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THE OTHER ONE AND I : A NARRATIVE PATTERN IN CONTEMPORARY CINEMA

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The study investigates a narrative pattern which plays a key part in contemporary cinema. It highlights the pattern's modernity and enormous narrative potential. Two literary texts (a radio play and a postmodern novel) have been selected to reveal a close interdependance between literature and film. Indeed, many film scripts from the 80's and 90's seem to be directly or indirectly inspired by a primarily literary structure. Thus, the study will try to shed new light on a number of recent films.

I. THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY

Günter Eich : Die Andere und Ich (The Other One and I)

In 1952, Günter Eich's radio drama *Die Andere und Ich* (1973, 499 - 537) received the "Hörspielpreis der Kriegsblinden", the highest German award for a radio play. The play remains an immensely important text because it introduced a duplication pattern of identity and reality which has become a key structure both in postmodern fiction and in contemporary cinema. I will introduce this narrative pattern by a brief interpretation of the play.

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Ellen Harland, an American housewife, spends her summer holidays with her family in Italy. They travel by car, 'exploring' the Mediterranean Coast according to the recommendations of a guidebook. A series of interior monologues, interspersed with dramatic flashbacks, reveals a striking amount of distance between Ellen and the rest of her family. In Comacchio, a small fishing village, Ellen is struck by the glance of a very old woman. The short moment of eye contact creates some disturbance in her; she cannot forget the old woman. When Ellen goes swimming at a beach in Porto Garibaldi, an important change of reality occurs: Ellen's interior monologue reveals how she leaves the water, waves her family goodbye and walks back to Comacchio. She has decided to search for the old fisherwoman. In 'reality', however, Ellen has fainted in the water; she has had an accident. Thus, the following action and all the flashbacks take place in her subconscious. The listener, however, has no chance to realize this change of reality.

In Comacchio, people seem to know Ellen. They address her as Camilla, a person she has never heard of. Later on, Ellen becomes aware that time has shifted from the year 1951 to the year 1910 : Ellen Harland's 41th birthday becomes the symbolical date of a rebirth in the sea. Ellen has become Camilla, the old fisherwoman, who is just going to marry. Ellen rebels against the part she is supposed to play. She walks around like a lunatic, passively enduring and at the same time resisting her fate. So Ellen, the well-to-do middle class housewife, learns to see the world through the eyes of a fisherwoman. She experiences an existence of extreme sorrow and grief, reliving Camilla's life from the year 1910 back to 1951. The action turns full circle when Camilla, who has forgotten about her former existence, sees herself, Ellen Harland, passing by in a car. In this very moment of eye contact, Ellen wakes up among her family, lying on the beach. It is only now that the listener realizes that a duplication of identity and reality has taken place and that Ellen has returned to the prime reality of everyday life and standard time. Everything seems to have been a dream. However, the play carries its

deliberate strategy of audience irritation even further: Ellen leaves her family for the second time. She perceives her husband and her children as strangers and goes back to Comacchio in order to search for Camilla. This time, however, nobody recognizes her. Instead, Ellen finds Camilla in her death chamber. The play's final monologue reveals that Ellen's identity has become ambiguous. The 'dream' has alienated her from her former existence. Camilla is dead; on the other hand, Ellen cannot continue her life.

The narrative pattern deliberately confronts two different existences and two different realities in order to establish a relationship of mutual projection. Whereas Ellen's sheltered middle class existence seems to exclude too much reality and too much suffering, Camilla lives just the opposite life. Thus, the play does not advocate one mode of existence at the expense of the other; instead, it raises fundamental questions about their relationship. So Ellen's 'loss of reality' equals that of the listener who is gradually drawn into a total change of horizon. Ellen manages to see the world with the eyes of another identity. She becomes 'one' with Camilla just like an author who, in the process of writing, temporarily becomes 'one' with his characters. Thus, the plot reveals itself as an artificial construct.

Atif Yilmaz : Ahh Belinda !

Atif Yilmaz is probably the most important representative of the current Turkish cinema. His films reveal a special interest in the role of women in Turkish society and in female identity. *Ahh Belinda* (from 1987) is based on the same structure as Eich's radio play. Here Yilmaz uses an identical narrative pattern for an extremely poignant and lucid commentary on Turkish society in general. Serap (Müjde Ar) is a theatre actress who decides to act in a TV commercial in order to earn some money. She represents Istanbul's bohemia of artists and would-be artists who live outside the moral and social conventions of contemporary Turkey. A change of identity occurs during a shower sequence: Serap has to close her eyes and wash her hair with the shampoo 'Belinda'.

Thus, she has to express a state of total ecstacy, as indicated by the film title. When Serap opens her eyes again, however, she realizes that her reality has changed. She finds herself in the surroundings of the character she is supposed to play in the commercial. Serap has become Naciye, a lower middle class woman who leads an insignificant existence at the side of her totally undistinguished husband Hulusi (Macit Koper). Like Ellen Harland, Serap remembers her former existence and passively resists her new 'part'. When Hulusi tries to make love to her, she takes flight. However, she cannot go back to her former life, either, for neither her friends nor her father recognize her. Thus, Serap has to make Naciye's life her own. She turns out to be a complete failure in every aspect, especially at Naciye's job in a bank. The 'mundane' lower-middle class life is not suitable for Serap. Consequently, Hulusi drags his wife to a psychiatrist. Serap, however, gradually manages her new 'role' by deliberately over - acting it. She over-plays her newly found state of total happiness so cleverly that she is drawing the audience into a kind of secret communion. Serap becomes an actress for the second time. Naturally, her dreams turn to the stage: She manages to get a small role in a play, to the great horror of her conservative-minded husband. Thus, the stage becomes the tie between both layers of reality and identity. When Serap opens her eyes for the second time, she is still standing under the shower, holding the shampoo 'Belinda' in her hand. The producers congratulate her on the intensity of her performance.

Once again, the audience experience the change of reality and identity as an extremely puzzling event. Although Atif Yılmaz uses a synthesizer score to indicate the transposition during the shower sequence, the viewer nevertheless undergoes the same feeling of a 'loss of reality'. Compared to Ellen Harland's experience, however, Serap's change of identity seems to be far less existential. It has more in common with a successful theatre rehearsal. Accordingly, it ends in a kind of comic relief. Still, the use of two layers of identity and reality achieves the same kind of mutual commentary; it shows that there is no connection

whatsoever between Serap's and Naciye's existence. Thus, the film depicts Turkey as a highly fragmented and contradictory society. The seriousness of the subject, however, is rendered in a highly humorous way: Atıf Yılmaz clearly noticed the comic potential of the film's duplication pattern.

Peter Del Monte: Julia and Julia

Both Eich's and Yılmaz's 'texts' foreground the problem of identity. Identity is being questioned but not shattered. Ellen and Camilla are not traditional characters who are open to psychological analysis; they are models of two different modes of existence. The same can be said about Naciye whose life seems to be highly stereotyped. It is only Serap who comes across as a real 'flesh and blood' character, especially since she manages to maintain some of her former identity in Naciye's existence. She never becomes 'one' with Naciye completely. A sense of role distance lets Serap's identity shine through Naciye's life. Thus, Serap does not undergo an identity crisis; she just returns to her former existence. Peter Del Monte's film *Julia and Julia*, however, changes the structural pattern in a significant way. The film (which was produced by the Italien RAI in 1989) reflects how the duplication pattern can be used as a visual (cinematic) expression of a heroine's psychological condition.

At a wedding ceremony on the Mediterranean Sea, the bride's veil is lifted by the wind and carried away. A photographer (Sting), who accidentally passes by, picks it up and exchanges a look with Julia (Kathleen Turner). Cut: Julia and her husband Paolo (Gabriel Byrne) drive to their seaside villa. Paolo loses control of the car; he dies in the accident which Julia survives. Cut: Julia has met another man. Asked for her husband Paolo, she immediately takes flight. She visits her parents in law. The conversation reveals that six years have passed since the accident, and that Julia thinks of her husband as if he were still alive. She refuses to sell the villa they were supposed to live in. It remains locked-up, with all the furniture being covered. Later on,

we realize that the villa is waiting to be occupied by Julia's dreams. Sometime in the evening. Julia looks out of her apartment window, gazing at a flat in the opposite block. She seems to remember something, leaves the house, and drives towards an unknown destination. She has to wait in front of a tunnel which is just being cleaned. She is all alone. Thick clouds of cleansing liquid come out of the tunnel, and for a moment Julia becomes unconscious. When she opens her eyes again, reality has changed. Her apartment is rented by a stranger. Instead, Julia finds her home in the opposite block. It seems now that Julia remembered a different life of hers when she looked out of the window several hours before. Julia is shocked and takes flight again. The following scenes show her at the side of Paolo and her 6 year old son; Julia imagines a perfect marriage in her seaside villa. Once again, the audience are drawn into a transformation of reality that does not reveal itself as a dream. No musical score helps the audience to understand the change (as in *Ahh Belinda*), and no visual aids (such as filters or lenses that provide different colour tones) are used to separate the film's different layers of reality and identity. - Julia seems to have found perfect happiness. However, mysterious phone calls start to disturb her marital life. The caller is a man called Daniel Osler who pretends to know Julia. Julia traces him down and enters his hotel room in his absence. To her great surprise, she finds nude pictures of herself among Osler's colour slides. Again, Julia leaves in great haste. One day Osler appears at Julia's travel agency. Julia recognizes the photographer who had picked up her veil on the day of her wedding. So the initial eye contact carried a moment of "anagnorisis" (just as in Eich's play). - Julia gradually falls in love with Osler, and her marriage faces a crisis. Paolo stays out nights and her son pushes her away. Julia visits Osler for the second time, this time finding him at home. His colour slides, however, show city impressions only. Julia's nude pictures stemmed from a relationship that is going to start now; they were part of the future. Thus, a clear distinction between the past and the present is replaced by a notion of simultaneity. Julia cannot concentrate

anymore, and her memory fails her more than once. Her 'dream' becomes as ambiguous as her everyday life existence. Julia's problem is to integrate the various layers of her life: She is a single woman who works in a travel agency, Paolo's wife and Osler's mistress at the same time. Since she is constantly fluctuating, escape and retreat become dominant patterns of behaviour. Thus, her relationship with Osler turns into a crisis, too. Julia wants to go back to Paolo and escapes from the photographer. Their love turns into a sexual obsession which ends in a violent way: Julia kills Osler with a pair of scissors. However, her newly established happiness with Paolo lasts for only a few days. Julia gets arrested and is taken to prison. The prison sequence becomes a symbolical expression of Julia's psychological condition. The day of her wedding is the trauma of her life. Indeed, both Osler and Paolo point to that very moment. Julia lives in an imaginary past which finally takes hold of her entire existence. Thus, by not being able to forget and by 'dreaming' of a life she was denied to have, Julia undergoes a process of internal migration. She lets her life pass her by. Again and again we see her looking out of a window. The fact, however, that we perceive her existence as highly enigmatic, depends on a very important structural variation. *Julia and Julia* cites the duplication pattern in its title but refuses to harmonize both layers of identity and reality by a circular structure. Indeed, Julia does not wake up in front of her steering wheel. Thus, the distinction between 'dream' and everyday life is constantly being blurred; both layers of reality become involved in a highly paradoxical set of correspondences and moments of duplication. The film resembles a convex mirror through which the audience perceive a mysterious reality which is a direct expression of Julia's state of mind. Thus, the film could be called a fascinating study in schizophrenia if Julia was a real 'flesh and blood' character. However, her total passivity and mostly expressionless face underline the fact that she is part of a highly 'literary' text which owes a great deal to contemporary postmodern aesthetics. Indeed, Peter Del Monte uses a fictional structure and cleverly applies it to the screen. Peter Ackroyd's

Hawksmoor, one of the most popular postmodern novels from the 1980's, makes the connection clear.

Peter Ackroyd : Hawksmoor

The novel is based on two parallel texts which are foregrounded in turns and are involved in a highly enigmatic relationship of similarity and difference. The first is set in the late 17th century, where architect Nicholas Dyer, who is a colleague of Sir Christopher Wren, worships a satanic 'cabbala'. He designs the plans for seven churches in London which form a pentagon. Each of these churches is inaugurated by the sacrifice of a human being. The second text is set in the 1980's. Once again, corpses are discovered in those seven churches. The names of the victims are exactly the same as those from the 17th centrury. Even the sequence of their deaths is identical. However, there are no hints to a possible murderer, and, strangely enough, it is not possible to define exactly at what time these murders were committed.

A feeling of 'timelessness' takes hold of the reader very quickly. Detective Hawksmoor faces a complete puzzle. He uses the traditional method of 'ratiocination' to solve it, following in Sherlock Holmes's footsteps. He gradually uncovers a whole set of duplications and mysterious similarities. However, he never gets near to solving the case. Instead, he uncovers a paradoxical relationship of similarity and difference. On the surface, the degree of similarity between both layers of reality, between the past and the present, seems striking indeed. Hawksmoor and Dyer live in the same part of London; Dyer's office is in the building which now belongs to Scotland Yard; both protagonists have an assistant called Walter Payne. Hawksmoor even gets hold of Dyer's notebook which contains the principles of his 'cabbala'. Also, the relationship of similarity is not only a matter of plot structure. The novel points to a possible identity between Hawksmoor and Dyer, especially since the historical Hawksmoor was an architect just like Dyer. However, none of these discoveries leads Hawksmoor anywhere. Instead, he gradually loses touch

with reality. The case begins to absorb his entire existence. The more mysterious it appears, the deeper Hawksmoor gets involved in it. Just like Julia, he undergoes a process of internal migration and gradually loses his conception of 'self'. He does not even recognize his reflection in a shop window: His surprised exclamation, "Do I know you?" (211), points to the final moment of dissolution; the novel ends with a druid -like, highly rhythmical monologue of Hawksmoor who finally reaches his destination in Dyer's last church, Little St High. The pentangle has been completed, and Hawksmoor himself has become the seventh and last victim. So the 17th century background text becomes a kind of 'abyss' in which Hawksmoor finally disappears. He drowns in a text, so to say, just as the reader who gets carried away by Ackroyd's narrative.

Thus, the novel's structure appears to be "architextual". The mysterious relationship between both layers of reality cannot be solved by the method of ratiocination but by the power of imagination only. So when Hawksmoor receives the drawing of a dead body (which is supposed to be Sherlock Holmes), then Holmes is no longer the "Universal Architect", as the picture's ironical subscript postulates. The real architect is the reader who is directly addressed in one inscription on a church wall (M SE M). The missing letter is a "U"; the sign omits the "you", the reader, who is necessary to make sense of the plot (Hutcheon 1988, 156). Just like an architect who designs churches, the reader designs or constructs his own fictional reality (Lee 1990, 71), a parallel which is constantly being drawn in the novel. So the mysterious duplicate structure of events is a direct appeal to the reader's imagination; the fictional reality becomes a puzzle whose pieces can be fit together in multiple ways without ever achieving congruency. The past means presence and absence at the same time. The similarity between both layers of fiction is as striking as their difference. Since Ackroyd uses a classical murder plot (i.e. the 'Ten Little Indians' pattern) in combination with a striking element of cabbala, a deep and protruding sense of horror captures the reader right from the beginning and draws him

deeper and deeper into the narrative. The ride into timelessness is emphasized by the novel's ending where Hawksmoor becomes part of a mystery that spans the different layers of time.

Apart from that obvious moment of horror, however, the novel foregrounds the question of identity. It seems that Dyer and Hawksmoor are involved in a mirror-like relationship which recalls the pattern of *The Other One and I*. Their identity seems to be the result of a mutual projection. However,

> as in the (convex) mirrors they both own, this reflection is a distortion. The mirroring, in fact, points out their differences from one another, the separation between the "I" perceiving and the "other" figured in the mirror. Subjectivity is created in the space between those two "I"s, not as a fixed essence, but as a constantly changing process. (Lee 1990, 85)

Indirectly, this comment also highlights the modernity of Eich's radio play because it seems to me that Ellen Harland's subjectivity is created in exactly the same space between two "I"s, namely hers and Camilla's. Julia, on the other hand, gets lost in the numerous possibilities of her existence. So in all of these 'texts', subjectivity is no longer a fixed essence but an open potential which the reader/viewer/listener has to shape by using his imagination.

II. HOLLYWOOD

The "Doppelgänger"

It is not the aim of this study to 'deconstruct' the duplication pattern of identity and reality by asking for its (primarily romantic) literary origins. It is certain, however, that one of the pattern's ingredients is the concept of the "Doppelgänger" which plays a key role especially in Ackroyd's novel. However, whereas literary texts tend to foreground the question of identity, Hollywood producers have always been primarily interested in the concept's "Dr. Jackyll and Mr. Hyde" potential. For them, the

"Doppelgänger" motif guarantees a moment of "stock horror". So it is all the more surprising that there are two science fiction films from the 1950's that use the concept not only as a means to make their audience's hair stand on end but as a device to question identity. Of these two, Jack Arnold's *It Came From Outer Space* (1953) is comparatively less significant. It is Don Siegel's adaptation of Jack Finney's science fiction classic *The Return of the Bodysnatchers* (1959) that stands out as the finest science fiction movie of the entire decade. The film deserves some consideration in the context of this study.

On the surface, Siegel's film works as a nice example of small town hysteria in a Cold War Period: Aliens occupy the human body and transform it into a cold and soulless entity, a so-called "pod". A young couple fight the desperate battle of the last holdouts, resisting their reduction into a vegetable-like state of existence. The film's "thrill" is of a very different kind because the "Doppelgänger" appears to be the next door neighbour who has lost his soul. Thus, the film works as a very powerful social parable. It appears to be a cinematic illustration of Riesman's famous diagnosis of a change in the American character: "Pods" are the obvious products of a shift towards "other directedness"; they are marked by a denial of the capacity for self-inspection and immediately crush any signs of deviating behaviour. Their identity is totally group- centered. A terrifying chant, "One of us ! One of us!", initiates the awakening sleeper into his new veggie-like life in the bosom of an ever-growing pod community. "Pods" represent the total congruency between the "I" perceiving and the "other" who is watching. In Siegel's own words :

> It (the film) exposed what a large number of people are doing to us culturally. They are pods. They have no soul and I'm sorry to say most people are that way. I think the pods outnumber us, if we ourselves are not pods. (Kass 1975, 120)

Recent variations of the "Doppelgänger" motif are far less sophisticated. Quite clearly, zombies are the "Doppelgänger" of

our time. Although the zombie genre is basically Italian (created by such directors as Dario Argento or Mario Bava), American directors have always known how to adapt foreign influences to the special "needs and desires" of their own domestic audience. Examples range from the mind-blowing *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1986) sequence (Tobe Hooper) to the (equally atrocious) "*The Hidden*" (1989) and the entire Wes Craven catalogue. A film such as Craven's *Shocker* (1989) cleverly combines the concept of a zombie-like mass murderer (who survives his own electrocution in order to enjoy a bloody after-life) with a clever reality game. Horace Pinker, heavily breeding on electricity, disappears in sockets or TV sets. Thus, the film ends with an intriguing chase sequence through the sets of a 1940's black and white movie that is just showing on television. - It seems, however, that once again the most original variations of the pattern come from science fiction films. Ridley Scott's *The Blade Runner* (1982) is especially interesting. Scott's "replicas" are human-like machines filled with an artificial identity. Their illusion of a past life is due to the programming of a computer and a number of fake photographs. Replicas are their own "Doppelgänger", so to say. The fact that the film depicts these 'machines' as more human than any of the emotionless human beings in Scott's future version of L.A. points to a very clever strategy of audience manipulation. When, at the climax of the film, the replica spares the life of his human adversary, we feel extremely sorry for him. In the moment of death, a machine rediscovers a human potential that seems to be sadly absent from Scott's distopia.

Outside the horror and science fiction genres, moments of a duplication of identity have provided some extremely moving scenes in recent Hollywood films. In *Hook* (1992), Spielberg's adaptation of *Peter Pan*, for example, Robin Williams discovers his long - forgotten childhood alter ego by looking into a pond. It says a lot about the art of film making that this short moment of "magic transformation" is more effective than almost any other scene from this 60 million dollar plus megabuster. As a bewildered critic from "Time Out" correctly noted, never say

"Neverland" again after this film. A sequence from Lawrence Kasdan's "*Grand Canyon*" (1991) might also have been inspired by Barrie's text: Here we see the male protagonist (William Hurt) flying, as free as a bird, over the nightly skyline of L.A. In the end, Hurt discovers himself, lying in bed and dreaming the dream we are just watching. Like Barrie's child characters, he is locked out in front of his bedroom window (a scene which, almost needless to say, was omitted from Spielberg's adaptation). These are moments of great cinematic impact that resemble a suggestive ride into our imagination. Indeed, even a routine thriller such as Richard Tuggle's *Tightrope* (1984) gains momentum in a scene where the detective (Clint Eastwood) sees himself as the murderer who is trying to strangle his girlfriend. Since the director does not indicate that this is a dream sequence, the carefully drawn distinction between the good guy and the bad gets blurred for a moment. A postmodern element of identity switch has taken place which, unfortunately, is not explored any further. It is quite obvious that Hollywood is primarily interested in a moment of immedicay; its films are mostly action or plot-oriented, in spite of the works of such established outsiders as Alan J. Pakula, Robert Altman or Alan Rudolph.

Nevertheless, two films have appeared recently that make an element of "identity shift" the basis of an entire script. Their plot reveals how a postmodern literary structure (as exemplified by Ackroyd's *Hawksmoor)* can be successfully adapted to the screen. Interestingly enough, both movies are Hollywood productions made by British directors who can be considered as outsiders in the Hollywood system, too.

Postmodern horror

The English director Kenneth Branagh's *Dead Again* (1992) presents two different layers of reality: the story of a gruesome murder from the late 1940's (which is presented by a series of black and white flashbacks) and a 1980's plot. A mad hypnotist (Derek Jacobi) is trying to convince the innocent heroine (Emma

Thompson) that she is in fact identical with the wife of the 1940's composer who supposedly killed her husband. Branagh's heroine gets more and more absorbed by a past which is not her own, and the film's dramatic climax depicts an almost exact repetition of the 1940's murder scenario. So once again, two layers of identity and reality form a mutual relationship of projection while the heroine undergoes an internal migration, a time travel from one layer to the other. However, subjectivity is not created between the two "I"s. Branagh's film does not really question identity. It is a typical Hollywood product because it uses a literary pattern as a ploy or gimmick to create an atmosphere of horror. Identity remains on a binary opposition which is being reversed at the end of the film (when the heroine is being prevented from the act of murder and returns to her former existence). The Hollywood convention of a good ending and the presentation of the mad hypnotist as the evil force behind both 'texts' takes away most of the film's impact.

Mike Figgis' *Liebestraum* (1992) is far more successful. His "temple-throbbing suspenser" is a "convoluted tale of lust and jealousy" (*Time Out* Feb. 92). Nick Kaminsky (Kevin Anderson), an architectural journalist, is summoned to the death bed of the mother he never knew (Kim Novak). Walking around the unfamiliar town, he meets his old friend Paul (Bill Pullmann), a property developer who is just about to demolish a unique cast-iron department store which has been locked up since a gruesome 50's murder. He becomes obsessed with the fate of the building, and with Paul's wife Jane (Pamela Gidley), a photographer who records the ruin's final hours. Once again, a film script is based on a very careful duplication of identity and reality. Its dramatic climax is a repetition of the film's opening sequence, a flashback of the original 50's murder. This time, it is Nick and Jane making love 'on the spot'. An old grammophone plays the same tango tune. A shadow appears at the entrance door. Is it Paul? A shot in the dark and - cut - the film ends in a nice moment of ambiguity which is a direct appeal to the imagination of the viewer. An open ending like this is far more effective than the traditional execution of the bad guy which concludes *Dead Again*.

Film scripts like these reveal how much postmodern narrative patterns pervade Hollywood scripts which, on the surface, seem to be traditional exercises in the suspense genre. Indeed, identity games and duplication structures have become permanent ingredients of Hollywood movies. However, films such as "*Liebestraum*" or *Julia and Julia* do not only reveal the pattern's enormous cinematographic potential; they also point to a certain danger. The literary origin of the pattern might put a distance between the character and the audience and thus reduce the film's dramatic impact. Especially Mike Figgis' protagonists get so stuck between two layers of reality and identity that they spend most of their time staring at each other, obviously wondering what is going on. They appear to be extremely passive, dominated by a gloomy sense of reflexion. Flaws like this underline the superior status of a cinema classic such as Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1959), a film that carries all the pattern's ingredients to a degree of utmost perfection. The script (which is based on a story by Boileau-Narcejack) combines a moment of duplication of identity with a striking element of internal migration: Kim Novak, the film's mystery blonde, appears both as Judie and Madeleine while James Stewart pursues his dead lover (Madeleine) in a living person (Judie). Gradually, he manages to change Judie into the ghost of her own past. Hitchcock's superior direction displays great care for details (as is most obvious in Judie's metamorphosis), cleverly changes the narrative pace (e.g. by confronting the long pursuit sequences between Stewart and Novak in the middle of the film with the breathtaking bell-tower finale) and totally disregards the conventions of a standard Hollywood thriller (the mystery's solution does not appear at the end but two thirds through the film). The result is a "perfect organism, each character, each sequence, each image illuminating every other "(Wood 1969, 97). Indeed, the film resembles a romantic microcosm: it foregrounds the "Doppelgänger" motif and thus the romantic origins of the duplication pattern. The film title itself, "*Vertigo*", appears to be primarily a metaphor of Hitchcock's superior strategy of audience manipulation. The film is a rarely beautiful, in parts almost meditative, ride into timelessness. It seems that Hollywood has a long way to go back.

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