

# ENGLISH SUMMARIES

Henry Bacon

**Toward a Systematic Synthesis – the border lines, border conflicts and desirable transgression of cognitive film studies**

As cognitive film studies together with ecological film theory and historical poetics emerged in the 1980s they defined their position in the field of film studies to great extent as standing in opposition to theories grouped round the scholarly periodical *Screen*, viz. de Saussure's semiotics, Althusser's neomarxism, Freudian or Lacanian psychoanalysis and Foucauldian analysis of power structures. Later on the opposition pattern shifted slightly so that the main opponent of the cognitive film studies has been cultural studies and the kind of postmodernism which has emerged in the wake of Gilles Deleuze. In a philosophical sense the structuring opposition has been that between realism and conventionalism.

The main argument in this article is that setting these groups of theories into opposition with one another has to a significant extent been misguided and that many oppositions such as that between phenomenology and cognitivism, ecological film theory and semiotics, poetics and hermeneutics, formal analysis and interpretation, text centred approach

and reception studies are complementary rather than mutually incompatible. An analysis of the actual questions that these major film theories address reveals that they treat equally important issues on different levels of how films are perceived and apprehended or how they relate to our lives. This point is captured in so-called bioculturalism, the basic premise of which is that cultural formations such as systems of representation emerge as a part of the social construction of reality yet are founded on cognitive faculties which humans have acquired in the process of evolution. Consequently, film studies should embrace a whole variety of approach in terms of their particular spheres of application so as to be able to address all the various issues that the cinematic experience evokes.

Pasi Nyysönen

**Spectator psychology and cinema's epistemological function in early film theory**

The idea about the film as a source of knowledge, which I call cinema's epistemological function, has been a since the birth of the moving images. The article focuses on the film theories and psychological ideas of two key representatives of the formative tendency of the classical film theory,

Hugo Münsterberg and Rudolf Arnheim. Both were professional psychologists and their interest on spectator psychology can be seen as precursor of the modern cognitive film theory.

Münsterberg and Arnheim are contextualised as representatives experimental and gestalt psychology who stress the importance central processes i.e. activity of the mind in perception and understanding. The contextualisation gives background to their views of the psychological activity of film spectator and to their ideas on cinema's epistemological function.

Basically both agree on the cognitive activity of the spectator but their views

on cinema's epistemological function differ in certain respects. In Münsterberg's idealistic thinking cinema is an art form which gives us information about ourselves and helps us to get an insight the universal values and things themselves. In Arnheim's gestaltist approach cinema is a visual media which can, if properly made, make reality more visible for us. The key to understanding the world is to grasp the general structures it is made of and cinema can help us by cuing our mind towards them.

Finally Münsterberg's and Arnheim's ideas on film, form and mind are summarised briefly situated at the general framework of contemporary cognitive film theory.

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