The Structure of Repetition in the Cinema: Three Hollywood Genres

Inbar Shaham
Open University of Israel, Department of Literature, Language, and the Arts

Abstract The structure of repetition, as Meir Sternberg (1978) defines it, consists in the repeated presentation of a fabulaic event along the text continuum. It has three types of component members: (1) forecast (e.g., command, scenario); (2) enactment (representing the forecast's objective realization, as communicated by an authorized narrator); and (3) report (about an enactment, a forecast, or another report, all delivered by some character). This research examines the repetition structure in cinematic narrative: specifically, in heist, adventure, and military operation films. Throughout, the argument proceeds with special reference to these genres, as well as to the cinema's medium, practice, and conventions in general, often citing literary parallels or precedents for comparison. It examines the different elements that serve to (re)compose the repetition structure for certain ends; the types of member brought together within the structure; their size, number, forms of transmission, order of appearance, representational proportion, and possible interrelations (overlap, partial overlap, contradiction, expansion or summary of a previous member). Above all, the analysis relates these interplays themselves to the structure's functions at the level of plot, meaning, and rhetoric, notably including their generic variations, as exemplified by the three focal genres.

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1. The Structure of Repetition Defined: Features and Functions

This study examines "the structure of repetition" in a specific and precisely defined sense, rather than simply as "repetition." The latter is a common and multiform phenomenon in cinema and in art in general. Such repetition may appear as a motif running through a text or a body of texts; as an analogy between characters, or between situations, events, spaces, or other mimetic components; as a linguistic recurrence (e.g., a rhyme, with its auditory repetition); as a stylistic pattern favored by an artist or a school; or as an intertextual equivalence relation, taking the form of allusion, parody, adaptation, and the like.[1]

What, then, is the repetition at the heart of this study, and how does it differ from other types? As Meir Sternberg defines it (1987a [1985]: 367–68; see also Sternberg 1977: 110–11; 1986: 298–99; 2008: 36–38), "A structure of repetition is the repeated presentation of an event along the text continuum." In technical terms, this means something that appears once in the *fabula* (the order of events as reconstructed in the viewers' minds) and at least twice in the *syuzhet* (the text as ordered and unfolding before us). In other kinds of repetition, analogy between elements hinges upon at least one point of similarity and one point of difference (ibid.: 365), whereas the similarity between members of a repetition structure goes so far as to reach, or at least approach, the point of identity. In that respect, members of this structure are apparently redundant in relation to one another: "For this structure consists in the repetition not of elements designed to link larger units but of those large units themselves; not in setting up points of contact between events that remain discrete even at their most equivalent . . . but in what comes close to a repeated account of the very same event" (ibid.: 367).

A repetition structure also differs from analogy in another respect. While an analogical relationship may exist between elements at every level of the text (language, theme, story, genre), the repetition structure proper belongs to the level of representation; and since its components represent events in the fictional world, their repetition can affect the course of the plot as a whole (ibid.: 365–75). This definition of the repetition structure thus varies, and distinguishes my study, from those formed or assumed in Bellour 1979; Chatman 1978; Genette 1980 [1972]; and Suleiman 1980, 1983, for instance, all of them concerned with other, often mixed types of repetition and forms of similarity in the narrative text (see below).

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[1] See, for example, Berman 2002 and Zanger 2007 on such repetition. I should point out that the popular literary term *twice-told tale* is not synonymous with *repetition structure*. In fact, researchers appear to use it quite loosely and diversely: *twice-told tale* may refer to stories that an audience is already familiar with (Norrick 1997), to the intertextual relationship between texts by the same author (Ullrich 2004), to remakes of an existing text (Leitch 2002), to a second transmission of a story by a different narrator in the same text (García Landa 2008), and more.

The structure of repetition is very common in cinematic narrative, because it operates there to underline significant story information.[2] It serves a fundamental need in the communication between filmmakers and audiences, ensuring that narrative information is received, understood, and retained as the text unfolds. Given that under normal film-viewing conditions—as in live theater—one cannot stop and rewind, repetition structures are of even greater importance in film than in media such as literature and painting. At the same time, repeating information runs the risk of boring the viewer, since the "same," familiar data is being restated. (Even the scholar Gérard Genette [1980 {1972}: 71] goes so far as to call the repeated transmission of an event a "possible useless duplication.") How, then, do filmmakers use repetition structures to achieve optimum clarity, comprehension, and recall, while avoiding boredom and loss of interest? Since these are both important goals in the cinema, resolving their conflict into peaceful coexistence is of prime concern. But since the tension between these two communicative needs is also fundamental, various patterns of repetition structure (and certain manipulations of its conventions) have predictably become established and, in some cases, typical or distinctive of certain corpora. Indeed, effective means of reconciling the dual imperative of reiteration-without-boredom have acquired formula-like status. Billy Wilder, for instance, often restates story information through characters in the fictional world, by having them repeat what they have heard from other characters, in the form of a summary, a question, a witty joke, an interpretive comment: in short, any device that will add variety to the repeated account.

The two aims of clarity and interest—with their reconciliation—definitely govern Hollywood cinema, because of its popular, commercial basis and its appeal to the broadest common denominator. For this reason, Hollywood films are the focus of this study. The Hollywood system (in the classical era, but also today, generally speaking) works on the assumption that audience members widely vary in intelligence, education, attention, interests, and so forth. Fictional worlds in the cinema are accordingly designed to make the salient facts (e.g., about events, characters, relationships) transparent, unequivocal, and easy to understand.[3]

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[2] Obviously enough, "in film as in fictional prose, an aesthetic element becomes as a rule more important if it is repeated" (Lothe 2000: 71).

[3] David Bordwell explains that the assumption about the diverse capabilities of viewers has led to the widespread "triple repetition" principle: "The Hollywood slogan is to state every fact three times, once for the smart viewer, once for the average viewer, and once for Slow Joe in the

This is not to say that every detail regarding the fictional world and the event sequence is narrated there: even if this were technically possible, the net result would be counterproductive—miscomprehension because of information overload—since human perception depends on the selectivity of the information it receives (Bordwell 1985: 7–9). This being the case, only strictly relevant and necessary information is transmitted, in such a quantity and distribution as will suit the perceptual capacities of the average viewer, as the filmmakers see them. Here, I should emphasize that this study of repetition structure does not involve any preconceived measure or estimate of the audience's capacity for recall and concentration; it adheres, instead, to the working assumptions of filmmakers about these capabilities, as indicated by their works.[4]

Finally, we should note that repetition structures in the cinema do much more than keep things comprehensible and interesting. Here lies their most usual function, but, as we will see, they also have other recurrent and contextual purposes, such as thematic, rhetorical, and generic functions, among others.

Like Sternberg, who focused on the repetition structure in a particular artistic medium—that of literary narrative, particularly in the Bible—my interest is in the various facets of the repetition structure as it pertains to cinematic narrative texts: the ways of conveying members of the repetition structure; the possible interactions between members within or along the structure (overlapping, partial overlapping, contradiction, expansion, or summary of a previous member); the location of the repetition structure within the text; its size in relation to the work as a whole; and its roles in terms of plot, meaning, and rhetoric (i.e., the communication between filmmakers and viewers). Examining these diverse aspects makes it possible to draw a comparison between texts within a given genre, in a certain style, or by a certain author. It also facilitates a comparison between different cinematic corpora and between literary and cinematic narratives.

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back row" (quoted in Bordwell et al. 1985: 31). On the imperative of clarity in contemporary Hollywood given the viewers' limitations, see Thompson 1999: 3–21.

[4] The importance of repeating information in classical Hollywood cinema is explicitly noted in scriptwriting guidebooks. "'State every important fact three times,' suggests scenarist Frances Marion, 'for the play is lost if the audience fails to understand the premises on which it is based'" (Bordwell 1985: 164). As Bordwell (2008 [1992]) also points out, however, the filmmakers' working assumption about the viewers' limited memory is not necessarily invidious. In *Mildred Pierce*, for instance, the creators have probably relied on the audience forgetting certain details of the early part of the film both to conceal their departure from realism and for dramatic effect. See the discussion on Bordwell (2008 [1992]) in section 1.1 ("Previous Studies in the Field") of this article.

The structure of repetition in the cinema, as in other fictional narratives, derives from a seemingly puzzling selection of components from the fabula's chronological chain of events, with a view to unfolding them along the text's continuum. The choice is puzzling, because of the inherent redundancy: Why is the same information conveyed a second, third, or even fourth time? The question is all the more compelling given that artistic texts are highly economical as a rule and correspondingly demand a high level of attentive processing by the audience (Sternberg 1987a [1985]: 368–69). Indeed, the very expectation that artworks should prove more discriminating than everyday communication implies that apparently "redundant" information must be relevant and functional in some way, and therefore worth noting and motivating (ibid.: 369). For this reason, I take a functional approach to the topic: as in biblical narrative and other corpora of narrative art, repetition structures in filmic texts are meaningful and worth studying because of the role they play at various levels of the text, some of them medium specific. As we will see, these functions are fulfilled in line with certain patterns characteristic of different cinematic corpora, marked off by genre, style, and auteur.[5]

Accordingly, this study analyzes the components of repetition structure in various filmic texts and the effects of their permutations on plot, meaning, and rhetoric. In defining the components and their combinations, I use Sternberg's typology of constant and variable factors in the repetition structure to draw comparisons between texts of the same corpus, between different filmic corpora, and between filmic and literary narrative.

Sternberg (ibid.: 375–76) distinguishes among three types of members within repetition structures: forecast (e.g., a command, prophecy, or scenario); enactment (objective realization from the perspective of an authorized narrator); and report (about an enactment or a forecast, delivered by a character). Together or separately, these three types of members represent events in the fictional world, and as such have plot value. An enactment clearly affects the chain of events; but so, too, can a report about an event, given its impact on the hearing character's knowledge and reaction; and the same can be said of forecasts.[6]

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[5] Bordwell develops a functionalist approach to film explicitly based on the Russian Formalists' poetics and Sternberg's narrative theory. Thereby "the institutional dynamics of filmmaking set up constraints and preferred options that fulfill overall systemic norms" (Bordwell 2008b: 16). Like Bordwell's (ibid.: 12) approach, my study of the repetition structure in the cinema falls under the category of theoretical poetics, rather than the historical variety: "Any inquiry into the fundamental principles by which artifacts in any representational medium are constructed, and the effects that flow from those principles, can fall within the domain of poetics. . . . A research project in poetics may be primarily analytical, studying particular devices across a range of works or in a single work."

Consider a typical starting point of war films: a character in the fictional world plans a complex and dangerous operation behind enemy lines. This planning counts as a member of forecast in a repetition structure. The sequence of events that make up the successful or unsuccessful carrying out of the operation represents a second member, one of enactment. And any character's retrospect on either the planning or the carrying out of the plan constitutes in turn a member of report: a possible but not obligatory component of the war film, as will appear in the next section.

Compare a different type of repetition structure, one characteristic of court dramas and certain screwball comedies, for example. There, one or more characters testify ("report") about a past event in the fictional world. If the event in question has itself already been previously told as happening or having happened in objective reality, the repetition structure goes from a member of enactment (the realization of the event) to a member of report (the backward-looking testimony).[7]

If repetition structures can feature three types of member, are there patterns of selection and combination that distinguish or even define particular corpora? In biblical repetition structures, for example, Sternberg (ibid.: 377–82) identifies several recurring features.

(a) There appear at least two members of different types. The double occurrence, or multiple recurrence, is itself evidently a constant of repetition structure, attaching to it by definition; but the mandatory

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[6] It should be noted that members of forecast include not only a representation of an event that is realized in the story's future (flash-forward, or repeating prolepses, as Genette calls them) but also mental and linguistic actions that become story events by virtue of being formulated as a plan, a fantasy, a scheme, a speculation, a wish, a command, a prophecy, and so forth.

As Sternberg (most recently in 2008: 51) points out, it is not only the fictional world in the story that is dynamic and changing—so, too, is the process of its comprehension. Questions about the past and the future constantly arise when we follow a story, so this process involves gaps in the information about the fictional world. The gap-filling process is uncertain, hypothetical, and tentative, and therefore at each stage of the story we may perceive "possible futures," even when they are not explicitly stated (ibid.: 34–35). Moreover, even when a forecast does not materialize—a wish unfulfilled, a plan unexecuted, a prophesy that proves false, an order disobeyed—it is nonetheless expressed in the fictional world and as such elicits responses from the characters. The "forecast" then constitutes a story event even when its existence is purely modal (ibid.: 36). The fact that "the multiform iffiness is integral to narrative communication" (ibid.: 69) helps explain why members of forecast appear in repetition structures and in narrative texts at large. On this subject, contrast Pirolini (2010: 86–92, 98–104) on the alleged rarity of prolepses, or "prospects" (as Preston Sturges called them [ibid.: 98]), in classical Hollywood cinema.

[7] On this kind of structure, see Shaham 2010: chap. 3.

difference in type is a variable (i.e., an ad hoc constant) characteristic of biblical poetics—as are all the rest of the features below.

(b) There is a direct plot link as well as an equivalence tie between these two different members.

(c) The order of members within each text segment corresponds to that of their sequence in the narrated world: for example, a report does not normally appear before the enactment it refers back to, let alone before a forecast of that enactment.

(d) Each member generally emerges from a different source of information, with at least one coming from the omniscient narrator, the highest authority in biblical narrative.

(e) The members of the structure tend to be concentrated within a single episodic unit rather than in a single scene or in an entire book or biographical cycle.

The application of this list may vary in its details and result from one biblical context to another. In this light, one of the main questions discussed in the present study is: What are the constant and the variable features that mark repetition structures in particular cinematic corpora?

As will appear, genres and other text classifications (for instance, by period, style, or author) tend to prefer certain sets or complexes out of the many possible permutations of member types within the structure. These possibilities diverge in terms of the components' size, number, order of appearance, representational proportions, and so forth. Unlike literary texts, moreover, the diversity of filmic repetition structures also derives from a choice within the medium: an event can have an auditory or a visual (re)representation (including graphics), or both.

For example, most Hollywood genres (e.g., action films or comedies) are content with a partial repetition structure in that they omit some members of enactment and make do with a report on them (delivered by characters or by a narrator, through a voice-over, subtitle, or some other device). This tendency may be partly due to the film production process: in terms of production costs, the difference between a summarized report and dramatized action can be enormous. Interestingly, however, the tendency does not extend to repetition structures that consist of members of forecast and enactment. Since forecasts can be wrong, they create suspense, so the ensuing member of enactment is generally shown, irrespective of financial cost or other constraints (such as censorship restrictions). Indeed, it is almost an iron rule in Hollywood that, once a member of forecast is conveyed (by characters, voice-over, subtitle, or any other means), a member of enactment must ensue sooner or later, whether repeating the forecast verbatim or with variation.[8]

For example, in *Gone with the Wind* (Victor Fleming 1939)—a paradigmatic film of the classical style—there is a pivotal scene around the halfway mark (in its ninety-fifth minute) where Scarlett O'Hara, fleeing from the approaching Yankee troops, has returned home. Hungry and exhausted, she vows that she and her family will never starve again. Her vow ("forecast") spells out what she is willing to do to that end, including the readiness to lie, steal, cheat, or kill. The lighting, camera movement, acting, and music, all contribute to this emotional high point. Following this concise, one-scene member of forecast, the enactment stretches over many scenes. In fact, until she marries Rhett Butler, Scarlett does not feel secure in her newly acquired wealth. For at least 60 minutes after her vow—out of the film's 210 minutes—she wrestles with financial troubles. In pursuit of her vow, she is indeed forced to commit all the misdeeds that she has previously envisaged. Over time she succeeds not merely in fending off hunger but in acquiring a great fortune: the forecast has been realized in full but at a heavy price.

Another example is in the opening scenes of *The Dirty Dozen* (Robert Aldrich 1967), where Major Reisman listens to the plan put together by General Worden's staff. He must choose twelve men from a group of convicted soldiers (some have been sentenced to death, some to life imprisonment), train them, and lead them on a suicidal operation against a Nazi mansion in occupied France. But the member of forecast does not end here. As the character charged with fulfilling the forecast, Reisman presses for some necessary adjustments. After listening to the plan, he lists the problems that he (fore)sees with it: without a prospect of a pardon to all survivors, the convicts will not cooperate, and even if they do, the chances of turning them into a competent fighting unit are very slim indeed. General Worden then accepts Reisman's suggestion of offering the convicts a pardon if the mission is successful. But the disciplinary problems that Reisman anticipated do arise, during both the training and the mission itself, more or less as he forecast them.

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[8] The precise nature of the repetition-with-variation is determined by generic conventions. Action films, as we said, tend to "realize" events that were set up in advance (through a forecast, a prophecy, a plan, etc.), even if such dramatization is costly. Indeed, one of the principal attractions of such films is the presentation of a member of enactment more or less in line with the anterior member of forecast, only significantly more spectacular and surprising. In comedies, on the other hand, convention dictates that the schemes of the antagonists against the sympathetic protagonists must fail, however clever and elaborate they may be. This is not unique to comedies in cinema, of course: in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* a malicious design against the innocent Isabella is eventually thwarted, much to the relief of the moral majority.

These two examples also illustrate the advantage of analysis based on the axis of fabulaic time over typologies such as Christian Metz's (1986 [1966]) table of key syntagmatic categories ("grande syntagmatique de la bande-image"). Metz's (ibid.: 46) typology is problematic, because he forces a linguistic analogy upon cinematic signification procedures: technical, medium-specific elements, such as shot, scene, and sequence, are treated as equivalent to verbal forms, such as word, sentence, and paragraph. In his effort to find cinematic parallels to the structural principles of language (e.g., "the double articulation"), he constantly needs to revise the list of "syntagmas" (sequences) in his proposed cinematic syntax, adding categories and subcategories, so as to distinguish among the numerous phenomena in the cinematic text.[9]

Another problem with Metz's typology is that he uses differences between elements on various levels of the text to distinguish between his respective types and subtypes. His classification is based on a number of compositional differences: between a sequence of shots and a single shot; between the representations of a chronological and a nonchronological (descriptive or thematic) sequence; between sequential and simultaneous events in the fictional world; or between representations of a single causal line and several causal threads (ibid.: 46–51). The distinctions between categories based on various textual elements results in a patchwork of criteria that is awkward to use as a tool for describing, analyzing, and comparing films. For instance, in regard to Metz's five "matters of expression" in the cinema (moving images, written material, voice, noise, and music), Kristin Thompson (1988: 110) rightly asks: "Does a track [shot] past a billboard constitute written material or moving images?" Apparently it is both, so that Metz's categories are not mutually exclusive.

A final problem with Metz's typology concerns the absence of sound elements and their contributions to the level of meaning in the text, including, as we will see, to the repetition structure. Basing a cinematic syntax purely on visual components undermines its ability to provide a full and accurate description of the principles of cinema, which is a syncretic art by nature. Indeed, as will appear, ignoring the syncretic (or multimedia) nature of cinema is a recurrent problem with studies of the time axis in narrative films. In the following section, I briefly review a number of other theories of narrative (some including cinematic narrative), each with its own bearing—under various names and guises—on what we call the structure of repetition, or repetition structure, for short.

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9. See Bordwell 2004: 203–19 and Bateman and Schmidt 2012 for overviews of the problems in Metz's "grande syntagmatique."

1.1. Previous Studies in the Field

To the best of my knowledge, repetition structure in cinematic narrative has not yet been studied systematically as distinct from various related phenomena. Indeed, references to such phenomena (under one label or another) tend to confuse different types of repetition in narrative texts. This theoretical weakness already arises in research on literary narratives and extends to cinematic counterparts or follow-ups. Here are a few notable examples.

Gérard Genette In his well-known book *Narrative Discourse* (1980 [1972]), Genette examines three central aspects of time in Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* (1913): order, duration, and frequency. Although his detailed discussion relates to some narrative elements and patterns that bear on my topic, such as events presented in the discourse prior to or after their fabulaic occurrence, or "anachronies," as he calls them (ibid.: 35–36), it is less than useful to my concerns, for several reasons:

a. As Genette himself points out, his brief mention of phenomena that I regard as genuine instances of repetition structure is mainly intended to point out their rarity in Proust's work. Genette refers to these instances as recalls or repeating analepses (ibid.: 54–58) and as anticipations, repeating prolepses, or simply advance notices (ibid.: 71–79). As their names suggest, the former apply to passages retelling an event that has already been told, and the latter mention it ahead of time. For Genette (ibid.: 71), both kinds are problematic, since they entail an unwanted redundancy, or pointless duplication. For me, on the other hand, repetition structures are a rich source of forms and functions of informational redundancy.

b. When Genette does mention the allegedly rare cases where the narrative repeats events that were already recounted in what has gone before, he confines himself to instances of repetition at the level of the "discourse" only, rather than at the level of the "story" (i.e., fabula). This focus on the author's or narrator's communication with the reader, rather than on the possible interplay between the two levels of communication in the text—namely, that between the framing participants and that between the characters themselves in the fictional world—arbitrarily limits the range of phenomena that count as "recalls" and "anticipations" even in Genette's terms.

c. The distinction between objective and subjective perspective (which, as we said, plays a crucial role in sorting out types of member) is not discussed in Genette's (ibid.: 39) chapter about time, on the grounds that such analysis would be redundant, since the issue will be covered in the chapter about "mood." But how can phenomena such as reports and forecasts be analyzed in isolation from the perspective of the recaller or anticipator? To my mind, this further artificial separation blurs the issues concerned.

d. Repetition structure, as defined by Sternberg (1977: 110–11; 1986: 298–99; 1987a [1985]: 367–68; 2008: 36–38), is relegated by Genette in *Narrative Discourse* to the category of "repeating narrative," and it is associated with an event's "frequency" in the text as relative to its frequency in the fictional world, namely, how many times a one-off event is mentioned in the text.[10] He first states that this form of repetition might seem purely hypothetical and irrelevant to literature (Genette 1980 [1972]: 115–16). But, in fact, he reminds us that it is quite common in certain modern texts: for example, the repeated depiction of the killing of the centipede in Alain Robbe-Grillet's *Jealousy* (1957), where the repetition involves "stylistic variation," or *Rashomon* (Akira Kurosawa 1950) and William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), where the same events repeat themselves with variations in "point of view." Genette (1980 [1972]: 115) claims that repetitions with such perspectival variations are also found in the eighteenth-century epistolary novel and that devices like advance notices and recalls also "belong to this narrative type, which they bring to existence more or less fleetingly."[11]

He focuses instead on the type of repetition referred to in *Narrative Discourse* as the "iterative narrative": Proust likes to talk about what keeps happening in the normal course of events to highlight the uniformity of similar moments and to conflate them into a routine (ibid.: 123–24). Genette's focus, therefore, is on a very different phenomenon of frequency from the repetition structure as I understand it: not a focus on the multiple hence "redundant" re-presentation of the same event, but on a generalized, "economical" way of presenting similar events in the world as if they were one and the same.[12] For all these reasons, Genette's theory has little relation to the present study either conceptually or in coverage—let alone focus—and I will use it mainly as a contrastive background.

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[10] "Schematically, we can say that a narrative, whatever it is, may tell once what happened once, *n* times what happened *n* times, *n* times what happened once, once what happened *n* times" (Genette 1980 [1972]: 114).

[11] Genette concludes his discussion of this type by citing the fact that children enjoy reading or hearing the same story repeatedly as proof that repetition is common in literature. However, this closing remark merely lists yet another form of repetition, namely, a whole text retold to some reader — one that is unlike those he has discussed earlier (repeating analepses, advance notices).

[12] Genette's focal iterative story — "what usually happens" — is, in fact, the antithesis of true repetition, in that what has happened many times in the fictional world (and, hence, "repeats itself" there) is presented only once in the story in summarized form. Nonrepresentation, or a generalized representation of repeating events as a form of routine, are naturally the reverse of a repeated representation of a certain event, as occurs in a true repetition structure. As Genette puts it, "narrating one time (or rather: at one time) what happened *n* times (1*N*/*nS*)," as opposed

Seymour Chatman *Story and Discourse* (1978) is the first theoretical approach to narrative in both literature and film. Chatman's discussion of the time axis is based on Genette's terminology and, therefore, likewise views repeated representations of the same event as a rare phenomenon in narrative (ibid.: 78–79). Moreover, in the example he brings—also taken from Genette—the repeating elements are formally identical, follow one another in quick succession, and lack any perspectival variation, for example, "Yesterday I went to bed early; Yesterday I went to bed early; Yesterday I went to bed early" (ibid.: 78). Genette (1980 [1972]: 115) himself cites more interesting "repeating" types: repetition with perspectival variations (e.g., *Rashomon* and *The Sound and the Fury*) as well as "recalls" and "anticipations."

A later book by Chatman, *Coming to Terms* (1990), aims for a more balanced narratology. In the introduction Chatman (ibid.: 2) agrees with his critics that his previous book undertreated filmic narratives. Therefore, this second book sets out to explore further key concepts in the study of the two media: the interplay between various types of texts; the relationship between the narrator and/or character and the implied author; cinematic adaptations of novels; and the rhetoric of fiction. However, it deliberately avoids "the relation of story time to discourse time," among other "issues that seem reasonably settled" (ibid.: 3), whereas, in my view, there remain aspects of narrative time that have yet to be investigated adequately, notably including repetition structure.

Bruce F. Kawin In *Telling It Again and Again*, Kawin (1972) discusses repetition in literature and film. Unfortunately, it conflates both various kinds of repetitions and other aspects of time in art and in reality. The cycle of seasons, the role played by repetition in Freudian therapy, and patterns of repetition specific to certain artworks and authors (such as Proust's involuntary memory) are all lumped together (ibid.: 91–92). Nor is there in Kawin 1972 any orderly or detailed typology of repetition. His only differentiation is a value-laden one: repetitions that gather strength with each repetition ("repetitive") as against those that are aimless, and therefore boring and diminishing in their effect ("repetitious"). In the absence of distinctions, conflations abound. Scenes, or entire films, by Luis Buñuel (ibid.: 81–84), Ingmar

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to the repetition structure, which in Genette belongs to "narrating *n* times what happened once (*nN*/1*S*)" (ibid.:115–16).

Bergman (ibid.: 84), William Dieterle (ibid.: 95–105), and Alain Resnais (ibid.: 156–162) are thus brought in to support general arguments about repetition in both art and reality.

Here and there, Kawin's book does mention true instances of repetition structure. For instance, the workings of voluntary and involuntary memory in Proust's work often amount to several members of report bearing on the same event (ibid.: 27–28). Or take Sergei Eisenstein's *October* (1928) and *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) (ibid.: 46–48): each repeats the occurrence of the same event and thus creates a rather unusual repetition structure with several members of enactment. However, these examples are few and far between in the book; nor are they identified as belonging to a single theoretical category.[13]

Raymond Bellour In "Cine-Repetitions," Bellour (1979) examines the various manifestations of "repetition" in cinema. He does not mention previous studies of the topic, such as Kawin's (1972) or Chatman's (1978). But he does mention Genette (1980 [1972]), and he refers to Metz's (1986 [1966]) cinematic syntax. Like Metz's, Bellour's typology bears on elements from various levels of the text, as well as extratextual ones. For instance, in the category of "External Repetition 1," he includes rehearsals prior to shooting the film, and the repetitions involved in several takes of the same shot. The category "External Repetition 2" includes multiple screenings of the same film on different occasions, while the twenty-four frames per second of any given image fall into the category "Internal Repetition 1." (In all, his typology covers six types of repetition, three external and three internal.) In an explanatory note on a category he calls "Textual Repetition 3," Bellour (1979: 69) cites two other types of cinematic repetition: the reproduction of images from reality or other arts—made possible thanks to the technical advantages of the medium—and repetition through remakes, adaptations, and intertextual allusions.

As in Kawin's discussion, Bellour's typology does not mark off the repetition structure as defined here from other types of repetition, all of which are lumped together. For example, some elements of genuine repetition structure are consigned to the miscellaneous category of "Textual Repetition 3": "It encompasses all levels, and everything feeds into it: a narrative segment, a gesture, a sound, a frame, a color, an exchange of sentences, a decor, an action, a camera movement, or any of them together" (ibid.). As we will see, "a narrative segment . . . an exchange of sentences . . . an action" can all be, together or separately, parts of members of forecast, enactment, or report.

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[13] Significantly, Kawin's book is nevertheless considered to this day a key work in the study of repetition. In *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* (2008 [2002]), for example, H. Porter Abbott refers to it and to J. Hillis Miller's *Fiction and Repetition* (1982) as the two authoritative studies of repetition in narrative.

Bellour's typology thus tries to cover a variety of phenomena, with only a very general common denominator among them. He believes the power of the term *repetition* lies in its being at once very general and very literal (ibid.: 65). To my mind, this level of generalization is too high, and his taxonomy accordingly suffers from much the same problems as arise in the works of Metz, Genette, and Chatman. Bellour's typology demonstrates once again how overgeneralized or indiscriminate accounts of the various meanings and references attached to the word *repetition* undermine any attempt to develop useful analytic tools for the study of repetition in the cinema.

Susan Rubin Suleiman In her article "Redundancy and the 'Readable' Text" (1980) and subsequent book *Authoritarian Fictions* (1983), Suleiman presents a typology of various repetition types in realistic narrative (the "readable" text) and examines more closely repetitions typical of the *roman à thèse* genre. Suleiman thus distinguishes repetitions within the fictional world from those at the level of discourse. The former repeat events, character qualities, or character-qualifying functions (any action that serves to characterize the agent [Suleiman 1980: 124]), syntagmatic functions (any act that serves to advance the story), actantial functions (the set of actions determining a character's general role in the story [ibid.]), and commentary (judgment, analysis, prognosis by a character [ibid.]) about an event, person, or context. At the level of discourse, Suleiman lists the following elements as repeatable: the narrator's relationship (e.g., didactic, cynical) with the audience; narrational commentary on an event (judgment, analysis, prognosis), person, or context; reflexive observation; and the kind of perspective from which the story is "viewed" or experienced (ibid.: 125–31). A third group of repetitions concerns redundancies at or between the levels of story and discourse: an event may be told more than once (which amounts to a "repetition structure" as defined by Sternberg); an event and the narrator's commentary on it can repeat one another; a character-qualifying function and a comment on it by the narrator (such a comment may also be redundant in relation to one made by a character on an event, person, or context) can also repeat one another.

Compared with Kawin or Bellour, Suleiman's analysis narrows the range of textual phenomena that count as repetition: it excludes, for instance, the level of language, namely, repeated words or phrases. Her classification is therefore more useful as a strategic tool for analyzing works of art, but the level of generalization and grouping together is still too high there. For example, classing instances of redundancy in events sequences together with aspects of character confuses "functions of 'doing'" with "qualities of 'being'" (ibid.: 124), or in other words, narrative with description. As a result, the fundamental distinction is missing: between repetition as some occurrence that repeats itself—after a certain interval in the represented reality—and a repeated attribute, pattern, or stylistic principle.

David Bordwell In an illuminating essay on a cognitive approach to the comprehension and recollection of films, Bordwell (2008 [1992], 2013) illustrates how films shape viewers' responses. According to him (ibid.: 137–43), films (correctly) assume that viewers search for the gist of a situation, of an event, indeed of the whole story, and to infer it from various cues in the film, they tend to ignore details and jump to conclusions. Bordwell demonstrates how filmmakers use these tendencies to create effects of surprise, suspense, and curiosity—as defined by Sternberg (e.g., 1978, 1992)—through an analysis of what he calls "partial replay" in *Mildred Pierce* (Michael Curtiz 1945). A replay is "a flashback that revisits scenes we've already seen" (Bordwell 2013). In a partial replay, or "fragmentary flashback," the later replay fills in "elements left out of earlier scenes. . . . The first time through a scene, we think we're seeing everything. But the replay shows us bits and pieces that were left out, or that we didn't notice, or that we've forgotten about. . . . The replay not only fills in missing information; it corrects the inferences we made during the first scene" (ibid.).

The phenomenon that Bordwell analyzes is, of course, a certain kind of repetition structure. However, his fine analysis of its features and functions operates without any larger theoretical framework concerning repetition structures. Indeed, Bordwell (ibid.) himself is uneasy about the lack of proper terminology. So, here is a summary of his description and analysis of the repetition structure in *Mildred Pierce* with the missing terminology added. The opening sequence of *Mildred Pierce* creates a false first impression, as if Mildred murdered Monte Beragon (clever camera angles hide from us the presence of a third person, the real killer). This impression is corrected retrospectively at the film's climax, when Mildred reveals the truth in a verbal testimony and flashback (both are members of report reiterating the enactment that was shown in the opening sequence): the killer is her daughter, whom she tried to shield by taking the blame herself.

Thus, Bordwell examines the relations (in point of magnitude, specificity, correspondence, location in the text) between a deceptive-looking, sketchy member of enactment (Monte's killing) and an apparently reliable and more detailed member of report (Mildred's final testimony). For instance, the seeming correspondence between the two members rests on the fact that "many actions are reiterated in the second version, and the redundancies suggest that we are seeing a straight replay" (Bordwell 2008 [1992]: 145). Yet the replay is in fact only partial, and "the narration profits from so many redundancies in order to introduce some significant disparities" (ibid.: 147). Bordwell also discusses the positioning (or timing) of the members along the narrative continuum and its contribution to the surprise effect when we learn that the opening sequence — the first depiction of the murder — concealed not only the identity of the real murderer but also the fact that three rather than two people were present at the scene of the crime (Veda, the real killer; Monte, the victim; and Mildred, the innocent bystander).

The *Mildred Pierce* example shows that, under the limitations of human memory, the fact that some details are not identical in the two enactment-to-report sequences — such as the precise location of a character in the frame or the direction of his or her gaze — goes unnoticed. The considerable time lapse between the two sequences under typical viewing conditions — approximately 101 minutes — almost guarantees that viewers will overlook differences between the two representations.[14]

As noted, Bordwell (2008 [1992]: 142) also refers to this structure's rhetorical effect: it contributes to the multilayered characterization of the heroine, Mildred, as "a self-sacrificing mother, a heedless wife, as a ruthless business owner, and so on." The more informative second member in this repetition structure exonerates Mildred and perhaps moves the viewers to consider their tendency to judge ambitious women as femmes fatales and to suspect the worst about them. (Mildred's goodness is proved by her maternal behavior.) In short, "the film's narration had encouraged us — at moments forced us — to make those inferences, all with the purpose of creating a false impression about who was in the house when Monte died" (Bordwell 2013).

Bordwell thus illustrates how modes of representation can invite unwarranted and misleading interpretations and how filmmakers can make viewers forget or even misremember events narrated earlier. This in turn reflects an understanding of film as a dynamic process, based on Sternberg's (e.g., 1978) theory of narrative. Like readers, viewers are accordingly invited, or tempted, to construct faulty hypotheses about the narrated world — a character, or an event, for example — only to correct them later in the light of new information (Bordwell 2008 [1992]; cf. Sternberg 1978: 90–158).

From this instructive example, Bordwell might, but does not, generalize about the range of options available in the cinema to present an event more than once and the effects achievable thereby (e.g., to remind viewers of a

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[14] "Typical viewing conditions" means watching it in the cinema, not on a VCR or DVD, where the two sequences can be viewed in succession, making the differences — and the concealment of the killer, or third party in the room, in the first sequence — more obvious. (See note 16 on the effects of changes in viewing conditions on the poetics of cinema.) See Bordwell's (2013) blog for a close comparison of the two sequences.

particular event, or to steer them toward a particular memory or interpretation of it, among other purposes). Much the same absence recurs in Bordwell (2008a) on the poetics of the "network narrative." There, several independent story lines intersect through encounters among characters belonging to the different lines, as, for example, in *Grand Hotel* (Edmund Goulding 1932), *Nashville* (Robert Altman 1975), and *Magnolia* (Paul Thomas Anderson 1999).[15] Bordwell (2008a) points to the popularity of this kind of narrative in the cinema of the 1990s and 2000s, and he describes its history, its many variations, its typical technical means, structural aspects, modes of narration, and thematics, and the difficulties it poses to viewers, given that we must follow over a dozen characters in different stories. This description includes examples of films with an extensive or short repetition structure (a replay or overlapping replay, Bordwell calls it). In *Yuva* (Mani Ratnam 2004), *Amores Perros* (Alejandro González Iñárritu 2000), or *Pulp Fiction* (Quentin Tarantino 1994), the crosscutting between story lines is achieved through the repeated representation (usually with variation) of certain events (Bordwell 2008a: 201, 206–11). However, as in Bordwell's previous article, here, too, the account of films with repetition structures is incidental to a much wider discussion of another phenomenon, in this case network narrative—and therefore remains limited.

Sarah Kozloff In her book on dialogue in film, Kozloff (2000) discusses in effect certain repetition structures, but again within another framework, now that of dialogue. She points out that dialogues in cinema are linguistic actions of equal importance to physical ones, and similarly represent events in the story. However, the examples she cites are linguistic actions with a pivotal role in the story, such as the revelation of a secret or a declaration of love (ibid.: 41–43). As I will demonstrate, however, any linguistic element (e.g., dialogue, voice-over, subtitle)—regardless of its plot role—is or can become a narrated event and may accordingly operate as a member of forecast, of enactment, or of report in a repetition structure.

From the viewpoint of repetition structure, Kozloff's focus on conversational interchange tends to lead to various limitations of scope. She thus examines how the dialogue varies in different genres—westerns, gangster films, screwball comedies, melodrama—with interesting results; but she separates dialogues from other sound components in the filmic text, such as voice-over (to which she devoted a separate study [Kozloff 1988]). She also examines the various functions of dialogue: contributing to event dynamics in the represented world, to characterization, to the description of space, to key themes, and so forth (Kozloff 2000: 33–61). Her dialogic functions are occasionally relevant to repetition structures, such as marking the time (ibid.: 33–36), and so establishing a present in relation to which reports and forecasts can be understood as such, or influencing the pace of the film (ibid.: 49), and thus the representational proportions of repeated members. But the analysis does not cover the range of operations available to filmic dialogues, let alone those open to repetition structures that such dialogues may generate. In the present study, I will try to investigate these multiple roles.

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[15] "The film opens up a social structure of acquaintance, kinship, and friendship beyond any one character's ken. . . . And the actions springing from this social structure aren't based on tight causality. The characters, however they're knit together, have diverging purposes and projects, and these intersect only occasionally—often accidentally" (Bordwell 2008a: 190–91). As we will see, Bordwell's network narrative parallels some of Charles Ramírez Berg's (2006) "alternative plots."

Charles Ramírez Berg Another study that intersects with the focus of my research is Berg's 2006 article on "alternative plots." Berg (2006: 5–7) identifies a new trend in the cinema of the 1990s and the 2000s: a rise in the frequency of what he regards as alternatives to the classical narrative, with its linear development, chronological order of events, and three-act structure.[16] He divides such "alternative" narratives into twelve categories, under three major headings: (a) plots with multiple heroes (and hence multilinear or loosely intertwined stories); (b) "nonlinear" plots, "based on the re-ordering of time" (ibid.: 27–44); and (c) plots that violate basic rules of classical cinema, which govern causality, the hero's aims, subjectivity, the perceptibility of narration, and the presentation of expositional information. (He acknowledges, however, that some films belong to more than one category.)

Of the various "alternative" categories that Berg describes, the ones particularly relevant to my discussion are of the second group, the so-called nonlinear plots, which—like the repetition structure—are defined by the story's time axis. Berg places five categories under this heading, numbered as: (5) stories told from end to beginning (e.g., *Betrayal* [David Jones 1983]; *Memento* [Christopher Nolan 2000]); (6) stories where a character performs the same sequence of actions more than once (e.g., *Groundhog Day* [Harold Ramis 1993]; *Run Lola Run* [Tom Tykwer 1998]); (7) the same sequence of events conveyed through the perspectives of several characters (e.g., *Citizen Kane* [Orson Wells 1941]; *Rashomon*; *Jackie Brown* [Quentin Tarantino 1997]);

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[16] Among the reasons Berg (ibid.) cites for the current popularity of deviations from the structure of classical narrative is a technological one: the move toward watching films on VCR and DVD, which allow one to view something twice, to stop the film or rewind to previous points at will. This new viewing experience, Berg (ibid.: 57) says, is more akin to reading a book than to watching a play or a dance performance. This technological factor does not, of course, explain the structural sophistication of films made prior to video recordings, such as *Citizen Kane* (Orson Wells 1941) and *Rashomon*, but it does bolster their status as films made "ahead of their time."

(8) story lines anchored in different characters that meet at a certain spatiotemporal point (e.g., *The Killing* [Stanley Kubrick 1956]; *Amores Perros*); and (9) the jumbled plot, where the disordered sequence of events has no realistic motivation—such as one or more characters' subjective viewpoint on the events and the story world—but arise from a decision made by the filmmaker and so is motivated in purely aesthetic or rhetorical terms (e.g., *Point Blank* [John Boorman 1967]; *Reservoir Dogs* [Quentin Tarantino 1992]; *Pulp Fiction*).

Berg's categorization—with its references to thematic and ideological common denominators of films in each category—significantly contributes to the identification of classical and other narrative principles and of historical trends in film. However, the problem first encountered in Suleiman's typology recurs here. Various features are again used to describe or compare an assorted set of deviations from classical narrative (e.g., the number of protagonists or story lines; the order of events in the narrated vs. the narration time; flashbacks through characters' perspectives vs. authorial time jumps). And this means that Berg's classification in turn suffers from a rather high level of overlapping among its categories.

The references to assorted kinds of deviation from the classical norm also obscure the rich array of formal and functional variation in the structure of repetition operating in some of the films he discusses. For instance, Berg (2006: 33) places *Jackie Brown* in the seventh category ("The Repeated Event Plot"), along with *Citizen Kane* and *Rashomon*—although this film, like Quentin Tarantino's previous ones, does not represent events through the characters' memories. Rather, it tells the same event (dropping the money off at the department store) three times, each more or less adhering to the field of vision and knowledge of one of the participating characters. In terms of repetition structure, the film has three successive members of enactment, each adding certain information that was missing in the previous ones; so the third and final enactment is the most informative. Berg's discussion of *Jackie Brown* would benefit from a comparison to *The Killing*, which has a similar structure with several enactments, rather than *Citizen Kane* or *Rashomon* (both structured with several members of report).[17]

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[17] Berg (2006: 39) puts *The Killing* in his eighth category ("The Hub-and-Spoke Plot"), which he considers a variation of the seventh type ("The Repeated Event Plot"): both show "one event from various perspectives. . . . The critical difference is that the repeated event in the Hub-and-Spoke Plot is the narrative's dramatic fulcrum and its organizing principle." But the difference at times vanishes in fact, so that this eighth category, like the seventh, is ultimately defined by repeating events, irrespective of the size of the repetition or the importance of events. Thus, *Jackie Brown* does not qualify as a case of "The Hub-and-Spoke Plot," because it conveys "three views of the same action to clarify an important plot point, but does not return to it obsessively, over and over again" (ibid.: 35). Moreover, since both *The Killing* and *Jackie Brown* use omni-

Thus, all ten works surveyed above fail to see the repetition structure as a multifaceted phenomenon with diverse functions in the story. The various studies also lack the key distinction between instances of repetition involving redundancy of textual elements and instances of repetition based purely on similarity, or between repeated presentation of an event in the narrative and other kinds of repeated elements in the text (such as colors or décor; see the discussion on Bellour). Following Sternberg's example, I therefore intend to examine repetition structures as distinct from (but interacting with) other relationships of similarity and equivalence in the cinema.

Having defined this structure as a peculiar and major form of repetition, I will now examine how and why it shows itself in various cinematic aspects and types of film. In particular, I will look at how members of repetition structure are conveyed (e.g., from a character's perspective vs. that of an omniscient narrator); the degree of overlap between the members (precise repetition vs. repetition-with-variation); the specificity of their presentation (e.g., summarized or fully dramatized); their respective locations in the text; their size, number, and order of presentation in the text; the number of repetition structures along the text; and most important, the relations among all these factors and the structure's functions in terms of meaning, rhetoric, and communicative effect generally. A related line of inquiry and comparison is generic: What are the characteristics of repetition structures in similar yet distinct genres?

1.2. A Case Study: Three Hollywood Genres

In the following, I compare heist films (a subgenre of crime films) with films about military operations (a subgenre of war films). The two have a similar narrative, moving from (a) planning, preparations, and training to (b) carrying out the planned action. Hence, the general repetition structure (or, indeed, repetition plot) behind such films consists of two members—of forecast and of enactment, respectively. The repetition in the form of enactment is by no means boring, since a major question that arises in the movement from (a) to (b) is: Will the heist (or military operation) go according to plan? Since there are numerous factors that can go wrong, the suspense effect is inherent and multiple.

In both of these genres, or subgenres, the repetition plot draws on elements from a more or less fixed repertoire (planning, recruiting the right people, preparations, training, the actual operation, escape, contending with agents

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scient narration and repeat several enactments seriatim, they could both fit into Berg's ninth category—the Jumbled Plot. Evidently, a problematic taxonomy in various respects.

of law enforcement or with pursuit by the enemy). Specific films only differ in the elements actually chosen and in the specification of each one. As we will see, these points of difference are neither accidental nor insignificant: they affect the meaning and experience provided in films about heists (e.g., *The Killing*; *The Day They Robbed the Bank of England* [John Guillermin 1960]) and military operations (e.g., *The Horse Soldiers* [John Ford 1959]; *The Dirty Dozen*). Both genres, for example, contain films of a tragic nature and ones oriented to irony and even satire.

The comparison between the two genres widens to include the adventure film, which similarly features characters and plots that might be called "future oriented." The underlying similarity again highlights the differences: unlike heist and military operation films, adventure films abound in a type of repetition structure with no detailed or protracted member of forecast. This difference is significant and related to other distinctive qualities of the adventure genre: to characterization (adventurers are usually daring and resourceful); to the timing of genre-specific goals (the hero's initial selfish and misguided pursuits give way to his conversion to the right cause only after considerable delay and blundering); and to the consequences of the characters' efforts.

The patterns, indeed "plots," discussed and illustrated in this section's threefold case study do not yet cover all the types of repetition structure in film, or the full range of functions that it may perform. Together with the comprehensive theoretical framework established in this section, however, the following analysis does, I hope, enable, develop, and illustrate what promises to be a focused and fruitful approach to an artistic device that, for all its multiform and meaningful presence in the cinema, has not received anything like the attention it deserves there. In part, at least, this neglect may be explained by the sheer diversity of guises and functions that the repetition structure assumes as a cinematic device—often extending to an overall strategy—and assumes them not only in film history but also within a given period or even a "style," like Hollywood cinema (see the appendix). But then, across and below the surface variety, we have already begun to discern certain recurring patterns in the use of the repetition structure in cinema as a compositional, communicative, and rhetorical tool.

These patterns—to be specified in the illustrative analysis that follows—include:

a. the hidden or indirect role of the retold member(s). At first glance, the repetition appears to be redundant, but ultimately this impression is dispelled: "For the information that looks redundant within one framework (the rendering of the world) finds its coherence within another (the judgment of the world)" (Sternberg 1987a [1985]: 389). This shift of framework out of redundancy, toward an evaluative or causal or some other purposive and meaningful coherence, is the key to how and why repetition structure operates. And given the shift, implied yet missable or mistakable, the operation always remains oblique (ibid.).

Take, for example, Scarlett O'Hara's vow in *Gone with the Wind* that she will never be hungry again, no matter what. In terms of story information, this vow initially strikes one as an overly long, possibly superfluous member of forecast, given the high level of detail in the corresponding member of enactment. The latter is protracted and transmitted both visually and vocally. All the immoral actions that she vowed to carry out, should the opportunity or necessity arise, do come to pass: Scarlett lies, steals, cheats, and kills a man. So, you may ask, what need is there for the one early scene of the forecasting vow?

This scene, with all its detail, guides the cinematic shaping of the audience's attitude toward the heroine: it suggests in advance a causal link between Scarlett's present state of hunger and her future misdeeds, thereby mitigating her guilt in our eyes. (Her defense by appeal to hunger probably struck a chord with the contemporary viewers of the Great Depression era.) This forecast-to-enactment repetition softens our judgment of the heroine by way of "extenuating circumstances" presented before the event: Scarlett acted as she did (so we infer) because she is a frightened and desperate woman, not an inherently cold-blooded liar, cheat, and killer.

Such oblique functioning (here evaluative, rhetorical) in the guise of apparent redundancy is especially notable in the context of Hollywood cinema, with its traditional adherence to strict and immediate functionality. (On the subordination of the cinematic medium there to the transmission of the story and on the multifunctional elements in the classical-realist Hollywood text, see Bordwell et al. 1985: 18–21, 24–25). This oblique functionality also brings to mind Kawin's (1972) distinction between repetition that gathers force with each reiteration (repetitive) and aimless repetition, which has a "diminishing," negative effect (repetitious). On closer inspection, some repetitions that appear at first to be "repetitious" may prove to be of the repetitive type, once their underlying purpose is detected and understood.

Such deceptive or otherwise apparent redundancy, let me emphasize, is not confined to film. It underlies and motivates the repetition structure as early as biblical narrative, possibly in narrative at large, as Sternberg (1977: 111, 120–49; 1978: 368–69, 387–440) points out.

The question is how the omnipresent principle gets implemented in various media and corpora.

b. Every aspect of the repetition structure—the type of members used (forecast, enactment, or report), how they interrelate (between confirming and contradicting one another in any way), the magnitude of the structure relative to the whole work, or its location in the text—can play a role within the operative codes, or the unwritten (sub)generic "contract" between filmmakers and audiences. A new and surprising twist on a familiar structure of repetition associated with a certain (sub) genre—like our trio—can therefore become a source of poetic novelty.

Such is the case with the heist film *Reservoir Dogs*, where the repeating members diverge sharply from the generic norm in their extent and order of appearance. Normally, the heist's planning stage (forecast) is shown in detail, followed by the robbery itself (enactment), with or without a subsequent member of report (i.e., a police investigation in pursuit of the robbers and/or the loot). But in *Reservoir Dogs*, the opening sequence shows a scene from the planning stage (forecast) of the robbery, with the aftermath of a botched enactment as an immediate follow-up, where the characters rack their brains and argue over what went wrong in the operation's planning or carrying out (an extended member of report). From then on, other parts of the planning stage are (re)presented, but the member of enactment—the robbery itself—is never actually shown.

The film, then, concentrates on the dramatizing of the gang's efforts to discover who is responsible for the aborted enactment by considering what has happened via a series of retrospects ("reports"). As a result, the question that usually dominates heist films and generates the suspense of the narrative—Will they pull it off?—is replaced here with another question entirely, driven by curiosity about events reported but not enacted: Why did they fail? In other words, the repetition structure here produces and reflects a salient departure from the conventions of heist films, with regard to the primary focus of interest.

This brings us to a departure on a generic scale in the operative norm itself. As will be pointed out in the next section, heist and military operation films may be regarded as examples of poetic novelty within the larger generic category of "adventure films." The two genres emerged in the same period (during World War II), and both exhibit a twist on the classical narrative structure of adventure films. Instead of beginning with a short exposition followed by breathtaking happenings that run to the end of the story, when the protagonist achieves his goal, the criminal or military story is neatly divided in two. The first half unrolls a repetition structure consisting in turn of two parts: a member of forecast (a group of characters planning an elaborate operation and preparing for it), then a member of enactment (the plan carried out, partly at least). The second half of the film involves an unforeseen setback, forcing the characters to abandon their original plan and improvise to achieve their original goal (or a revised one, as the case may be).

Thus, unlike the conventional structure of adventure films—a sequence of spontaneous members of enactment with little prospection (forecast) or retrospection (reports)—the heist and military operation films typically devote their first half to an elaborate and prolonged member of forecast and "revert" in their second half to the adventure formula of abandoned plans and seat-of-the-pants improvisation. In *The Asphalt Jungle* (John Huston 1950), for example, the first fifty-five minutes show the gang being assembled and the robbery carried out. Unfortunately for them, once they have obtained the diamonds, the robbers' luck runs out, and the remaining fifty-two minutes trace the mishaps and betrayals that ultimately lead to their arrest or demise.

c. One consistent and important finding is the lack of any necessary connection between particular formal aspects of the repetition structure and specific functions. Depending on the context, different forms or techniques may serve the same end (e.g., meaning, rhetoric), or the same form may contribute to different ends (Sternberg [1982: 393] calls it the "Proteus Principle"). As we noted earlier in the *Gone with the Wind* example, a repetition structure can be used to shape the audience's attitude toward a character, much like the music, the composition, or the casting. In addition, it can serve various effects of plot and rhetoric at once. An example would be the multifunctional police investigation scene in the screwball comedy *Bringing Up Baby* (Howard Hawks 1938). The strange and comic coincidences befalling the protagonists make it difficult for them to deliver a coherent testimony (report) about their actions and motivations. This difficulty fulfills at least two functions, compositional and rhetorical. Compositionally, it delays the plot's movement toward the ultimate resolution of the misunderstandings and the end of the story. Rhetorically, it reflects the difficulties experienced by the scriptwriters in creating a screwball comedy, where the chain of events requires a series of highly unusual yet plausible events. Moreover, charging the protagonists with serious yet baseless offenses during the interrogation, as if they were real criminals, helps diminish the gravity of their misdemeanors (such as letting loose a wild leopard in a populated area), thus producing an important rhetorical effect of value judgment.

No less interestingly, the functional variation of the repetition structure goes yet further. Heist stories fall into two distinct types—film noir (with its fatalistic tone) and comedy. Like the noir-like *The Asphalt Jungle*, the comic *The Lady Killers* (Alexander Mackendrick 1955) has a bipartite linear structure. The first half shows a robbery successfully planned and executed; but then around the middle (in minute forty-two of eighty-six minutes), the robbers' luck turns, when their sweet, old landlady discovers the loot. The second half of the film extends as a series of confrontations between the landlady and the robbers, in which they try to kill her by various means, but she survives and ultimately prevails.

The same repetition structure can even have several variations that exhibit no common denominator other than their role. For instance, some screwball comedies (e.g., *The Awful Truth* [Leo McCarey 1937]) dramatize only a single brief court scene, in which the characters testify as usual, while others multiply and lengthen it (e.g., *My Favorite Wife* [Garson Kanin 1940]). In some screwball comedies the narrative opens in court (e.g., *The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer* [Irving Reid 1947]), while others reach their climax or even end there (*Midnight* [Mitchell Leisen 1939]). The sheer diversity in the size, number, and ordering of members of repetition structure in screwball comedy may explain why this structure has not been recognized thus far as a distinctive and important generic screwball feature. Unlike known cinematic devices, such as voice-over (Kozloff 1988), flashback (Turim 1989), dialogue (Kozloff 2000), network narrative (Bordwell 2008a), and alternative plots (Berg 2006), the repetition structure has no set of constant formal attributes.

d. The existence of three types of member in repetition structures helps explain how the various film elements—auditory and visual, including graphics—work together to create effects and meaning patterns. The textual units that I examine—the events forecast, enacted, and reported—are all represented (or representable) in a way that combines different representational devices from the various channels of information available to the cinematic medium. The key distinctions in my study concern the time axis in the represented world and how it relates to that of transmission, rather than to the visual/auditory contrast. Relying on this double time line—narrative's fundamental organizing principle—and assimilating other components or options to it yields a clear advantage: it makes possible not just an approach to specific

> repetition structures in film, but also a systematic comparative analysis among various films and, indeed, among various narrative arts. Accordingly, my approach is inclusive and multimedia—in keeping with the syncretic nature of cinema—as distinct from semiotic research, with its customary divide of the various cinematic channels of information (e.g., Metz 1986 [1966]). As a result, my examination reveals surprising similarities between films of different corpora but with similar repetition structures. For instance, Rose Sayers's story in *The African Queen* (John Huston 1951), a quintessential adventure film, forms a repetition plot which is similar to the plot of military operation films, rather than to the one usually employed in adventure films. As we will see later, this cross-generic "borrowing" affects Rose's characterization and the film's ideological meaning.

In conclusion, my focus on the repetition structure and its three types of member will hopefully contribute to the analysis of units and their combinations in cinematic text. The repeating members are quasi-mimetic and can be presented in various semiotic systems, rather than being merely formal units—analogous to shot, sequence, scene, for example, all of which, of course, have no parallel in other sign systems. At issue here, in short, are distinct temporal entities within the fictional world, namely, represented events ("enactments") or (in the case of forecast and report) speech events. As such, the repetition structure allows us to perform a comparative analysis of cinematic stories and other types of narrative, using a common terminology and a functional approach. Within this framework, the formal components specific to each medium appear and operate either as different manifestations of the same phenomenon (member, sequence) or as different means to similar actional or rhetorical aims.

Viewing or reviewing the filmic composition in terms of repetition structure, with its three component types—forecast, enactment, report—makes it possible, among other things, to examine the interplay of visual and auditory elements in the overall semiotics ("language") of cinema. Instead of focusing on the differences between these media of transmission and so on each component separately, I will examine how visual and auditory components work together to create certain effects or patterns of meaning. For across their differences, such cinematic components, or options within the cinematic repertoire, may be combined and compared in their operations as members of forecast, enactment, or report—that is, as analogous yet distinct events in the fictional world that are arranged and transmitted in a particular sequence in pursuit of a particular goal. Seen in these functional terms, the verbal messages uttered by characters or narrators in the fictional world or outside it become equivalent to other modes of transmission—a camera movement, a color selection, or a specific lighting pattern. Accordingly, the questions to ask mainly concern the relationship of such equivalents and other variables to the two temporalities that distinguish narrative: the characters' and the audience's, the narrated and the narrational or communicative. For example, is the information repeated in a member of enactment, of report, and/or of forecast? Why is it combined and transmitted in this particular order, by this particular means, from this particular viewpoint, or to that particular extent? And so forth. Investigating repetition structures along such operational lines promises to contribute to the study of cinematic narrative in a manner that both brings out its special traits, powers, processes, and artifacts and invites comparison to, or with, other arts of telling and retelling.

2. The Structure of Repetition in Three Genres: Heist Films, Adventure Films, and Military Operation Films

2.1. Three Genres and One Common Structure of Repetition

In this section, I compare three cinematic genres—heist films, adventure films, and military operation films—in terms of their structures of repetition. All three feature a particular yet well-defined structure. It adheres to the fabula's chronological order of events and has two components: a member of forecast and a member of enactment (a heist, a heroic mission, or a military operation, respectively) that has been anticipated by the forecast.

As we will see, along with the characteristics that the three genres share, each genre also has distinctive formal, structural, thematic, and rhetorical-ideological features. Simple and widespread, the conventional narrative of adventure films (Cawelti 1976: 40; Sobchack 1995: 9) will hopefully make it easy to compare with the other two genres. The comparison among the structures of repetition in these three closely related but distinct genres will help us examine how even textual elements that are not considered to be genre defining (or so much as notable) are yet shaped in ways typical of each genre. In addition, comparing the repetition structure's features and functions in adventure films, heist films, and military operation films will shed new light on the classical Hollywood narrative—a category to which all three belong. The results, I believe, will improve on the analysis via narratological models in Propp (1968 [1928]); Lévi-Strauss (1963 [1958]); or Bordwell (1985).[18]

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[18] On such models and their applications to the cinema, see Stam et al. 1992.

An outline of the classical Hollywood film will accordingly be followed by a detailed inquiry into the qualities that relate and divide our three genres. I will then closely examine the effects that all these similarities and differences have on the structure typical of repetition in each genre and on other, formal, rhetorical, even thematic-ideological generic aspects.

2.2. The Classical Hollywood Film

According to Bordwell and Thompson (1990: 70), the narrative structure in the classical Hollywood film is defined by the aims of the characters: "The character wants something. The desire sets up a goal, and the course of the narrative's development will most likely involve the process of achieving that goal." Or, the desire of the leading character provides the forward impetus for the narrative. Hollywood protagonists tend to be active, to seek out goals and pursue them, rather than having goals simply thrust upon them. Almost invariably, the protagonist's goals define the main lines of action (Thompson 1999: 14).[19] Bordwell (1985: 13) adds that "the characters' desires and efforts also create dramatic conflicts, given the obstacles they must confront" on their way to each goal. Further, Bordwell and Thompson distinguish between short- and long-term goals, between the goals of major and minor characters (ibid.: 17–18; Thompson 1999: 14–15), even between static and changing or evolving goals (Thompson 1999: 51–52). But, I would argue, we also need to consider how generic axes and variables affect the characters' goals in the classical Hollywood film.

In what follows, I will therefore compare the goals of protagonists in the three genres in question. I will show how these goals may be defined and compared on this generic front by appeal to the members of the shared repetition structure. Beyond the typology of goals offered by Bordwell and Thompson, I would also like to draw a distinction between goals presented at the start of the film and the (achieved) goals that end it. In particular, at what point in the order of represented events (fabula), as against the given, discourse order (syuzhet), does each of these two types appear in films of the genres involved? How clear and detailed is each goal? What moral and/or practical value does it assume? What sort of plans (members of forecast) are constructed and executed (as members of enactment) to achieve them?

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[19] This theoretical model, originating in the cognitivist study of narrative, has also been adopted in the field of scriptwriting. Consider Robert McKee's (1997: 19) popular guide to scriptwriters: "Of the total creative effort represented in the finished work, 75 percent or more of a writer's labor goes into designing story. Who are these characters? What do they want? Why do they want it? How do they go about getting it? What stops them? What are the consequences? Finding the answers to these grand questions and shaping them into story is our overwhelming creative task." See also the critical overview of the cognitivist study of narrative, including this model of action, in Sternberg (2003a, 2003b).

Taking into account the structure of classical (or canonical) Hollywood films, moreover, I will examine how the goals, the plans to achieve them, and the execution of these plans, all appear at significant points on the text continuum. According to Thompson, the structure that has governed classical Hollywood film since the 1930s—to this day—consists of four parts or stages. They appear in the following order: (a) the *setup*, in which the protagonist(s) conceive of one or more goals; (b) the *complicating action*, in which the protagonist(s) must adapt their goal to changing circumstances; (c) the *development*, in which the protagonist(s) must struggle against obstacles hindering their progress toward their goal; (d) the *climax* and the *epilogue*, in which the action shifts into straightforward advance toward the climax, where the goal is achieved—or not, as the case may be—followed by a final resolution and epilogue (Thompson 1999: 27–44).[20] Bordwell (1985: 18), who anticipates this four-way subdivision (ibid.: 169–73), defines the climax as the scene where the protagonist solves the problem he or she was facing once and for all. In the ensuing epilogue, punishments and rewards are meted out, and each character gets his or her deserts in a cinematic equivalent to "and they all lived (un)happily ever after" (ibid.: 36).

Moreover, Thompson (1999: 36–42) attributes invariable proportions to the four stages. Typically, the film divides into four equal parts, each about thirty minutes long. An important turning point appears around the middle of the film, between "the complicating action" and "the development" (ibid.: 31–32). Other turning points appear in the course of the text, each changing the line of action in a different direction (ibid.: 29–30). This structural model is very general (for instance, it ignores generic peculiarities) and, as noted earlier, refers to the protagonists' features, goals, actions.[21]

In sum, according to Bordwell (1985: 13, 20; 2008c: 105–10) and Thompson (1999: 14–15, 27–36), goal-oriented characters and the story's progression through conventional stages (setup, complicating action, development, climax, and epilogue) are two fundamental features of Hollywood cinema. The question is how these features vary in specific genres, such as my trio. To put it another way, do these general features share significant genre-specific variations?

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[20] Thompson actually proposes a variant of Gustav Freytag's pyramid, on whose problems see Sternberg (1978: 5–8).

[21] In support of her structural model, Thompson (1999: 32–36, 37, 40–42) cites films from various genres, including the heist film *Heat* (Michael Mann 1995) and adventure films, such as *Jaws* (Steven Spielberg 1975), *Jurassic Park* (Spielberg 1993), and *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (James Cameron 1991). Her examples indicate that these two genres, of the three that I discuss, fall under the general category of classical Hollywood films, as she typically defines it. What, then, about the military operation genre? Another film Thompson analyses is *Alien* (Ridley Scott 1979), which features "a shooting-gallery plot" (ibid.: 283–84): a group of characters, placed in an isolated location, are killed off one by one, or in pairs, by some hostile entity. Thompson (1999: 283–84) claims that this structure is typical of war films, detective films, and certain horror films. However, since "a shooting-gallery plot" also typifies military operation films, "classical Hollywood" should include this genre, too, according to Thompson's own definitions.

I'll try to answer this question by analyzing typical structures of repetition in each of the three genres, with special regard to members of forecast. If the narrative follows the characters' progress toward their goals, it must mean that characters anticipate certain *scenarios*, make *predictions* and *plans*, to achieve their goals. In compositional terms, these are all members of forecast. Moreover, if the viewer of Hollywood films is invited to follow the goal-directed efforts of characters, then this viewer is in effect invited to compare the characters' forecasts with their subsequent enactments. Examining the features of certain repetition structures may yield a fresh—and, I believe, more accurate—conceptualization of the familiar narrative structure of classical cinema.

2.3. The Adventure Film

Thomas Sobchack (1995: 9, 15) defines the adventure film as a major generic category encompassing films about wars, military operations, disasters, espionage, safaris, swashbuckler dramas, biblical epics, and other struggles. In his view, all noncomic Hollywood genres—including westerns, sports films, and horror films—are based on the narrative structure of medieval romance, but this becomes particularly apparent in adventure films: "A protagonist either has, or develops, great and special skills and overcomes insurmountable obstacles in extraordinary situations to successfully achieve some desired goal—usually the restitution of order to the world invoked by the narrative. The protagonists confront the human, natural, or supernatural powers that have improperly assumed control over the world and eventually defeat them" (ibid.: 9). It appears, therefore, that the adventure film shows the basic qualities of classical Hollywood cinema and that its generic peculiarity lies in the setting (generally exotic), the characters' attributes (uncommon powers), and their goals. Typically, the hero's main goal is to restore a social order that has been disrupted, as in *Robin Hood*, *The Four Musketeers*, *The Prisoner of Zenda* (John Cromwell 1937; Richard Thorpe 1952), and their many remakes. This conventional goal derives from a conventional value system: "Political stability and the status quo of traditional social structures are prominent values of this genre" (Sobchack 1995: 12). Finding rare treasures and rescuing hostages are also typical aims in adventure films (Marchetti 1989: 188–91). Ideologically, they, too, show "the hero—individual or group—overcoming obstacles and dangers and accomplishing some important and moral mission" (Cawelti 1976: 39).[22]

To my mind, however, the commonality extends to the action itself, with its particular repetition structure. All the worthy goals characteristic of adventure films share (1) a basic twofold repetition structure, where the hero's (or heroes') goal serves as "a member of forecast" and its achievement as "a member of enactment"; and beyond this straightforward defining movement, (2) the convoluted route that the characters must traverse to achieve their goal. This second, complicating drive means that adventure films typically multiply members, or even structures, of repetition.

Sometimes, we first encounter the heroes planning how to achieve goals that are entirely different from the ones (e.g., restoring social order) that the film (and the genre's convention) defines as most important. Thus, in the opening part of such a film, some personal goal and its attendant plans are arranged within a short-term structure of repetition, containing only a few members. (Just those two, in fact, as already noted—a member of forecast, then a member of enactment—in and through which all aims are fulfilled, partly or fully.) Such is the case in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (Steven Spielberg 1984) or *The Fifth Element* (Luc Besson 1997), for example. Only later, following a process of transformation, or "conversion," do the characters start to aim for the worthy, value-laden cause, and so there belatedly appears the member of forecast that leads to the crucial member of enactment—the realization of the primary goal.

But its realization is impeded not only by characters' faulty motives. Occasionally, the characters do set their sights on the right goal from the outset, but are compelled by various forces to take other routes in pursuit of different goals. In adventure films, we must also note, the primary, worthy goal tends to be formulated in general terms—"to overthrow a tyrannical regime," "to release prisoners," "to destroy a magical weapon"—while the specific actions required are usually left somewhat vague in the planning (unlike films about heists or military operations, as I will argue later). Thus, progress toward the goal in adventure films is divided into a series of secondary aims and effects, each loosely connected to the ultimate goal. Compositionally, these minor goals function as obstacles placed in the characters' path by the filmmaker to delay the happy end, which comes mostly at the end of the film, when the characters have at last reached what the context defines as *the* goal of the adventure. In the following sections, I will cite several examples of the intricate paths leading to this main goal. Such paths can, moreover, present obstacles in the form of divergent or even opposed lines pursued by others, so that the different goal-driven actions and repetition structures interfere with each other's advance toward fulfillment.

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[22] Both John G. Cawelti (1976) and Sobchack (1995: 12) discuss the "lone hero pattern" together with adventure films about a group of heroes. So I will combine the two variants and use *hero* and *heroes* interchangeably.

In *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* (Gore Verbinski 2003), for instance, Captain Barbossa and his pirates mainly desire to return a treasure they have stolen, so as to lift the terrible curse placed upon them as a result. (They have become ghosts, suffering from hunger and thirst, but unable to feel any physical pleasure.) Meanwhile, the infamous pirate Jack Sparrow has a primary goal of his own: to take revenge on Barbossa—who led a mutiny against him and took over his ship—and to regain his former status as the ship's captain. Again, the two lovers in the story—Will Turner, humble blacksmith and son of a pirate, and Elizabeth Swan, daughter of the governor of Port Royal—are driven by a more ordinary goal: to confess their love to each other and be united, in spite of their class differences. Finally, the main objective of the navy stationed at Port Royal is to capture any pirate or pirate ship they encounter. Commodore Norrington, who's in charge, has a personal goal as well: being in love with Elizabeth, he hopes to marry her.

All these goals are consistent with the conventions and values of adventure, especially pirate films. The paths of the characters to their respective desired goals are conventionally long, tortuous, and full of detours. (Needless to say, not every goal—plan, hope, wish—is realized in a matching member of enactment by the time the film concludes.) All the characters must contend with goals other than their own: each hero or group must join forces with some characters and resist the actions of others whose goals are contrary to their own. In terms of the repetition structure, this again results in short-term members of forecast leading to short-term members of enactment on the long way toward the ultimate realization of the primary forecast.

Will Turner's story exemplifies the second type of conventional plot in adventure films, where characters have a worthy goal at the outset, but are obliged to move toward it in a roundabout way. To unite with his beloved Elizabeth, Will must first rescue her, and to do that, he must cooperate with pirates. This brings him dangerously close to living outside the law. In an amusing "member of report," Jack Sparrow—the pirate that Will joins—sums up the deeds Will has performed to further his worthy cause:

> You know, for having such a bleak outlook on pirates you're well on your way to becoming one. Sprung a man from jail, commandeered a ship of the Fleet, sailed with a buccaneer crew out of Tortuga . . . —and you're completely obsessed with treasure. (Rossio and Elliott 2004)

Indeed, the way to hell is paved with good intentions. Elizabeth is finally rescued in the 119th minute of the film (137 min), thanks to Will and to her own resourcefulness. A minute later, Will confesses his love to her, then they kiss, and so their story ends for now. According to the genre's conventions of the kidnap-and-rescue narrative, their plotline is quite easy to follow. Both characters fall into the hands of pirates and escape from them several times during the action. The generic goal of uniting the two lovers (a member of enactment) is achieved through a series of rescue measures, which include negotiations and exchanges of prisoners, as well as escapes. All the intermediate rescues, not just the final one, result from quick actions with very little advance planning. Situations and power hierarchies change rapidly, as do the locations of the various characters and the relations they form with one another. All this leaves little room for detailed members of *forecast* or prolonged members of *enactment* (as the situation changes rapidly, even the little that is planned may turn out to be unachievable only minutes later). Members of report—about what has happened and how—are also generally few and far between, brief and to the point.

Members of enactment, anticipated by very sketchy members of forecast, thus abound in the case of Jack Sparrow—a pirate with no ship, crew, or proper compass. Even his flexibility and resourcefulness give him little advantage in the frenetic world of the adventure film. As Jack himself explains (in minute 117), his schemes never go according to plan:

> Me? I'm dishonest. And a dishonest man you can always trust to be dishonest. Honestly. It's the honest ones you want to watch out for, because you can never predict when they're going to do something incredibly stupid. (ibid.)

Indeed, decent characters, just like pirates, turn out to conceal their intentions and plans and (regarding another kind of forecast) to make false promises—albeit for a worthy cause. Thus, when Elizabeth is abandoned on a desert island with the boozy Jack Sparrow and an enormous supply of rum, her declared willingness to take part in the drinking party Jack proposes is both uncharacteristic and probably feigned. Her secret plan is revealed to Jack and the audience only after the fact: having waited until he fell asleep, she burns all the rum in the hope that a passing ship would notice the smoke and come to their rescue. All goes according to plan for once, thus saving the lives of both of them.[23]

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23. This episode also indicates what can turn a series of events into a breathtaking adventure sequence. The desert island scene with the rescue from it lasts seven minutes. During that time, two of the main characters, Elizabeth and Jack, come close to losing their lives but survive, thanks to resourcefulness, cunning, and a great deal of luck. Soon after this fortunate rescue,

This event-sequence illustrates how, besides typically featuring sketchy and impromptu members of forecast—under time pressure—structures of repetition in adventure films tend to avoid going into the details of elaborate plans even when such plans do exist within the fictional world.[24] Elizabeth's scheme, for example, is accordingly not unfolded in its proper event order but rather reconstructed after the event. So the relation between the members of forecast and enactment in this structure of repetition is experienced differently from that of heist films and military operation films, as we'll see later.

Among other consequences of the secret plans and the general distrust between the characters, then, their respective primary goals only gradually emerge. Some of their actions are therefore understood only in retrospect as members of forecast looking ahead to a member of enactment. For example, when Jack first arrives at Port Royal (minute thirteen), he matter-of-factly discloses to two naval soldiers his clearly illegal "intention to commandeer one of these ships, pick up a crew in Tortuga, raid, pillage, plunder and otherwise pilfer my weasely black guts out!" (ibid.). A remarkably frank state-

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they encounter new dangers (e.g., a sea battle between two gunships, duels with ghosts) and once again are saved against all odds.

[24] The audience should be able to follow the story with no particular difficulty, although the characters are frenetic, plans and actions are swift, and motives are complex. Knowing the generic convention that all's well that ends well (e.g., even outlaws will help the two lovers unite, the treasure will fall into the right hands, etc.) is enough to keep the final goal in mind. The fact that the path from one scene to the next is sometimes unclear, or appears to be arbitrary, is unimportant.

Interestingly, the comparatively few global members of forecast are located at strategic points of the story line in terms of Thompson's structural model. For instance, in response to Will's question about the fate of his beloved Elizabeth, Jack Sparrow sums up the current situation in ironic fashion: "She's safe, just like I promised. She's all set to marry Norrington, just like she promised. And you get to die for her, just like you promised. So we're all men of our word really, except for Elizabeth who is, in fact, a woman" (Rossio and Elliott 2004). This summary highlights which conventional goals have not yet been achieved (namely, the survival of all the protagonists, the union of the "right" couple). It appears at minute ninety-nine, that is, close to the end of the "development" and just before the beginning of the "climax and epilogue," the fourth and final part of the Thompson model.

Compared with *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*, a much earlier example of the genre, *Captain Blood* (Michael Curtiz 1935), presents far more detailed members of forecast before each action (or enactment). Both films feature many short-term structures of repetition, but the creators of *Captain Blood* evidently had less confidence in their audience's capacity to follow a fast-paced sequence of events. So they inserted a verbal forecast prior to every significant event and then retold or summarized the event in members of report after its enactment—as happens with all the ups and downs in Captain Blood's life—while the more recent film deems a single pithy summary by Jack (like the one above) enough for the purpose. Do these two opposed examples point to a general trend of a diminishing number and extent of repetition structures in pirate films between the 1930s and the 2000s? The question would repay study.

ment of purpose. But his odd behavior and the astonished looks on the faces of the two sailors lead the viewers to suspect that he is merely raving drunk.

Nonetheless, his plan proves to be achievable. Its first part gets enacted almost immediately: despite the port being full of soldiers, he manages to commandeer a ship. The second part of his plan—to lead a life of piracy—is vitally important to him, and he goes to great lengths to realize it. However, this forecast does not represent all his plans. What is temporarily withheld from us is yet another goal, revealed as late as minute sixty-two—to take revenge on Captain Barbossa, who has stolen his ship and left him to die on a desert island. Gibbs, a pirate who has long known Jack, discloses to Will Turner his desire for revenge, thereby also letting the viewers in on this important expositional piece of information.[25] Like Will and Elizabeth, Jack Sparrow ultimately fulfils his original plan, but on the way he contributes to the execution of other plans or goals—his own and, consciously or unwittingly, those of others.

Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl is neither an extreme nor a rare example of the high goal count in adventure films, nor of the convoluted path the characters must take to achieve them. Other examples of multiple structures of repetition in adventure films with typical short-term plans (members of forecast) followed by impromptu or partial realizations (members of enactment) may be found in *Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark* (Steven Spielberg 1981), the first in a popular series of films inspired by Hollywood adventure films of the 1930s and 1940s (Aronstein 1995: 3). Here, too, we encounter the clear lack of preparations (that is, only generalized members of forecast) typical of the actions of adventure film protagonists, and a strategic nonpresentation of preparations, when they do occur.

The film's opening scene is a good example of the latter. The hero, Indiana Jones, is introduced to us while he makes his way through a South American jungle toward a cave where a golden icon is waiting to be discovered and appropriated. Since the antecedents of this expedition remain unknown to us, we have no idea how well prepared Jones is for the task ahead. (Interestingly, this suspenseful exposition has the look and feel of a classic adventure film climax scene.) The absence of a member of forecast here is deliberate: the disclosure of Jones's plan would greatly weaken not only the suspense but also the element of surprise, which is based upon the gradual revelation of the anterior problems and the responses contrived to meet them. The former lie in a series of ingenious traps and obstacles set in order to deny access to the treasure; the latter consists of the ingenious solutions Jones has devised or improvised for each of them. Only later do we realize what extensive and meticulous planning went before the complex operation just enacted: Dr. Jones's past academic achievements and treasure hunts had prepared him for the various obstacles he encounters in the cave.

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[25] Hints about Jack's planned revenge actually appear twelve minutes earlier in his cryptic dialogue with Gibbs, which suggests a hidden agenda. Indeed, their looks and knowing smiles are enough to indicate that "a plan is afoot" (i.e., a member of forecast), though its details are withheld for a time. The revenge itself—the ensuing member of enactment—is carried out in minute 116. On the various effects of delayed and distributed exposition, see Sternberg 1978: e.g., 158–90.

However, more typical is a lack (rather than a withholding) of preparation and seat-of-the-pants actions. For example, in minute 77 of the film (out of 110), the archaeologist Jones tells his collaborators that to retrieve the ark held by the Nazis, they must now fly from Cairo to London, so some means of transportation is required. While searching for it, Jones adds, he will try to locate in the Egyptian desert the truck the Nazis are using to smuggle the stolen ark (which he had originally discovered, then lost to them). When Sallah, his friend and ally, asks how he intends to commandeer a highly secured truck single-handedly, Jones replies, "I don't know, I'm making this up as I go."

A similar reflexive comment about the improvising license peculiar to the adventure film appears in the parody *The Princess Bride* (Rob Reiner 1987). Westley, Inigo, and Fezzik are about to storm a castle to liberate Buttercup, Westley's sweetheart. Just before they do, however, Inigo voices his misgivings. He questions Westley, the leader of the group, about the plan of attack: "How do I find the Count?—Once I do, how do I find you again?—Once I find you again, how do we escape?" But Fezzik, the third member of the group, gives Inigo a dismissive reply: "Don't pester him—he's had a hard day."[26]

This accords with a central tenet of adventure films: no prior planning is required—only a plunge into action with good intentions and high hopes. The unplanned ("forecastless") action produces a strong and composite narrative interest, namely, a (pleasant) surprise, following our curiosity (about the missing scenario), and suspense (about the coming action). A difficult, even a hopeless-looking situation eventually turns into an advantageous, indeed victorious one, thanks to the agents' quick improvisation.

In terms of repetition structure, dispensing with the planning stage—or not showing it, let alone all of it—means that an adventure film tends to consist of a chain of events that are presented mostly as, or in, enactment. Members of forecast, on the other hand, are incomplete or sketchy and follow one another in quick succession, because characters have no time to plan in detail (or to give one another a detailed account of what has happened or of their future plans). This method of presentation generates an overall sense of haste. Characters find themselves compelled to react quickly to volatile situations, and so most of their actions are improvised. This also explains the typical attributes of characters in these films: they are daring, spontaneous, reckless, risk taking—in a word, adventurers. The generic pressure against specific members of forecast leaves little room for characters of a different disposition, just as the generic need for such characters helps create or reinforce this pressure.

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[26] With Westley having been dead most of that day and brought back to life by magic, "a hard day" is an understatement. And the fact that he is still partly paralyzed does nothing to discourage them either. With such cheerful bluntness, the parody reveals the high level of risk that characters in adventure films are accustomed to.

The same compositional rule applies to adventure films whose characters have carefully laid plans to achieve objectives other than the ones that the film and the genre identify as the "right" ones: being wrong, they will not be attained or even sought for long. Occasionally, as we said, characters shift to the worthy goal only after undergoing a process of conversion, which motivates the shift. As will presently become apparent, stories about characters first determined to pursue objectives that the genre does not "approve of" also consist of multiple structures of repetition, just like other adventure plots.

Dana Polan (1986: 75–76) has traced a narrative pattern in films made during World War II, which he labels "the conversion narrative." There, films of various genres (not only adventure) have protagonists who initially pursue selfish aims but ultimately change their minds and join the war. In the early 1940s, of course, this narrative had a clear propaganda purpose—to mobilize Americans to fight against Nazi Germany. Polan (ibid.: 75) cites *Sergeant York* (Howard Hawks 1941), *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz 1942), and *Air Force* (Howard Hawks 1943) as typical examples of this pattern.

But the "conversion narrative" can also be found in adventure films made before and after World War II: these, too, begin with a hero driven by a personal, selfish goal, which, for various reasons, he or she abandons for a heroic goal. That is the outline of films such as *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (Allan Dwan 1922; Michael Curtiz and William Keighley 1938), *Captain Blood* (Michael Curtiz 1935), and *The Prisoner of Zenda*, among many others.[27]

This narrative pattern of goal-shift (or -doubling) has a significant influence on the structure of repetition in these films, which accordingly develops—or divides—into two structural instances. The first presents a member of forecast oriented toward a selfish aim (which the hero forms with varying degrees of conviction, or for want of a suitable alternative) and a consequent member of enactment (when the hero may actually achieve the uncanonical goal, then relinquish it, or abandon the quest altogether before its completion). In other adventure films, the protagonist is merely drifting at first, with no specific purpose except "to enjoy life," "to make a fortune," and so forth. In the ensuing, second repetition structure along the adventure plot, however, the member of forecast relates to a mission that is part of the general war effort and is followed by a member of enactment in which this mission is accomplished. Determination and faith in the cause typify the agents within this second member of forecast. Even in the absence of a clear strategy about how to perform the mission and contribute to the war effort—an absence motivated by deadlines or other constraints—the participants at least intend to use every means at their disposal, or even to improvise, in the service of the cause, now defined as worthy and desirable.

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[27] According to Sobchack, the conventions of the adventure genre were consolidated during the 1930s, and adventure films of this decade indeed already show how common and central the "conversion narrative" was to the genre, even before World War II.

The more usual adventure films based on a "conversion narrative," at any rate, deploy more than one structure of repetition. Their original plans and designs come to nothing (i.e., have no members of enactment following them) and get discarded by the protagonist in favor of a new objective—one with a higher moral value (this being the essential propaganda message behind these films). Such a multiple pattern presents no difficulties in following the story: the audience's familiarity with the conversion narrative ensures that the crucial goal (the one which the film's second member of forecast is designed to achieve) is apparent to viewers, even when it is not to the characters themselves. Clues distributed in the first part of the film also help. They indirectly (e.g., via a cynical-looking hero, or high-minded and "correctly" motivated secondary characters) hint at the conversion to come. The very fact that one can sum up the hero's goals under very general headings (such as "his own selfish agenda," even while broken down into a series of goals, and thus a series of short-term structures of repetition, as in *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* versus the later "joining the war effort") makes it easy to understand the motives and the event chains of these films.

Interestingly, the conversion process resembles the structural pattern that Joseph Campbell (1972: 59–68) found in the heroic tales of various cultures and named the "hero's journey." One of its early stages, "the refusal of the call," corresponds to the first part of the adventure film, where the protagonist pursues selfish or misguided goals. In both cases, then, the goal that the text deems to be important is deferred, so as to arise and realize itself only after initial mistakes and deviations, with variable "screen time" given by the work to each of the two stages.

Campbell's model therefore corroborates my argument about the repetition structure typical of adventure films: even when the existence of an important goal (in compositional terms, the primary goal) is clear to the viewers from the outset, the characters supposed to reach it are reluctant to dedicate themselves to the task at hand, and consequently are in no hurry to make plans ("forecasts") for achieving it. On the contrary, they tend to make plans for other goals entirely, whether born of selfishness (as early in conversion narratives) or assigned to the characters by fate (as in the case of Will Turner in *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*).[28] Or else they simply want to have nothing to do with the mission foisted upon them. All these (together or separately) are variations of the "refusal of the call," and they represent a low or negative member of forecast that (temporarily) arises instead of one privileged by the conventional values of the genre. This wrong member of forecast (which, as I said, may be subdivided into a series of such members) and its consequent enactment(s) are responsible for the delays in the progression toward the climax and the epilogue. Thus, if the core of the adventure narrative lies in overcoming dangers and obstacles on the way to achieving an approved goal, the protagonist's own pursuit of the wrong aims is among the recurrent obstacles.

Adventure films, moreover, likewise use other factors than the initial pursuit of the "wrong" objectives and the conversion process to multiply the goals of characters within the appropriate repetition structure. In films set in exotic locations, for example, the adventurers often venture into unfamiliar terrain, with no prior knowledge of what they will seek or find there. Initially, rather, the goal consists in the journey itself, in exploring the unfamiliar. This is later replaced by another objective: to overcome any obstacles encountered along the way. *The Lost World* (Harry O. Hoyt 1925), *King Kong* (Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack 1933; Peter Jackson 2005), and *Jurassic Park* (Steven Spielberg 1993) are good examples of this pattern. In *King Kong* (1933), for instance, a film crew sails in search of exotic locations for a production. When they reach Skull Island, they must face the gigantic ape Kong. The high incidence of the hero reacting to situations, rather than taking the initiative, directly results from this exploration of unfamiliar territory and manifests the essence of the adventure: the unknown (hence, unforecastable) exceeds the known, and changing conditions govern the chain of events far more than do human actions.

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[28] Again, this delay is not negative in compositional terms. As Bordwell (2000: 179) reminds us: "Stories also need padding and stretching. . . . Any storyteller must fill out the story to the proper length, and so assorted materials — repetitions, gags, digressions, delays — are stitched in, more or less tightly." Though immediately related to Hong Kong cinema, Bordwell's generalization extends to Western stories. On the various features and functions of the "retardatory structure" in narrative and in specific literary genres, see Sternberg 1974; 1978: 159 – 82.

This alternative source of preliminary goals underlines the fact that an integral part of the adventure genre's conventions is its opening with a number of brief repetition structures, each featuring only two members, in a set order: a schematic or otherwise undetailed member of forecast is followed by an enactment that realizes it in whole or part. Indeed, the episodic structure deemed typical of adventure films[29] largely consists in this quick series of enactments, each the (direct or unexpected) outcome of a cursory member of forecast, so as to pit the characters repeatedly against unforeseen and shifting difficult situations.

The phenomenon of characters caught up in such future-oriented action is also central to the genres of heist films and military operation films that I will discuss next. However, this salient common denominator also begins to highlight the disparities among the three genres. As I will now argue, the latter two genres have a very different repetition structure. There, unlike the adventurers, the protagonists invest much effort in familiarizing themselves ahead of time with the scene of operations: they try to obtain maximum control over future events through meticulous planning and preparation. In terms of the repetition structure, they set out to devise a perfect "forecast" in the hope that it may be fully "enacted," in spite of it being highly complex, involving various stages and details, and ultimately depending on luck: in this last respect not unlike schemes contrived on the hoof.

[29] Bordwell (2000: 82) describes the episodic structure prevailing in Hong Kong cinema as follows: "The plots tend not to develop long-running chains of action/reaction, with goals formed, blocked, recast, and fulfilled. Instead, as in *Project A* and *A Chinese Ghost Story*, the plot consists of short-range, fairly closed-off strings of scenes. As a result, complications get resolved seriatim, rather than converging at a single climax." This episodic or piecemeal plotting may be traced, according to Bordwell (ibid.: 183), to various popular narrative traditions, such as oral epics, adventure stories, fairy tales, Elizabethan dramas, and many Hong Kong films. However, he regards the episodic series as uncommon in Hollywood, whose "concern for detailed motivation on many fronts probably makes it unusual among popular cinemas" (ibid.). And yet, as shown above, it would appear that this structure can actually be found in major genres of Hollywood cinema.

The difference between the episodic structure of Hong Kong films (as first described) and that of films like *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* — so I would argue — is one of degree, not kind. It resides in the extent to which independent episodes are presented as legitimate digressions from the arduous progress toward an important goal (rescuing captives, say, or taking revenge); in the amount of detail given to this motivation; and in whether it assumes psychological realism or remains little more than an excuse for a series of unconnected episodes. In the exceptionally free episodic structure of Hong Kong revenge films, events unroll as a series of assaults and counterassaults, with no character change. Such a structure indeed makes it difficult for the viewer to anticipate the ending: the sketchy characterization and main goal do not indicate any particular closure and lessen the need for a happy end (Bordwell 2000: 183–84).

2.4. Heist Films

Heist films unfold in turn the basic structure of repetition, comprising a member of forecast (planning the robbery) and of enactment (carrying it out). In more traditional and less precise terms, Stuart M. Kaminsky (1974: 77, 83) identifies the "one essential [and defining] element of big caper movies" as "the plot concentration on the commission of a single crime of great monetary significance." Kaminsky thus overemphasizes the robbery itself at the expense of its planning. Kim Newman's (1997: 70) definition of the heist genre, though likewise traditionally formulated, takes into account the goals of the characters as well: "dramas from about 1950 onwards, in which professional crooks plan and execute a clever, daring but (the censors insisted) ultimately unsuccessful robbery, usually of cash or jewels. Often the thieves fall out, or make one fatal error that leads to their arrest."

Thus, the heist film, like the adventure film, clearly belongs to the wider category of the classical Hollywood film: highly motivated characters grappling with various obstacles in pursuit of a tangible goal. The story always advances toward some kind of resolution (Bordwell 1985: 12–41; Bordwell and Thompson 1990: 10–71; Thompson 1999: 10–17)—in this case, success or failure in the robbery—and so this, too, is a future-oriented, suspenseful genre.[30]

The bare-bones generic narrative—planning a robbery and trying to execute it—develops into the following continuum or repertoire of encoded components: (1) planning; (2) recruiting people with suitable skills; (3) the personal story of each participant (motives, dilemmas, problems that might affect the success of the robbery) and the human dynamics within the group; (4) preparations (delegating tasks and responsibilities, mastering specific skills and deploying them, procuring tools and instruments, scouting out the scene of the robbery); (5) the operation itself (whether carried out according to plan, or with deviations); (6) escaping, dividing the loot or selling it (when the plan succeeds), and dealing (psychologically, as otherwise) with the police investigation or the capture of some or all of the members of the gang, one by one.

The first four components in this event-line or repertoire constitute together an unusually detailed member of forecast. The fifth component is a member of enactment related to the member of forecast. So is the sixth and final component, except that it also develops a separate structure, or structures, of repetition on a smaller scale (each, of course, comprising members of forecast and of enactment). Occasionally, this sixth component further includes members of report looking back on the robbery and/or its planning, that is, on the two basic composite members (1–5) of the global structure of repetition.

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[30] In fact, the classical heist film is closely related to the Hollywood canon. As Kaminsky (1974: 75) points out, one of the earliest narrative films ever made—*The Great Train Robbery* (Edwin S. Porter 1903)—is a heist film. Its narrative pattern therefore arose when the Hollywood cinematic code was being formulated. Indeed, no wonder this formulation took place in reference to heist film: this genre, I think, best exemplifies the forward-looking perspective—a hallmark of the classic Hollywood event line—given the operational plan the protagonists make and seek to carry out.

In short, the first five components of the heist film narrative represent a simple repetition structure, where a (composite) member of forecast leads to its associated sequel of enactment. However, this simplicity is deceptive, as it allows for several complicating devices. These notably include the following:

2.4.1. Varying Levels of Specificity Actions and events of the fabula may be variously treated in the syuzhet: elaborated in minute detail, summed up in brief, or omitted altogether. In *Odds against Tomorrow* (Robert Wise 1959), for instance, the exposition details the motivation behind each character's decision to join the heist and the relationships that develop among the characters. By contrast, very little screen time is given to the technical preparations, whether the special equipment or the skills required. The team obtains guns and a powerful getaway car, but we are never told how exactly. Nor do we learn about the origins of the plan, such as why this particular bank was chosen as the target. Only one technical problem is discussed at length by the robbers in advance: how to remove the chain blocking the bank's side entrance. This problem finds a simple and indeed successful solution. Ultimately, though, the heist fails, not because of any technical problems, but owing to the lack of trust among the robbers, aroused by racial prejudice. In another case in point, *Die Hard* (John McTiernan 1988), no information at all is given about the robbers' prior planning and preparations: we first encounter them as they break into the building of the corporation they intend to rob.[31]

However, even a heist film that glosses over the details of the relevant forecast (with all its components, 1–4) still pays lip service to its importance. Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*, for example, opens with the gathering of the robbers at the planning stage. They are too busy, though, with questions irrelevant to the robbery, such as aliases, restaurants' tips, and whatnot. Finally, the leader of the gang shouts that this is why robbers end up in jail—an offhand reflexive comment on the appropriate ratio between the time spent on preparing (“forecasting”) the robbery itself and the human dynamics that surround the entire affair.

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[31] The absence of such components is a mark of the film's generic classification. For example, though featuring most of the components of the heist film repertoire, *Die Hard* is not considered a heist film but a police action thriller. The difference lies in the perspective from which events are shown: in this case, we mainly follow that of John McClane and the other cops helping him foil the heist, rather than the robbers' viewpoint.

2.4.2. Order of Presentation/Organizational Structure Most of the components typical of the heist genre are presented in the same order as they appear in the fabula. Take *The Day They Robbed the Bank of England.* Its first forty-seven minutes are devoted to planning the attack on the eponymous bank, which had never been robbed before. The next thirty-two minutes concentrate on the operation (“enactment”) itself, including the laborious digging of a tunnel below the bank. The robbers do actually succeed in reaching the gold bars in the vault—and even in removing most of them—but are caught red-handed. Following the same chronological order, the epilogue consists in their arrests but is exceedingly brief: only one minute and five seconds long.

In *Reservoir Dogs*, by contrast, the chain of events does not adhere to a chronological order (nor does the movie motivate this divergence in terms such as a character reminiscing, imagining, fantasizing, or speculating about the future). Instead, the audience must reconstruct the fabula (what happened, how, and why) based on the dialogues and the state of the characters involved (e.g., whether they are calm or anxious, healthy or wounded, better or worse informed about prior events). The opening sequence presents a scene from the planning (“forecast”) stage of the robbery, followed immediately by the aftermath of its failure in enactment: the characters carefully evoke and analyse (“report”) details of the heist’s planning and execution to figure out who had betrayed them.

Other aspects of the plan are inserted out of time order within the post-robbery chain of events, but the film’s most important member of enactment—the robbery itself—is not shown at all. Indeed, most of the film revolves around the attempt of the surviving robbers to discover the person responsible for their failure, by combing over events that occurred prior to and during the robbery. The deviation from the fabulaic order, in this case, goes so far as to omit—not just summarize—the operation itself as it gets enacted in due sequence: so the future-oriented suspenseful question that normally arises in such films—Will the robbery succeed?—is replaced here with an altogether different question about past events, evoking our curiosity (as well as the agents’): Who is to blame for their failure? The answer to this new question emerges in minute fifty-seven of the film, when we learn in retrospect the true identity of one of the robbers—an undercover cop.

However, while shifting time-ratios abound, a nonchronological story line of this kind is highly unusual. In most heist films, the order of events as represented corresponds to the fabula, with key members changing perhaps in their relative weight along the repetition plot, but not omitted from the fabula itself, and so from the film.

2.4.3. Mode of Transmission Transmitting information to the viewers from the mouth or the perspective of a character (usually one who turns out to be unreliable because of mental instability, tendency to lie, etc.) can affect the order of the represented events as well as the choice of story information disclosed to the viewers. In *The Usual Suspects* (Brian Singer 1995), for instance, only at the very end do the viewers—and also the US customs agent investigating the case—learn that the testimony provided by one of the robbers was totally fabricated: even supposed flashbacks from his perspective turn out to be false. Such late disclosure is quite rare in this genre (hence its unsettling effect of surprise), because most heist films give the audience factual information from the vantage point of an omniscient narrator. True, the relevant information is not always provided in full or immediately, and sometimes its absence is not duly motivated by an adherence, for better or worse, to what a principal character knows (a common feature of the classical Hollywood narrative). In any case, however, the delayed disclosure of information creates the effect of surprise, both locally and globally, that is to say, at various points along the text as well as at its end.

2.4.4. Parallel Structures of Repetition Occasionally, alternative schemes (pursued by other criminals, by the police, or by a small group among the robbers) develop in parallel to the primary plan ("forecast") and its execution ("enactment"). This "branching" generates new suspense: Which of the groups and plans will defeat the others? Too many competing schemes, bonds, loyalties, and mutual deceptions, however, may result in information overload: as if it were a farce, where everyone seemingly tries to deceive everyone else. Cases in point are *The Day They Robbed the Bank of England*, *The Killing*, and *Du rififi chez les hommes* (Jules Dassin 1955). As already mentioned apropos *Die Hard*, identifying certain characters as the protagonists of the film (via screen time, casting, etc.) affects the generic definition of films. Thus, films depicting robberies from the perspective of the policemen concerned are police dramas or thrillers, rather than heist films.

2.4.5. A Serial Structure of Repetition Some films multiply heists by presenting a group of robbers who make their living this way (as in *Topkapi* [Jules Dassin 1964]), or who find themselves compelled to take part in a second robbery (e.g., *The Italian Job* [Gary Gray 2003]; *Ocean's Twelve* [Steven Soderbergh 2004]). In *Topkapi*, the two masterminds behind the operation, Walter Harper and Elizabeth Lipp, mention past exploits in their conversations, and the film ends with their planning yet another robbery—one to be executed as soon as the gang is released from jail, after serving long sentences for attempted robbery of the museum at the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul.

2.4.6. Tonal Variations The Hays Code of censorship, which governed Hollywood from 1934 to 1968 and decreed that all films must demonstrate that crime does not pay (Manchel 1990: 953–59; Sova 2001), is responsible for the unhappy endings of the early heist films (e.g., *The Asphalt Jungle*; *The Killing*). With the weakening of the code in the late 1960s, comic heist films began to appear, and the genre has since branched into two distinct varieties (Newman 1997: 71). One contains films belonging to the noir tradition of the post–World War II era, in which robberies fail and most of their perpetrators die either during the operation or soon after. *The Asphalt Jungle* is considered the first of this kind.[32] On the other hand, we have elegant heist comedies of the kind that first appeared in the British cinema, where the protagonists mostly survive to tell the tale but do not get to enjoy their ill-gotten gains (e.g., *The Lavender Hill Mob* [Charles Crichton 1951]). By the end of the 1960s the censorship code further weakened, and some heist films—such as *Hot Millions* (Eric Till 1968), a British-American production—feature an "immoral" happy ending, with the robbers successful and prosperous following the operation. In films like *Hot Millions*, as in the noir heists, the member of enactment does not fully parallel its member of forecast. Usually, in heist comedies, the robbers reach their desired goal, not according to plan, but by pure luck, thus creating a comic surprise.

In summary, heist films may and do differ in their use of repetition components from the generic repertoire; in the order in which these components are presented in the chain of events; in each component's degree of specificity; in the number of independent story lines that appear (in parallel or in sequence); and in the overall pattern's tonality, especially closure. The structure of repetition in heist films thus shows itself to be multiply flexible.

Across all these artful variables and historical changes, however, there persists the one overriding hallmark of the heist film vis-à-vis other genres in the classical Hollywood film. The difference lies first and foremost in the relative centrality of the narrative unit devoted to the planning of a criminal operation: one that is complex, dangerous, in need of many participants, and requires preparation to suit within the fictional reality. In terms of the repetition structure, this amounts to a particularly detailed member of forecast. Moreover, heist films adhere as a rule to the fabulaic, chronological order, so that this privileged member appears at the start of the film, variously connected to its exposition.

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[32] To my mind, *The Asphalt Jungle* followed *High Sierra* (Raoul Walsh 1941; script by John Huston and W. R. Burnett, author of the stories behind both films). The earlier work not only manifests the various generic components but also presents events in fabulaic order: first the planning, then the heist, and lastly the capture and deaths of the robbers.

Adventure films, on the other hand, manifest no such detailed schemes contrived by the protagonists, and their "setup" consists of nothing more than expositional information about the characters' past histories and attributes.[33] Future-oriented elements in the setup are formulated, not as an operative member of forecast, but as a general prospect, ambition, or wish. This general desire might be, for instance, to produce a film at some exotic location, as in *King Kong* (1933); to track down the ark of the covenant somewhere in Egypt, as in *Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark*; to rescue a sister kidnapped in Colombia, as in *Romancing the Stone* [Robert Zemeckis 1984]; to return a heroine to her true love, as in *The Princess Bride*; and so forth. All these examples indicate that, when a member of forecast does appear at the start of adventure films, it generally consists of little more than a general and tentative plan for the future.

The difference in repetition structure becomes most striking when heist films are compared with adventure films that represent a conversion narrative. In the latter, "unimportant" objectives are replaced by very important ones. The protagonist is accordingly portrayed at first as cynical, opportunistic, and indifferent—attributes that later transform into determination, single-mindedness, and heroic dedication. In heist films, however, the opposite occurs. There, the initial focus on a single, hardheaded, and pragmatic goal is replaced midway through the story by a succession of lesser, impromptu, and unpredictable goals, all of which arise in desperate efforts to avoid arrest or, at least, to stay alive.

Both genres, then, produce a considerable disparity between the initial goal (in heist films, getting rich; in adventure films, various other objectives) and the eventual primary goal (survival and a worthy cause of some sort, respectively). In heist films, these two successive goals require markedly different degrees of advance preparation (hence the contrast in the specificity of their respective members of forecast); while in adventure films the degree of preparation for the two corresponding goals is about the same, so that structures of repetition throughout the film begin with improvised and schematic members of forecast.

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[33] However, some important expositional information may emerge at a later stage, so the exposition is distributed and not necessarily concentrated at the "setup" phase. See also note 4.

2.5. The Military Operation Film

According to Jeanine Basinger (1986), the "World War II combat film" is a cinematic genre marked by the subject and order of its narrative units.[34] Thus, in the opening sequence "a group of men, led by a hero, undertake a mission which will accomplish an important military objective. . . . They may have to hold a fort and make a last stand. They may have to rove forward through jungle, desert, forest, the ocean, both on top and underwater, or in the air" (ibid.: 73–74). But, in any case, "the objective is present." Also, "the objective may have been a secret, or it may have been planned in advance, or it may have grown out of necessity" (ibid.).

Accordingly, World War II combat films feature both operations that demand methodical planning and ones involving unscripted encounters with unforeseen obstacles. (Consider Basinger's examples: holding a fort, as against moving forward.) From the present viewpoint, therefore, some combat films resemble the heist genre in their structures of repetition, while others are probably organized along lines more akin to adventure films. In works of the former type, a group of men (here a military unit) reminiscently embarks on a planned operation. Here, too, a detailed member of forecast (the planning) precedes the enactment (carrying out the orders for the operation). I accordingly distinguish between combat films that resemble heist films in this regard—I call them *military operation films*—and those belonging to Basinger's wider category of World War II combat films, where big operations are preceded by comparatively little planning.[35]

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[34] Basinger (1986: 27–28) argues that the "World War II combat film" first appeared during that war in *Eagle Squadron* (Arthur Lubin 1942), *Flying Tigers* (David Miller 1942), and *Wake Island* (John Farrow 1942; script by Burnett, who also contributed to the first heist films). Their conventional elements have since appeared in combat films set in Korea, in Vietnam, and elsewhere (Basinger 1986: 181–212). Basinger (2003: 253–62) later adds a chapter on the revival of the World War II combat film in the 1990s, showing how the "old" conventions still apply to films such as *Saving Private Ryan* (Steven Spielberg 1998). Further study is needed to determine whether the same holds for other recent combat films—like *The Thin Red Line* (Terrence Malick 1998), *Three Kings* (David O. Russell 1999), *Black Hawk Down* (Ridley Scott 2002), *We Were Soldiers* (Randall Wallace 2002), and *Letters from Iwo Jima* (Clint Eastwood 2006)—or whether, against Basinger, they fall, instead, under the category of the military operation film, as I define it.

[35] This distinction within the "war films" category also corresponds, in fact, to the difference between "military operation" and "adventure" films. *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (Peter Jackson 2003) exemplifies the latter category. Although the film is ostensibly about the final battles of Middle Earth against Sauron's army, all the events are patterned after the conventions not of a military operation film but of the loose adventure films. The only time we witness an advance battle plan (and even so in abridged form) is shortly before the final, climactic clash, when Aragorn suggests a strategic diversion. The plan he proposes, however, is still highly generalized: a diversionary attack. The ensuing member of enactment attests to the lack of any tactical forethought: his warriors simply attack the enemy head-on, putting their lives at great risk. Likewise with *Star Wars* (George Lucas 1977), an adventure film despite its

A classic example of a "military operation film," by my definition, is *Objective: Burma!* (Raoul Walsh 1945). It opens with preparations for a military raid intended to demolish a Japanese radar station, deep in the Burmese jungle, to enable an Allied airborne invasion of Burma. In the first 16 of the film's 131 minutes, we witness the planning of the operation, complete with briefing the troops (thus introducing them to the viewers as well) and examining their equipment.

The unit then enters the jungle, reaches its target, and fulfills its mission—all by minute forty-eight of the film. Then, as further planned, they reach the rendezvous point, where a plane is supposed to pick them up. But an encounter with Japanese troops forces them to change tack. By minute sixty-three they have devised an alternative plan: to cross the jungle to a new rendezvous point, two days' march away. The second half of the film shows the hardships they endure on the way, like negotiating an unfamiliar route, survival in the jungle, Japanese attacks on land and from the air. The film ends with the survivors gazing up at Allied planes in the sky above: thanks to their demolition of the radar station, the invasion of Burma has gone ahead as planned.

According to Basinger (1986: 26), the three basic ingredients of the World War II combat film are a hero, a group, and an objective. The second element—the group—is a departure from the norm in classical Hollywood cinema, which revolves around individuals. But combat films center on a group of characters and emphasize teamwork, even if the group has a leader portrayed by a star (Belton 1994: 165–66). The group as a generic component also has an interest beyond Basinger's framework, in that it affects the repetition structure. The planning ("forecast") and carrying out ("enactment") of such enterprises are remarkably different when performed by a team as opposed to an individual. On the one hand, the larger the group, the easier it is to control the operation's various details, instead of relying on fate or luck. On the other hand, each additional character also increases the risk that the operation may go wrong for some reason. The more so because coordinating the views, interests, and actions of numerous characters grows increasingly difficult and accident-prone.

As for the third element, Basinger (1986: 56, 73–75) rightly notes that the story is organized as the characters' progression toward a goal: here, therefore, the military operation film accords with classical Hollywood. However, such a goal and goal directedness require (and indeed receive) an appropriate planning stage, and this forecast accordingly counts as a

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title. In both films, then, warriors embark on perilous missions without any detailed planning or proper equipment (weapons, camouflage). Physical prowess, determination, faith, plenty of luck, and the absence of other options are the only assets that adventure characters enjoy.

basic ingredient of the genre, no less than do Basinger's trio or the eventual enactment of the forecast.[36]

Kaminsky (1974: 75), Newman (1997: 70), and Martin Rubin (1999: 121–22) point out certain similarities between the heist and the military operation film. In both genres, the same type of characters dominate: usually strong, courageous, resourceful men, with a lust for danger and adventure. Another common feature is the team effort and the group's human diversity, unlike the classical Hollywood genres' tendency to focus on one or two protagonists. According to Newman, the two genres come together in a film such as *The Dirty Dozen*. There, a perilous military operation is carried out by convicted felons, blurring the moral difference between the two genres (Newman 1997: 70). Such blurring also occurs in other films, such as *Ocean's Eleven* (Lewis Milestone 1960) and *Three Kings* (David O. Russell 1999), where we learn that the original bond among the gang members was formed during their military service together. Military skills and long-standing mutual trust are the foundation for the heist they jointly plan and enact.[37]

As we will presently see, the similarity between the heist and the military operation film is many-sided. Unlike Basinger's "combat films," the military operation variety resembles the heist film not only in its characters' traits, combined with its multiplying and grouping of them; nor only in its structure of repetition (a comparatively detailed member of forecast followed by a corresponding member of enactment). The likeness extends to the military operation's repertoire of events, with a difference in context (military rather than criminal) and objective (e.g., concerning item 6 of the heist repertoire,

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36. Incidentally, the differences between Basinger's view of a generic component (here the "group") and mine demonstrates why it is useful to compare generic definitions that overlap only in part. Different insights are gained thereby. Basinger's discussion helps us understand, among other things, how ethnic identities and issues were represented in the era of World War II and have evolved since (and not just in wartime). She also enriches our understanding of the genre system of the classical Hollywood cinema—particularly the evolution of genres and their interrelationships. On the other hand, my examination is designed to explain the compositional features of cinematic texts in terms of their emotional effects and their thematic and ideological meanings, and to help us understand other Hollywood genres. Both definitions, then, are efficient tools in the functional analysis of specific films, of generic conventions, and of how genres relate to each other. Outlining the boundaries of each genre—World War II combat films vs. military operation films—by specific and diverse criteria should also enrich our understanding of cinema's genre system as a whole.

37. The link between the two genres is even more explicit in *Bob Le Flambeau* (Jean-Pierre Melville 1956), where, while training for a casino robbery, Bob explains to the rest of the gang that they should work together like a paratrooper unit. If Basinger is correct regarding the genesis of the World War II combat film, perhaps there is a genetic link between the two genres, and as Rubin (1999: 121–22) maintains, the heist film is a form of military operation film adapted to a civilian context. On the other hand, since heist films coevolved with the military operation film, the similarities may be due to convergent evolution, rather than to a linear genesis.

where the robbers escape with the loot, here the characters return to base).[38] Item 7 in the repertoire consists of either the survivors being decorated (if the operation was successful) or the deaths of all or most of the unit, one by one.[39]

Most of this repertoire shows in, for example, *The Dirty Dozen*.[40] The first 101 minutes are devoted to preparing for a secret mission of seizing and destroying a château full of German officers. This forward-looking story includes forming a unit of "volunteers"—all convicted murderers—and training them to become crack soldiers. The next 40 minutes trace the operation itself: it ends successfully, but few of the men survive, and the exceedingly brief epilogue (1 minute and 30 seconds) takes place in a hospital room, where the three surviving soldiers are recovering from their injuries.

Here, the representational proportion between forecast (101 minutes) and enactment (40 minutes) is motivated by the nature of the operation: raiding the château is a complex, dangerous, and multiphase project, requiring endless training. The training stage in this film is even more critical than usual, given that the participants, who have spent their military service in jail, have no skills or experience as combat soldiers and must undergo a profound transformation accordingly.

As in the heist analogue, the deceptively simple-looking structure of repetition in the military operation film—a detailed member of forecast followed by enactment—may be complicated by several factors. These also diversify the heist film, as we have seen, and so pinpoint or underline the family resemblance between the two genres.

2.5.1. Varying Levels of Specificity As with heists, events in military operation films diverge in the amount of screen time given to each of the six generic components. In *The Dirty Dozen*, for instance, the six are fully specified, except for the planning stage, which precedes the beginning of the film. (The orders for Project Amnesty, which come from the high command, are read aloud at the outset to the officers appointed to run the operation.)[41] *Objective Burma!* also presents each of the stages in almost obsessive detail (Neale 1991: 44–45). By contrast, *Paths of Glory* (Stanley Kubrick 1957) devotes only 27 minutes and 30 seconds to the day before the operation. The brevity of the film's member of forecast here accords with the relatively brief planning stage in the fictional world. This lack of attention not only has plot consequences—the mission fails—but also assumes thematic and moral significance. Seen together with the generals putting selfish concerns before military strategy, it testifies to the operation's deficient planning. The operation itself ends at minute thirty-four of the film (so that the member of enactment takes around seven minutes). Next, the film's last fifty minutes deal with the inquiry into the fiasco (i.e., a detailed member of report) and the (capital) punishment of the soldiers found guilty of cowardice and disobedience during the aborted mission. An antiwar film, *Paths of Glory* exposes the indifference of senior officers to the lives of their soldiers: they cynically decide to launch an attack without due planning or preparation. The all too short member of forecast (perceptibly so both in absolute terms and relative to its usual duration in the genre) dramatizes the film's scathing message.

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[38] In "The World War II combat film," Kathryn Kane (1988: 94) lists such recurring narrative components: "the transmission and reception of orders, assembling the group, communication to the men of the mission, preparation of weapons, general conversation and relaxation, departure from home, arrival at destination, alternating scenes of combat and life in the combat zone, aftermath." Interestingly, while Kane refers to most of the generic components I have described, she overlooks the fact that they are organized in a structure of repetition that unfolds the planning of an operation and its carrying out more or less according to plan. Thus, she loses sight of both the chronological-causal and the analogical ties that connect the assortment of components she lists.

[39] As already mentioned, Basinger (1986: 54–59) claims that even the order in which the soldiers die follows an invariable pattern based on their narrative functions and ethnic identities.

[40] Basinger (ibid.: 202–12) associates the film with a subgenre she calls "the dirty group," characterized by its bending of the conventions of the World War II combat film, under the influence of the Vietnam War.

2.5.2. Order of Presentation/Organizational Structure As in heist films, events in military operation films are generally presented in fabulaic order. Some films open with a veteran—a plain soldier or a senior officer—recalling past battles. The flashback to them unrolls chronologically, and, at the end, we return to the present. For example, most of *Operation Petticoat* (Blake Edwards 1959) extends as a flashback, where a retired submarine commander looks back on a special operation in which he participated. An interesting example of a delayed and distributed member of forecast, with an effect on the repetition structure typical of this genre, is *Fight Club* (David Fincher 1999).[42] It represents a military-style terrorist attack planned and executed. However, the film both uses an unreliable narrator and disorders the chronology of events for surprise (the delayed revelation of the fact that the antagonist is only a figment of the protagonist's imagination). As a result, the member of forecast—the planning stage—is not fully disclosed at the outset. To complicate matters further, parts of the planning phase are distributed throughout the text as background actions, with no apparent links among these parts or any overt and recurrent heading, such as "preparations for a guerrilla attack." Thus, although the entire set of generic repetition elements appears here, its presentation is so unconventional that the viewers are unaware, until very late in the film, that they are witnessing the preliminaries to the operation.

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[41] The cursory mention of the planning stage in *The Dirty Dozen* by no means removes it from the military operation genre, since it dwells long enough on the training stage before the enacted raid. On the other hand, *The Avengers* (Joss Whedon 2012), which was inspired by *The Dirty Dozen*, does not have any extensive planning *or* preparation. The assembled individualistic superheroes clash among themselves, while repeatedly dealing with the attacks of a mighty enemy. They improvise and prevail, as usual in adventure films. Thus, although Whedon (quoted in Reynolds 2012) stated that *The Dirty Dozen* was "the first movie I referenced when Marvel asked me what I'd do if they gave me the [*Avengers*] script," his film belongs to a different genre than *The Dirty Dozen*. Whedon (ibid.) correctly summarizes the 1967 military operation film as "an hour-and-a-half of training and 20 minutes of Nazi fighting," yet his own film focuses on group dynamics without much forecasting of the external battles ahead. (To be fair, his adventurous protagonists have too little information about their enemy to hatch a plan of action against him.) The difference between the two films, and indeed between the two genres, is encapsulated in the following exchange between the team's levelheaded soldier Rogers (Captain America) and the reckless Stark (Iron Man):

> Captain America: "We need a plan of attack!"
> Iron Man: "I have a plan—attack" (*The Avengers*)

The absence of an "official" member of forecast largely results from the character-narrator's particular condition here, his multiple personality disorder. Under its influence, his imaginary friend-turned-foe seems real to him, and so to the unsuspecting viewers as well (only much later do we find out that our character-narrator is really the leader of the terrorists, however unconsciously). Other factors contribute to our misreading: the film opens with the narrator tied up and threatened with a gun put in his mouth. Holding the gun is Tyler Durden, leader of an anarchist terror group that is about to blow up some buildings in the heart of New York. We receive only a cursory mention of the impending terrorist attack, and this forecast is immediately swamped by a mass of other expositional details, given in a long flashback (a global member of report) accompanied by the narrator's voice-over. His feverish utterance involves the introduction of several characters who may or may not belong to the main plot, and of events from several different contexts, all presented in nonchronological order. The absence of a clear hierarchy of importance governing all this information adds to our confusion.

Later in the film, however, clues begin to emerge, and they suggest that an activity familiar from military operation films is taking place. Together with our narrator, we come to see the gravity of what he thought to be no more than a temporary, recreational activity. We receive only discontinuous and sometimes opaque clues, however, because the narrating hero is kept in the dark about the gang's preparations for something called "Operation Mayhem." These preparatory steps include the formation of an ideology (anarchist in this case); recruiting members to the group; establishing a headquarters, where explosives are produced on a large scale; and training, in the form of perpetrating small acts of sabotage and subversion.

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[42] The Internet Movie Database (IMDb n.d.) identifies this film as an action thriller, while allmovie (n.d.) lists it as hybrid film made up of comic drama, satire, psychological drama, and black comedy.

Thus, both the narrator's experiencing-I and the viewers discover too late that seemingly disconnected events are actually parts of an orderly plan for a broadscale, coordinated terrorist attack. The attack itself is carried out as planned toward the end of the film. The surprising revelation near the end about the narrator's split personality disorder clarifies in retrospect why we received only partial information on what is, in fact, a story about a military-style terrorist attack. Tyler Durden, the mastermind behind the operation, indeed controlled our hero's mind and hid from him (and us) his true state of being and sequence of doing.

Fight Club is, of course, an atypical example of this generic category. The exception to the rule newly demonstrates the importance of perspective, a fabulaic order of events, and a detailed, lucid presentation of the forecast to the genre's identity and impact. Without these features, it seems, a cinematic work does not count as a genuine military operation film.

2.5.3. Mode of Transmission According to Steve Neale (1991), the narration in the American war film is mostly omnipresent and otherwise omniscient. The viewers therefore receive factual, reliable information about events happening in several spaces (both physical and psychological, the latter within characters up and down the military hierarchy). We therefore know more than the combatants do, especially when their circumstances change or they lose touch with their base (ibid.: 48–53). In another type of war film, however, the audience is limited to knowing no more than the soldiers involved, as in *A Walk in the Sun* (Lewis Milestone 1945) or *Hamburger Hill* (John Irving 1987). This state of ignorance intensifies the viewers' identification with the characters, who are doing their best in an unfamiliar terrain and following the orders of their superiors (Neale 1991: 48–53).[43]

2.5.4. Parallel Structures of Repetition Certain war films set out to dehumanize the enemy for propaganda reasons (ibid.: 38–39). So they provide little or no representation of the enemy, far less any detailed structures of repetition parallel to those bearing on "our" side—unlike heist films, where the doings of the crime gang and the police can run parallel for long. Typically, even in military operation films that do represent the enemy (Japanese, German, or North Korean) troops by themselves, their plans and actions don't receive much screen time.[44]

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[43] On dramatic ironies and other effects generated by disparities between what the characters know and what readers know, see Sternberg (1978: 254–305; 1987b [1985]: 163–72). Biblical examples of the possible variations between the readers' perspective and that of the fictional characters—readers having informational advantage over the characters, or vice versa, or equal knowledge—represent the same strategies that operate in cinematic texts and for the same purpose and effects, but distinctively generated by the means of expression and arrangement specific to the cinematic medium.

2.5.5. An Intermediate Structure Films produced during World War II, whatever their particular interest, frequently mention the global war, usually during the exposition (Kane 1988: 94; Neale 1991: 37) and at the end of the film (Kane 1988: 94). The specific operation may end successfully or otherwise, but it is made clear that the wider war is still raging, and the Allies will have to combine efforts to win it. The reference to future battles or wars at the end of the film has become a conventional measure of implicit serialization, with propaganda value, of course.

2.5.6. Mini-Repetition in Another Genre The basic structure of repetition may also appear as a mininarrative within a larger narrative of a different genre. Thus, action or epic films of the biographical-historical variety, such as *Lawrence of Arabia* (David Lean 1962) and *Patton* (Franklin J. Schaffner 1970), or even musicals, such as *Up in Arms* (Elliott Nugent 1944), *The Gang's All Here* (Busby Berkeley 1943), and *I'll Get By* (Richard Sale 1950), feature one or more sequences that typify the military operation film (Basinger 1986: 246–50).

The six factors of this genre's structure of repetition show how it may vary from one military operation film to another, just like heist films and in similar ways. The variables again involve the degree of specificity typical of repeating members, the content of these members, their number, their order of appearance, their mode of transmission, and their relative weight in the overall narrative pattern (which may belong to another genre).

At the same time, along with this rich variability, the structure of repetition brings to light points of contact and correspondence among the cinematic genres involved. The set of analogies that reveals itself from this viewpoint between heist and military operation films is not only interesting in itself; it also newly comes into play when either of the genres is compared with the adventure film, which is, in some respects, similar to both. In all three genres, for example, characters struggle to gain control in "win or lose" situations. This puts competing forecasts on a collision course, and it gives the enactment in the final repetition structure a privileged status. Unlike musicals or romantic comedies, the characters in all three genres pursue goals (i.e., "forecasts," whether formulated at the outset or adopted later) that put them in danger and may even cost them their lives. In all three, the protagonists must deal along the way with various human and nonhuman obstacles to realize their wishes ("enact" their "forecasts"). In all three, survival or success depends on skill, improvisation, and quick reactions. In all three, the protagonists must also exhibit ingenuity and resourcefulness, and in all three, the dramatic intensity is heightened by a sense of urgency.[45]

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[44] Exceptions include *The Iron Cross* (Sam Peckinpah 1977), an American film about a German military operation during World War II, and *Letters from Iwo Jima*, which shows a famous battle of the same war from the Japanese perspective. It is worth mentioning that parallel structures of repetition may also arise from crosscutting between the troops in the field and their headquarters, possibly revealing a conflict of interests (Neale 1991: 40–53).

As this comparison suggests, moreover, the heroes do not always achieve ("enact") the goals ("forecasts") they sought. In noirish heists and in certain military operation films, they fail and/or perish. In heist comedies, some adventure films, and other military operation films, they come to enact their original plans, at least partly. In some adventure films, the original aim is abandoned in favor of another and worthier goal, which the heroes do manage to accomplish. Still another feature that the three genres have in common, and that has a special claim to interest, is the elaborate rendering of technical processes.

2.6. "Technical Realism"

The careful planning and the use of sophisticated technical skills and equipment in heist and in military operation films create a special communicative problem for filmmakers. How to present the technical aspects of the planning and execution, forecast and enactment, to viewers who are unfamiliar with techniques for, say, breaking and entering, blowing up things, advanced computer hacking, and so forth? How, if at all, can the viewers' interest be kept alive during a (sometimes protracted) series or chain of incomprehensible actions? This problem even becomes more acute along the repetition structure in the case of discrepancy between the original plan and the actual state of affairs, forcing the characters to make immediate adjustments. Both the emergence of a suspenseful problem and its improvised solution may involve arcane jargon, phenomena, or developments.

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[45] A related genre, both structurally and thematically, is the "escape film." The well-known novel *The Count of Monte Cristo* (Alexandre Dumas 1844) has probably most inspired this genre, but there only one man dares to escape. In films about escapes from prisoner of war (POW) camps, the similarity to military operation films grows: as trained soldiers that have become POWs, the heroes generally plan their escapes meticulously. *La grande illusion* (Jean Renoir 1937), *Stalag 17* (Billy Wilder 1953), *The Great Escape* (John Sturges 1963), and *Escape to Victory* (John Huston 1981) are famous examples. In this regard, it would be interesting to examine whether and how the heist film influenced the escape type, since the latter might be described as an "inverted" variation of the former. Instead of penetrating into a highly secured facility and stealing a hidden treasure, the escapees set out to break (or "steal") out from such a facility designed to keep them in.

However, although liable to alienate viewers, such sequences of technical actions continue to be presented in films of these genres. One must conclude that their creators operate on the assumption that viewers will be drawn into the story and find it compelling despite their lack of a full understanding of what the characters are saying or doing. Technical aspects probably gain interest and significance from the overall goal (e.g., making a fortune, storming a castle) even when their specific meaning or their relationship to other actions is unknown. In other words, the characters' motivations and general intentions lend meaning to objects, utterances or actions that, in themselves, may remain somewhat obscure. Nowhere is this better illustrated, perhaps, than in the prolonged heist sequence of *Du rififi chez les hommes*. For 31 uninterrupted minutes (about a quarter of the film's total of 112), the robbers work their way into a prestigious jewelry store by drilling a hole in the floor of the apartment above. All this time they maintain absolute silence, giving the sequence the quality of a silent movie (without even musical accompaniment).[46]

What is it that justifies the faith of filmmakers in viewers' interest in protracted, highly technical, and unfamiliar operations? According to Sternberg (1983: 158–60), technical actions can be interesting to watch precisely because they are baffling and strange. In the case of *Du rififi chez les hommes*, for instance, gaining access to a place by means of a hole in the floor above it is interesting because it is unusual. More importantly, it nevertheless appears to be possible and even plausible (though by no means commonplace or straightforward), because we viewers are privy to every stage in the complicated process. The detailed representation of an unusual process therefore heightens its realism (ibid.: 157–63), which in turn sharpens the viewers' interest.

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[46] In the years 1934–68, moreover, the representation of technical operations in heist films was hampered by another problem, namely, the limitations imposed by the Hays Code (until its replacement with a rating system), such as:

> 2. Method of Crime should not be explicitly presented
> a. Theft, robbery, safe-cracking, and dynamiting of trains, mines, buildings, etc., should not be detailed in method. (Stanley 1978: 277)

These restrictions stemmed from the concern that viewers might copy illegal acts they see on screen. But Hollywood films kept detailing such acts, even while the Hays Code was still in force. In *Double Indemnity* (Billy Wilder 1944), for example, the two murderers (the victim's wife and her lover, an insurance agent) devise a complicated scheme—detailed at some length—to kill the woman's husband and obtain the money from his life insurance. As usual (because mandatory) in crime films of the time, their scheme fails, and both conspirators die, but specifying their actions evidently violates clause 2 of the code. How, then, did the film pass censorship? As I see it, in this case (and probably others), the detailed rendering of criminal activities helped underline the moral lesson behind crime films of that era: it is very difficult to bend messy reality to human will, even when all the relevant factors have apparently been taken into account. Nevertheless, films about failed robberies are not necessarily morality tales. The unhappy end—so they suggest—does not come because fate has a "moral sensibility" and punishes sinners, but because of the limits of human control. As a practical matter, where so many factors are involved, even a flawless performance of a series of actions cannot save it from failure. Thus, the realistic motivation for the failure is compatible with the normative-censorial dictate, or at least does not challenge it.

It is worth noting that sequences of unintelligible actions are not unique to the heist and the military operation genres. They can also be found, for example, in science fiction films, with a major difference. While the unintelligible action in the former two genres appears to be technically feasible—at least in the eyes of the nonexpert or the average viewer—science fiction films present futuristic vehicles and weapons with utterly fantastic names and attributes. In this regard, scriptwriters of science fiction films enjoy far greater creative license in their bid for "fantastic realism."

Thus, complex and unfamiliar technical actions may appear in films of all these genres, even when most viewers probably have no knowledge of their (real or fictional) bearings and contexts. Here lies a marked contrast to the strict economy normally observed in the classical Hollywood film (Bordwell 1985: 24). Viewing such sequences is, therefore, like watching pantomime: the criminal or military drama translates into well-choreographed motions of people, tools, and machines. So even things normally found in instructional do-it-yourself videos are shown here with a feature of artistic abstractness.

Moreover, the realism engendered by the technical details and processes serves other functions as well. As Kathryn Kane (1988: 89–90) points out about the World War II combat film, the focus on the soldiers' modern technology heightens the thematic contrast between the sense of peril versus safety: the combatants operate in a dangerous and chaotic space, while modern weaponry (such as tanks, communications, etc.) provide a semblance of protection. The absence or loss of such technology usually predicts defeat and death, as is evidently the case in *Objective: Burma!*

In heist films, the realism created by detailed technical processes also has a rhetorical function, such as persuasive or anticipatory effect. Judging by common sense, if the characters successfully disable a sophisticated security system, or crack a state-of-the-art safe, or perform any other exceptional action, they will likely succeed in pulling off the heist as a whole. In addition, the painstaking detail lavished on the various stages of the operation underlines the high risks involved, and so heightens suspense.

Adventure films likewise show in detail technical tools and processes, and for the same reason, namely, to create a realistic effect, along with a suspenseful oscillation between peril and safety, fear and hope, on the way to the heroes' achievement of the desired goals. According to John G. Cawelti and Bruce A. Rosenberg's (1987) analysis of the James Bond films, the detailing of technological means in adventure films has a moral function as well. Conventionally, the hero's tools often fail, prove to be unsuitable at a critical moment, or are inferior to those the antagonist has at his disposal. Even so, the hero prevails, despite the low quality of his equipment, by virtue of his objective. A good example of this convention is *Star Wars* (George Lucas 1977): young Luke finds out that light sabers and spaceships are exciting, but what ultimately wins the day is the "Force"—a type of mental and spiritual strength that he develops with the help of his mentor.[47] This convention implies a certain ambivalence toward technology, especially regarding its power (Cawelti and Rosenberg 1987: 137–39). Therefore, although the protagonist is usually highly skilled in the ways of technology, it is with his bare hands that he eventually wins.

Now, how do the three genres differ regarding technical realism? In adventure films the planning stage is brief in the happening itself and/or in its presentation. So the unintelligibility or magic of technical details bears there, for the most part, upon the action sequences (e.g., the enactment of storming a castle, crash-landing on foreign terrain) rather than the preparations. The rapid pace and the danger involved in the heroes' actions in these cases make for exciting viewing, but leave little room for specifying the technical ways and means concerned. Even where technical problems do arise and challenge the characters, there is no time for reflection on how to solve them (unlike, say, the planning stage of heist films). The solution lies in quick improvisation.

But then, esoteric or advanced-looking gadgetry, however sketchily portrayed, possesses a certain novelty value or realistic effect. As Sternberg (1983: 157–63) points out in his article on the James Bond novels, rhetorical realism springs from the particular mixture of the realistic and the fantastic.

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[47] In the parody *The Princess Bride*, the heroes' use of simple technological means and their winning merely through resourcefulness is illustrated in the "storming the castle" sequence. Westley, who was dead for most of the day, starts recovering. He is still paralyzed in most of his body, but his mind is alert, and, together with his two comrades, he devises a plan of action. The following exchange between the three pokes fun at the role of objects and tools in the adventure genre:

> WESTLEY: My brains, your strength, and his steel against sixty men, and you think a little head jiggle is supposed to make me happy? Hmmmm? I mean, if we only had a wheelbarrow that would be something.
>
> INIGO: Where did we put that wheelbarrow the albino had?
>
> FEZZIK: With the albino, I think.
>
> WESTLEY: Why didn't you list that among our assets in the first place? What I wouldn't give for a Holocaust cloak. . . .
>
> INIGO: There we cannot help you.
>
> FEZZIK: Would this do?
>
> INIGO: Where did you get that?
>
> FEZZIK: At Miracle Max's. It fit so nice; he said I could keep it.

These mixtures include the latter's minute portrayal, for example, or its assimilation to a realistic context to form a "natural" extension, as it were. Likewise, even if the rapid shifts in adventure films prevent the characters from indulging in much talk about technical features—as they do in films about heists or military operations—the professional terminology (or pseudo-professional, in the case of science fiction adventure) and the tendency of equipment to malfunction lend an air of plausibility to an otherwise fantastic arena and activity.[48]

As already stated and explained, adventure films involve little preparation ("forecast"), or indeed none at all. Predictably, this leads to challenges in dealing with poor or damaged equipment. Contrast heist films, which devote a large part of the preparations to obtaining the right technical gear and to recruiting the necessary expertise to use it. The Indiana Jones series is particularly notorious for how poor equipment adds to the difficulties posed by the goal itself. Time and again Jones comes to face formidable obstacles and rivals—yet he manages to escape and eventually triumph due to nothing more than his wits, his whip, lucky coincidences, and the occasional helper.[49] His success even extends from treasure to romance, as customary in the genre. Little wonder the member of enactment remains focal throughout.

Another example is in *The African Queen*, when Charlie and Rose must repeatedly fix their rickety boat while dealing with various obstacles (water rapids, enemy fire, etc.). After one of many repairs, Charlie wonders aloud whether it will hold and indeed whether the boat will survive the long journey ahead. The answer to these questions is delayed until the end of the film, creating and maintaining the wanted suspense.

The discrepancy between their meager means and the impressive accomplishments that ensue in the action produces still further effects. It operates not only for suspense (until the moment of improbable triumph), for surprise (arising from the creative way a David-vs.-Goliath-like confrontation ends happily), and for moral impact, as already described, but for comedy or irony as well. In *The Fifth Element*, for instance, the survival of planet Earth depends entirely upon the lighting of a single match—the last one in a box of matches belonging to the hero, who is trying to quit smoking. Fire, it transpires, is one of the elements needed to defeat the evil power approaching Earth.

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[48] According to Sternberg (1983: 158–59), this descriptive technique in Ian Fleming's books is innovative in five respects: (1) generically, in its (often allusive) recourse to adventure and suspense stories; (2) quantitatively, in the extensive use of this means; (3) compositionally, in the distribution of detailed descriptions all along the text; (4) linguistically, in the use of professional or scientific terminology; (5) rhetorically, in the use of this technique for combining, or enhancing, the realistic and the fantastic effects of the represented worlds. Fleming began publishing in 1953, so in multiplying detailed descriptions for rhetorical effects he was perhaps inspired by, among other sources, two cinematic genres developed during World War II: the military operation and the heist film.

[49] In adventure stories a conventional division of labor between the protagonists and various kinds of assistants (dubbed "helpers" in the Proppian model [Propp 1968 {1928}: 45–46]) ensures the protagonist's safety when he cannot extricate himself from trouble. Such a division is not found in heist films. A team effort means that, instead of "helpers," every individual contributes to accomplishing the common goal. The team effort is intended—like the meticulous preparations—to remove uncertainties from the characters' path and to avert the need for lucky accidents, such as the ones common to adventure films, where reckless bravery leads the characters into seemingly hopeless situations (until luck or assistants come to the rescue).

Finally, it is important to note that the differences among the three genres are relative, not absolute: improvisations occur in films about heists or military operations as well as in adventure films, and resourcefulness, good judgment, and creativity are critical assets there, too. Similarly, problems with equipment and the suspense created thereby occur in heist and military operation films, too—as when circumstances prevent the use of the fancy gear that had been prepared in advance—but these are less common than in the adventure variety. The careful advance preparations generally ensure that the equipment, like or unlike other aspects of the plan, does not fail.

If all three genres indeed belong to the "classical or canonical Hollywood film," certain interesting questions arise: What are the results of the different type and topic of the members in each typical structure of repetition? What can these differences teach us about the compositional, communicational, rhetorical, and other features that characterize each genre? How do structural principles that typify "related" genres within the Hollywood system[50] lead to genuine disparities and/or similarities in emotional and cognitive effect, or in thematic-ideological meaning among these genres?

In the following sections, I will examine and compare two variables in the repetition structures typical of the three genres: (1) when the protagonist and the main goal of the film are brought together and (2) how this occurs. As we will see, the time and the manner in which protagonists undertake to realize ("enact") the forecasts marked as most important can influence the meaning and the effect in films of all three genres. The rich diversity afforded by these two variables may advance our understanding of how genre-specific structures of repetition contribute to the form, meaning, and impact of the narratives in each genre.

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[50] Kaminsky (1974: 74–75) defines the heist or "big caper film" as "a sub-genre of the adventure-process film," where a "small group of individuals of diverse ability (often social outcasts), comes together to confront a massive establishment, be it prison, army, or secret installation." But Kaminsky also subsumes military operation (and escape) films under the same wide category of the "adventure-process," supposedly a descendent of mythic stories, such as Jason and the Argonauts. But he does not specify that wider category in any detail (ibid.: 75). Nor will I myself go into the question whether the three are "neighboring" genres, two subgenres and a parent genre, or otherwise related. I prefer to focus instead on the repetition structures that unify and/or divide these three categories.

As we have learned, forecasts in the three genres differ in scale and specificity. Films about heists and military operations begin with a detailed member of forecast,[51] which concentrates on the planning and training for the big event. This enables the viewers to construct hypotheses (themselves a type of implicit forecast, not necessarily the same as the agents' overt plan) about the film's coming story (or at least about its first half, as is often the case in both of these genres). By contrast, as also argued above, adventure films only present brief and sketchy members of forecast, conceived in response to rapid and extreme changes in circumstances. Let's now turn to consider the forecast's location along the text's continuum: when and how do heroes meet and bind themselves to their fated goals?

2.7. A Protagonist and a Goal

2.7.1. When Do Protagonist and Goal Come Together? In adventure films, as we recall, the protagonist's main goal can arise at a much later stage (in both the fictional and the textual order of events) compared with films about robberies or military projects. Up to that stage, the adventurers pursue other goals, either because those goals seem to them more urgent (as in the examples cited from *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*), or because they have yet to undergo or complete a process of conversion.

The highly codified nature of altruistic goals in adventure films (e.g., rescuing hostages, freeing a besieged city, overthrowing a tyrant), however, means that viewers may nevertheless suspect early on that the heroes will eventually change tack in favor of the worthy goal (as with *Casablanca*, *The African Queen*, or *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*). Casting Hollywood stars in major roles has a similar anticipatory effect. Hence, the joining together of the protagonist and the primary goal is assured and expected in the viewing, on the basis of generic conventions and intertextual signs, even when it suffers delay within the fictional world. At any rate, starting with assorted goals, rather than a single clear objective, is another ground rule of adventure films.

Protagonists change goals in heist films, too, but with certain differences. This switch usually occurs there around the midpoint of the film. And from that moment onward, instead of continuing to focus on the robbery—whether or not successful—attention shifts to a more pressing issue, namely, the robbers making a successful getaway, or simply surviving. In *The Asphalt Jungle,* for example, the first fifty-five minutes are devoted to narrating how the gang was assembled and the heist carried out. The remaining fifty-two minutes convey the mishaps and betrayals leading to the robbers' arrests or deaths. In other words, *The Asphalt Jungle* develops a symmetrical pattern of "crime and punishment." The film's midpoint is located within the heist itself, precisely when the robbers' luck runs out: they overpower an armed security guard, but his gun drops and accidentally shoots Louie Ciavelli, the safe cracker. From then on, things go from bad to worse, and the robbers suffer a series of problems, delays, and ill-fated coincidences, ending in their deaths or imprisonment.

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[51] Such an opening, detailed, concentrated member of forecast is not the same as preliminary and concentrated exposition (vs. a delayed or distributed exposition; see the analysis of the various kinds of antecedents in Sternberg's *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction* [1978]). An exposition likewise includes background material which may affect the outcome of the mission, such as the attributes of the characters, but, unlike the members of forecast in repetition structures, this material does not appear or operate as a plan made by the characters about future actions.

Another example is in *Du rififi chez les hommes*, where the first 44 minutes (out of 112) present planning the robbery and carrying it out, but then trouble breaks out. The child of one of the robbers is kidnapped, and the ransom demanded for his release is the stolen jewelry. In *The Lady Killers*—a heist film that doubles as a black comedy—the divided event line recurs: the first half of the film shows the robbery's successful planning and enactment, but in the forty-second minute (out of eighty-six) the robbers' sweet old landlady discovers the loot. The second half of the film dramatizes a series of conflicts: they try to kill her by various means, but she survives and ultimately prevails.

The heist narrative is accordingly organized into two large repetition structures: one governs the first half of the film (the planning and enactment of the heist) and the other its second half (e.g., evading capture, retrieving the loot after it has been stolen by another gang, etc.). The member of forecast in the first structure of repetition is relatively more detailed than that in the second, being more carefully planned.

Adventure films, by contrast, seldom have such extensive repetition structures. Instead, they unfold a series of members of enactment, each preceded by a cursory (or entirely omitted) forecast. The viewers themselves may well raise hypotheses (that is, tentative forecasts) about possible developments or outcomes in the fictional world. But these are less based on information provided by the characters, about how they intend to achieve their goals, than on well-established conventions of the genre and what the story implies to be its primary concern (such as rescuing hostages, returning a just king to his throne, finding a hidden treasure). Also, adventurers may get temporarily sidetracked from the story's primary goal, while the robbers in heist films abandon a clearly defined aim (getting rich) for a more basic one (avoiding capture, or even death), and generally fail in that, too.[52]

Military operation films appear to have a twofold, symmetrical pattern similar to that of heist films. In the first half (sixty-three minutes) of *Objective: Burma!*, for example, we encounter the usual detailed forecast, and then events unroll more or less according to plan, whereas in the second half (sixty-eight minutes) the plan goes awry, and the paratroopers must improvise solutions to serious and unexpected problems.

In *The Horse Soldiers* this twofold pattern grows even more salient, because the plan itself covers only the first half of the military operation. Unlike *Objective: Burma!*, further, no coincidence or bad luck is to blame for the ensuing troubles. During the American Civil War, a colonel in the Union army, John Marlowe (John Wayne), leads a cavalry unit behind enemy lines to destroy a strategically critical Confederate supply depot. The opening sequence (four minutes and thirty-seven seconds long) presents the plan in a scene typical of the military operation genre: a small room with several senior officers (here three generals and Colonel Marlowe) poring over a map of the intended target (here the railroad station in a town called Newton). The scene functions as both an extensive and a concentrated member of forecast, typically designed to exhibit the characters' personality, professionalism, and the risk involved. Marlowe is confident he can lead his men safely to the target through 300 miles of hostile territory and carry out the task, but he has no idea how to return them safely to base. Equipped with only half a plan, he nevertheless embarks upon the mission.

Prior to the departure for Newton, however, the exposition of *The Horse Soldiers* continues until minute 13:20 of the film (out of 114). It includes other conventional elements in this (and the heist) genre's member of forecast, such as recruiting suitable members of the team; having them examined by the unit's doctor; further talk about anticipated difficulties; and the soldiers' briefing. The exposition also lays bare disagreements, personal interests, and seeds of future conflict within the unit and introduces the various participants in the mission.

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[52] An interesting question concerns the relation between the repetition structure typical of heist films and Thompson's (1999) structural model. For example, in a heist film where the plot unfolds in fabulaic order, does the planning and preparation stage appear at the start of Thompson's "setup," or does it also cover "the complicated action"? Also, according to Thompson's model, heist films would be divided into four parts with turning points between them; but, to my mind, one cannot ignore the fact that heists are inherently tripartite in character—planning, execution, and escape/capture—as clearly illustrated in *The Killing*, *The Asphalt Jungle*, *Topkapi*, and *Ocean's Eleven* (2001), among others. Still, Bordwell (2008c: 105) argues that Sid Field's famous three-act structure, dividing plots into 1:2:1 proportions, can, in fact, be reconciled with Thompson's fourfold model (with a significant turning point at the halfway mark). Given that "the lengthy second act is difficult to write . . . scenarists made this stretch tractable by tacitly breaking it into two roughly equal chunks" (ibid.: 109). Akiva Goldsman, the famous scriptwriter, upholds this view in generalizing that "a screenplay consists of four acts, or really three acts, but the second act is really two acts, so we might as well call it four acts" (quoted in ibid.).

The opening here, therefore, has all the hallmarks of a "forecast" in a military operation film: the advance planning (secrecy and professionalism help lessen the high risk incurred); the emphasis on the skills and team effort required; the human diversity within the cavalry unit; and the joint determination to pull off a mission that may decide the outcome of the war. But the unusual fact that only the first half of the operation has been planned stands out from the beginning. At the film's midpoint (minute fifty-four), the unit indeed reaches Newton, overcomes the local Confederate force, and destroys the depot, all as forecast. The soldiers then start their ride back to base in accordance with a new plan, which Marlowe keeps revising in the face of changing conditions along the way. (They had encountered unforeseen obstacles en route to Newton, as well, and so needed occasionally to depart from the original plan, but at least they had then a clear overall plan to depart from.)

Two more general questions arise at this point. To begin with, what is the significance of the two-part narrative structure typical of heist and military operation films? To my mind, this pattern of opposed symmetry in both genres—with two members of forecast, the first detailed, the second bare-bones or partial, each followed by its own member of enactment—brings out the sudden change in the characters' control. At first, elaborate preparation and high professionalism, along with promising initial enactment, make the robbers or soldiers believe that their scheme is feasible. But later something goes wrong, and all the characters' strengths are no match for the setbacks and misfortunes that push them farther and farther away from their original plan. This abrupt change gives some of the films in these two genres a tragic overtone: they in effect follow the Aristotelian shift of fortune "from happiness to unhappiness," with an unexpected peripety in between.

The second question is how this twofold repetition plot has fared in scholarly work on the classical Hollywood narrative. The answer may be found in the seminal book by Bordwell et al. (1985), describing how the theoretical models of dramatic writing transformed soon after the birth of the silent film from Gustav Freytag's pyramid-like model (long established in the theater and its study) to a new model, originated by William Archer. "After the turn of the century," he and his followers "abandoned the placement of the climax at the centre of a play with a long falling action, or denouement, leading to a 'catastrophe.' Instead, for them, the climax should come near the end, with all action rising generally in stages toward this moment—a model much closer to the literary structure assumed for the short story and novel of the period" (ibid.: 169). The influence of Archer's new model is evident to this day in contemporary books about the poetics of cinema.[53]

It appears, then, that both heist films and military operation films are designed to follow a well-established, theory-based pattern, namely, Freytag's outmoded dramatic model. Whether or not filmmakers consciously use this model, they do highlight the midpoint of the film and employ the distinctive pattern of the action's ascent and decline—corresponding to the rise and fall in the control the characters have over their lives. Only, in our two genres this pattern takes the form of a well-defined, though complex, structure of repetition: a detailed member of forecast with a largely concordant enactment (the ascent), followed by one or more structures of repetition with incomplete or nonexistent members of forecast and disappointing enactments (the decline). Even in films that end happily (as with comic heists), the decline is evident in the characters' loss of control over events in the denouement. From the midpoint onward, blind chance shapes their fortune—for better or for worse. Even so, both heist and military operation films provide the obligatory climactic scene toward the end (where usually it is finally determined who keeps the loot, or who wins the decisive battle, respectively). Thus, although the midpoint of these films is significant in its division of the text continuum into two halves, as required by Freytag's model, the film's high point—in terms of emotional impact and suspense—lies elsewhere, just before the final conclusion.[54]

In adventure films, the midpoint also shows important events. But, there the division of the event sequence differs from that of the other two genres. In them, we recall, the first half is planned and well-organized (due to a repetition structure with an elaborate, careful forecast) and the second half full of improvisation and immediate response (due to multiple short-range structures of repetition with at best schematic members of forecast). By contrast, the two halves of the adventure film are distinguishable not by the nature of the characters' actions (they are hasty or unplanned throughout) but in other respects, such as the goals the characters seek and the power relations among them.

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[53] See, for instance, Louis D. Giannetti (1996 [1972]: 328): the diagram representing the classical narrative paradigm in his book is based on Archer's model, but Giannetti attributes it to Freytag. The symmetry in Freytag's inverted-V narrative model has been totally forgotten.

[54] According to Basinger (1986: 75), in a World War II combat film "a climactic battle takes place, and a learning or growth process occurs." Significantly, Basinger does not refer to how the climax links up with the mission assigned to the soldiers at the start of the film. The scene and its function (as climax) are defined by what happens in it—a battle, a learning process—rather than as an outcome of prior events (desirable or not, planned or random, expected or unforeseen). Unlike the usual structure of repetition, the climax scene may be an enactment that is not preceded by any given member of forecast (however condensed). This loose patterning is fairly consistent in the history of the genre. For instance, the climax of *Saving Private Ryan*—a German attack on a strategically important bridge—isn't casually linked to, or even predicted by, the film's main, titular operation.

For instance, midway through *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* (minute sixty-eight), the pirates are convinced that they are close to solving their problem. By returning the last coin to its original treasure chest, besmirched with the blood of Elizabeth—whom they mistake for Bill Turner's daughter—they believe they will rid themselves of the curse that was put upon them. However, the curse continues to plague them, so they start looking for Bill Turner's real offspring, namely, Will Turner. Thus, the midpoint divides the film into two extensive and successive actions in the pirates' quest: (a) looking for the last coins in the Aztec treasure they stole but must return to its chest and (b) looking for the true offspring of the pirate who betrayed them and whose blood is required to eliminate the curse. The film is thus the opposite of heist films in more than one sense: not only must the pirates return a treasure, rather than seize it, but none of their actions has been "forecast." All their aims, short- and long-lasting, misguided and commendable, are treated in the same improvizing manner. They just keep being carried along from one event to the next.

Captain Blood offers another example of a two-part adventure story that is not based on a shift in the types of repetition structure. At the midpoint of the film (minute fifty-seven), Bishop vows to take revenge on Blood and his pirates, who used to be Bishop's slaves but turned pirates and humiliated him. The midpoint occurs a minute after the ex-slaves seize a Spanish pirate ship and liberate the besieged town (foreshadowing their later defense of Port Royal from an attack by the French navy). The midpoint here accordingly marks a shift in the balance of power between Blood and Bishop: the former is reprieved because of his heroic deeds, and by the end of the film, Bishop must deal with a Blood who has now been appointed the new governor of Jamaica.

Adventure stories, then, exhibit a clear consistency in the type of repetition structure and in the nature of the characters' actions, which are always ad hoc, spontaneous. The sense of symmetry between the film's two halves is created, in part, by the contrast between characters, their attributes and their relative power.[55]

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[55] Another possible factor contributing to the symmetry between the two halves of an adventure film is mentioned in Bordwell's account of action films (which, he says, include the adventure variety). In the action movie's "first half the hero is likely to be reactive, whereas in the second half the hero seizes the initiative" (Bordwell 2006: 109). Importantly, however, this change, from reactiveness to initiative, need not change the kind of members of forecast distributed along the text: both initiated and reactive actions may be the result of careful

In conclusion, the comparison of the three genres reveals key similarities and differences among them. The protagonists of adventure stories find themselves in situations requiring quick responses to various obstacles that confront them in quick succession. By contrast, the heroes of films about heists or military operations mostly need stamina, determination, discipline, and nerves of steel—as well as earlier rehearsals—to carry out a chain of well-planned moves with the utmost precision. Only, their circumstances change mid film, when other factors intervene and progressively hinder the realization of the elaborate forecast in a corresponding member of enactment to such an extent that the original plan is abandoned. From that point on, the characters lose control over events and need to act much like their counterparts in adventure films: that is, to take risks and trust in fate or luck.

The African Queen interestingly illustrates the differences between the genres with regard to when protagonists and goals are brought together. Here, elements of the adventure and of the military operation genre combine in an unusual manner. The story centers on Rose Sayer (Katharine Hepburn), a not-so-young missionary in German East Africa, who joins Charlie Allnut (Humphrey Bogart) on his dilapidated steamboat to escape from the German army during World War I (she's English, he's Canadian). As they set out on their journey, Rose gets it into her head to carry out a kind of military operation: to blow up a German gunboat anchored in a large lake downriver, thus enabling the British army to enter this part of Africa. Charlie (Bogart in a typical role) initially regards this plan as sheer lunacy and focuses on simply steering clear of the Germans and of various other dangers along the way. As in many films of that era, however, he eventually comes round to the idea. Having meanwhile also fallen in love, they actually carry out together her plan of action. Thus, in the same film, the two protagonists begin by envisaging generically distinct aims and paths. The heroine plans a military-style operation down to the equipment they'll need and how to obtain it. The hero, on the other hand, comes to relinquish a blinkered and selfish goal in favor of a just and heroic one—as befits an adventure film. In other words, he undergoes a conversion.

In the same film, therefore, we witness two concurrent and competing repetition structures: Rose adheres to the same detailed plan (member of forecast) from start to finish, ultimate enactment included, whereas Charlie abandons one repetition structure with a sketchy and partial member of forecast ("surviving a journey down a dangerous river") for another

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planning or of sudden impulse. The latter option is more common in this genre from beginning to end.

("destroying a gunboat by any means available"). The gulf between Rose and Charlie at the start of the film is both mental and generic, but as they begin to cooperate in their first joint operation—passing a German fort from which German soldiers shoot at them on their way to much bigger endeavors—they fall in love. Hence the realistic portrayal of their respective psychological-emotional transformations is emphasized by the generic composition.[56]

2.7.2. How Do Protagonist and Goal Come Together? Another major distinction between heist and military operation films, on the one hand, and adventure films, on the other, lies in the protagonists' attitudes toward the goals ahead. As already seen, in adventure films, where one or more characters undergo a conversion, most of them initially prefer to continue their unadventurous routine, with little or no risk or sacrifice, but are coaxed into carrying out heroic deeds—unwillingly, at first. More adventurous characters (such as pirates, explorers, policemen) need no conversion or persuasion to be daring. But they are in turn distracted from the primary goal by the pursuit of other, minor, often egocentric objectives.

The delayed juncture of hero and goal in adventure films is often motivated by the need for some sort of initiation. Young adventurers thus join more experienced ones (as in *The Four Musketeers* and *Star Wars*), who prepare them for their calling. In this respect, adventure films may, like those of the heist and military operation, themselves involve extensive preparations, but these are here mainly psychological in nature: the young explorer/fortune hunter/adventurer must undergo a process of character formation and acquire certain skills.

Whatever the reason for the delayed joining of the hero and the main goal, the member of forecast at the start of adventure films usually comprises plans of two kinds: one initiated by the characters, the other deriving from the conventions of the genre. Early on in the story, the latter scenario is an untested general hypothesis, which the viewers are encouraged to form based on generic knowledge and the evident imbalance in the fictional

[56] Compare the adventure film *Romancing the Stone*, where the heroine also has a heroic goal of her own and one similar to a military operation, namely, to rescue her kidnapped sister. The hero, though, is after another goal entirely, one typical of adventure films: a treasure hunt. As in romantic comedies, here, too, the pair is constantly bickering. And the eventual romantic union results, as in *The African Queen*, from the union of goals: rescuing the sister leads to success in the treasure hunt. A similar ethical and gender-based division—a selfless heroine, a selfish hero—manifests itself in the second and third films of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* trilogy (*Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest* [Gore Verbinski 2006], *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End* [Verbinski 2007]). Is it a generic pattern or merely a chance resemblance? Regardless of the answer, it would be interesting to examine how this gender and moral axis is expressed in adventure films in general and how it compares with the role reversal in a common variety of heist films: film noir, where often an immoral woman corrupts a man who would otherwise remain decent.

world. Part of this hypothesis is the prediction that a plan (to accomplish some worthy cause, e.g., saving hostages, overpowering a tyrant, vanquishing ruthless aliens) will replace the one formed by the characters (usually some self-serving objective).

By contrast, heist films (both noirish and comic) usually involve no delay whatsoever in the joining together of characters and goal. The characters develop, or are recruited for, a criminal project in order to solve various problems, to get rich, or simply to earn a living as professional criminals. Heist films, therefore, usually open with a member of forecast coming from the characters themselves, which includes an explicit, often elaborate plan of action. In many heist films the merger of characters and goals occurs in a typical context: an audition, if you will (e.g., *Topkapi* and *Ocean's Eleven* [Steven Soderbergh 2001]), similar to the audition stage in musicals—a genre not unlike heist films in the painstaking preparations made before a grand-scale production (Newman 1997: 70). In adventure films, however, the opposite happens. There is a prevailing sense of randomness in the way the characters are brought together: finding themselves in a tight spot, they have no choice but to cooperate. This contingency is what unites them in a drive toward the main goal (as "forecast"). The grouping together by chance makes for a random combination of traits and skills, so that each individual may have a critical impact—for better or worse—on the group effort. The randomness of traits and skills can produce surprises, as sometimes even esoteric qualities save the day. This theme recurs in films such as the Star Wars series, the Indiana Jones series, and *The Princess Bride*.[57] The accidental assembling also characterizes certain military operation films: a group of strangers evolves into a cohesive unit only in the heat of battle, when some of its members develop high military skills or leadership qualities (Basinger 1986: 74, 79).

As in adventure films, a conversion process of sorts occurs in military operation films: the soldiers may be officially recruited at the outset, but some of them join in, mentally and morally, only at a later stage. According to Basinger (1986: 54) and Kane (1988: 95), in most of the genre's films, at least one recruit expresses doubts (possibly echoing ours) about his own skills, about those of his comrades, or about their commanders' leadership. By convention, the fundamental necessity of the mission is left unquestioned, along with the participation in the war. Eventually, the characters and the audience both learn that the doubts they may have initially harbored are groundless. If one of the soldiers undergoes a process of conversion, the members of the genre-specific structure of repetition assume a slightly different meaning for him: at first, during the preparatory stage, he only reluctantly falls into line, but by the time of enactment he grows fully devoted to the cause. The transformation in his mental and emotional attitude toward the plan also affects its chances of success.

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[57] For instance, in *The Princess Bride* the heroine is rescued and the villainous prince defeated with the help of a dim-witted giant, a drunken swordsman, and a timid retired wizard.

Forced recruitment to a cause is generally linked to positive-idealistic objectives and therefore is common in both adventure and military operation films—but heist films occasionally employ this measure, too. For example, in *Odds against Tomorrow* Johnny Ingram is a self-destructive gambler, but he is no fool and so is aware of the risks involved in robbing banks. It therefore takes an explicit threat to the lives of his daughter and his ex-wife to persuade him to join the heist. Thus, his recruitment by the gang offers a complex parallel to how cynical or selfish characters are persuaded to join worthy causes in adventure and military operation films.

In *The Killing*, inversely, one of the characters, Mike O'Riley, joins the project because he needs the money for the medical treatment of his invalid wife. His devotion to her sharply contrasts with the violence of other characters in the film who, like him, are broke—or not, as the case may be. The use in heist films of a convention borrowed from the heroism of adventure films and military operation films may add a social commentary or a moral question: Do ends justify the means, even when criminal?

A similar critical question arises in films of a subgenre of the military operation film, which Basinger (1986: 202–12) dubs the "dirty group" (see note 40). There, the forcible enlisting of the combatants reaches the point of satire. In *The Dirty Dozen*, for example, the characters must either join a heroic but risky operation, or face imprisonment for life or a death sentence. By contrast, in adventure and most military operation films, the need for heroism is usually not portrayed so cynically: characters join in the conviction (or renewed conviction) that the aim is important. The choice they make is genuine, not forced.

In conclusion, the comparison so far reveals a general rule, with generic variations. All protagonists in the classical Hollywood film are characterized by the principal goal they set out to achieve: by a member of forecast toward whose enactment they drive. The generic variations relate to how and when the narrative's protagonists and main goal are brought together. In heist and military operation films, this takes place early in the story, usually at the characters' own initiative (although sometimes the juncture occurs in response to pressure or institutionalized oppression). The member of forecast in either genre's first repetition structure focuses precisely on the characters shaping the goal that is central to them and to the story. In adventure films, on the other hand, the protagonist and the main goal may come together much later in the film—with time wasted, in the interim, on short-term or misguided objectives. But the protagonist then discovers the rightness and importance of the goal and joins the efforts to achieve it. In any event, all three genres include a second half that multiplies improvised responses to emergencies, so that the overall narrative unrolls more than one structure of repetition.

Another related feature that all three genres share is that the characters fail to realize their initial goal or preference: the uninitiated or selfish heroes of adventure films and the skeptical participants in military operation films outgrow their early indifference to the general good and take on their proper role; the criminals in heist films in turn do not generally become rich or content as expected. The differences among the three genres bear upon the reasons for the change in objectives, that is, ideological conviction as against circumstances. In heist and military operation films, the switch occurs about midnarrative, when a serious setback or problem calls for improvisation either to complete the enactment, or to make a safe getaway. In this respect, the noirish heist film may be the exact opposite of the adventure film, as concerns the relationship between planning and ultimate success. In adventure films spontaneity and lack of preparations do not appear to hamper a successful outcome of a difficult quest. In noirish heist films, however, even the best laid plans come to grief, because of factors beyond the participants' control.

The three genres also differ in the values underlying their heroes' goals and their efforts to attain them. In the military operation film, all the protagonists' objectives and endeavors—self-driven and reactive, initial and subsequent—are deemed to be positive, no matter what the actual outcome. In adventure and heist films, however, the initial actions are presented in a negative light: both the adventurer's frivolous pursuits and the robbers' on heist ultimately come to nothing. In the former genre characters who take up the challenge presented to them by the antagonist's forces, and so pursue heroic goals, ultimately triumph and accomplish even more than they had hoped for.

Thus, adventure films glorify not only normative morality but also optimism and humility. On the one hand, the protagonists sooner or later take risks and set out to achieve goals that are just and important but not very feasible in realistic terms. However, these goals become far more achievable when measured by the generic convention of "a change in fortune from misery to happiness"—that is, in terms of artistic probability. On the other hand, in view of their devotion and sacrifice, these same characters are ultimately rewarded far beyond what they had dared to wish for.

The main goal's improbability by normal human standards can explain the relatively long time it takes the protagonists to accept it. Usually, the odds weigh so heavily against the protagonists, in realistic terms, as to suggest that they are likely to fail. Any plan formed is almost desperate—at least in the eyes of the characters concerned, though not of the viewers, who refer the events to a higher, artistic frame. This appearance reinforces the surprise of the goal being achieved after all—especially for the protagonists. They (especially those destined to a conversion process) are often skeptical, cynical, realist, or just not inclined to voice their hopes and wishes, being men of action, rather than of words. Conversely, in heist and military operation films, optimism and self-assurance lead to the spelling out of goals and the ways and means to obtain them. In this light, it would appear that the military operation film stands somewhere between the heist film (which it resembles in the oppositional or symmetrical pattern of repetition structures and in tragic overtones, as noted earlier) and the adventure film (considering the similarly heroic and ethical nature of the protagonists' objectives).

The comparison among the three genres also reveals ideological variability. For instance, the detailed member of forecast at the start of heist and military operation films may be cast in a light either morally positive or negative, with success or failure to suit. Meager forecasts are also enacted with variable results. For instance, the absence of a detailed member of forecast in adventure films and in the second half of heist and military operation films (and the improvisation required as a result in the consequent member of enactment) can lead to failure or success, depending on the genre: failure in heist films, because the characters "deserve" to be punished; success in adventure films, because the characters "deserve" to succeed; and either outcome in military operation films, regardless of the characters' deserts.

Two conclusions follow. To begin with, the extent of the advance planning in the repetition structure, the moral valence of the enactment, and the outcome are all highly variable. Second, certain permutations have become entrenched in the conventions of specific genres, where they also gain specific moral and rhetorical significance (as we saw in *Paths of Glory*, *The African Queen*, and *Hot Millions*). The structure of repetition therefore functions in ways that shed light on generic variations in the classical Hollywood narrative—beyond the general model of exposition, complicating action, climax, and closure.

3. Some Further Lines of Inquiry

This study does not, of course, cover all the aspects of cinematic repetition structures that are worth noting and investigating in all corpora. But here are some further possible and promising lines of inquiry:

a. How characterization is based on the characters' tendency to voice or repeat members of forecast or of report. The comparative dominance of either type of member in the various discourses may indicate whether a character is oriented toward the future, the past, or the present, and may also suggest other personality traits.
b. Repetition structures in very long films, such as historical epics and biographies (e.g., *Gone with the Wind*; *Ben-Hur* [William Wyle 1959]; *Dr. Zhivago* [David Lea 1965]; *Gandhi* [Richard Attenborough 1982]; *Schindler's List* [Steven Spielberg 1993]). Specifically, are there repetition structures that are distinctively adapted to such films, given the fact that the greater length of such films puts an extra burden on the memory of the viewer?
c. In films series, how to convey effectively information that was already narrated in earlier parts of the series and to foreshadow narrative events to be realized (and if suspenseful, resolved) in latter parts or films, in a text that is transmitted by installments over long periods, such as *The Lord of the Rings* (three parts, *The Fellowship of the Ring* [Peter Jackson 2001]; *The Two Towers* [Jackson 2002]; and *The Return of the King* [Jackson 2003]), *Pirates of the Caribbean* (four films, *The Curse of the Black Pearl*; *Dead Man's Chest* [Gore Verbinski 2006]; *At World's End* [Verbinski 2007]; and *On Stranger Tides* [Rob Marshall 2011]), and the like? How can one part be effective in jogging memories of previous parts without boring the viewers who have already seen the earlier films in the series?
d. Repetition structures in fantasy genres, where characters have supernatural powers (e.g., cinematic adaptations of myths and legends, horror movies, or science fiction). How do the characters' abilities to read minds, to see the future, to cast a spell, to be invisible, and so forth affect the form, functions, and dynamics of the repetition structure in these films?
e. Modern and postmodern films, where the member of enactment (or its very occurrence) is uncertain. Such ambiguity may derive, for example, from the presence of competing members of enactment. So we come to wonder what eventually happened, if at all, in the depicted world (e.g., *Rashomon*'s) or in other possible worlds that run parallel to it (for instance, *Groundhog Day*; *Run Lola Run*; and *Sliding Doors* [Peter Howitt 1998]).
f. Again, concerning silent films, are there repetition structures that are specific to this art form? What effect is produced in this regard by the absence of speech (e.g., for forecasting or report) and the extensive use of captions in representing the story world?

g. Last, a few words on the special interest of repetition structures in television series with continuous narratives, such as *Twin Peaks* (Mark Frost and David Lynch 1990–91), *NYPD Blues* (Steven Bochco and David Milch 1993–2005), *ER* (Michael Crichton 1994–2009), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Joss Whedon 1997–2003), and *Homicide: Life on the Street* (Paul Attanasio 1993–99).[58] Here, a repetition plot may run its course within a certain episode, or stretch over several episodes in a given season, or even over several seasons.[59] How do the varying intervals between members determine (or motivate) the features of the repetition structure? What distinguishes members of forecast in repetition structures that extend over more than a single episode in a television series? Such structures, moreover, depend upon legal and financial factors, as well as artistic and rhetorical ones. For example, when an actor is committed by contract to a particular role for several seasons in advance, directors and scriptwriters can extend story lines that involve this character over several episodes. (Contrast another actor's guest appearance.) Similarly, members of forecast are influenced by the fact that television series usually have no fixed end date.[60]

Further research along these lines will reveal, among other things, a distinctive pattern in the approaches of directors or periods or cultures—as well as genres—to the re-presentation of events over time. Even questions familiar to us, by now, invite yet another viewpoint—authorial, historical, or cultural. Just glance at them from such viewpoints and you can sense the rise of new variations, differences, comparisons. For example, should an event be shown more than once—and if so, how? If portrayed as a memory, then whose? If presented as a plan to be realized later, then who is its originator? How should iterations relate to one another—as equivalents, complements, contradictions? And why? The questions promise to enrich and advance our understanding of cinematic repetition, and cinematic art more generally, with each change of framework.

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[58] On this topic, see the studies by Allrath et al. (2005: 1–46) and Hayward (1997).

[59] For example, in the British science fiction series *Dr. Who* (Russell T. Davis et al. 2005–), the story abounds in predictions (members of forecast), given that many characters can move freely back and forth in time, and some can even see into the future. In episode 11 of season 4, for example, Rose Tyler orders Donna Noble to join her in an alternative reality, where she has an important role in the plan to save the universe. In episode 13 of the same series, Rose's prediction is borne out: Donna becomes the savior of the universe, in spite of her humble origins and unexceptional skills.

[60] One interesting example is the television series *Firefly* (Joss Whedon 2002–3)—terminated after only one season because of low ratings. The series creator, Whedon, subsequently directed a film, *Serenity* (2005), based on parts of the script that he had prepared for the series's second season, which never materialized. To the delight of the series's small but devoted fan base, the film brings several of the open-ended story lines that arose in the first series to a satisfying, if somewhat hurried, conclusion. In repetition structural terms, the film provides (corresponding or contrasting) members of enactment for what appeared in the series as members of forecast. Compare the unexpected decision to terminate another television series by Whedon, *Angel* (David Greenwalt and Whedon 1999–2004), a few months before the end of the fifth and final season. In the final episode before it went off air, Whedon managed to incorporate quick (yet still realistic) resolutions of quite a few "forecasts" (plans, predictions, projections) that had engaged the characters throughout that season and in previous ones.

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Serenity (dir. Joss Whedon, 2005)
Sergeant York (dir. Howard Hawks, 1941)
Sliding Doors (dir. Peter Howitt, 1998)
Stalag 17 (dir. Billy Wilder, 1953)
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The Thin Red Line (dir. Terrence Malick, 1998)
Three Kings (dir. David O. Russell, 1999)
Topkapi (dir. Jules Dassin, 1964)
Twin Peaks (TV Series) (created by Mark Frost and David Lynch, 1990–91)
Up in Arms (dir. Elliott Nugent, 1944)
The Usual Suspects (dir. Brian Singer, 1995)
Wake Island (dir. John Farrow, 1942)
A Walk in the Sun (dir. Lewis Milestone, 1945)
We Were Soldiers (dir. Randall Wallace, 2002)
Yuva (dir. Mani Ratnam, 2004)

Appendix

This analysis is part of my doctoral dissertation (Shaham 2010). This fuller treatment also extends to repetition structures that are typical of screwball comedies, of certain styles (classical vs. modern), and of an auteur (Billy Wilder). Here is a quick overview of these further inquiries.

First, where the repetition structures of heist and military operation films organize all or much of the text, that deployed in screwball comedy most often takes one or two scenes. Moreover, this shorter extent typically involves a specific context, repetition form, and plot-related and rhetorical functions. There, the screwball protagonists find themselves, for one reason or another, in judicial or quasi-judicial settings, where they are obliged to give an account of their actions. Further, the ensuing repetition plot is well defined in turn: characters' testimonies not only count as members of report, but they report about events (members of enactment) previously shown. Hence the enactment → report(s) ordering. Finally, the repetition via report of plot that the viewers already know, by characters in a judicial context, serves certain generic (mainly comic) and rhetorical ends. My analysis shows how the characters' successful or unsuccessful attempts at self-defense (especially when played by popular and charismatic actors) also defend the scriptwriters and their texts against charges of improbability, violating censorship restrictions, and/or compromising the persona of the stars in the leading roles. The typical repetition structure of screwball comedies therefore helps reconcile the filmic text with various official and unofficial extratextual demands of the prevalent Hollywood conventions—the realist narrative code, censorship (the Hays Code), or the star system—without sacrificing the demands of comedy itself (see also Shaham 2000).

Second is the repetition structure in modernist films. The main difference between classical and modernist style is in the accessibility of the member of enactment in repetition structures, which itself involves a larger difference: between information transmitted from an objective and a subjective source, respectively (see Sternberg 1987a [1985]: 380–82). One of the reasons modernist texts are hard to understand is the difficulty we encounter in reconstructing the work's objective reality (above all, the action as it "really happened") from the subjective (limited, unreliable) reports, especially from retrospects made by characters on the action.

In classical Hollywood stories, the omniscient narrator gives a reliable account of objective reality. The member of enactment authoritatively establishes the action that took place. Similarly, the truth value of members of forecast or report is also clear, for better or worse: the text generally provides clues about the validity (or reliability) of the world mediated by them. All this sharply contrasts with the equivalent members in the repetition structures typical of modernism, cinematic and literary. Here, the member of enactment is either absent altogether from the text, or shown in such a way as to hinder its full and secure reconstruction. Nor do members of forecast and/or report compensate for this problematic reconstruction, since they, too, come from dubious sources.

I illustrate all this through a comparison of the repetition structures in two well-known modernist films: *Citizen Kane* and *Rashomon*. Both are organized around global repetition structures with multiple members of report, but with significant dissimilarities. *Rashomon* unfolds an elaborate repetition structure from which no coherent, unequivocal member of enactment may be reconstructed ("what really happened in the forest"). *Citizen Kane* presents viewers with an even greater interpretive challenge: apart from disabling a single and consistent interpretation of what happened in the fictional world and of Kane's personality ("who, or what, was he"), the film does not favor any of the diverse accounts of its meaning ("what is the film about").

Third is repetition structures in the films of Wilder, a Hollywood director and scriptwriter whose films span many genres (e.g., comedies, satires, drama, film noir, morality tales, escape films) over a long time. I show how a certain type of repetition structure keeps manifesting itself in his films across lines of genre, period, or tempo. It does not essentially vary, for example, according to whether the film is faster paced (as in the farce *One, Two, Three* [1961]) or slower paced than usual (as in the drama *The Lost Weekend* [1945]). Wilder used other techniques, instead, to compensate for the unusual tempo (such as a distorted chronology in a slow-paced film, or simple human motivation in a fast-paced one). The structure of repetition in Wilder's films serves not only as a common solution to compositional problems and exigencies, but also as a basis for a central theme — that of ambition and its consequences. An analysis of films such as *Double Indemnity*, *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), and *Ace in the Hole* (1951) reveals how his characters — in comedies and dramas alike — attempt to escape their fates, to hurry things along, to postpone the inevitable, to cut short tedious processes, or to revive past glory. And their denial of reality (of past, present, or future happenings) is reflected in the predominance of members of forecast and report over members of enactment in terms of number, extent, location, and so forth.