INI381 - Central European Cinema

Course Instructor: Prof. Babey

Final Paper - Annotated Bibliography

The Motif of the Double: Identification and its Practical Application in Central European Cinema

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Introduction

My research for the annotated bibliography began at Robarts Library, where I used the University of Toronto Library search engine to glean all work that pertained to ‘the doppelganger’ or ‘the double‘. My first set of results were determined by excluding topics that were more obscure to cinema, per se (ie. purely psychoanalytic works). I made some initial selections of works that addressed the presence of the doppelganger in literature or film. After scanning these first selections, I determined that the sinister doppelganger in horror film (of Hollywood, especially) should be ignored for the most part. I chose the Alec Charles article as an aptly connective piece between ‘the gaze’ of the double and concepts that could be equally applied to Central European cinema traditions as to Hollywood horror genre films. For my second round of research, I cross-referenced psychoanalytic works that addressed cinema, specifically. I chose Otto Rank’s *The Double*, as a seminal work on the motif of the double, while adding Metz, Bellour & Rosolato as well as the Portuges essay which all focused on psychoanalysis in operation within the medium of film. Having understood something important about the relationship and identification between spectator and film as it relates to the motif of the double, I sought out more resources to corroborated theories of the self-conscious self-reflexive nature of film, as outlined by Metz. Balazs and Wadja’s self-conscious works fit in nicely to this requirement while also satisfying my need to focus on Central European traditions and perspectives.

Having found important works on the theory of the double and its direct relationship to film, I thought it important to focus on its practical usage in film narratives. I selected three articles that each addressed use of the double motif in a Hungarian, Czech and Polish film, respectively. All three articles expanded the understanding of the theory through commenting on its practical application that indeed became additionally valuable to my research for tying together the psychoanalytic and geopolitical understanding of the ‘rise of the double‘. There was a critical ‘hole’ in my research results as the theory and application of the double had yet to cohere through my initial findings. I decided to add the useful Nagler essay on the taxonomy of the doppelganger (theory of the *application* of the double motif). The biography of Hedy Lamarr appeared to be a useful practical exploration of the theory of application of the double motif much in the same way that Wadja’s book was a practical exploration of Rank, Metz and Balazs’s strictly theoretical works. My research had spawned a thesis for me that related to Central European cinema and its use of the double motif. My ’3 phase’ theory on self-conscious, self-reflexive cinema of Central Europe required some fact gathering for substantiation. Stoil’s *Beyond the Danube* is a full account of the history of Central European cinema and provided my thesis with some structure, warding off particular ambiguities that had emerged, initially. My annotations were thusly organized with the endeavor to expand from theory of the double motif to its practical application, creating a greater ‘wholeness‘ to the vast network of concepts related to the double motif.

I would endeavor to expand my research with a focus on dialectic and compliment. Tymms’s work and Benjamin’s theories of ‘mechanical reproduction’ may provide some important insights on Rank and Metz’s theories. Mazierska’s *Polish Postcommunist Cinema* (2007) and Hames’s *The Ironies of History* compliment Stoil’s work and my own thesis regarding themes of dissidence, self-awareness, disillusionment and escape in later phases of self-conscious self-reflexive films of Central Europe. I would also seek to demarcate the limits and “boundaries” of geopolitical metaphorical applications of the double motif in Central European cinema (Coates’s “displacement and haunting” and the articles regarding “regional visions” and East-West identification in Imre’s anthology, *Eastern European Cinemas*). Some core complimentary theoretical and practical concepts related to the double could be explored further, such as ‘the gaze’ in Lacanian terms (Vrbancic, 2011) and the double motif in literature (Rogers, 1970). The most seductive concept that was developed throughout my research related to the work of Metz and Balazs regarding the inherent self-conscious character of film and its ability to raise a double naturally through identification with the spectator. Although, I was not able to find a translated edition of Irzykowski’s *The Tenth Muse*, I did find some references to it that lead me to believe the work could be a valuable addition to my research with regard to understanding Metz’s theories of identification in film. In closing this introduction, I would like to add that there are two specific concepts that I am personally interested in through my research and beyond concentration on my tentative thesis connected to the result of my annotations. The first, relates to Herder’s concept of the *Volksgeist* or ‘national’ soul (Johnson, 2002). This concept could be very valuable to understanding a unique dimension of the motif of the double (perhaps connecting back to Rank‘s chapter focusing on anthropology and the double). The second, relates to Rank’s acknowledgement of shadows representing the pursuit of ‘the other’ for recognition. I would be interested to examine the signaled presence of shadows in Central European films that fit into my second and third phases within my proposed thesis.

PART 1 - Theoretical Foundation for Understanding the Motif of ‘The Double’ in Cinema

1) Otto Rank’s “The Double” - Seminal Theory on the Motif of ‘The Double’

Rank, Otto. *The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study.* Translated and Edited by Harry Tucker Jr.. Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1971. (BF1213 R212 1971 at Pratt Library)

Harry Tucker Jr. adds some important notes in his introduction to Rank’s seminal work in psychoanalysis, such as, Meyer’s concept of the double-theme arising from “a longing for a more exalted existence” (Ibid, introduction, xiii.), Rank’s examination of the motif of the double in literature through his study of the film, Der Student von Prag (1913)(Ibid, introduction, xiv.), and Tymms’s assertion that Rank’s origins of the double are centered around a concept of morbid self-love (Ibid, introduction, xv.) In a succinct and valuable précis, Tucker Jr. summaries Rank’s work by positing that there is a conscious cause-and-effect chain between the manifestation of the double and the result of its manifestation. For Tucker Jr., Rank is presenting that the double is construed as over-rationalized in order to justify its true irrational nature within an over-rationalized civilization, and thus, man struggles between his need for likeness and his desire for difference, creating a spiritual double and being quite distinct from the resultant physical manifestation which allude to issues of mortality and immortality (Ibid, introduction, xvi.) Rank, asserts that “cinematography can express certain psychological facts and relationships” and that “photoplay” (ie. film) is a legitimate form of expression (Ibid, 4.) For Rank, Der Student von Prag, makes clear a “basic idea” that a person’s past is inescapable and becomes their fate once they try to purge and disown it and the author further purports that “the past life is embodied in the reflection” (Ibid, 6.) Film provokes that the double is an imaginative representation, which ties into some of the important relevant points from Metz and Balazs (Ibid, 7.) Chapter 2 highlights “neurotic Spectrophobia” from instances of the double in literature, referring to a theme of rejecting the double prior to recognition and commencing the conflict from that point. Rank importantly identifies the emergence of the double as being connected to paranoia, and later mental illness (in the individual) when self-reflection and self-reflection within societal contexts overlap consciously (Ibid, 26-27.) This denial and paranoia, aforementioned, can often explain portrayals of the double as “venturesome, hypocritical, sycophantic, and ambitious” (Ibid, 30.) Chapter 3 refers to biographical influences for the double motif in literature and introduces the issue of suicide, while Chapter 4 addresses anthropological concerns centered on folklore and superstition in cultural accounts of the double (ironically, warded off by Tucker Jr. as being outdated). In a footnote, Rank accounts for narcissism that precludes fear and hate of the double - self-love and pity that construes the double as a “sorry fellow” - which is considered a pathological distortion for the “true” function of the double (Ibid, 71.) For Rank, the true function of the double arises out of issues of mortality/immortality as a person considers the legitimacy of themselves as an independent self (exclusively internal) or as a product/creator of something external (ie. ‘the Other’) and where emergence of the double raises a crisis regarding whether the self will be consumed by the external (that which produced or created or was recognized by the self). Svankmeyer, has explored this “cannibalistic fear” where the self is consumed by what it either created or simply recognized, forwarding a fundamental Cartesian *cogito* dilemma regarding absolute truths evident to the self. For Rank, the feared self can be an obstruction (as noted in Der Student von Prag) and narcissism can be an escape (although it has its own trappings when the denied ‘other’ seeks recognition through persecution)(Ibid, 73-74.) Rank’s work identifies a division of the self between an individualized sense of self and a social sense of self. The double arises from the crisis of these two “perspectives” being recognized consciously by a single mind. An important question to extend past Rank’s work regards the perspective of the double - or what is sometimes referred to as ’the gaze’ - in this case, of ‘the other’ or double, itself. Rank’s work on the double motif is important to my research as it identifies an initial crisis between the individualized sense of self and the social sense of self. Central European film narratives employing the double motif should be understood from a psychoanalytic perspective, but not precluding geopolitical factors and socio-political crises to explain the employment of the motif, in the first place.

2) Christian Metz’s “The Imaginary Signifier” - Seminal Theory on the “Nature” of Cinema

Metz, Christian. *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema.* Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1982. (PN1995 M45313 1982 at Pratt Library)

Metz’s Chapter 3, “*Identification, Mirror*”, opens with the assertions that cinema, in the fairest respect, is a “synthesis of all the arts” and that cinema’s signifier is perceptual (visual and auditory)(Ibid, 42-43.) Film presents ‘the Other’ overtly through employing a screen as ‘the other scene’ (Ibid, 43.) Although the content of a film may be fictive, it is recorded which provides it with a feature of being a “memory trace” that is connected to reality (Ibid, 43.) Films may be connected to reality, but are themselves imaginary as they can be reproduced or replicated, ad infinitum (Ibid, 45.) This ability to be replicated raises a “dual character of its signifier” and creates a crisis around the concept of its absence (Ibid, 45.) Similar to Rank’s theorizing the inner workings of the human mind, Metz puts forward for film a compulsive self-reflexive function, namely, that film has a crisis to double as it must be acknowledged for its ability to do so (the crisis of the conscious mind stems from recognizing a duplicity in its sense of being an individual and its sense of being social through acknowledgement of an ‘other’ which then gives rise to the external manifestation of the double)(Ibid, 45.) Metz concludes, “film is like the mirror” where film experiences primary identification (the formation of the ego) as it perceives its own image through replication or the mere possibility of replication by virtue of the fact that it has been recorded in the first place (Ibid, 45.) Metz, in effect posits a philosophical question akin to “whether a sound is made by a falling tree with no auditory spectator”. For Metz, if a film plays on the screen with no audience, did it still play? Instead of answering this question directly, he asks another - what does the film depict? His answer is circumstantial - that film depicts at all drives audience recognition and thus bonds the two (Ibid, 46.) Metz goes on to focus on spectatorship in cinema, noting conscious examination as part of a double movement (projective and introjective) in vision and that this duality must be understood as a crisis while he also refers to Freud’s assertion that a break is necessary in ordinary practices (neurosis and psychosis) to bring an awareness to otherwise automatic behaviour (Ibid, 50, 56.) This could suggest that the motif of the double has the ability to create this break (Metz later promotes a rousing effect or “wakefulness“ for film on its spectator that promotes self-awareness)(Ibid, 123.) Metz iterates that to understand the fiction film, “I must both take myself for the character… and not take myself for him,” which is highly reminiscent of Rank’s theories on the “true” purpose of the double (Ibid, 57.) Later in the book, Metz asserts that there are no primary or secondary figures in psychoanalysis, and that there are only figures “which have escaped secondarisation”(Ibid, 165.) Following this statement, legitimizing the self requires facing the double and denying that it has primacy over the self. Metz’s work on the self-conscious “nature” of cinema and its relationship to the spectator raises an important issue for my research as it extends a new ’layer’ to the original crisis of the self and its manifestation of the double. Within cinematic portrayal, the double reflects inherent qualities and dilemmas of cinema itself as well as being a platform for the portrayal of individual and societal crises (I would like to suggest that this could be considered a ‘tertiary crisis’ in the motif of the double). Central European film must be recognized for having played a major role in avant-garde film movements since 1896 and thus the presence of the double may go beyond psychoanalytic and/or geopolitical concerns and could potentially strictly address and adhere to issues of film and filmmaking, in the most self-reflexive manner (the Balazs and Wadja entries in this bibliography will shed more light on this issue).

PART 2 - Understanding ‘Identification’ and Extending Metz’s Chapter 3 of “*The Imaginary Signifier”*

3) Bela Balazs’s “Theory of the Film” - Exploring Cinema’s ‘Self’ Influencing the Spectator

Balazs, Bela. *Theory of the Film: Character and Growth of a New Art.* Translated by Edith Bone. New York: Dover Publications, 1970. (PN1994 B2613 1970 at Robarts Library)

For Balazs, film is a mere photographic reproduction or “a reproduction of a histrionic performance” (Ibid, 46.) Balazs shifts directions and endows film with a character by posing the question, “what does the film produce as oppose to reproduce?” and providing that the answer is - identification (ie. perspective)(Ibid, 46.) This identification (perspective) is initiated through cinematography, editing and the technology of the camera itself (Ibid, 46.) He posits that film allows the spectator to see what is known and familiar from their own perspective from a brand new perspective (Ibid, 46.) Balazs provides an enigmatic statement to that end, when he asserts that, “the film camera has revealed new worlds until then concealed from us” (Ibid, 47.) I would like to suggest that this statement can allude to the motif of the double (which would connect up with the relationship between cinema and its spectator, that Metz outlines). Balazs and Metz attribute a (self-)conscious bond between film and its spectator, with an acknowledgement of the selves and the other within the relationship. Balazs goes on to introduce his ideas on the concept of ’the gaze’ as he notices film’s self-conscious desire to match the gaze of the audience with that of the subjects in the film world (ie. identification)(Ibid, 48.) Balazs, in a forerunner to Metz, claims that film does not depict reality per se (Metz later clarifies that film depicts reality but the depiction is itself imaginary in nature)(Ibid, 49.) Balazs explains spectator identification of that which falsely depicts reality (ie. film) is based in the “physiognomy of objects” in a film picture (Ibid, 91.) The physiognomy of objects merge with that of the audience creating identification and this “synthesis” can create an awareness giving rise to the doubling effect, naturally, in viewing a film (Ibid, 91) By this token, I would like to suggest that film is an extremely apt medium for presenting the motif of the double. Balazs continues with defining identification systems in the relationship of spectator and film. Distortions will break the cohesive synthesis, where Balazs claims that “objects need to be recognizable” (Ibid, 101-102.) Balazs believes that caricature is powerful as long as it is recognizable because the audience will “discover a deep reality” in the portrayal (Ibid, 104.) Balazs explores the concept of ’the gaze’ further and feels that the human face can act as a mirror and that reaction shots are more important than shots of the speaker as it “doubles melody of the word” through showing the facial expression the word evokes (Ibid, 111.) Later, Balazs mentions that camera tricks (ie. superimposition) can activate the subconscious and bring self-awareness (an important tie-in concept with both Rank and Metz)(Ibid, 186.) Balazs’s consideration of the inherent nature of film as self-reflexive, his thoughts on the concept of ’the gaze’ and his identification of a doubling effect in the relationship of film objects and their spectators provides important support for my research and my findings within Metz’s “*The Imaginary Signifier*”. Despite, being a key figure in Hungarian cinema and having been a major player in politically-charged film movements of Central Europe, Bela Balazs has provided powerful theoretical work in support of Metz’s later-developed theories that sheds more light on my concept of a “tertiary crisis” in the conception of the motif of the double in cinema. An inherent “nature” of film coordinating the ideas of Metz and Balazs could preclude a more straightforward psychoanalytic and/or geopolitical understanding of the use of the double motif in Central European cinema.

4) Raymond Bellour and Guy Rosolato’s “Dialogue: Remembering a Film” - Exploring the Spectator Influencing the Cinema’s Self

Bellour, Raymond and Guy Rosolato. “Dialogue: Remembering a Film.” In *Psychoanalysis and Cinema,* edited by E. Ann Kaplan. London: Routledge, 1990. (PN1995.9 P78P79 1990 at Graham Library)

This dialogue between Bellour and Rosolato concerns identification in cinema spectatorship more than directly advancing ‘oneiric’ film theories, to which they are both renowned. They assert that the spectator of a film performs a kind of doubling where what is undesired about the self is projected and externalized into an ’other’ while at the same time, the spectator will take possession of this ’other’ because the self can identify with it (Ibid, 210.) Bellour and Rosolato attribute this “two-way” identification process to be between the director/actor and the spectator/audience (Ibid, 210.) Their projective identification theories, however, do not seem to acknowledge an inherent “character” or “nature” of film that Metz and Balazs both theorize, independently. That being said, Bellour and Rosolato put forward what Metz identified as a “the screen as the other scene” when recognizing the recording aspect of film. They claim that film has a “cinematic memory screen” that mirrors the conscious memory screen. These two screens interact and provide for transference of secrets and then revelations, according to Bellour and Rosolato (Ibid, p210.) A “phenomenon of seduction” is a result of this identification and interaction (Ibid, p211.) Like the theories of Balazs, based on this dialogue, it would seem that film is adept at transferring the double from a subconscious repression into a physical manifestation both within the film world and between spectator and film narrative. Bellour and Rosolato gloss over the concept of “super metaphors” (a metaphor of metaphor) providing the prime example in film as being the Hitchcockian cameo - where the auteur appears in his own work (Ibid, p215.) If the motif of the double can be seen as a super metaphor in consideration of film’s inherent ’character’ and thus ability to identify with the spectator, then some films may not suffer from my concept of a “tertiary crisis” and such a concept may become inapplicable, overall. Bellour and Rosolato provide a theory for a compliment between the psychoanalytic manifestation of the double and the doubling nature of film and its identification with the spectator. In this sense, many Central European films, in particular, featuring the double motif could be regarded as self-reflexive authorial super-metaphors that position the double in direct relation to the auteur’s endeavors as ’*agent provocateurs*’. This begs the question as to whether Metz can be denied when theorizing that cinema has its own nature (as a result of its reproducibility) that transcends its exclusiveness as auteur inception*.* To some degree, I strongly feel that there is a denial or myopia in the understanding of Bellour and Rosolato about the exclusivity of the spectator-film relationship. I believe at this point in my research, that Metz trumps a more linear dimensional understanding of identification and “memory screens” through adequately defending that film has an inherent character and self-conscious nature due to its reproducibility by virtue of being a record, *de facto*.

PART 3 - The Nature of Filmmaking - Auteur and Film Relationships Explored

5) Andrzej Wajda’s “Double Vision” - The Double’s Natural Occurrences in Film Production Methods

Wajda, Andrzej. *Double Vision.* New York: Henry Holt, 1989. (PN1998.3 W34A3 1989 at Robarts Library)

Wadja’s “Double Vision” serves as a practical addendum to my research on the fundamental theories of the double motif. Metz attributes an inherent character and nature to film that precludes linear understandings of the double as being a projection of subconscious repression of the mind. Film can give rise to portrayals of the double simply by virtue of its own nature as a record and related inherent crises of self-conscious reproducibility. Wadja, the renowned Polish filmmaker, provides an enlightened piece of work on the nature of filmmaking and its relation to the nature of film as an art medium. For Wadja, “in the cinema the only judge is the public” and so accordingly a dilemma is created for the double motif as it would seem that subjective identification is marred by a process of collective judgment (Ibid, p65.) Wadja examines other aspects of doubling in film that have no direct connection to psychoanalytic and/or geopolitical understandings; the actors must take on a role that may occasionally have no inherent subconscious identification, the film is judged and receives its value by outsiders that may reasonably have no inherent identification with the production, the DOP and director will blend their own perspectives or “interesting angles” through the viewfinder of the camera during principal photography diversifying perspectives that would betray a straightforward identification with the film world and its characters (Ibid, 65.) I would like to suggest that Wadja is forwarding that as a result of these myriad ‘doublings’ in film production and exhibition, unique perspectives are juxtaposed with the perspective of ’the other’ sooner than being mutually subjected to self-reflexive identification. For Wadja, filmmaking is a form of “eyewitness account” that distinguishes for the spectator between “looking and seeing” but excluding neither by necessity (Ibid, 2, 34.) This doubling of the spectator’s interaction with the film leads to a duplicity in the appropriation of the perspective of ‘the other’ (Ibid, 34.) Wadja’s considerations have the potential to multiply the ‘layers’ or ‘dimensions’ now, regarding the “true” nature of the double motif, originally outlined by Otto Rank. The double may manifest as an externalization of 1) a subconscious repression of the character, 2) a subconscious repression of the spectator, 3) a subconscious repression of film, 4) a subconscious repression of the process of what is looked upon, and 5) a subconscious repression of the process of what is seen. That is to say, for the new additions, that what is looked upon when watching the film manifests a double related to what is being denied in what should be seen, and vice-versa. Wadja provides an amusing and enlightened proverb to illustrate the point - Chinese merchants say that when the tongue is lying, the hands speak the truth because truth is always in search of an outlet (Ibid, 35.) The double is an outlet for truth that is denied either by only looking or only seeing a film at any given watching. In this respect, Wadja identifies himself as an *agent provocateur* auteur and filmmaker by placing his ‘truthful’ words and gestures into the uncanny film world itself (Ibid, 36.) He also introduces his contempt for censorship to support this theory, as the state (in nationalized cinema) seeks to appropriate films with their own ’otherness’ in hopes that spectators will find some reason to identify and thus appropriate the state, consciously (Ibid, 2.) Wadja’s own professional methods testify to his adherence to his own theories as he advises that an unobtrusive camera (ie. long shot) will diminish the interference in an actor’s performance and thus allow for a more natural performance that integrates the character into the scene (analogous to unobstructed citizens within a nation state)(Ibid, 41.) Wadja provides further insights on the use of the double motif - from self-conscious senses of purging or mending errors emanating from the auteur’s originality to internal censorship expressions of fear colliding with external censorship’s attempts to control through scapegoating (Ibid, 62, 119-121.) Wadja is a critical theorist who recognizes a duplicity of interactions and identifications within film and the process of its viewing that give rise and significance to the motif of the double.

PART 4 - The Double Motif as Characterization in Film Worlds

6) Lihi Nagler’s “Singling out the Double” - Taxonomy of Doppelgangers

Nagler, Lihi. “Singling out the Double: Objectivity, Subjectivity and Alterity in Kieslowski’s The Double Life of Veronique.” *Post Script* vol22. issue3 (2003)

Accessed: March 28, 2012 [www.freepatentsonline.com/article/Post-Script/113096254](http://www.freepatentsonline.com/article/Post-Script/113096254)

The essay seeks to contextualize Kieslowski’s 1991 film The Double Life of Veronique. Nagler endeavors foremost to differentiate the term “double” with that of “doppelganger” where the latter is strictly understood as referring to a “split double“. She roots the term “doppelganger” with Goethe and identifies the simultaneous “spotting” of one’s doppelganger as reflecting an object/subject opposition. The subjectivity of defining the doppelganger as ‘the other’ is an endeavor to diminish the dichotomy of ’the gaze’ and thus appropriate the other as part of the whole through identification. Nagler notes that film is an apt medium for examining ’the gaze’ as it is based in the visual image. Nagler acknowledges the “constituents of the phenomenon” (master creators or auteurs and direct creators or characters) and the reproducibility ability of film to distinguish source from its reproduction. According to Nagler, The Double Life of Veronique is a distinct inversion from countless horror film scenarios that depict the doppelganger as a sinister double. In Kieslowski’s film, it is the doppelganger who is trying to escape its origin. Nagler cites Eder, who distinguishes subjective and objective doppelganger types in cinema. The former is an antagonist or antithesis of the protagonist while the latter is a “multiple”. Kieslowski’s film has a ‘hybrid’ mixed treatment as the doubles are antithetical, yet complementary. The death of one of the doubles motivates the other out of this hybridized “stalemate” and thus creates a “haunting effect“. Nagler recognizes a connection between the double motif and a European cinema theme - that hybrid type doppelgangers can represent a Europe that is no longer split but that is also not capable of being united. Nagler goes on to cite Richter’s spectatorial definition of doppelgangers which are distinguished as either arising psychically where attempts to destroy the menacing doppelganger result in suicide or types where the double is created physically which can often result in the death of the original. Nagler notes the latter type as being very self-reflective of the film medium itself. Nagler notes Coates’s analysis of this latter type being highly conducive to the Central European experience where the death of the original creates open possibilities for the doppelganger that express a political need for upward mobility and opportunity. Prior to analyzing Kieslowski’s film, Nagler suggests that the ‘doubles-Veronique’ are also a hybrid of Richter’s types where they are physical body doubles but psychical soul doppelgangers. Nagler proves an important point when examining the double in cinema - it expands in consideration, exponentially. She situates Kieslowski’s work in relation to geopolitically motivated socio-historical contexts, but as the realm of the double expands - and now hybridizes in definition - more layers are added, leading me to believe from my research that the motif of the double cannot be neatly understood or applied to explain its individual instances, genre representations in cinema, or its appearance in film, in general.

7) Elsaesser’s “Mobile Selves” - Rye’s Der Student Von Prag (1913)

Elsaesser, Thomas. “Weimer Cinema, Mobile Selves, and Anxious Males: Kracauer and Eisner Revisited.” In *Expressionist Film - New Perspectives,* edited by Dietrich Scheunemann. New York: Camden House, 2003. (PN1993.5 G3N49 2003 on reserve at Robarts Library)

Elsaesser quotes Kracauer from a 1927 article about films being “the mirror of the prevailing society” (Ibid, 35.) Kracauer was mainly referring to relationships of social/cultural and economic/consumer interests of the public and film producers, respectively. This theory adds yet another layer to the consideration of what gives rise to the double motif - where film producers act as external censors in much the same way that Wadja condemned nationalized cinemas of Central Europe. Elsaesser posits that the motif of the double arises as a reification of “highly self-conscious moments of national reflectivity and reinvention” during film movements of Romanticism (expressing upward mobility) and the Fantastic (expressing wish-fulfillment) in the early 20th Century (Ibid, 45-46.) The wish fulfillment function of the Fantastic and the double motif itself often coalesce through characterizations of certain traditional figures - predominantly magicians or *montreurs d’ombres* (shadow players)(Ibid, 50.) Such characters were popular at real fairground throughout Europe which becomes quite self-reflexive for cinema which had its first film exhibitions at fairgrounds. These ’shadow players’ control a boundary between endeavors of Romanticism and those of the Fantastic, like Scapinelli in Der Student von Prag. Balduin seeks upward mobility and finds his wish fulfillment in Scapinelli’s mysterious powers. However, the endeavors of Romanticism and the Fantastic cannot work in conjunction as the latter is an insincere fall-back for the sincere serious former movement. The double that is created is a reaping of what has been sown in what Kracauer refers to as “identification as miscognition” (Ibid, 51.) The film spectator identifies with the double through fear of having the same convictions and compromises, furthermore this fear is reinforced for the audience when Balduin destroys himself (Ibid, 51.) A dilemma defines this early installment of the cinematic double as motif because the audience create and identify with the double to escape marginalization, yet fear remains as a poorly executed escape leads back to captivity. Der Student von Prag is an example of a nascent expression of identification in the motif of the double for cinema and yet becomes a tradition for later portrayals of the double as it encompasses the spectrum of motivations and means for activating one’s doppelganger. Elsaesser notes some adjustments in the early representations of the double in film as a method for providing more successful identification and lessening fear; 1) narratives can veer off from the menace of a sinister doppelganger and 2) the doppelganger receives treatment within the genre of comedy (Ibid, 50-51.) Elsaesser holds that Kracauer fails to note that Der Student von Prag creates fear by repressing historical and social dimensions and thus entering the realm of wish-fulfillment (Ibid, 56.) Elsaesser’s essay is particularly important for mapping the origins of the double in cinema while also marking elements of repression and processes of identification created for the spectator with respect to how film character’s are portrayed and what motivates them. He hints at an important question related to my research, namely - what is causing the repression that gives rise to the double? I would like to suggest that within consideration of Kracauer’s theories and Elsaesser’s contentions of them, that with regard to the European experience, specifically, the answer may be - guilt. I would suggest that Central Europe may experience a guilt in lacking the social mobility to better their position and thus falling back on wish-fulfillment in full subconscious knowledge that it will give rise to a malformed sinister double also seeking “an easy way out“.

8) Insdorf’s “Double Lives, Second Chances” - Kieslowski’s The Double Life of Veronique (1991)

Insdorf, Annette. *Double Lives, Second Chances: The Cinema of Krzysztof Kieslowski*. New York: Hyperion, 1999. (PN1998.3 K54I58 1999 at Innis Library)

Insdorf marks Kieslowski’s film as a “gently self-conscious meditation on looking as well as storytelling - in other words, on filmmaking” (Ibid, 125.) This is reminiscent of many of the other works I have researched where film is marked as having a powerful self-reflexive quality especially pervasive for the spectator in self-conscious themes (the double motif being perhaps the most pronounced, in that respect). The film opens with a self-conscious shot filmed upside-down, highlighting the theme of perspective while the two locations (France and Poland) juxtaposed introduce a geopolitical dialectic (Ibid, 128.) I have noted other Central European films that employ upside down shots as a form of geopolitical self-conscious dialectic within their loosely bound narratives (Zilnik’s Early Works and Pavlovic’s The Return). Insdorf claims that the upside down shot is a form of doubling that stirs self-awareness and rouses recognition of the physical world (and thus, ‘the other‘)(Ibid, 128.) The ‘doubles-Veronique’ make provincial journeys into major urban locales, creating a marked divide between Eastern and Western European experience (Ibid, 128.) Insdorf poses a question as to whether Europe doubled (or halved) into East and West will provide mutual self-reflexivity and ultimate salvation for the other or does the history of Europe precipitate that a single entity must be created and live more wisely with inner unity and cohesive solidarity (Ibid, 131.) Similar to Der Student von Prag, Kieslowski’s film characterizes a “wish-fulfilling” magician, Alexandre, who favors aspects of control and direction over imagining a synergy with ’the other’ (Ibid, 131). Secondary motifs to that of the double abound from ghostly images, shadows and glass (Ibid, 131-133.) Additionally, Rank’s theory on the double representing issues of mortality/immortality and the inevitability of death mark an important theme in The Double Life of Veronique (Ibid, 134.) Of special note, Kieslowski intended over a dozen versions of the film’s final sequence in a self-reflexive acknowledgement of the inherent character of film to double itself through reproducibility (Ibid, 135.) Insdorf’s article is important to my research for its cohesion to many of the issues taken up in the theory of the double in cinema, especially the work of Otto Rank.

9) Portuges’s “Central European Twins” - Enyedi’s My Twentieth Century (1989)

Portuges, Catherine. “Central European Twins: Psychoanalysis and Cinema in Ildiko Enyedi’s My Twentieth Century.” *Psychoanalytic Inquiry: A Topical Journal for Mental Health Professionals* vol27 issue4 (2007): 525-539.

Accessed online March 28, 2012. *deadlink*

This essay focuses on feminist theory as it relates to the ‘female gaze’ within a Freudian patriarchal Central European context. Portuges notes that the culture in Central Europe has a long connection with psychoanalysis in cinema and that Hungarian films from 1949-1989 “evoke loss - private and subjective, political and collective.” Portuges remarks that Enyedi, as auteur, is “dedicated to liberating the imagination from the ideological constraints of - and obsession with - the region’s traumatic history.” The film intuitively foreshadows the disillusionment that would follow the “*fin-de-siecle*” of the Communist Soviet patronage in Central Europe. This essay is important to my research for a few reasons, the first being that Portuges admits that there is a complication in the reading of the film between psychoanalytic endeavors to understand the double as representing the self with geopolitical social critique reflecting a history of captivity by foreign imperialism. This is the first scholarly work in my research whereby applications of the double motif to the Central European cinema context try to separate subconscious psychoanalysis from purely self-reflexive authorial geopolitical concerns. It is an important distinction I feel. Following from Elsaesser, Portuges further notes that My Twentieth Century is tied to the Fantastic, with elements of wish-fulfillment and a magician character endowed with the potential to fulfill the wish (although, he chooses not to). The film also presents the double motif in terms of modernity, where consumerism of the ‘future’ West is identified as ‘the other’ and vacillated communist ideals and dual monarchical exploitation of the ’past’ East is also identified as ’the other’. The essay has further applications to my research as it regards the work of Stoil and my developing thesis (that will be discussed in more detail later). I will suggest three distinct phases in self-reflexive geopolitically charged films in Central Europe that employ the use of the double motif. My Twentieth Century transcends the phases - phase one; a rousing of self-awareness (dawn of a new beginning at Menlo Park), phase two; activism and self-conscious dissidence (the revolutionary twin), and phase three; disillusionment and escapism (lost opportunities and captivity for both twins). Although, the film works to integrate my tentative three phases, the narrative “cheats” the motif slightly as the theme is that of separated twins seeking reunification and not a manifestation of an uncanny double conforming to Eder or Richter’s definitions, mentioned earlier. The essay still provides a lot of insight into complex developments of the double motif as multi-faceted geopolitical social critique (a specific theme and motif usage to which I am planning on concentrating my research efforts in order to solidify a plausible thesis).

PART 5 - Identification with ‘The Gaze’ and Self-Conscious Perspectives of ‘The Other’

10) Alec Charles’s “Double Identity” - ‘The Gaze’ and ‘The Impossible Gaze’

Charles, Alec. “Double Identity: Presence and Absence in the Films of Tod Browning,” In *The Films of Tod Browning,* edited by Bernd Herzogenrath. London: Black Dog Publishing, 2006. (PN1998.3 B773F55 2006 at Robarts Library)

Charles notes that voyeurism draws its powers from the object being unaware of it being the subject of voyeurism (Ibid, 81.) In cinema, ‘the gaze’ is manipulated self-reflexively as the audience is self-aware of its spectatorship of the film world (Ibid, 81.) The ‘impossible gaze’ is the gaze of ‘the other’ (the prime example being the shower scene in Hitchcock’s Psycho)(Ibid, 81.) The gaze is connected to themes of voyeurism and is ambiguously ‘meta-diegetic’ given the identification of the spectator with film (as outlined by Metz)(Ibid, 81.) A direct address is another ambiguously meta-diegetic technique that Charles identifies as “blurring the demarcation between hero and villain… as well as fiction and reality” (Ibid, 83.) I would like to suggest that direct address is a popular self-reflexive technique in Central European film as it creates identification through self-awareness. The gaze has a didactic and albeit, paranoid quality in its mixed treatment in Central European film. There is a recurring theme of surveillance and voyeurism in Central European cinema putting forward a sinister gaze of the other (Czech films, The Ear or The Hand), while didactic direct address provides for an active and benevolent self-conscious gaze of the other in many dissident-themed narratives (Jansco‘s Red Psalm). Charles employs an important montage sequence from Eisenstein’s Potemkin to assert that the gaze of the other in didactic and/or paranoid films forces the sinister other to be faced and dominated and that “you can’t straddle the fence of socio-economic dialectic: you can’t hedge your historical-materialist bets” (Ibid, 84-85.) Charles’s essay is important to my research because it identifies the relationship between ‘the other’ and ‘the gaze’ as one that creates the ‘impossible gaze’. The impossible gaze is connected to self-reflexive films that employ didactic narratives, paranoid themes and self-aware techniques (ie. direct address). The power of the doppelganger is in its uncanniness and the inevitability of its gaze forcing a showdown to reassert and re-appropriate the dominance of the self’s own perspective. These aforementioned themes, narratives and techniques are prevalent in geopolitically charged films of Central Europe and connect the double with the gaze in this region’s cinematic traditions.

11) Richard Rhodes’s “Hedy’s Folly” - Practical Applications of ‘The Gaze’ and Otherness in the “Nature” of Film

Rhodes, Richard. *Hedy’s Folly.* New York: Doubleday, 2011. (PN2287 L24R54 2011 at Robarts Library)

The hyper-patriarchal figure of Fritz Mandl draws certain parallels to the time in which he rose to great power and influence in Central Europe. Rhodes notes Hedy Lamarr’s first husband as having been “a powerhouse of industry and the third richest man in Austria by the age of thirty-three” (Ibid, 23-26.) He is also noted as a womanizer and ruthless businessman (Ibid, 23-26.) Lamarr remarked that once she married Mandl, she was no longer an individual but was appropriated like property (Ibid, 27.) Prior to meeting Mandl, Lamarr (nee, Giesler) was discovered by Gustav Machaty and starred in his ever-popular and controversial film, Ekstase. For Lamarr, the film represented an end to false modesty and prostitution while sanctioning a newer and healthier freedom - a break from anxious patronizing control (Ibid, 20-21.) Mandl could not acknowledge these bright hopes and reportedly spent a small fortune on his obsessive quest to track down and buy every print of Ekstase (Ibid, 28.) I would like to suggest that Mandl (who having heard reports that the ’orgasm’ scene in the film was not faked) attempted to appropriate all prints of the films that he construed as ‘misrepresenting’ Lamarr’s true character. The prints became like doppelgangers and it was reported that for every batch Mandl bought up, a new set of prints popped up in their place - a true testament to Metz’s understanding of the reproducibility of film providing film with a self-conscious character. The ‘doppelganger prints’ would not be denied, yet it begs the question as to whether Metz is limited in his assertion that film depicts reality yet is itself, imaginary? If film has a self-consciousness nature then perhaps it has a physical imaginary self as well as a psychical-like or soulful real self. This comes back to Metz’s unanswerable philosophical line of questioning regarding whether a film that plays with no spectatorship, still played? The Hedy Lamarr and Ekstase print destruction situation in the least metaphorically addresses issues of the double, its manifestation, re-appropriation and destruction - and now its potential infinite reproducibility within the context of a film world given film’s ability to reproduce infinitely.

12) Stoil’s “Beyond the Danube” - Developing a Theory from Tradition

Stoil, Michael Jon. *Cinema Beyond the Danube: The Camera and Politics.* New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1974. (PN1993.5 E8S8 at Robarts Library)

Stoil’s book is an invaluable work for those who are researching Central European film traditions and history. A point is punctuated with regards to the rest of my research when Stoil notes that only Lazar’s Yesterday has survived the political oppression of ‘the other’ from Lenin’s disciple, Bela Kun’s short rule of Hungary, ending in 1919 (Ibid, 43-45.) Of 31 films produced in 100 days of the Republic of Councils, 30 were destroyed permanently. Film may be a record with inherent reproducibility, yet something must be attributed to its “complex” with consideration that the original and any copies can be destroyed permanently, never to return. Stoil reviews the ’resurrection’ of film industries such as Ford’s START group in Poland and the return of Balazs and Lukacs to Hungary in 1945 (Ibid, 46.) Film industries were resurrected, however, many films were not. In fact, even when archives are inaccessible to the public, it must bring a greater complexity to the characterization of film as having a self-conscious reflexivity. Clearly, film is still the object while man is the subject, in many ways. Stoil marks two phases of filmmaking in the Central European region, the latter, from 1931-39 was defined through its central concern of suppression of individual creativity and expression (Ibid, 65-67.) A spirit of social criticism rose up against the fascist and Stalinist patronage of nationalized cinemas in Central Europe (Ibid, 129.) A Romantic nationalism was on the rise in the 1960s and 70s with important motifs of resurrection (the sword in Skolimowski’s Barrier, the individual in Jancso’s Red Psalm)(Ibid, 131.) ‘The self’ versus ‘the other’ became a central theme and outlet for social criticism. Doubling was replaced by self-sacrifice of the individual toward creating a freedom for the collective against ’other’ oppression (Ibid, 149.) The films of Schorm and Nemec focus on the stifled individual as a progression of the self-conscious self-sacrificing individual caught between a past of repressed captivity and a future of inevitable disillusionment (Ibid, 153.) Stoil’s work is important to my research as it presents a development in themes of Central European cinema, historically. As a result of my findings, I would like to suggest that three phases of self-conscious works permeated Central European culture through the medium of film and cinematic narratives. Phase one employs doubling, themes of duality or the double motif as a method of “rousing” the audience through self-reflexive identification. The spectator is requested to become activated and self-conscious, recognizing the manifestation of their repression as a perversion resultant of their oppression by ’the other’. Phase 2 employs themes of self-sacrifice once the self has become “whole”, faced its internal ’other’ and defeated it. The self-sacrifice endeavors to free the collective, altruistically. Phase 3 is concerned with issues of disillusionment and escapism when Phase 2 altruism is fruitless. My hopes would be to further develop the concept of these three phases and explore filmic examples of each phase for congruity with a more general thesis. Of particular interest would be how the double motif is employed in films of Phase 2 & 3 and whether this disintegrates the significance of the phases, wholly, or whether a greater cycle or pattern emerges, that is itself self-conscious with a definable “character” and “nature”.