence where Keaton was shot to death by someone else has to be false, which leads to an irresolvable contradiction. This clue was offered up in order to verify and prepare the second twist. (5) The last version is presented in the form of a montage sequence, altering between shots of Kint's exit from the station, Kujan's face, the information he sees on the wall of the office, and brief flashes of Keaton's and other character's death. It is unveiled that Kint is in fact Söze, and this truth is verified by multiple clues. As Kujan is staring at the wall in the police office, he starts to recognize names and places from Kint's story, while the film presents us the voices of Kujan, Kint and many others to signal what is happening inside Kujan's head. The identity of Kint is further confirmed by the sketch artist's portrait that the police station receives from the hospital and Kint's behavior in the street: he no longer limps as he walks and his hands are perfectly healthy. We even see him for a fragment of a second as the hatted figure who fires the gun that kills Keaton. With this montage, the film also suggests that the initial presentation was true, and it only underreported events. However, on a closer inspection it becomes apparent that the film not only mediates and faithfully displays Kint's rhetorical strategy, but independently creates an additional layer of interrelations in the axis of the author-viewer communication, because the authorial and the narrator character's intents not always coincide. Take for example the sequence, where Kint tells about how Keyser Söze's family was captured by Hungarian

mobsters and butchered by Söze himself to prove his fearlessness to the gangsters. There is a clear contrast between other flashbacks and this scene in the level of both the quality of the images and the type of soundtrack used. The visual dimension is „extremely impressionistic, using an out of focus camera, colour filters with an »unreal« effect, slow-motion shots, and character movements smudged through long-term exposure. […] On the soundtrack, the representation contains, apart from the voice-over narration, mainly nondiegetic sounds, such as an indeterminable ominous noise and some dissonant music." (Laass 2008, 145) The broken continuity between frames and the dreamlike presentation all display the scene as a subjective vision, contrasting it with the objectivity and accuracy of Kint's other flashbacks. However, the representation of the Söze myth can be explained with the story's indirectness, the narrator himself admits that this is only gossip. Or, as Laass argues „the deviant narrative techniques merely emphasise, on both the visual and the acoustic level, the shocking brutality of the events presented." (2008, 145) Whatever artistic reason stands behind the odd representation of the sequence, it is well adjusted to the rhetorical intent of the character narrator, because it successfully contrasts the realistic imagery of the parts told as a personal experience. But two moments in the film are uninterpretable as the illustration of an intradiegetic character's intent. Ferenz writes that the film „has left the rules of fair play behind, as the initial sequence contains a POV shot which we were able to ascribe to Kint. However, as it turns out at the end, this shot couldn't have been a POV shot at all because Kint couldn't have been in two places at the same time: witnessing the killing of Keaton from a removed vantage-point and committing the killing of Keaton." (2008, 208) But Ferenz is being inaccurate here: there is no „POV shot" in the scene (we only get that kind of shots in Kint's narrative), but a repeated shot of a pile of boxes and ropes, suggesting that someone is watching from behind them. The viewer can only understand the full significance of these shots at the end, when Kint tells that he saw the murder from that exact position. But the curious ending scene not only show us Kint's POV, but repeats exactly the same shots with the objects we saw at the beginning. At this point the author wants the audience to think that the shots of the ropes from the opening sequence is resolved: „Hence, we are asked to entertain the idea that even this allegedly impersonal initial sequence was in fact not impersonal at all; yet no indication whatsoever marked it as personal. Therefore, a profound uncertainty concerning the imagery's truth is raised, and we are likely to ascribe this to the film-makers themselves and not to the film's pseudo-diegetic character-narrator, Kint." (2008, 208) Ferenz is seemingly confused about the subjectivity of the two representations of the same event, and mixes the notions of

focalization and ocularization. The film clearly sends controversial signals regarding the meaning (not the subjectivity) of the image of the ropes which I should examine from both the aspect of the character's and the author's communication. On the axis of communication between Kint and Kujan, there are no images just words. Kint tells Kujan that from behind the ropes he saw a man shoot Keaton. This statement is confirmed by (1) authentic POV shots (where his sight is obstructed by the objects in front of him), (2) almost POV shots (where there is no object in the frame) and (3) shots of the ropes (as a quasi countershot to the POV, showing the source of vision). The authorial narration not only confirms Kint's story, but does something else: it maintains the consistency between the initial representation of this event and Kint's version. (see: Laass 2008, 145) The opening scene was indeed „impersonal", but not because of the lack of POV shots, but because it was not narrated by a character, therefore it necessarily showed events as they happened. In other words: Kint's communicational intents has nothing to do with the images in the opening sequence, therefore we cannot describe it as „unreliable". A POV shot would have only indicated that there was a witness for the scene, but this could not have questioned the truth of the whole sequence. However, it was a deceptive scene in the context of the whole narrative, because it suggested a false interpretation with the shots of the ropes: as it turns out Kint was never behind the ropes because he was the man who pulled the trigger on the boat. It follows that the authorial narration not only adjusts to Kint's rhetoric, but it operates a rhetoric independent of diegetic truths when it deceptively attaches importance to a sight whose only role is the authentication of a lie later invented by a character.

According to Laass „[a]s long as [the viewer] perceives the information he is presented with as merely incomplete, which constitutes a case of underreporting, and not inaccurate (misreporting), he will not regard this lack of communicativeness as evidence of severe factual unreliability" (2008, 144) But unreliability in this case is not a matter of under- or misreporting, but if the segment in question is a represented narration or not: in an unreliable character narration both kind of errors are possible, but the authorial discourse cannot misreport, because instead of becoming unreliable, it becomes incoherent. Even though *The Usual Suspects* is pushing the boundaries of „fair play" much more than Hitchcock's film, it can account for every detail through the elegant combination of authorial deception (underreporting) and unreliable narration (character misreporting).

Unlike Laass, who says that „[t]he most interesting issue concerning the film's focalisation […] is the multiply focalised representation of how the crime is committed." (2008, 145) I stated that Keaton's death is presented by „multiple perspectives" and not

„multiple focalizations", because character focalization is the wrong concept to use here. Of course, focalization is always embedded in narration (there is no separate activity of focalization without a narrative act, because it is an aspect of narrative articulation), but the narrative progression in Singer's film is not shaped by the limited access to different character's experiences of the events but different narrativizations of the events, just like in *Stage Fright*. The presentation of a narration (narrative articulation with a communicational intent) should be considered as an entirely different type of rhetorical act than the presentation of an experience of a particular subject (character focalization).[193] The presence of mimetic unreliability (lying) is the best indicator why this situation cannot be described by the collision of perspectives: nobody lived through the events as they are presented in Kint's narrative, so when the film communicates them to the viewer, it is obviously a representation of Kint's narrative act, not the perspective of Kint as a character. The aspect of the film where we *can* talk about focalization is the relation between narrative instances and characters. Although Kint presents his version of the story as an eyewitness testimony, he is both the narrator and the main character in it (autodiegesis), therefore his discourse is prefocalized in the genettian sense, constrained by the requirements of authenticity. It is different in many respects than the heterodiegetic cases of character focalization, but the quality and quantity of information shared about the self (as a character) is the rhetorical choice of the author-narrator, therefore he has a certain field of play here. (It can be either an internal deep, surface or even external focalization.) What can be positively established is that the presentation of Keaton's death is not „multiply focalized" but there is a certain amount of information Kint and Kujan provides in their narration, and some other information that the authorial discourse suggests through the interconnection of the direct presentation of the events and the visual details of Kint's narration.

In general, it can be concluded that whether a character narration is true or not, if the audiovisuals can be understood as a representation of the character's narrative act, the usefulness of the segment's analysis as character focalization is seriously challenged: the author is not focalizing the character but representing its discourse. Nevertheless, Laass insistently talks about focalization: „The hyponarrative is also almost entirely externally focalised. [...] Kint is established as its communicative sender on NL1, but, apart from a few

[193] The film *Vantage Point* is a good example of character focalization, because the same event is repeatedly shown from the perspectives of eight different characters, and not through the illustrated presentation of their verbal accounts. Therefore, no communicational intent of theirs directly intervenes in the presentation of their perception of the events.

exceptions discussed below, he almost never serves as the perceptual subject of the audiovisual representation of what he relates. (2008, 144) However, what she describes in this passage is not narrative focalization, but the lack and occasional application of ocularization, which is only a possible textual indicator of narrative focalization, which is always a matter of interpretation, the narrative understanding of a larger segment, which might be only possible from the perspective of a retrospective re-evaluation of the whole narrative. Since in this case, the character narrator's discourse is verbal, the utilization of the ocularization techniques should be attributed solely to the author of the film. In this respect, it is not that strange that a prefocalized discourse is (almost) without character ocularization, which is a dimension controlled by the author. The representation of the flashback follows filmic conventions instead of strictly adhering to things Kint could know. There are several scenes in the film without Kint being there, the audience overhears conversations which he could not possibly hear (the dialogue between Keaton and his girlfriend, the dialogue between the corrupt cops in a police car) and in the same way, it can ocularize characters beyond him. Although a POV shot of Kobayashi is present in one scene, only two characters have really emphasized POV shots in the flashback: Söze and Kint. Because we know that Kint is Söze, at least one of the POV shots has to show a position that was never occupied by him. We can be sure that Kint never told Kujan about a situation where he saw the events from the boat, yet we get a POV shot of the fictional Söze shooting Keaton in the back. Even if this shot might be more accurate than the rest of the scene, it cannot be a faithful representation of Kint's narrative.[194] Since the visual framing of the individual shots has nothing to do with the rhetorical force of Kint's verbal narration, ocularization techniques should be considered a medium-specific aspect of the narrative where the author of the film took the most creative liberty in the representation of the character's discourse.

Does the audiovisual representation of Kint's discourse reveals more to the audience about the truth than Kint wants to say? It mostly reinforces Kint's deceptive communication by showing the events consistently, but there is one element by which the author reveals a connection only available for the viewers of the film. He mentions a lawyer named „Kobayashi" who is practically the right hand of Söze. The audience suspects that the entire character is a fabrication of Kint because his name refers to the company that manufactured Kujan's mug. The character played by Pete Postlethwaite appears multiple times in the flashbacks and for our greatest surprise he also turns up at the end of the film as Kint's

[194] The situation is similar to what happens in *Rashomon* when we get a POV shot from the woman's perspective inside the narrative of the bandit.

(Söze's) driver after he leaves the police station. This identity is only present at the discursive level, because only the extrafictional audience have seen him both as the lawyer in the embedded story and as the driver. Laass is confident that „the final scene of the film shows that the character actually exists within the diegesis; Kint apparently only gave him a different name." (2008, 141), but I have reservations about this notion of the character, because the mystery cannot be resolved on the level of the story. Here, the film's implicit narration (indirect assertions) has a big significance in the establishment of the ambiguity. We do not know for sure, if the film is being communicative with us and Postlethwaite's presence means he represents the same character in Kint's story and in the primary diegesis. (Note that Söze was also played by at least four different actors at different points in the film.)

Just like in *Stage Fright* and *Rashomon,* the narrative dynamics of *The Usual Suspects* are much more relied on deficient storytelling than colliding perspectives or simply utilizing different character focalizations. The film contains factually unreliable narration because the inaccurately represented events are not connected to a character's perception (as in *The Innocents*) or contradictory fictional facts (as in *Marienbad*), but they represent the narrative act of a character. In films with lying narrators and this type of „twists", unreliable character narration and authorial deception are both present in the narrative.

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