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Job and Orpheus. Models of Rhetoric of Suffering in Literature and Film

Pain exposure and suffering that accompanies and follows it are a model of every human experience as its extreme and radical realization. Therefore the topic seems to be scientifically fruitful as well as altogether interesting due to its universal character: each individual has a body, each is exposed to pain that one tries to verbalize. This work makes use of tools of verbal and visual rhetoric, which are supported by contexts of philosophy, anthropology and auxiliary sciences of medicine. Such methodological decisions determined the construction of this thesis: the selection of analysis materials and the choice of contexts used to interpret film and literary works were subordinated to two motives or – to use a rhetorical nomenclature – tropes of suffering. These tropes are represented by two figures of the patients: Biblical Job and Orpheus.

A figure of Job is bound to the idea of repetition as it was defined by Søren Kierkegaard in his *Repetition*. This notion has a philosophical as well as rhetorical dimension, since it is combined with a gesture of narrative repetition. In this part of the thesis I analyzed the philosophical and rhetorical notions of the idea of repetition in three film adaptations of Kafka's *The Trial* (by Welles, Thomas, and Jones) as well as in the original novel. I also put a quasi-biographical movie *Kafka* by Soderbergh in the same context.

Aside from Job, Orpheus is another figure used to create the suffering narrations. As the context of my deliberations I used a short essay by Maurice Blanchot *The Gaze of Orpheus* and its interpretations. In that part I reflected upon suffering discourse in Jean Cocteau's *Orphic Trilogy* (*The Blood of a Poet*, *Orpheus* and *Testament of Orpheus*) and in Marcel Camus' famous *Black Orpheus*.

What is so immensely intriguing, most of the films mentioned above deal with representations of collective suffering, social oppression, and real or symbolic power of authority and the politics of suffering they perform. We can observe it especially well in Welles' *The Trial*, the second part of *Orphic Trilogy* and *Black Orpheus* where the radical social diagnose is hidden behind the glittering carnival image. As a matter of fact the peculiar discretion is typical of all of the movies analyzed in this thesis: the language of suffering they make use of is always subtle and nuanced.

The appendix of the dissertation is dedicated to the another rhetorical mechanism of the pain experience depictions: a narrative of suffering. I tried to apply the conclusions of medical anthropology researches that distinguish the narration plots and knots of the patients' discourses to the structure of the movies that deal with what is called the terminal narrations and the narrations of chronic pain.