

Film Appreciation
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Lecture - 04

Film Theory

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Good mornings, so today's topic is major trends in film theory. So, because of the relative newness of the film medium compared with other art forms Thomas Edison's Kinetoscope a peephole machines where first opened to the public in New York city only in 1894, we are looking at the beginnings of film theory, and how this new medium called cinema is started. We have also refer to Thomas Edison's and his invention Kinetoscope peephole which is one of the earliest modes of the moving pictures. We are talking about the year 1894, and how it all begins. We are also talking about the Lumia brothers who first projected there shot actualities to paying audience, audience who paid money to watch films in a café in Paris in 1895.

So, film theory and criticism are dependent on a limited number of major text, and the lines of their disperse can easily be tries up to the point when the so call theory of structuralism and post structuralism head profound effect on cultural history in general

from that point on film theory and criticism proliferated at very rapid rate at a very rapid speed and film journals, became as much a place for discussion debits arguments on the issues of art and esthetics. As journals were for as say your literature of film in other words acquired the states which was earlier accorded only to great works of literature.

And film journals and film historians played a major role in according this state's two films that is much of discuss on cinema from this start this concerned with fictional narcotic films an emphasize that parallels that the vast popularity of such works compared with a more limited and specialized appeal of the documentary and more experimental and Avagad film. Most of the early theorizations show a clear leaning gravitation toward the formalist possibility of cinema and certain formalism, and certain aspects of formalism, definitely under ((Refer Time: 03:28)) the montage theory expounded by the great Russian film makers in the 1920'2. For example, Liyo Kuleshov or Lev Kuleshov from Russia, who begins to publish essays in 1917 and many books published in the 1920s they talk about the practices of American film makers especially film makers such as DW Griffiths and Kuleshov was started to understand the practices of film making by the great film makers of the time.

So, there is term called the Kuleshov on effect. It has passed into cine cinematic language to describe what for Kuleshov was the inherent magic of the film medium itself that is which is creation of meanings and significant and emotional impact by relating and juxtaposing individual shorts, see we are talking about montage theory one of the earliest efforts to lend a kind of an intellectual touch to film studies that idea was that how scenes are created by relating and juxtapose individual shorts. How meanings are created by juxtapose individual shots, a resulting in a context that was not inherent in any of the single piece of film that was a product of the ending itself. So, Kuleshov student would of keen begin writing to books too many scripts that together to become the book film technique when he was working on his picture, mother you know mother as authored by magazine workings. So, when the movie was being picturized when the movie was filmed in 1920'2 would of keen started writing to books on films studies. So, in this book he exclusive his own variation of montage what [FL] Einstein Isis Einstein refer to as linkage in which shots are un optically linked together so that they continuously and naturally flow along with the films narrative lines, this is a contribution

of Kuleshov, but he also pushes theoretically, this theoretical discuss further with its discussion of film mix space and time.

Now we are talking about temporal special aspects of cinema and Kuleshov a discussion of dimensions created by the editing process itself and distinct from any space and time known in external reality. So, these are the contribution made by Kuleshov and ((Refer Time: 06:41)). Apart from ((Refer Time: 06:44)) concept of linkage editing there is Einstein's collision theory of montage in which the dramatic disposition of shots produce produces kind of attraction to one and another that make the significant of meaning of the synthesis more clear to the viewer.

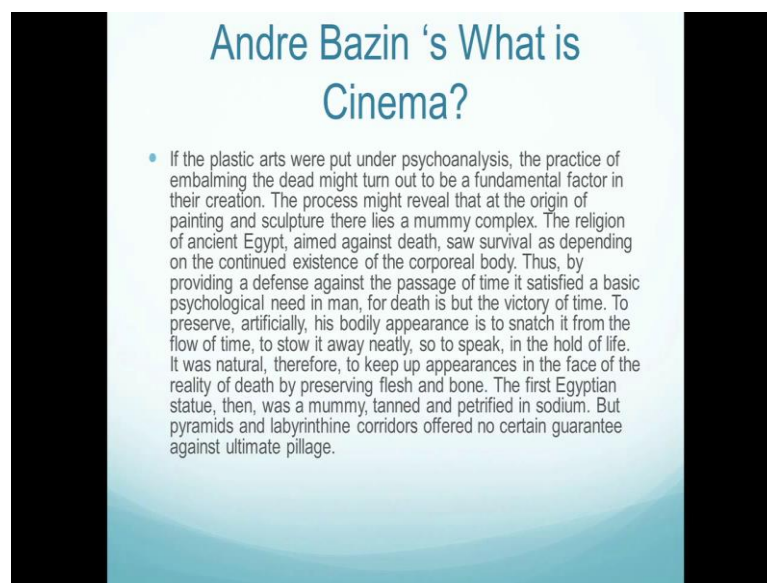
Where is Kuleshov had demonstrated how to juxtapose shorts could create up to produce context not inherent in the individual images ins Einstein going to beyond his mentor in both his writings and also in his films to show that the two images could be actually synthesized in the minority everywhere to create a single totality and perfection even to create a level of thought organization beyond the recitalist images in the know coming to another key theories Andre Bazin of in easy of Andre Bazin of return in France in the lay nineteen forties and fifties the great Vokis called what is cinema volume one and part volume two. So, we have an impressive blend of realism an discussion realist criticism and theory of realism his cinema actually realistic that is the discussion that the debate all about.

The base of found Kuleshovs and Isis Einstein's impasses on montage antithetical to realistic possibilities of cinema creating instead and illusory and illusion of reality that is product of introduction of the shorts and not a reflection of the world which is actually filmed on photographed base apprise the American directors such as orison Welles and William wells for emphasizing the individual in edits self and what each revels of reality not exactly through relationship of images. So, an emphasis largely absents in cinema sense the silent film of earlier film makers earlier Hollywood film maker. Now through the techniques of deep focus and along take according to base on Orison Welles and William wells presenting space and time as continues and whole as appear in external reality. So, that we viewers are force to immerse them self in the images and select for them self what to see famous scene from Orison Welles, Citizen Kane while the mother science the document of the child coming into a inheritance, the child is happily shown playing away and we watch that the child playing away through the window pan, but this

was called the deep focus technique, where all characters are extremely and very clearly visible to the viewers. And it depends on the viewers what to select unlike the montage.

So, one of the founders of the French film journal [FL] influence the criticism of people like Godthab and ((Refer Time: 10:32)) and people like Yoke Rivet who wrote for the journal and subsequently they also becoming extremely influential members of the entire French new way cinema. Bassoon emphasizes on the individual image is analysis of the single motion picture in the context of film genre and his appreciation of the personal and the unique in the achievement of each film artist also had an impact on the new way films these critics where to direct, but it is basically Bazin should and very insightful appreciation of cinema and his ability to respond to the nuances of each work and his very discerning eye for a style and form and the use of detailed and techniques as the source for his concepts that has serviced as a model future writers of film appreciation and film criticism.

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I would like to draw your attention to passage from Andre Bazin's what is cinema, I will read out this quote for you. If the plastic arts were put under psychoanalysis, the practice of embalming the dead might turn out to be a fundamental factor in their creation. The process might reveal that at the origin of painting and sculpture there lies a mummy complex. The religion of ancient Egypt aimed against death saw survival as depending on the continued existence of the corporeal body. Thus, by providing a defense against

the passage of time it satisfied a basic psychological need in man, for death is but the victory of time. To preserve, artificially his bodily appearance is to victory of time to preserve artificially his bodily appearance is to snatch it from the flow of time, to stow it away neatly, so to speak, in the hold of life it was natural, therefore, to keep up appearances in the face of the reality of death by preserving flesh and bone. The first Egyptian statue then was a mummy tanned and personified in sodium. But pyramids and labyrinthine corridors offered no certain guarantee against ultimate pillage.

And look what cinema did to this. So, along with Bazin's there is another important name Sires Fred Creakier who is also recognized as one of the measure advocates of real cinema. He wrote a famous theoretical text called theory of film the redemption physical reality which are published in 1960. And the direction he takes that the fictional films that most full fill the potential of the filmic medium are those that least distort or remove the audience from the world as we know it those films also have the capacity to make us rediscover the real world to expand our vision of it.

Now coming to something called genre theory and criticism which made considerable side, during the same period of time, and which seeks to recognize the very popular nature of film especially as a product of the Hollywood studio system. All the individual directors might be sighted for their ability and certain genres of you know creating there or inscribing the personally stamp with in the tradition must genres a theory and criticism was based on the connection between the works and their audiences and attempted to explain social and cultural needs of the viewer the genre theory and criticism what itself the most probable or where the most profitable, probably most profitable location for adopting the new emphases on structuralism which was having such deep impact on cultural criticism during the sixties and seventies.

So, Hollywood offered a large number of similar films with very well know elements in each on which made these works the inevitable source for a studies in cinema and structuralism approach to cinema. And another binary opposition and its structure exploded in these studies and they may seem to two superficial to suggest the deep structure that people like for instance Claude Lorus cross the great anthropologist had proposed in mix from primitive culture or in his treatment of Oedipus Myth, but then work called horizon west written by someone called Gym Critics in 1969 and he aware the writer is able to establish a basic structural and thematic kind of contract in the

western in the western genre and also show the individual contributions of a specific directors within this context.

Then there is another great theorist Peter Walloon and his discussions of Hollywood directors Howard Hawks and Jon Ford in a very inflectional book those of few who are interested in doing some kind of research in film studies should know this book is called science and meanings in the cinema published in 1969 and he also Peter Walloon also uses genre in a structuralist approach to develop thematic structures and tensions in the films of Jon Ford and Howard Hawks. The most important early work in context of semiotics was by Christian Metz and his book Film Language a semiotics of cinema which was originally published in the French language.

Now Metz's major theory is to demonstrate the way in which film signifies meaning through semiotics codes especially specialized codes unique to the cinema such as the arrangement of shots possible in a narrative sequence. There is also something called second semiotics and where the main idea of the second semiotics is to identify and then expose the ideological structure and codes of capitalist society evident or even implied in commercial narrative cinema and to tie the ideological focus in with Lacan's psychoanalytic theory about the child's early development stages especially in the mirror stage to which the regress on some level when we view the images on the screen recreated within a scene the imaginary and where a feeling of wholeness and self which is first developed in us when we view our reflection in a mirror during early childhood, but now is actually developed by a film's ideology. So, using Lacan's mirror stage theory and applying it into cinema.

Now there is another important film theorist John Louis Baudry who wrote about ideological effects of the basic cinematic apparatuses. This was the first of the several essays on the subject that worked to influence Christian Metz to further his development and to popularize these ideas in the text that he wrote between 1973 and 1975 collectively they are called imaginary signifier.

Now I'm coming back to Lacan his concept of the *stich* you know what is *stich* to stitch up something, so he gives us the concept of *stich*, which film makers use film critics also a film theory also applied. So, his concept of *stich* earlier introduced to film theory in ((Refer Time: 19:58)). This concept appears in Lacan's *stich* and it offers

much debate on the recreation of the imaginary and how the subject is positioned on the screen and how it imposes on the unity of such techniques of narrative films as point of view editing's. So, whose point of view are we supposed to follow. So, we have to understand these theories of such as mirror stage and points of view match cutting and eye lining matching and on the way how such techniques importunity and perhaps give a subjectivity how you know there is the concept of camera subjectivity, subjectivism. So, how these things operate.

Now, from here we move onto feminist film theory and criticism which was also a measure trend which is still a measure trend in understanding appreciating films. So, feminist film theory and criticism has also been in regress and influential school it has had great impact on the teaching of the film studies. So, early text in this area offer a straight forward critical approach in which the various external types of women in film are praised and analysis as products of patriarchal society and culture, but feminist criticism has also become very much involved with the ideas of Luis Althusser and Zizek and semiotics approaches of post structuralist film theory in his attempt to understand section differentiation within the narrative and text code of the film as well as within the viewing process itself.

Now one of the major essays of this school comes by Laura Mulvey whose essay visual pleasure narrative cinema published in 1975 describes the images of women in the Hollywood cinema as the passive object of the active male gaze. So, these concepts like gaze and objectification of women, you can trace all these back to the great feminist writers of the series and Laura Mulvey is one of the most influential theorist of this trend. So, the idea is that pleasure of the male gaze is threatened by the women's representation as a signifier of castration Mulvey describes two unconscious responses of the male to alleviate his fear of castration.

The first of a process of sadistic voyeurism which denigrates the women and the second a process of scopophilia and fetishizing women which over values the women's physical appearances in response to this focus on male pleasure and desire. Mulvey herself in her thoughts on visual pleasure narrative cinema which is inspired by dual in the sun, it is a movie directed by Kingwida and Mulvey wrote this essay on visual pleasure and narrative cinema on Kingwida's dual in the sun. And also these another critic called Kaye Silverman who wrote this essay embodying in the female voice published in

1984. There was another feminist critic film feminist a merry in merry and dowel who her essay film and the macerated theorizing the female spectator, all these theories Silverman and Mulvey and merry and dowel the all considered from a psychoanalytic perspective the pressures and problems brought upon the female viewer by films structured for the male gays and forbidding any positive identification with the female characters. So, one response to the psychoanalytic marks its approach has been a greater imposes on film form and technique and response is noted for its reliance on literary concepts and the examination of what takes place on the screen in the context of the viewer's reaction.

So, now let us talk about another trend which is narratology that includes an important dowse of viewer response analysis, the important theories of this movement is he is not exactly a film theorist, but a narratologist Edward Branigan. And he writes in his book point of view in the cinema and theory of narration and subjectivity in classical film which often uses the vocabulary on concepts of literary narratology to discuss film narrative text, but does sort to active a detailed analysis of way film techniques create various types of subjectivity on this screen and subjective responses in the viewer. Now since the nineteen sixties have been the concepts and studies of post modernism that term itself has been definitely or it has been defined quite on in differently a variably, but persistent elements are the denial of any meaning full theories concerning life, reality or art, fragmentation lack of cohesion in both cultural and individual identity, those are the major features of post modernism. Again the sub version of time and history, and the domination of the world by media and information technology, which we have created and where we have created a reality of science major per ourselves.

So, most significant in this discussion as been guy ((Refer Time: 26:39)) the society of this spectacle and also the works by John ((Refer Time: 26:45)) specially the simulations which was published in 1983 and then again a very seminal text I can emphasize for those who are interested in research cinema and film studies. This author is very important Frederic Jameson and his post modernism or the cultural logic of the late capitalism. So, the concepts of post modernism had been use full so far in the analysis of a number of films and in understanding certain tendencies in modern cinema. So we have to understand Jameson concept past his the invitation and accumulation of the filmic codes of the past, it has been specially useful and this shift was precipitated most notably

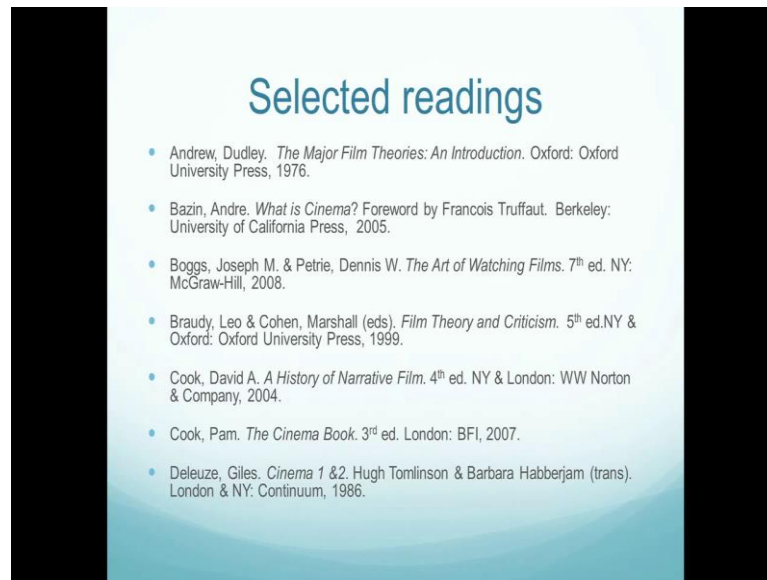
by a short influential essay by Alexander as through published in ((Refer Time: 27:41)). It was called the birth of a new ((Refer Time: 27:46)) published in 1968. So, what came to be known as the A-theory was later imported to North America in 1960s via the critical writings of Andrew Sarris and his reappraisal of Hollywood cinema which...

Now coming to post-colonial theories, so an important demonstration of the relation between post-colonial studies and film theory is demonstrated by the works of Frantz Fanon whose ideas including discussion of film spectatorship and issues of race in his works called *Black Skin White Mask* published in 1952. And again we have works like *Unthinking Eurocentrism* and *Multi-Culturalism and the Media* by Ella Shohat and Robert Stam where these writers give that euro-centrism and vision the world from a single prevailing point.

Again there is a book mystifying movies facts and fictions in contemporary film theory and philosophical problems of classical film theory the great writer Noel Carroll defines theory is strictly as a coherent and enzymatic set of statements that can both explain event and force event when Carroll uses the definition to justify the critic of much of the film theory canon preferring a model, analytic theory from philosophy as the bases of his work including theorizing the moving images and a philosophy of mass art. Carroll among significant cluster of film theoretician who are antagonist to the dominance of what is frequently called *slab theory* in cinema studies which is based on the theories of Saussure, Lacan, Althusser and Barthes, so therefore, we get the term *slab*.

So, Carroll credited with David Bordwell came up with a co-edited volume called *Post-Theory: Restructuring Film Studies* where various authors critic the grand theories that had come to dominate cinema studies through the nineteen sixties and seventies, most of which inclusiveness and cultural and psychoanalytic studies. So, Bordwell in his book or in his essay *Other Contemporary Film Studies* attempts to map out the incoherence trendiness and general lack of solid intellectual grounding of much recent theory. Bordwell's approach provides a template for analyzing the form in which events in a film are presented including plot fusion and story which is also called *fabula*, while cognitivism addresses the cinematic representation in the mental activities of the spectators.

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So, let me draw your attention to some of the selected readings here. Please take a look at the bibliography, the book by Dudley Andrew, Andre Bazin. The art of watching films by Joseph Boggs; Leo Braudy Film Theory and Criticism, this is a very important text. David Cook, A History of Narrative Films. Pam Cook, The Cinema Book and of course you have Deleuze, the cinema 1 and cinema 2.

Thank you very much.