Chapter 1

Film and Dreams: A Theoretical-Historical Survey

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The spectator's state of mind is not unlike that of a dreamer. The darkness of the hall, the enervating effect of music, the silent shadow gliding across the luminous screen—everything conspires to plunge us into a dreamlike state in which the suggestive power of the forms playing before us can become as imperious as the power of the images appearing in our veritable sleep. Next morning, the incoherence of the dream can make us smile, while it seems amazing that we could have ever lent ourselves to such absurd adventures, incomprehensible to our waking mind. I have often noticed that filmgoers experience similar emotions. They become the plaything of illusion, having been carried away by a sequence of unpredictible actions or irresistible visual currents. When the lights go up, they are astonished at ever having yielded to the suggestions of these crazy shadows. As their critical sense reawakens, they smile at their credulity. Their contact with commonplace reality restores their everyday logic. They may even experience some contempt for the adventures which a few moments previously they had followed with such passionate attention. But we should not resent these lapses into ingratitude because they are homages to the suggestive power of cinema which possesses the ability to lure the mind so far beyond its habitual boundaries.

René Clair, 1926

Cinema is like a dream. . . . Watching movies is equivalent to daydreaming. . . . Motion picture images induce a hypnagogic state in the viewer's

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consciousness. . . . The psychophysiological identification with the movement of the camera through space activates the viewer's sensory-motor centers. . . . The perception of graphic patterns alternately repeated on the movie screen has hypnotic consequences. . . . The stroboscopic impact of the motion picture projection is mesmerizing in itself. . . . Cinema is oneiric in its very nature. . . .

These and similar observations on the relationship of film to dreams abound, yet rarely has the incontrovertible power which the cinematic expression of dreams exerts upon the viewer been explored through scholarly research or analytical study. Dream films, or dream sequences, especially in narrative cinema, seldom make use of the wealth of devices that are both peculiar to the film medium and capable of stimulating psycho-physiological responses characteristic of the oneiric state. Rather, illustrative-histrionic resources are utilized—mainly bizarre imagery and disjointed plot line—to depict the thematic aspect of dreams or the psychical distortions of the human mind.

It is my contention that when appropriate cinematic devices are used to convey dream imagery or altered states of consciousness, the viewer is given the opportunity not only to perceptually follow the dream content on the screen but to experience it sensorially, that is, in a way which approximates the process and impact of dreaming. This introduction isolates the works of those narrative filmmakers who treat dreams, the unconscious and various psychical states in a cinematic way. Along with this, current scientific exploration of the physiology of dreaming will be discussed in order to substantiate certain similarities between viewing films and dreaming. This will be followed by a brief survey of the treatment of dreams by narrative directors of both silent and sound cinema, with emphasis on Federico Fellini, Alain Resnais, Luis Buñuel and Ingmar Bergman, whose works often depict in a cinematic way dreams, the unconscious, and various anomalies of the human brain.

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In the entire literature concerned with the theoretical aspects of cinema, very little has been written on the physiological relationship between film and dreams, although the earliest "feature" films attempted to visualize dream events. Most often this relationship is considered on a thematic, not to say perfunctory level, without substantial probing into the similar processes of dreaming and film viewing. The earliest study to discuss this subject and to touch upon the psychology of cinema in general was written around 1916 by the Harvard professor Hugo Münsterberg. In "Memory and Imagination," a chapter of his analytical essay *The Film: A Psychological Study*, Münsterberg discerned that film "acts as our imagination acts: the photoplay obeys the laws of the mind rather than those of the outer world."[1] He particularly emphasized that "the theater can picture only how real occurrences follow one another, while the photoplay can overcome the interval of the future as well as the interval of the past. . . The screen may produce not only what we remember or imagine, but what the persons in a play see in their own

1. Hugo Münsterberg, *The Film: A Psychological Study* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1916). Reprinted by Dover Publications (New York, 1970), p. 41.

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minds."[2] In 1923 the French poet Robert Desnos published a brief one-page statement entitled "Dream and Cinema," which refers to the oneiric aspect of cinema in very general terms.[3] In 1925 the first issue of the famous French review, *L'Art cinématographique,* published an article, "The Psychological Value of the Image," written by Dr. René Allendy, discussing the "objective" and "subjective" connotation of the film image within a narrative context, and only marginally touching upon the oneiric impact of the film image which distorts reality.[4] René Clair, perhaps the most outspoken proponent of "pure cinema" in the 1920s, was among the first to note the similarity between dreaming and film viewing, as exemplified in the epigraph[5] cited at the beginning of this chapter.

A more substantial consideration of the relationship between film and dream can be found in Jean Epstein's essays written between 1921 and 1935 (*Bonjour, cinéma, Le Cinématographe vu d'Etna, Photogénie de l'imponderable*). As a theorist who practiced filmmaking, Epstein considers cinema to be *"surnaturel par essence"*: "I see what does not exist, and I perceive the unreal specifically."[6] In his book, *Le Cinéma du diable* (1947), Epstein concludes: "This machine [cinema] capable of stretching or condensing—by accelerated or slow motion—as well as dismantling real time, is an 'intelligent machine' which expounds relativity on all levels, and seems to provide a sort of psychosis (une sorte de psychisme]."[7] Another Epstein book carries the title *L'Intelligence d'une machine* (1946), testifying to his belief in cinema as a means of expression that conveys ideas and moods in its own unique way and which does not imitate novels or plays. This book contains several poetically written chapters about the oneiric capacity of the film medium, which Epstein brought to realization in some of his silent films that will be mentioned in the second part of this introduction. In the chapter entitled "Le Cinématographe, machine à rêver" (The camera, a machine for dreaming), Epstein discusses Freud's concept of how dream imagery is formed and applies it to the cinematic process. He infers that the two processes are similar on the structural level and that "in the language of dream, as in the language of cinema, images undergo a transformation of meaning and, at the same time, tend toward symbolization."[8] André Malraux picked up some of Epstein's ideas in his essay, "An Outline of

2. Münsterberg, pp. 41-42.

3. Robert Desnos' poem *L'Étoile de Mer* inspired Man Ray to make in 1928 a surrealist film collage of the same title, with multiple imagery that had some oneiric quality. Desnos' article, "Le Rêve et le cinéma," is included in the anthology *L'occhio tagliato: Documenti del cinema dadaista e surrealista,* ed. Gianni Rondolino (Torino: Martano, 1972), pp. 133-134.

4. Dr. Allendy, "La Valeur psychologique de l'image," *L'Art cinématographique* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1926), No. 1. Reprinted by Arno Press (New York, 1970), p. 75-103.

5. René Clair, *Reflections on the Cinema,* transl. Vera Traill (London: William Kimber, 1953), p. 68.

6. This statement is from *Bonjour, cinéma,* as quoted in Marcel L'Herbier's anthology, *Intelligence du cinématographe* (Paris: Correa, 1942), pp. 264-265.

7. This statement is from *Le Cinéma du diable,* as quoted in Henri Agel's *Esthetique du cinéma* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971), p. 20.

8. Jean Epstein, *L'Intelligence d'une machine* (Paris: Jacques Melot, 1946), p. 142.

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the Psychology of Cinema," comparing film to the novel or theater and their different methods of transforming real time and space into metaphorical visions. But Malraux, like André Breton in his essay "As in a Forest," does not focus on the problem of the unique processes occurring in the human mind during dreaming and film viewing.[9]

Among the first scholar-psychologists to approach this subject with an adequate professional responsibility as well as an understanding of the film medium was Dr. Serge Lebovici, a psychiatrist from Paris. In 1949 he published his essay "Psychoanalysis and Cinema," claiming that "film in all its aspects, especially its language and participants (actors), can be studied from the standpoint of the psychology of dreams." Lebovici inferred that neither the novel nor the theater uses a means of expression "so close to oneiric thinking (très proche de la pensée onirique)" and that "research related to the specifics of film language clearly shows its similarity to dream consciousness." Lebovici devoted much of the essay to his contention that "film, like dreams, does not express abstract ideas as such: it has to do this by way of concrete visual images, no matter how condensed and displaced in time and space."[10]

The majority of writings on the oneiric aspect of film, however, emphasizes the Surrealist tradition in cinema and treats dream imagery on the screen as if it were painted on canvas. Even Ado Kyrou, in his notable book *Surrealism and Cinema,* discusses the relationship between film and dreams—*thematically,* interpreting the films' dream content as a literary metaphor. In the chapter, "The Impossible: Fantoms and Dreams," Kyrou merely names the titles of the films with dream content, concluding that dream and film are "insolubly married" (se mariaient indissolublement), and that "cinematic oneirism (l'oneirisme cinématographique) is so powerful that we sail along that magnetic line where reality does not separate from dream." Writing about the specific films like L'Herbier's *Fantastic Night* (1942), Kyrou says: "Just as the heroes of *La Nuit fantastique* can not distinguish any more their dream from their real acts, we as spectators enter the screen because this is *our dream,* we are familiar with it, and we know how to experience it."[11] As one can realize, Kyrou is concerned only with dream content and not with the cinematic form chosen to convey it.

Most statements about the oneiric capacity of cinema fail to address the following essential questions: how do films and dreams form imagery? how do they reflect reality in that they are capable of both distorting it *and* making it extremely tangible? how do they affect the viewer/dreamer on both the psychological and the physiological level? and, above all, what cinematic means can be used to intensify the similarity between film and dream? Knowing that theoretical conclusions in art depend largely upon practical achievements, this situation in cinema study can be justified; not until recently did films begin to explore the subcon-

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9. Malraux's essay, *Esquaise d'un psychologie du cinéma,* is published also in book form (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), while Breton's essay "Comme dans un bois," appeared in the review *L'Age du cinéma,* No. 4-5, Paris, 1951.

10. Serge Lebovici, "Psychoanalyse et Cinéma," *Revue International de filmologie,* Tome: II, No. 5 (Paris, 1949-50), pp. 50, 51.

11. Ado Kyrou, *Le Surréalisme au cinéma* (Paris: Arcanes, 1953), p. 89.

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scious and other mental processes including dreaming, hallucinating and fantasizing. The problem is complicated by the fact that serious research involving the interrelationship between the two disciplines of psychology and cinema study, one already established (psychology) and the other just in the process of being formed (cinema study), demands that the researcher has a thorough understanding of the basic elements of the discipline which is not within the area of his/her own professional expertise. Indeed, in recent practice, either the researcher is a specialist in psychology/philosophy and knows nothing or very little about cinematic specificities, or he/she is a film theoriest without full knowledge of psychology and philosophy. Furthermore, a truly complete understanding of the oneiric nature of the film medium implies that the researcher is familiar with the basic elements of filmmaking, since the most striking (and subtle) relationship between film and dream stems from the specific techniques and methods of shooting, editing, composing and executing film shots.

More recently, Suzanne Langer, in her acclaimed book, *Feeling and Form,* launched the idea that film is like a dream in its presentation of events, emphasizing at the same time the basic differences between films and dreams, such as the fact that films can leap forward or backward in time, while dreams seem always to move forward (which is to say that dreams are essentially narrative in their development, while films can be totally without a narrative flow as well as extremely abstract). While this idea, as Langer admits, is taken from R. E. Jones (*The Dramatic Imagination: Reflections and Speculations on the Arts of Theatre,* 1941), her essay contains several other references to cinema and dream which are more original. Langer contends that cinema "creates a virtual present, an order of direct apparition," which does not mean that "it copies dream or puts one into a daydream." She also states that "the dreamer is always at the center of dream . . . always 'there,' so that his relation is equidistant from all events" (this point will be discussed later in the Introduction.) Finally, Langer places particular emphasis on the "immediacy of experience," "givenness," or "authenticity" of dream imagery and concludes that this is "what the art of the film abstracts from actuality, from our dreaming."[12] Recognizing the evident similarities between cinema and dream, many other contemporary theorists, and especially psychologists, find various common characteristics in both dream imagery and motion picture images. Professor George Linden, in his book *Reflection on the Screen,* writes about "a sense of bi-presence"[13] which the dreamer often experiences, i.e., the dreamer has a sense of being part of the dream and at the same time being a spectator of the dream. On the other hand, Linden emphasizes that the dreamer has "a sharp intensification of the sense of ownership," which is the reason why the dreamer considers his/her dream as "*my* dream and no one else's," while the film viewer experiences this sense only while watching a film that contains a strong ontological authenticity of the photographed environment. However, one can argue that we become equally removed from our dreams *after*

12. Suzanne Langer, *Feeling and Form* (New York: Scribners, 1970), pp. 411-415.

13. George Linden, *Reflection on the Screen* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1970), p. 173.

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awakening, since we recall them as something we have already experienced, i.e., we examine them in the form of a memory, or a vague recollection of dream imagery, just as we experience and recall film images after a screening.

The professor of philosophy, F. E. Sparshott, in his essay "Vision and Dreams in Cinema," offers a more elaborate discussion of the subject. He focuses on substantial similarities between films and dreams, approaching it from the psychological position of visual perception. Emphasizing the unique spatial relationship of the dreamer to his/her dream worlds, he notices that "it is like nothing in waking reality so much as it is like my relationship with the film world."[14] Professor Sparshott is, indeed, one of the first theorists to acknowledge the spatial experience as being unique for both dreaming and film viewing. Later we shall see how this statement complies with the most recent discoveries in the physiology of dreaming. Whether or not the film viewer is predominantly an "outside" spectator or a sensorially activated participant, he/she seems to relate both psychologically and/or physiologically to the film world *more intensely* and with a *greater sensory-motor involvement* than with any other art form.

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The similarity between the psycho-physiological processes occurring in the film viewer and the dreamer is the central issue in discussions concerned with the relationship between cinema and dreams. Some scholars consider that film viewing corresponds more closely to daydreaming than to any stage of the sleeping dream; this is supported by the fact that the daydreamer's consciousness is not entirely seized upon the inner vision as it is when a person dreams. Correspondingly, some psychologists suggest that the sensorial activation occurring during film viewing parallels, more closely, one particular type of dream, known as the "lucid dream" (i.e., a dream in which the dreamer is aware that he/she is actually dreaming.) Others find that film viewers experience a unique psychic sensation which approximates, in many ways, the *hypnagogic*[15]

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14. F. E. Sparshott, "Vision and Dream in Cinema," *Philosophic Exchange*, Summer 1971 (New York: State University of New York at Brockport), p. 115. Professor Sparshott's characterization of the dreamer's spatial relationship to his/her dream worlds and his contention that the dreamer is a kind of observer who participates without contact is challenged by another philosopher, Robert Curry, in his article "Film and Dreams" (*Journal of Aesthetic and Art Criticism*, Fall 1974, Vol. 33, pp. 83-89). Curry argues that "the dreamer's relationship to his dream world is almost never such as to be correctly characterized on the model of the recipient of a visual image like that of a photograph or a film" (p. 84). Insisting that the film camera is, basically, the "recorder" of events, Curry concludes that "dream worlds are lived worlds, and even when the dreamer is a kind of spectator of his dreams what he sees in a fundamental respect is unlike what he sees as a spectator of a film" (p. 85). Yet, with due respect to this claim, what the film viewer sees on the screen is more like what he sees and experiences in his dreams than what he sees and experiences while observing a painting, photograph, the theater or a television show.

15. There are two transitional states of conciousness: one preceding and the other succeeding the four stages of dreaming. Charles Tart describes them in the following way: When we lie down to sleep at night, there is a period of time in

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sensation characteristic of the transitional period between sleep and the waking state of consciousness. This contention supports the hypothesis that the mood and feelings permeating the film viewer are not (and how can they be?) *identical* to the feelings stimulated in people while they are dreaming, but rather *similar*— in many ways—to those associated with transitional states of consciousness, as well as specific types of dream. Or, to put it differently, the film viewer's "willing suspension of disbelief" (as Coleridge formulated the reader's readiness to accept the fictional world in literature), is comparatively stronger in cinema than in other arts. Hence, it seems legitimate—as well as useful—to emphasize the similarities rather than the dissimilarities between film and dreams, the latter being obvious and widely discussed in most of the theoretical articles dealing with the phenomenological aspect of this medium.

The fundamental similarity between "lucid dream" and film viewing is that, in both cases, a person is "aware" of dreaming or film viewing. In this type of dream, the imagery perceived and situations experienced are acknowledged as belonging to a dream; nevertheless, the dreaming person is so overwhelmed by the "authenticity" of the dreamed event that his or her suspension of disbelief is absolute. In other words, the awareness of being asleep does not diminish the psycho-physiological response to the dreamed event. A similar phenomenon exists in cinema: the spectator's realization of being seated in the darkness of the theater in no way diminishes the emotional and sensorial participation in the event occurring on the screen. To be more specific, it reduces the sensorial participation of the viewer to a lesser degree than is the case in any other medium. This intensity of participation is unique to cinema, and it can be strengthened by devices specific to the medium (camera movement, montage, wide screen, 3-D, color, stereophonic sound, etc.), as well as by the comfort of the seats in a movie auditorium (a component often neglected in judging the impact of a film on the viewer). Related to this, the illogical events presented on the movie screen do not preclude an inner sensorial experience of it. The intense emotional and physical involvement induced by film images upon the viewer marks the difference between an inactive body and an intense sensory-motor response. Although other arts are also dependent upon the psychological participation of the spectator, they do not evoke such intense *sensory-motor reactions* as cinema; even theater and television spur less physiological stimulation, which, in turn, allows the viewer to be more detached and hence more critical of the photographed events. This is largely due to the distance of the proscenium from the audience and the fixed point of view of the theater viewer: the seated spectators do not become *physiologi-*

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which it would be difficult to say with any certainty whether we are awake or asleep. This borderline period has been termed the *hypnagogic* period. The transitional state that occurs when we awake *from* sleep is called *hypnopompic* period." Charles Tart, "Between Waking and Sleeping: The Hypnagogic State," *Altered States of Consciousness* (New York: Anchor Books, 1972), p. 75. In film theory, however, the term "hypnagogic" is used as a general term to indicate both borderline periods, i.e., the one occurring before and the one occurring after the sleep. Also, some contemporary film theorists use this term to describe the oneiric aspect of non-narrative films or to single out the specific movement in the avant-garde cinema, such as are "hypnagogic films" made by certain new American filmmakers.

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cally involved in the event occurring on the stage, regardless of whatever emotional identification they may experience with the plot and the characters. The same is typical—albeit to a lesser degree—of the new, innovative theatrical forms as well, including theater-in-the-round. Similarly the small size of television screens, the flatness and grainy texture of the TV image, as well as the circumstances under which television shows are watched keep the viewer even more removed from the aired show. Many other psychological and physiological factors peculiar to the nature of theater and television also contribute to the detachment of the viewer from the show and consequently increase the judgmental control of the viewer's mind. The television image originates from a small area within the visual field (i.e., TV set in the room); during viewing, this small area is perceptually attenuated at the expense of the rest of the visual field. Hence the viewer is continuously prevented from a *full* identification with the event occurring on the small screen. Contrary to this, in the process of film viewing the full size movie screen captures the viewer's perceptual attention almost entirely, so that the identification with the event developing on the screen is much greater. This degree of perceptual involvement and psychological identification of the viewer with the photographed event is crucial for the oneiric impact of the cinematic medium.

Modern laboratory research in sleep and dreaming has pointed to several distinct physiological responses during sleep. One in particular is comparable to the viewer's inner activities that occur during film viewing; they can be related to the "high dream," which Charles Tart describes as "the great intensification of sensory activity and the dropping out of ordinary intellectual activity to the point where the dreamer no longer experiences the usual split between the knower and the known."[16] Tart claims that the state of consciousness aroused by the "high dream" is similar (though not necessarily identical) to dreams induced by chemical psychedelic agents. In such a state of mind, the person feels estranged from the self, although the feeling of alienation does not prevent full participation in the dream event either emotionally or physiologically. Parallel to this, the process of film viewing causes identification of the viewer with the events occurring on the screen which, in turn, activates sensory-motor centers or paralyzes muscular activity, a sensation often felt in "high" and "lucid" dreams.

The claim that cinema is oneiric and hypnotic in its nature rests on the stroboscopic principle of motion picture projection which keeps film viewers in total darkness for almost half of their viewing time, depending on the shutter mechanism. Although viewers are not directly aware of this, the movie screen becomes invisible for thirty minutes during the projection of a full-length feature film, which ordinarily lasts ninety minutes. The viewers' perception inevitably responds to these constant flashes of darkness on the screen (intensified by the inevitable flickering of the image), which has a subliminal physiological and psychological impact on the viewers' neural systems. Another fact must also be acknowledged: perception of a film occurs in a dark environment, considerably isolating the viewer both from the surrounding atmosphere as

16. Charles Tart, "The 'High' Dream: A New State of Consciousness," *Altered States of Consciousness*, p. 174.

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well as from the other members of the audience; this isolation is more intense than a similar isolation experienced when one perceives works in other arts, including theater. This parallels the darkness associated with sleeping: the typical ninety-minute duration of a film is analogous to the regular ninety-minute cycle of a person's dreaming while asleep. Finally, the position of the viewers' bodies—relaxed and comfortable—is similar to the position they assume when they sleep and dream. However formal, these facts and circumstances must have at least some oneiric and/or hypnotic impact on the film viewers and their perception of the film image, which can enhance the film's dream content.

The oneiric/hypnotic nature of cinema also contributes to reducing the viewers' critical reflections during film screening, regardless of whether or not they accept the film's content. The psychophysiological involvement in the projected motion picture image therefore forces the viewers to suspend, at least temporarily, a moral judgment on and subjective censorship of the perceived content; more than with any other art, the movie audience accepts events on the screen without substantial and instantaneous ethical or ideological reservations. Aware of this phenomenon, Sergei Eisenstein tried to subvert the "mesmerizing power" of narrative cinema by employing "intellectual montage" with the intention of diverting the viewers' psychological participation in the action occurring on the screen, i.e., to eliminate the hypnagogic impact of the motion picture image and instead encourage the viewers' mental capacities to think about and comment upon the projected shots as they appear on the screen. On the other hand, Eisenstein also tried to reinforce the hypnagogic impact of cinema by using other forms of cutting, especially dynamic and metric montage which prevail in his early films.

Because of the unique oneiric/hypnotic power of cinema, the interpretation of a film's content occurs predominantly *after* viewing, just as the interpretation of a dream is possible only after the dreamer awakes. In responding to other arts, including theater and television, the viewers are prompted to begin their interpretation of the perceived content *during* a show, especially in productions which rely on some kind of stylization (Brecht established "Verfremdungs Effekt" in theater for this specific purpose). In cinema, the interpretation of a film's content is based almost entirely on a vague recollection of events as already seen on the screen, just as the interpretation of dreams involves only the recollected segments of the dream. This may seem paradoxical since both dreams and films consist of vivid visual material yet are not easily recalled, even immediately after they occur. Freud emphasized that dreams are remembered mostly in fragments and that we retain only a general impression about a dream, rather than a precise recollection of its sequential development. In discussing the question "why dreams are forgotten after waking," Freud wrote: "We often have the feeling that we have remembered a dream in part and that there was more of it during the night; we can observe, too, how recollection of a dream, which was still lively in the morning, will melt away, except for a few fragments, in the course of a day; we often know we have dreamt without knowing *what* we dreamt."[17] One year later, in 1901, Freud returned to this issue inferring

17. Sigmund Freud, "Why Dreams Are Forgotten after Waking," *The Standard Edition*, ed. James Strachey, Vol. IV (London: Hogarth Press, 1953), p. 13.

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that "the forgetting of dreams, too, remains inexplicable unless the power of the psychical censorship is taken into account," and that "the forgetting of dreams is tendentious and serves the purpose of resistance."[18] Parallel to this, once a screening is over, reconstruction of even a short sequence is an arduous process, let alone a sense of the order of shots or the composition of a single frame. Of course, a general subjective notion and emotional impression of the projected shots are retained, but in order for all their features to be discerned, they have to be viewed over and over again. The vagueness of the memory may, of course, stem from different sources; yet they are related on the psychological level. In the case of dreaming, it results from the hazy mental activity surrounding even the most simple dreams, from repression and from the unusual immediate intrusion of the real world upon the fragile mental threads that connect the wakened dreamer with his/her dreams. With films, however, one retains a much stronger impression at the conclusion of the screening, and the difficulty in carrying out the precise film imagery is due to the limitation of long term memory and degree of involvement of the viewer's mental apparatus during screening. Yet with all these limitations, the capacity of remembering a film sequence or a shot is weaker than the capacity of recalling an image created in the reader's mind. This may be related to the fact that both in film and dreams it is not the plot which impresses the viewer so much; rather, numerous dynamic visual details affect sensory-motor centers, an experience much different from when one reads a novel or watches a theater performance.

The parallel is evident: while the sleeper's self-control resumes command *upon awakening* from a dream, the censorial consciousness of the film viewer begins to function *after the screening of a film* and is related to the subsequent recollection of it. Whereas suspension of disbelief in the dreamer is absolute, in cinema it is variable, but considerably stronger than in any other art. The greater the stimulation of the film viewer's sensory-motor centers, the greater the abatement of his critical judgement. Many untraditional filmmakers try to counteract this phenomenon of psycho-physiological arousal in the film viewers, so that they may have a dispassionate response towards the photographed events and make immediate critical comments on the thematic and formal aspects of the images projected on the screen.

In addition to the difficulty of recalling the details of a dream, the awakened dreamer has an even greater problem in verbalizing the dream, or, more precisely, in sustaining the memory of the dream experience. The general feelings with which we emerge from a dream are the strongest, and they are described in ambiguous terms ranging from the pleasurable, through the mysterious, to those emotions revealing unalloyed and inexplicable anxiety. The evanescent details, ambiguous feelings, and transient images associated with the dreamed event are identified by Silvano Arieti as being aspects of endoceptual memory:

> The endocept goes beyond the cognitive stage of the image, but inasmuch as it does not reproduce anything similar to perceptions, it is not easily recognizable, and it cannot be translated into a verbal expression; it remains at a

18. Freud, "The Forgetting of Dreams," *The Standard Edition*, Vol. V, pp. 512-513.

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preverbal level and although it has an emotional component, it does not expand into a clearly felt emotion.[19]

Arieti's characterization of the endoceptual memory of dreams is surprisingly similar to Sergei Eisenstein's concept of the "overtonal experience" of a film which, according to him, cannot be expressed verbally because of the interaction of the many conflicting auditory-visual elements experienced in the process of viewing. Eisenstein explained that "the visual overtone is proved to be an actual piece—and actual element of—a fourth dimension," and that the sensations remembered by the viewer after screening a film are "physiological in response, while they are 'psychical' in perception, which is merely the physiological process of a *higher nervous* activity."[20] During the screening of the "Mowing Contest Sequence" in his film *Old and New*, Eisenstein related that he "saw the most impressionable members of the audience quietly rocking from side to side at an increasing rate of speed as the shots were accelerated by the montage dynamism."[21] At the end of the screenings, however, the viewers' recollection of the sequence was "approximate"; they were incapable of describing it verbally, yet they continued to feel a strong emotional excitement which is characteristic of the endoceptual memory of dreams.

The suspension of the mind's critical faculty, both in dreaming and film viewing, generates the resistance to "bad dreams" as well as to films in which the spectators are led to identify with physically unpleasant situations. The sensation, for example, of spinning or falling through space both in dreams and in films may cause drowsiness, anxiety or depression, accompanied by emotional stresses which continue after the dreaming or film viewing is over. Generally considered pathological in dreams, excitement of this type can serve aesthetic purposes in cinema. Although it is widely exploited in the production of trivial horror movies, this physiological stimulation has great potential for dream cinema.

Recognizing that dreaming and film viewing share certain psychophysiological characteristics, the laboratory researchers Bertini, Lewis, and Witkin (from the Psychology Laboratory and the Psychiatric Treatment Research Center of the Department of Psychiatry, SUNY, Downtown Medical Center, Brooklyn, New York) conducted experiments to explore the hypnagogic state of a sleeping mind and to find "what dream-like transformation of elements from an exciting film may occur during the experimental-hypnagogic interval in some subjects, not only when they were at their regular sleep time, but at other times of the day."[22]

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19. Silvano Arieti, *Creativity,* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), pp. 54-55.

20. Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form* . . .

21. Eisenstein, ibid., p. 80. This statement is very close to Slavko Vorkapich's explanation of the kinesthetic sensation stimulated by motion picture images. Vorkapich's definition of kinesthesia will be quoted later.

22. M. Bertini, Helen B. Lewis, and Herman A. Witkin, "Some Preliminary Observations with an Experimental Procedure for the Study of Hypnagogic and Related Phenomena," *Altered States of Consciousness*, p. 96. H. A. Witkin and H. B. Lewis wrote another article on "The Relation of Experimentally Induced Presleep Experience to Dream," in *Journal of American Psychoanalytical Association*, Vol. 13, 1965, p. 819. Also, D. Folkes and A. Rechtschaffen wrote the article, "Presleep Determinants of Dream Content: Effect of Two Films," in *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, Vol. 19, 1964, p. 983.

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The experiment consisted of a short black-and-white silent film screened to a group of chosen subjects. The segment "showed a mother monkey hauling her dead baby about by the arms and legs and nibbling at it." The film's montage structure consisted of "many scenes [evidently shots] of the dangling legs of the dead baby,"[23] which had an enthralling effect on the subjects. Obviously, it was not merely the theme of the film that affected the subjects' consciousness, but also the visual movement and montage by which the event was presented on the screen: the optical dynamism of the images emphasized by the recurrent movement of the mother monkey within the shots, as well as the inserted details (close-ups) of the dangling legs. After the screening, the subjects were asked to relax with closed eyes in the course of "the experimental-hypnagogic period," which lasted for about an hour subsequent to the showing. As the test period progressed, strong visual and auditory imagery was experienced, imagery oneiric in quality and characterized by motion through space. Some of the comments were: "travelling at a very fast speed . . . riding on a subway train . . . coming out of the tunnel right onto the lawn, then going underground again."[24] As common dream experience of "descent" and identifying with the object in motion, these subjects indicated by their comments that their recollection of feelings was *kinesthetic,* similar to the feeling provoked by the act of watching the film clip.

It is not unusual in modern psychiatry that cinema is used in treatment of patients, especially as part of the Rorschach test. Dr. Harvey Greenberg—psychiatrist and movie addict—admits in his book, *The Movies on Your Mind* (1975), that discussing films with his patients helps him learn more about their psychic traumas. He writes: "If the screen is the the master hypnotist and if cinema is a species of dream and fantasy within the public domain, then it is legitimate for the professional decipherer of restless dreams and errant visions—the psychoanalyst—to interpret films for us."[25]

Another characteristic of the hypnagogic state of consciousness is the condensation—both symbolic and rhythmic—of dream images: they are recalled in compressed clusters. In films, also, shots succeed each other at varying speeds, compressing numerous optical data within a single sequence. As in dream imagery, film shots instantaneously fuse into visual metaphors which, according to Stanley Burnshaw, enable the poetic imagination to compress "in a single picture, multiplicity of references ignoring the limitation imposed by the demands of logic"[26]—a statement in accord with the Freudian concept of "Verdichtung,"[27] i.e., the state of mind in dreams as well as in the creative process which coalesces separate pictures into a single symbolic image. This is also true of the cinematic image: through condensation by montage, the most prosaic sequence of shots becomes "overburdened with a variety of references that embody meanings too elusive to identify and

23. Bertini, Lewis, and Herman, pp. 96-97.

24. Bertini, Lewis, and Herman, p. 95.

25. Harvey R. Greenberg, M.D., *The Movies on Your Mind* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1975), p. 9.

26. Stanley Burnshaw, *The Seamless Web* (New York: George Braziller, 1970), p. 95.

27. In his writings, Freud also uses other German terms for condensation and compression of imagery in dreams, such as "Verschmelzung" (fusion, amalgamation), and "Mischbildungen" (mixed formations).

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ultimately impossible to talk about clearly."[28] The more condensed the montage sequence, the more elusive is its meaning (i.e., the connotative link between the brief, often subliminally perceived shots), and, consequently, the more difficult is the attempt to describe it verbally. Moreover, a dynamic montage of shots can incite a vertiginous feeling similar to the unpleasant sensation caused by the visual flashes appearing in nightmarish dreams. But the unpleasant sensation experienced in a dream can be creatively transformed into an exciting cinematic sensation that enhances both the poetical and metaphorical meaning of a dream sequence. The camera movement is capable of stimulating such sensory-motor and vestibular sensations in the film viewer, while dynamic montage parallels the condensation of images characteristic of nightmares and exuberant dreams.

It is important to note here that the most intensive condensation of dream imagery takes place at a particular stage of a sleeping dream, apparently in the *hypnagogic* stage, which, in this case, must be distinguished from the *hypnotic* state of consciousness. The hypnagogic state of mind may be best induced by the illusion of physical penetration through space during film viewing; the hypnotic state of mind may be successfully achieved by an intensive perceptual concentration of the eyes upon objects which, as abstract graphic signs, change and move perpetually over a flat surface of the screen. Unconfined camera movement through space (especially within the three-dimensional image) may stimulate the hypnagogic state in the viewer's mind; on the other hand, the hypnotic state of mind may be stimulated by the movement of abstract graphic forms (including those produced by a computer) projected on a screen with a reduced illusion of perspective. But unlike the hypnagogic state, the hypnotic one causes very little, if any, physiological activity in the viewer, and with low intensity of kinesthesia. Animated and computer films, which distort objects photographically, generate such hypnotic state independent of the film's narrative developent. The hypnotic state caused by moving (and flattened) optical patterns projected on the screen lacks spatial dimension and as such can be related to "visual flashes" in dreams. These intensify the optical bizarreness of the *milieu* in which a dream event occurs. In many Expressionist films, brief sequences composed of numerous photographically distorted images superimposed upon each other form an abstract conglomeration (amalgamation) of differently moving forms to illustrate the hallucinatory dreams or fantasies of the characters. Known as "UFA" effects,[29] these sequences differ essentially from the montage sequences in which the photographed events/objects preserve their ontological authenticity (i.e., their figurative appearance as they exist in reality), no matter how rapidly the shots replace one another on the screen.

Since the viewer's perception of an abstract film eliminates the feeling of ontological authenticity and the illusion of spatial depth on the screen, the hypnotic state (in non-narrative animated graphics) replaces the

28. Burnshaw, p. 95.

29. The term is derived from the title of the German national film production company (Universal Film A. G.), founded in 1917 by a merger of several smaller companies. UFA Enterprises possessed excellently equipped studios with technical facilities capable of producing the most sophisticated optical effects.

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hypnagogic state (in narrative dream films). Animated and cartoon films generate such a hypnotic state upon the viewer because the movement of graphic patterns and forms within a flat surface is inherently soporific; they fail to stimulate a hypnagogic state no matter how bizarre and hallucinatory their imagery on a graphic-thematic level.

A physiological reaction is not provoked by all dreams, and consequently one cannot generalize and say that all dreams generate visceral sensation. There are dreams which do not substantially differ from our perception of reality in the awakened state. Such dreams are veritable copies of the environments and events we have experienced or could have experienced in life; they are realistic and credible in every detail and do not contain any spatial or temporal distortion. They may contain somewhat bizarre situations, yet are insufficient to function as the generator of the hypnagogic state in the dreamer, be it anxious or pleasant. After awakening, the dreamer merely feels surprised by the strange combination of elements or the unnatural course of events but is not emotionally "possessed." Take for example a dream in which the dreamer is located in a beautiful castle, walking through its exotic parks, over brooks and vast fields; suddenly, the dreamer comes to a wall, climbs it and realizes that this entire environment is flying through the air. The dreamer, of course, accepts this fact as "natural" and continues to walk, enjoying the landscape. Transmitted to the screen, this imagery would not differ from any realistic film photographed in an authentic exotic location, and the shot of the castle flying in the air would not possess oneiric implication; it might be visually stunning but without hypnagogic energy. This is why fairy tales on the screen—with flying castles, flying carpets and flying saucers—are bereft of dream-like impact, despite the effectiveness of their optical tricks.

Most film directors do not emphasize the cinematic distinction between oneiric and realistic sequences. Instead, the only indication that an event represents a dream or vision is usually conveyed by narrative or structural implications; the audience realizes that what they see on the screen represents a dream because of the stylized mise-en-scène, the symbolic use of sound and music, or by the realization that the characters in the sequence appear in a different mental state from their existence in reality—i.e., adult characters represented as when they were children, or the appearance of characters who have already died prior to or in the course of the plot development. Luis Buñuel, Alain Resnais and Carlos Saura, for example, conceive their films in this manner: they insist on a complete interfusion of oneiric and realistic events so that the viewer can only speculate as to what is meant to be reality and what is the product of a dreaming brain. Other directors such as Dziga Vertov, Akira Kurosawa, Miklós Jancsó and Francis Coppola are not preoccupied with dream material; they do employ some specific cinematic devices which generate oneiric impact in certain sequences, although their narrative structure does not involve dreams or stream-of-consciousness. The emphasis of this essay is on the very nature of dream imagery, especially its psycho-physiological impact on the viewer. There is no doubt that dream imagery affects the viewers' sensory-motor centers in a way quite different from their perception of reality, even when dream imagery is a veritable reproduction of the objective world. In the process of dreaming, our neural and muscular systems respond differently to various situations

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in spite of the fact that we accept them as reality. In essence, this unique aspect of dreaming parallels the impact of some cinematic devices on the film viewer. This impact is the subject which must be studied by both film theorists and psycho-neurologists.

Ninety-nine percent of commercial films use dreams only as the narrative material or as a contribution to a literary interpretation of the film plot.[30] Concerned exclusively with dream-like story, such films are no more than verbal dream reports to be resolved by the symbolic reading of the narrative, behavior of the characters, dramatic situations, and scenery. In line with this attitude, modern semiologists analyze films in the same manner; they approach a film as they study a novel or fairy tale, using the same terms for a literary description of a dream event as well as for a cinematic presentation of it; they refer to both as the "text" (and they have in mind the *completed film*, not just the written script). In fact, this only confirms that most "dream" films do not provide a different aesthetic experience from reading about the same dream content described in a novel or short story. Instead of being transposed into equivalent cinematic dream imagery, the verbal description of dream events is literally illustrated by moving images.

Freud dedicated a great deal of his research and thinking to the symbolism of dream imagery. He claimed that "dreams make use of any symbolizations which are already present in unconscious thinking because they fit better with the requirements of dream-construction on account of their representability and also because as a rule they escape censorship."[31] Most of this statement can be applied to cinema: the symbols on the screen function best when they are presented in the form of a representative film image (shot). The concluding part, however, is less applicable to cinema because symbolization in cinematic structure is rarely intended to circumvent subliminal censorship (although this is not necessarily true in extremely personal films). Generally, cinematic dream symbols replace subliminal censorship by creative intuition in an attempt to avoid the political and moral censorship of a given society. In cinema, symbolization has a more direct function related to the aesthetic unity of the film as a whole: its main goal is to suffuse the representability of the motion picture image with a poetic impact and to assure its deeper metaphorical meaning.

The most pertinent distinction between dream symbols and cinematic symbols stems from the way they are recognized. We become aware of the dream symbol's meaning only after awakening, i.e., when we begin to

30. Besides Freud's classical method of interpreting dreams, there is an interesting recent paper dealing with the narrative/dramatic aspect of dreams, "What Is the Dreamer Who Dreams the Dream, and Who Is the Dreamer Who Understands It?" by James S. Grotstein, M.D., *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1979, pp. 111-169. Grotstein's general conclusion is that dream is "a passion play insofar as it is the testimonial staging of the performance of and witnessing of the experience of passionate release," and that the dream is "the quintessence of narrative" and that "narrative is that artistic and awesome arrangement in a linear, plot-oriented sequential form of a story which absorbs the passionate outcries of psychic disturbances and perturbations and permits these outcries to 'tell the story' in a special and pre-ordained way (according to the laws of narrative) so that the story may be told—and heard" (p. 116).

31. Freud, *The Standard Edition*, Vol. XV, p. 158.

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interpret our dreams. On the other hand, we get at least a hint about the meaning of a cinematic symbol during a screening because one segment of our critical mind always responds to the superstructure of the filmed event. Although relatively weak, the film viewer's critical mind accepts the filmed event simultaneously as both fact and metaphor (especially if it is appropriately conveyed by cinematic means). For example, the film viewer inevitably comprehends the symbolic implication of the clock without hands (*Wild Strawberries*), the tripled sun in the sky (*The Passion of Anna*) or the Lady in Black (*Face to Face*). Bergman's presentation of these objects, natural phenomena, and people alludes to their deeper symbolic meaning regardless of their role in the film's narrative structure.

According to Freud, "dreams make use of symbolism for the disguised representation of their latent thoughts,"[32] which means that their role is protective and that the dreamer must determine their broader implication. Cinema, on the other hand, makes use of symbolism to enhance the metaphorical meaning of the filmmaker's concept and to increase the poetical impact of the photographed object, event or character. Being symbolic does not automatically infer an oneiric quality—many other cinematic components must be attributed to the film imagery in order to make it truly dream-like. The interpretation of dream symbols in cinema is, therefore, less significant for the oneiric impact of a film than the way they are presented on the screen. If Freud stated that "the interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind,"[33] then the cinematic presentation of dream symbols is "the royal road" to their sensory-motor experience in the course of watching a film. The greater the intensity of this experience, the deeper the metaphorical and poetical meaning of a dream film.

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As one can see, the study of the oneiric aspects of cinema in terms of the psychoanalytical teaching of Freud is relevant to an interpretative analysis of the film narrative. It facilitates the thematic and dramatic reading of the film script and the literary meaning of the photographed event; however, it does not contribute to the exploration of the perceptual impact of dream films. To understand this unique aspect of dream cinema it is useful to focus on the research done by neuro-psychologists Allan Hobson and Robert McCarley, whose recent discoveries throw more light on the isomorphism between dreaming and film viewing. This isomorphism helps understand the uniqueness of the motion picture medium in creating an oneiric mood in film viewers, activating their sensory-motor centers in a way similar to the stimulation that occurs while dreaming. Hobson and McCarley's research on the physiology of dreaming, neurobiology, and brain science indicates that the brain is the major physiological power source of dream imagery and is largely responsible for all distortions and sublimations of dreamed events. This hypothesis, apparently, challenges—if not disclaims—many concepts integral to the Freudian interpretation of dreams. Moreover, this

32. Freud, *The Standard Edition*, Vol. IV, p. 214.
33. Freud, *The Standard Edition*, Vol. V, p. 608.

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hypothesis opens a new avenue for studying the specifics of the film medium, especially its capacity to stimulate a dream-like experience in a way no other art can match.

Let us begin with Hobson and McCarley's definition of dream:

> Dream is a mental experience occurring in sleep, which is characterized by hallucinatory imagery, predominantly visual and often vivid; by bizarre elements due to such spatio-temporal distortions as condensation, discontinuity, and acceleration; and by delusional acceptance of these phenomena as "real" at the time that they occur; strong emotion may or may not be associated with these distinctive formal properties of the dream, and subsequent recall of these conscious events is almost invariably poor, unless an immediate arousal from sleep occurs.[34]

In contrast to Freud's well-known statements about the condensation, distortion and displacement of events in dreams,[35] the Hobson-McCarley definition of the same phenomena places a particular emphasis upon the "delusional acceptance" of dreams as "real" at the time of dreaming. This is of considerable significance for cinema study since the illusion of the "absolute reality" of dream events can be recreated on the screen with great verisimilitude. It is known as the *ontological authenticity* of the motion picture image; the term indicates that, by its nature, the film medium gives the impression that what appears on the screen is "real," i.e., represents a faithful reproduction of objects and events as they exist in reality. This is one reason why a distorted film image has a hypnotic rather than hypnagogic impact, hence uncommon to dream imagery. In a hypnotized mind, preconscious thoughts are captured by a kind of anesthesia, paralyzed in forming images, and not participating in them psycho-physiologically. In a hypnagogic state of mind the preconscious thoughts are active in forming images, fully participating in their development and stimulating the dreamer's neural system.

The psychoanalytical dream theory claims that the basic function of dreams is to discharge the unconscious and to serve as a guardian of sleep. In 1970 David Hawkins inferred that the results of the psychophysiological research "which includes information unavailable to Freud indicates a need for revision of Freud's original hypothesis." Hawkins wrote: "We now know that the D-state of sleep (and presumably also dreaming) is a repetitive, virtually automatic phenomenon which, except under unusual circumstances, occupies the same amount of time each night. Hence, we might think of things really the other way around and

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34. This definition is fully elaborated in Hobson and McCarley's papers, "The Neurobiological Origins of Psychoanalytic Dream-Theory," and "The Brain as a Dream State Generator: An Activation-Synthesis Hypothesis of the Dream Process," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 134, Nos. 11,12 (Washington, 1977), pp. 1211-21, 1335-48.

35. In his article on psychoanalysis (written in 1929 for a German encyclopedia), Freud stated: "By operation of the dream-work (to which it would be quite incorrect to ascribe any 'creative' character), the latent dream thoughts are *condensed* in a remarkable way, they are *distorted* by the displacement of physical intensities, they are arranged with a view of being *represented in visual pictures;* and besides all this, before the manifest dream is arrived at, they are submitted to a process of *secondary elaboration* which seeks to give the new product something in the nature of a sense of coherence." *Collected Papers,* ed. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1950), Vol. V, pp. 114-115.

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say that sleep insures dreaming."[36] Other neurologists involved in dream research supported this criticism of the Freudian explanation of the dream's function.

Hobson and McCarley's findings defy particularly the Freudian theory of dreams as fulfillment of a repressed wish, a "substitute for an infantile scene modified by being transferred on to a recent experience," and as the "expression of a piece of infantile mental life that has been suppressed."[37] Their conclusions—though in the form of theses—ask for a revision of Freud's teaching that dreams operate exclusively on the psychological level. Hobson and McCarley suggest that dreams, by and large, are physiological phenomena, which indicates that sudden scene shifts (so common in dreams) are triggered by runs of stimuli in the giant cells of the sleeping brain (and not by our "suppressed desires"), and that bizarre dream imagery corresponds to different levels of intensity of the sleeping brain's activity. This explains why, in the process of the hallucinatory dreaming, the most active physiological systems are the visual and vestibular ones.[38] According to Hobson and McCarley, the activation of these systems occurs mostly *at random,* activating the dreamer's sensory-motor centers, without regard for a narrative continuity of the dreamed event. Similarly, during film viewing, perceived images—as they are projected on the screen—stimulate the viewer's neural centers *independently* of the film plot and its meaning. In other words, a vestibular activation caused by a subliminal perception of the recurrent stroboscopic pulsation on the screen accounts for the hypnagogic nature of the film projection *per se.* The story line, of course, can intensify such sensation in the psychological and ideational sense, but the physiological response of the film viewer depends primarily on the kind of cinematic (auditory-visual) stimuli coming from the screen, especially when the camera moves through space, or the action "jumps" from one location to another. Hobson and McCarley relate the sudden jumps in the process of dreaming to the "rapid eye movement" (REM)—that is, the physiological source which, in turn, stimulates the higher brain centers to weave unexpected scene shifts into a "surreal" dream plot. However confused these "jumps" are on the narrative level, a dreamer nevertheless experiences them with extensive sensory-motor activation. In the same way, the viewer experiences the unexpected "jump cuts" used by directors to create dramatic shifts in time and space without decreasing the viewer's sensory-motor excitement.

As mentioned previously, one of the most powerful sensations in dreaming is caused by a free movement of the dreamer through space.

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36. David Hawkins, "Dream Research and Psychoanalytic Theory," *Sleep and Dreaming,* ed. Ernest Hartmann (Boston: Little Brown, 1970), pp. 253-256.

37. Freud, *The Standard Edition,* Vol. V, pp. 546, 567.

38. Vestibular activation, related to the sensation of movement with respect to the environment, depends on the balance mechanism located in the central portion of the middle ear which, when disturbed, generates a feeling of queasiness, in spite of the fact that the sleeper's body remains motionless. Vestibular activation is intensified by the hallucinatory phenomena of dreaming and is considered as a pathophysiology of sleep characteristic of autistic children during REM sleep. Knowing this, one can assume why people are so "scared" of horror films with hallucinatory imagery (in which the moving camera makes the viewer the "victim" of the physical aggression).

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So it is in film viewing: the strongest sensory-motor activation of the viewer occurs in sequences executed by the camera's gliding, craning, elevating and descending—a penetration through space. Contrary to this, there are dreams characterized by a virtual absence of motor activity, dreams in which the dreamer responds to pursuit with complete paralysis or with leaden limbs. In such dreams, according to Hobson and McCarley, muscular inhibition is related to the basic physiology of REM sleep and cannot be considered the consequence of the dreamer's unconscious self-punishment for iniquitous deeds performed in the awakened state, as Freud claimed.[39] Cinema is capable of approximating very closely the sensorial experience of slow motion, with its attendant sensation of an inability to move despite desperate attempts to perform such movement. For instance, the slow movement of the camera following an object-character in motion, combined with a zoom progressing in the opposite direction, creates an oneiric tension that is equivalent to the frozen energy of the paralyzed dreamer. This unique cinematic device, by which some of the most oneiric sequences in the history of cinema have been created, cannot be matched by other media, even television.

It is essential to reiterate here why the sensory-motor *responses* (characteristic of film viewing) correspond to muscular *sensations* (experienced by the dreamer) regardless of the fact that in some states of sleep muscular reactions also take place in the dreamer. The two responses, being different from a psychological standpoint, *do* stimulate a similar physiological reaction in dreamer and viewer's viscera: each in its own way enhances the dreamer or film viewer's identification, alienation and comprehension of the dreamed event. The most exciting dream films—as we shall see in the second part of this survey—employ the specific cinematic devices to intensify such visceral reactions in the viewer.

The muscular sensation of flying and penetration through space in dreams apparently disturbs the balance in a dreamer's vestibular centers. The neurons of the brainstem (which is the core of the vestibular system) receive direct input from the giant cell area and stimulate a corresponding feeling of queasiness in a dreamer's body. (Although such cases are rare, there are individuals who experience unease and even nausea during and immediately after dreaming.) Is it any wonder, then, that dreams of flying through space have such a tremendous visceral and physiological impact on a dreamer and are a common subject of oneiric poetry? The transference of this sensation to cinema can result in a tremendous sensory-motor stimulation, especially if strengthened by new shooting and screening techniques such as 3-D and 70mm film formats accompanied by stereophonic sound. With further improvement of cinematic technique, it will be possible to expand the film viewer's sensory-motor and vestibular responses, enabling cinema to approximate even more closely the process of dreaming. To this effect, the flexibility of the new "weightless" camera can be most instrumental in providing dreamlike excitement in the cinema of the future. The new "steady-cam," which moves through space as a spirit, is

39. Freud wrote: "Unpleasurable dreams may also be 'punishment dreams.' What is fulfilled in them is equally an unconscious wish, namely a wish that the dreamer may be punished for a repressed and forbidden wishful impulse." *The Standard Edition,* Vol. V, p. 557.

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is amply exploited in horror movies for its ability to create a sense of nightmare.

In addition to camera movement, film montage is another powerful source of physiological stimulation characteristic of dreaming. The comparative study of dreaming and film viewing suggests a correspondence between subliminal montage and the cluster of images activated by unknown mechanisms during sleep. No other art can evoke a hallucinatory mood or anxiety similar to feelings evoked by, for instance, a nightmare, as the cinematic accumulation of images, especially if projected at an accelerated as well as reduced speed. In this way, montage condensation of shots can be used in dream films to enhance the oneiric impact of the narrative; moreover, it can generate a strong hypnotic effect even when shots are edited on a strictly formal basis. Such editing likely corresponds to dream images triggered spontaneously by eye movement (REM) during the sleeping state, resulting in an extremely illogical combination of facts and events which nevertheless excite the dreamer (or viewer) emotionally.

* * *

A dreamer's involvement in the dreamed event may have a variety of functions: in most cases dreamers are invisible observers of the dreamed event, but they can also be participants and/or visible observers of the dreamed event. On the psychological level, as invisible observers, dreamers stand on the perimeter of the action, with a notion that the dreamed event occurs immediately around them. This is the most common objective of traditional filmmaking when presenting dream content: the camera simply registers the dream event, however bizarre it may be. As participants, dreamers feel as though they are epicenters of the action, not only involved with what occurs in front of, but also aware of, what is going on behind the "scene" as well. In cinema, this feeling can be evoked by a hand-held camera moving through space, so that viewers become simultaneously observers and participants of an event, even if some of the action is not shown on the screen (sound can largely contribute to this feeling). Finally, dreamers can be self-observers, i.e., they see themselves as participants of the action as if their identity is split in two "egos"; in cinema this impression can be evoked by self-referential devices which show the filmmaker as the participant of the event photographed by himself or herself, constantly reminding the viewers that they are watching a film. As one can see, the correspondence between spatial sensation in dreams and in cinema is due to the kinesthetic effect[40]

40. The kinesthetic effect produced by the motion picture is similar—in the physiological sense—to the sensory-motor reactions which occur during dreaming. Kinesthesia in cinema can be enforced by means of montage and the camera movement, especially in a three-dimensional and stereophonic film. The most elaborate definition of kinesthesia in film was given by Slavko Vorkapich: "Kinesthesia in the cinematic sense means to shoot certain movements in reality with a static camera, to provide the impression of movement by shooting static objects with a moving camera, and to organize shots in a way that permits the viewer to experience in his body, so to speak, a unique kinesthetic melody and orchestration." ("Film as a Visual Language and as a Form of Art," *Film Culture*, New York, Fall 1965, pp. 2-24.)

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created by camera movement which is similar to the sensory-motor sensation in dreams. This effect is enhanced by the ontological authenticity of dream as well as of film images because the motion picture camera behaves as an observer of the real world in a real environment. If, then, the filmmaker holds the camera in his/her own hands (as most "personal filmmakers" prefer), the obtained image is perceived by viewers as the filmmaker's "alter-ego," a part of the self-referential style of filmmaking, which can be related to the "lucid dream." The most convincing dream films reveal filmmakers' subjective and unconscious preoccupations with their "alter-egos"; therefore, some of the best examples of subjective dream films have been photographed with a moving, hand-held camera representing the filmmaker's point-of-view. Functioning as the filmmaker's inner eye, the hand-held camera moves physically through space (as dreamers often feel themselves moving in their dreams), provoking a strong kinesthetic sensation in the viewer. Such a subjective and omnipresent point-of-view affects the viewers' perceptions in a visceral manner: the ever-changing shift of the camera's viewpoint during shooting intensifies a sense of space while obstructing the feeling of gravity, essential for experiencing physical reality but irrelevant for inferring dreams. All of these analogies between film and dreams can be used creatively in films which deal with dream content. The intensity to which the spatial sensation of the environment is felt in both dreams and film depends upon the position of the objects surrounding the moving dreamers in their dreams or surrounding the camera, the viewpoint with which viewers identify. The physical reference in a dream or film to surrounding objects is particularly crucial if a dreamer or viewer is not aware of concrete limits of space. For example, each may not perceive the actual walls of a room, yet each could have a strong feeling that the space around them represents a closed interior. The walls are understood to exist somewhere in the distance concealed in darkness, enhancing the mysterious and ominous atmosphere of the environment.

It has been noted in psychoanalytical research that "the greatest number of dream events takes place in a comparatively small space."[41] In his survey of Freud's approach to dream interpretation, David Hawkins states that "a special stage of sleep, the D-state with increased tension and irritation in the dreaming subjects and a buildup of instinctual drives and anxiety,"[42] is characterized by neurophysiological responses known as "phasic events."[43] Similar neural responses can also be found in the passive bodies of film viewers, especially when they watch sequences executed with elaborate trackings. Physiologically experiencing movement through space, film viewers accept their perceived images as being

41. Samuel Lowy, *Psychological and Biological Foundations of Dream—Interpretation* (London: Kegan, Tranch, Trubner, 1942), p. 197.

42. David Hawkins, "Dream Research and Psychoanalytic Theory," *Sleep and Dreaming*, ed. Ernest Hartmann, p. 234.

43. "Phasic events" are neurophysiological and other events which occur during the D-state of sleep (i.e., desynchronized sleep, or REM sleep), including movement of external ocular muscles. The D-state of sleep is characterized by low voltage slow activity and resting muscle potential lower than that of the waking state but much higher than that of the S-state of sleep (synchronized sleep, or NREM sleep). A detailed explanation of these phenomena can be found in the anthology, *Sleep and Dreaming*, ed. Ernest Hartmann.

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features of the real world and relate to them as though these features are part of an authentic ambience. Lowy explains this phenomenon in the following way: "In the real world we feel more separated from our environment and events taking place therein than in dreams. In the real world 'I' and 'you' are more clearly defined and distinct to our subjective perception than is the case in dreams where *spectator and actor are one with the action.* It must be added that the spatial character of events in dreams shows, with rare exception, a relatively narrow demarcation."[44]

The apparent spatial tangibility in dreams is particularly intensified in REM anxiety dreams characterized by claustrophobic feelings. No other medium better assimilates the spatial tangibility of environment than cinema; therefore whenever directors such as Bergman, Fellini, Resnais, and Welles want to create a claustrophobic atmosphere for an anxiety dream sequence, they use extensive camera movements through sharp and graphically demarcated spaces. In order to heighten tangibility of the environment, these directors often place three-dimensional objects between a tracking camera and moving actors and actresses while increasing the chiaroscuro and/or color contrast of the furniture and architecture. This will be elaborated on the following pages by a close analysis of Bergman's films, particularly sequences which present dreams and hallucinations executed by a tracking camera with ceaseless motion of actors and actresses in a claustrophobic environment, be it a single room (*Face to Face*), a narrow street (*Wild Strawberries*), a long corridor (*The Hour of the Wolf*), or a deep forest (*Persona*).

While watching dream sequences executed by a tracking camera, viewers simultaneously experience spatial sensation of the environment and muscular activity of their body, supporting a hypothesis that the stimulation of the viewers' neural centers is closer to a REM sleep (desynchronized sleep) than to a NREM sleep (synchronized sleep). It has also been proved that "gross movements of the body are generally found toward the beginning or the end of the D-period, with a complete cessation of tonic muscle potential."[45] Thus the most evident similarity between REM sleep and film viewing lies in the phenomenon that both dreamers and viewers, while their muscle potential is relatively high, experience sensory motor activity which creates a unique tension that can enhance an anxious mood or hallucinatory imagery. The film viewers' sensory-motor stimulation—comparable to the responses of certain neural centers during dreaming—can be used *creatively* both in abstract and narrative films which deal with oneiric themes. Intensified by various cinematic devices, this stimulation has great significance for not only the kinesthetic impact of a film's formal structure but also for the intensification of the film's metaphorical meaning, as well as for the expansion of the viewers' understanding altered states of consciousness. This implies that a film should not only be retained on a level of visual interpretation of dream imagery but should convey the very mood of an oneiric vision with psycho-physiological sensations that accompany both dreaming and film viewing. In writing about the archetypal significance of dreams, Eric Neuman stated:

In our dreams we inhabit an interior world without being aware that we do so,

44. Lowy, ibid., p. 52.
45. Hartmann, ibid., p. 410.

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> for all the figures in the dream are images, symbols and projections of interior processes [in which] the inside and outside are not discriminated from one another. The feeling of oneness with the universe, the ability of all contents to change shape and place, in accordance with the laws of similarity and symbolic affinity, the symbolic character of the world and the symbolic meaning of all spatial dimensions—high and low, left and right, etc.—the significance of colors and so forth, all this the world of dreams shares with the dawn period of mankind.[46]

I would add that cinema—with its unique spatial dynamism and capacity to alter the shape, time, and place of things and events in fascinating visual terms—can make the world of dreams more tangible than can any other art. In the "dawn period" of mankind the cave-artist wanted to create a painted illusion of moving animals appearing as bizarre as the imagery in his dreams. Today, modern technology permits such a strong creation of oneiric visions that viewers feel they are experiencing their own dreams.

At the close of this theoretical consideration, I want to emphasize once again that it focuses on the relationship between the processes of dreaming and film viewing. The relationship between the acts of dreaming and filmmaking is another interesting topic which ought to be studied separately. Several contemporary psychologists have been concerned with dreams and artistic creation, among them the British psychoanalyst Charles Rycroft, who dedicated an entire chapter to dreams and literary imagination in his recent book, *The Innocence of Dream,* trying to "marry Coleridge's Theory of the Poetic Imagination and Freud's theory of dreams."[47] An attempt to relate dream-work to the creation of the cinematic imagery is made in Allan Hobson's essay, "Film and the Physiology of Dreaming Sleep: The Brain as Camera-Projector," and in my article, "The Art of the Brain: Dynamics of Dream," both printed in *Dreamworks.*[48]

In conclusion, let us specify some of the most effective cinematic techniques which can enhance the oneiric impact of a film and stimulate the neural activities similar to those occurring during dreaming:

- Camera movement through space (especially when combined with deep-focus and 3-D) contributes to a kinesthetic sensation and induces a hypnagogic mood in the viewer.
- Illogical and paradoxical combinations of objects, characters and settings (while at the same time preserving the vivid representation of the photographed world) parallels the bizarre appearance of dream imagery.
- Dynamic montage (with concentration on the close-up and subliminal condensation of brief shots) causes vestibular activation and enhances anxiety characteristic of nightmares.
- Dissolution of spatial and temporal continuity (especially by using "jump-cuts") is equivalent to sudden scene shifts in dreams, both temporally and spatially.

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46. Erick Neuman, *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), p. 276.

47. Charles Rycroft, *The Innocence of Dream* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979), p. 167.

48. *Dreamworks—An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* (an issue dedicated to "Dream & Film"), Spring 1980, no. 1, pp. 9, 78.

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- Photographic effects (lens distortions, oblique angles, scratching, pixillation, flickering, overlapping, dissolves, multiple exposure and many other shooting, printing or laboratory expedients) thrusted upon the viewer's perceptual centers induce a hypnotic mood.
- Ontological authenticity of motion picture photography compels the viewers to accept even the most illogical events and incongruous concatenation of facts on the screen as "real," just as they accept them in their most absurd dreams.
- Sight-and-sound counterpoint, including color juxtaposition, emphasizes the unusual appearance of dream imagery and provides an opportunity for the viewer to be emotionally excited as dreamers often are excited by similar unusual sound and color combinations in their dreams.

All these devices can contribute to the oneiric aspect of films which deal with dream content, so that their metaphorical meaning does not function solely on the thematic level, but rises to the cinematic (meaning: psychophysiological) level, as well.

In practice, however, the greatest number of films with dream content make superficial use of the bizarre and exotic features of dream imagery and make no attempt to explore those cinematic properties which can stimulate a sensation similar to that of the sleeping dreamer. Most of these films give only perfunctory treatment to dreams, *illustrating* them on a purely thematic level. Very few films have approached this phenomenon with proper concern for the cinematic elements and with an awareness of the psychophysiological processes of dreaming. These films prove that cinema offers an ideal opportunity for stimulating oneiric moods and sensory-motor reactions in the viewer's awake mind. In the forthcoming survey, the emphasis will be placed on these films and the cinematic devices by which their oneiric impact has been achieved.

* * *

The treatment of dreams in the history of narrative cinema can be discussed from four perspectives:

- *Thematic:* the emphasis on dream content within the narrative framework of the film
- *Psychoanalytical:* the associative-symbolic interpretation of dream content in relation to the function of the characters and conflicts between them
- *Psychological:* the mental activity and emotional states evoked in the viewer during and after watching a film
- *Physiological:* sensory-motor and vestibular activation incurred by the act of viewing a film, including the possibility of modifying the interpretation of dream content by the increased physiological responses in the viewer's neural centers.

The first fantasy films produced in the early days of narrative cinema illustrate dream content thematically and dramatically. Méliès' *A Trip to the Moon* (1902) is a histrionic visualization of a stage director's fantasy or dream. Although Méliès' imagination was limited by a theatrical mise-en-scène recorded by a stationary camera, it surpassed the "make-believe" of the stage by the use of optical tricks and close-ups. Edwin

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Porter's *Dream of a Rarebit Fiend* (1906), a farcical presentation of a nightmare, marks a step forward in its utilization of filmic devices (photographed instead of painted backdrops, matched shots, double exposure, accelerated motion), producing effects that could not be achieved even by the most sophisticated theatrical phantasmagoria.

As early as 1908, D. W. Griffith employed stop motion photography in portaying the Devil's influence over the protagonist in his Biograph film, *The Devil* (1908). The Mélièsque appearance and disappearance of the Devil was executed by special effects, while the mise-en-scène in this film remained theatrical; the Devil (dressed in the traditional Faustian manner) crawls behind the married artist, tempting him to pursue his latent interests in the beautiful model. Later, Griffith used a similar device in *The Sorrows of Satan* (1926), although this film is a more sophisticated theatrical visualization of the devilish forces in the human character. Billy Bitzer, Griffith's cameraman, must be credited with many of the filmic devices which so effectively enhanced the mysterious mood of Griffith's stories. Thus, the eerie atmosphere in *Edgar Allan Poe* (1909) alludes to the environment in which Poe created his poem "The Raven," through lighting and the predominantly dark composition of the shot. Another short story by Poe, "The Tell-Tale Heart," and the poem, "Annabel Lee," inspired Griffith's and Bitzer's most cinematic treatment of the supernatural and hallucinatory visions in *The Avenging Conscience* (1914). This six-reeler was conceived in the form of a dream (which was not revealed until the very end of the film). Double exposure (or masking technique) was employed extensively whenever the ghost, Christ, ghouls, Moses and the murdered uncle appeared on the screen, while the expressionistic lighting was used in the shots depicting a dreamlike atmosphere of the environment.

The French avant-garde filmmakers of the 1920s, under the influence of Freud's research on dreams, sought to express oneiric content through the depiction of unconscious processes such as the reflection of suppressed impulses or unfulfilled desires. To represent the perceptions of a madman, Abel Gance, in *La folie du Docteur Tube* (1914), used various concave mirrors and distorting lenses while shooting events in an already graphically oblique decor (painted in the traditional theatrical manner). René Clair, in his *Paris qui dort* (1923), employed more specific cinematic means—among them, accelerated and reverse motion, "frozen" image, underscored texture of photography—to show how a mad scientist altered the normal course of life with a "mysterious ray." In *Le Voyage imaginaire* (1925), he opted for a surrealistic mise-en-scène to illustrate the protagonist's dream in which he has been transformed into a dog pursued by monstrous wax figures. But the highly irrational and Dadaist structure of Clair's earlier film, *Entr'acte* (1924), more closely approximates the process of dreaming; in addition to the bizarre arrangement of events, its extremely dynamic camera movement, combined with accelerated and slow motion, create a perceptual excitement akin to the spatio-temporal disintegration experienced in dreams, especially when synchronized with music by Eric Satie. Germaine Dulac explored symbolic representation of the latent unconscious imagery by photographing events peculiar to her heroine's depression in the film *La souriante Madame Beudet* (1922). Dulac enhanced Madame Beudet's oppressed mood by both the texture of photography and shot

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composition. In her second film, *The Seashell and the Clergyman* (1928), based on a script by Antonin Artaud, she used even more explicit film techniques such as slow motion, reverse motion, multiple exposure and devious camera movement to depict the hallucinations of a priest; most of these techniques are effective *per se*, even when they fail to probe into the very process of a tormented mind. Another French avant-garde filmmaker, Dimitri Kirsanov, in his impressionistically conceived short film, *Menilmontant* (1926), used many cinematic devices (dissolves, dynamic camera movement, soft focus, montage, conflict of light and darkness) to intensify the sequences in which the heroine recalls her past and contemplates drowning her newly born baby after being deserted by her fiancé.

Jean Renoir (known now principally as a realistic director) created two of the most impressive dreamlike sequences in silent cinema. In *La fille de l'eau* (1924), he depicted the nightmare of a young girl using decelerated, and often reverse, motion as she is chased through a picturesque landscape, photographed with overexposed light. In *La petite marchande d'allumettes* (1928), Renoir achieved even more dazzling dream effects which poetically reconstitute the protagonist's vision at the moment of her death. Slow motion, prolonged dissolves, double exposure, overexposed photography alternated with sharp contrast between light and dark, extensive camera movement, and jump-cuts, pellucidly convey the oneiric quality of the imagery appearing in the dying child's consciousness.

Jean Epstein who, as has already been mentioned, wrote several essays on the oneiric nature of cinema, created a number of dreamlike sequences in *La chute de la Maison Usher* (1928). Infusing elements culled from two of Poe's stories (*The Fall of the House of Usher* and *The Oval Portrait*), Epstein transposed the literary description of Poe's mysterious atmosphere into mesmeric motion picture images. The texture of photography (often distorted optically) and camera movement (sometimes gliding ethereally, sometimes nervously pulsating) contribute to the oneiric quality of many sequences in this film. At about the same time, two American avant-garde filmmakers, John Sibley Watson and Melville Webber, produced another film version of Poe's story: their *Fall of the House of Usher* (1928) employs extensively Expressionistic stylization of decor and photographic distortions to arouse a sense of mystery by pictorial means but without the kinesthetic impact of Epstein's film. In his silent (and subsequently synchronized) film *Gold of the Sea* (1931), Epstein included a brief—but very poetical—dream flash to enhance the hypnagogic mood of a poor girl: lying on the beach, she envisions her own wedding party being "drowned" in the stormy sea (i.e., shown through a hazy double exposure), as the result of her conviction that all hopes to realize her life goal have crumbled.

Silent films, in general, rely on Expressionistic decor to illustrate unconscious activities. Eric von Stroheim, in his realistic *Greed* (1924), made use of Expressionistic stylization to present stream-of-consciousness (e.g., Trina's musings on money while caressing it with her serpent-like hands) and distortion of her mind (e.g., Zerkow's digging for the mythical golden vessels). These dreamlike segments von Stroheim inserted within the otherwise realistic narrative structure of his film. Among the most imaginative exponents of American experimental

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cinema in the silent era, Slavko Vorkapich and Robert Florey, combined Expressionistic miniature settings in their short feature *Life and Death of 9413—A Hollywood Extra* (1928) with photographic distortion of perspective in illustrating the dream of the protagonist. Vorkapich was also involved in composing a dream sequence in the famous American labor film, *Millions of Us* (1934-35). It is a typical Vorkapich special-effect insert depicting the state of mind of a hungry worker as he dreams about a profusion of food that "runs away" from him on the table.[49]

The graphic treatment of dream content in German cinema is best exemplified by Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919). The highly Expressionistic distortion of painted sets is the major stylistic means by which the characters' "inner vision" is depicted in this film. F. W. Murnau, on the other hand, relied on *photographic* means to evoke a supernatural atmosphere in his *Nosferatu* (1921), and, as well, to visualize the wish-fulfilling dreams of an old doorman in *The Last Laugh* (1924). Instead of distorting objects and decor, or applying make-up liberally, Murnau resorted to reduced motion, negative photography, and hand-held camera to portray dreams and stream-of-consciousness. Lotte Eisner describes Murnau's shots as "pulsating grooves of vibrating light" and "opalescent surfaces streaming with reflections,"[50] which intensifies their oneiric nature. Murnau's use of light and reflection was designed to reveal the "essence" of a dream or vision, instead of merely illustrating it optically. In the third segment of Paul Leni's *Waxworks* (1924), the young poet's dream about Jack the Ripper is presented through multiple exposure (unlike the other two episodes, "Haround Al-Raschid" and "Iván the Terrible," which are weighted with the graphic symbolism of theatrical decor). As a result, the perceptual collision of opposing movements in the Jack the Ripper episode amounts to a disturbing visual density which contributes to a sense of nightmarish tension, yet does not destroy the illusion of reality, as the conventional "UFA" effects would do.

Both Leni and Murnau can be compared with two major Scandinavian filmmakers, Mauritz Stiller and Victor Sjöstrom, especially in their use of photographic means to convey the ambiguous appearance of dreams, hallucinations and nightmares. In Sjöstrom's *The Outlaw and His Wife* (1917), the visionary imagery indicates the character's mental processes (Halla's recollection of her dead child and Keri's account of his past life); in Stiller's *The Treasure of Arne* (1919), the heroine Elsalil dreams of her dead foster sister beckoning to her past: she appears on the screen as a transparent figure leading Elsalil to the tavern, where she learns about (and "sees" the images of) her father's tragic death. The visions of the dying protagonist in Sjöstrom's *The Phantom Chariot* (1920) and the dreams of the heroine in Stiller's *The Saga of Gunnar Hede* (1922) are executed either by picturesque double exposures, modified by light, or, as in the latter film, by long tracking shots through a snow-covered forest. At the outset of the sound era, the Danish director Carl Theodor

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49. For political reasons and because of his position in Hollywood, Vorkapich used the pseudonym of Jack Smith, which appears in the credits of *Millions of Us*, together with the name of Tina Smith, the co-director of this film.

50. Lotte Eisner, *The Haunted Screen* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), p. 214.

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Dreyer created his famous *Vampyr* (1931), which has been proclaimed "a worthy successor to Murnau's *Nosferatu*" (Lotte Eisner). To convey a mysterious atmosphere, Dreyer employed a variety of genuinely cinematic means. One of the more striking of these was the subjective camera point of view representing the dead man's "perspective" as seen from inside the coffin while the corpse is carried through corridors and beneath trees.

Because German Expressionist films tend to present dreams and visions in a more histrionic or pictorial rather than a photographic and cinematic fashion, the symbolism of dreams is conveyed graphically or architecturally. In Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1926), Freder's hallucination of an underground factory and its destruction is depicted as an enormous symbolic edifice reminiscent of a grotesque deity. In Paul Wegener and Carl Boese's *The Golem* (1920), spectacular stage effects are designed to illustrate the ritualistic animation of the statue made of clay (whose gestures are reminiscent of Méliès' trick films). Wiene's *Raskolnikov* (1923), on the other hand, uses multiple exposures with strong black-and-white contrast to reflect the protagonist's deranged mind; Arthur Robison's *Warning Shadows* (1923) depicts the inner frustration of the characters by a phantasmagoric interplay of shadows and reflections, deformed and augmented photographically, with obvious Freudian implications; Lupu Pick's *Sylvester* (1923) underscores the "Einfuhlung" (empathy) of the "Umwelt" (surroundings) by the continuous use of "entfesselte Kamera" (the unchained moving camera) for the purpose of creating a vertigo from which the viewers are meant to suffer along with the depressed characters. There are many other films which use both the graphic and stagy elements of Expressionistic stylization to convey the deranged states of the human psyche. Yet, with all their histrionicism, Expressionistic filmmakers, as well as the filmmakers of the French avant-garde movement, must be credited as the first serious artists in the history of cinema who attempted to explore the specific ways of paralleling the complex visions which characterize stream-of-consciousness and the distorted appearance of objects in a deranged mind. Even today, many stylistic features symbolizing dream processes in the contemporary film can be traced to the Expressionist shooting technique.

In film comedies produced during the silent era, dream imagery was primarily used to literally justify absurd situations (gags), so as to permit comedians/clowns to display their burlesque talents. Charlie Chaplin in *The Kid* (1921) used a dream frame to illustrate his vision of inhabitants sprouting wings like angels and flying about their community as one would probably do it on the stage. In *The Gold Rush* (1925), Chaplin portrayed a hungry tramp's delirium through the use of a surrealistic mise-en-scène: Charlie, transformed into a chicken, is chased by Big Jim, who wants to cut his throat and eat him for dinner. Apparently, the notion of dream is conveyed here only through the illustration of the narrative, however ingeniously it is performed. Buster Keaton developed the dramatic continuity of his *Sherlock Jr.* (1924) within the thematic framework of a dream: falling asleep while projecting a movie, Keaton dreams that he is a famous detective experiencing all sorts of hilarious adventures, many of them possible only in dreams. Mack Sennett's slapstick comedies, more than others, consisted of flamboyant movement on

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the screen, intensified by the accelerated projection of the moving pictures. However, the visual dynamism of Sennett's burlesques was so intensive that it affected—and still affects—spectators as fantastic action belonging to "another world." The optical "irritation" of the old slapstick is often brought to the "threshold" of perceptual tolerance, creating an hypnagogic mood/impact on the viewers. To make a more distinct border between the two worlds, Frank Capra, the director of Harry Langdon's *The Strong Man* (1926), tinted the dream sequences in sepia tones to distinguish them optically from those portions of the action which occur in real life. One can generalize by saying that dream sequences in silent comedies were not oneiric in the physiological sense; rather, their function was entirely thematic, meant to account for extravagant behavior and absurd situations characteristic of the comic plot.

Even a superficial survey of film history proves that in traditional narrative cinema oneiric themes have been merely illustrated visually and encumbered by optical effects—which do not serve any function other than to encourage the viewer's literary interpretation of the film's dream content. Only a few directors with a pronounced cinematic consciousness have used certain film devices to enhance oneiric aspects of their films in a cinematic way. The majority of directors, including those directly inspired by oneiric literature and dream theories, have not shown particular interest in exploring the oneiric capacity of the medium. Thus, for example, G. W. Pabst, in his silent film *Secret of a Soul* (1926), based on Freud's theory of dreams, did not go beyond thematical illustration of long discourses between a patient suffering from repressive dreams and the patient's psychoanalyst. Every dream in this film is first described by lengthy *literary* intertitles, and then is illustrated visually. Unfortunately, most of the sequences do not transcend a pictorial presentation of bizarre combinations of objects and events, although some of the shots are effective as symbolic images composed with an Expressionistic "agglomeration" of objects and movements. The proof that the silent cinema was able to express dream imagery and the subconscious in a complex way was confirmed by the great Japanese director, Teinosuke Kinugasa, who produced in the same year *A Page of Madness* (1926), a masterpiece of the silent era. Kinugasa explored the minds of the lunatics detained in an asylum and haunted by the images of their past life. By the creative use of shooting techniques characteristic of several European schools (i.e., French Impressionistic treatment of landscape, German Expressionistic lighting of interiors, and Soviet montage in the dynamic juxtaposition of details), Kinugasa created one of the most exciting cinematic presentations of the complex processes occurring in a disordered human psyche. *A Page of Madness* is often compared to *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,* although Kinugasa demonstrated greater cinematic sensitivity in integrating various photographic devices into a *cauchemar*-like imagery.

In Soviet silent cinema, the first attempt to portray dreams can be found in Yakov Protazanov's 1924 adaptation of Alexei Tolstoi's novel *Aelita.* The protagonist's visit to the planet Mars, presented as a dream (which is not the case in the novel), makes extensive use of Expressionistic decor, histrionic acting and oblique angles from which the planet's landscape is shot. Following the Expressionistic tradition, and inspired by Gogol's stories *The Overcoat* and *The Nevsky Prospect,* Grigori

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Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg created *The Overcoat* (1926), visualizing the fantasy of a clerk who dreams of a "celestial space" that visually combines a bureaucratic office, a ballroom and a circus—all elements of which are distorted by the use of Expressionistic decor and light.

The montage concepts developed by Soviet revolutionary filmmakers of the same period differ radically from the Expressionistic treatment of dreams, particularly one specific type of montage capable of conveying unconscious processes. A beautiful example of the subliminal montage is *Fragment of an Empire* (1929), in which Friedrich Ermler conveyed the process of revitalization of the protagonist's blocked mind: the dynamic interaction of brief shots, each with different light values, was designed to mimic the recollection of his life before the revolution. Sergei Eisenstein included a short dream sequence in *Old and New* (1929), at the moment when the peasant woman dreams about the future of her cooperative farm. Exemplifying his concept of "polyphonic montage" which draws on tonalities of shot composition and their interaction to enhance juxtaposition of conflicting and complementary graphic elements on the screen, Eisenstein stimulated "psycho-physiological vibrations" in the viewers. Another example of the pervasive use of dream structure in Soviet cinema is Alexander Dovzhenko's *Zvenigora* (1928). This is perhaps the earliest film assailed by critics as "too complex and difficult to understand" because it showed reality as reflected in the character's mind. Frequent flashbacks, slow motion, jump-cuts and other cinematic devices interrupt the narrative flow to emphasize the imaginary world of a folksinger. More than thirty-five years later, another Soviet director, Sergei Paradzhanov (in *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors,* 1964), created imagery of a similar oneiric power: long trackings of the camera and photographically deformed shots reflect the characters' distorted perception of the outside world at the moment of their psychic crises or death. In his next film, *The Color of Pomegranates,* or *Sayat Nova* (1973), Paradzhanov created even more exciting oneiric imagery through the subliminal interplay of symbolic images and colors. Two other contemporary Soviet directors, Mikhail Kalatozov and Andrei Tarkovsky, created several impressive oneiric sequences using various shooting techniques to enhance the inner world of their characters. In *The Cranes Are Flying, (1957),* Kalatozov imaginatively employed double exposure, montage and photographic texture to conjure up the stream-of-consciousness of his wounded war hero. In *Ivan's Childhood* (1962), Tarkovsky visualized his young protagonist's dream with circular camera movement placed against a negatively exposed background. Tarkovsky's more recent films, *The Mirror* (1975), and especially *Stalker* (1980), are oneiric in their overall structure: the shot composition—slightly distorted—reflects the protagonist's stream-of-consciousness, while the specific shooting technique (the floating camera) enhances visual recollections. A similar mood associated with cosmic travel (which can also be related to the protagonist's inner vision) is created by special effects in Tarkovsky's *Solaris* (1971).

The device most closely associated with dream imagery—and even more often misused in commercial films containing dream sequences—is slow motion. One of the most creative applications of this device can be found in Jean Vigo's film, *Zero de Conduite* (1933), in the procession sequence: the parade of the rebellious pupils, [illegible] feathers,

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has a stunning hallucinatory effect. Vigo achieved a similar oneiric mood in the diving sequence of his otherwise realistic and lyrical film, *L'Atlante* (1934). The texture of his photography, the floating camera and the slow motion of the diving character contribute to the mesmeric mood of this sequence and likewise coincide with the protagonist's psychical mood.

Slow motion has an equally mesmerizing impact in the key sequences of Maya Deren's dream film, *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943). She combined slow motion with extensive camera movement (mostly hand-held and at oblique angles), followed by sudden shifts of locale in which people and objects come into conflict. Deren's spatial and temporal displacement of action affects the viewer's neural centers, thus stimulating in the audience sensations that are similar to those which the characters experience in the film (e.g., somnambulistic walking down the alley and on the beach, climbing the stairs, falling or flying through the window). To a lesser degree, this can be said for Deren's other two films, *At Land* (1944) and *Ritual in transfigured Time* (1946), which deal with dream content as well. *At Land* follows almost literally the Freudian concept of a dream as a symbolic representation of unfulfilled desires, but without greater sensorial impact. However, one segment (the social gathering) in *Ritual in Transfigured Time*, with its numerous opposed, overlapping movements of the characters milling around, filmed by a tracking camera in deceleration, has a strong hypnagogic effect. Deren's experiments were historically significant since they demonstrated for the first time in cinema that a specific shooting technique could enhance the oneiric aspect of a film with dream content. By subverting the unity of time and space on the screen, Deren (and her cameraman Alexander Hammid) attempted to stimulate the sensorial experience of the viewers. On the narrative level, Deren borrowed many ideas from Freudian dream theory and the Jungian concept of archetypes, but she also insisted upon presenting these ideas and concepts through cinematic means, particularly by using camera movements and by slowing down motion. Deren's experiments were important for the advancement of dream cinema in general: more than two decades later, her cinematic legacy had been influencing major avant-garde American filmmakers, particularly those who have promulgated the oneiric and hypnagogic aspects of the non-narrative film. Today Deren's films may often seem thematically superficial, however they contain many sequences with a strong oneiric and kinesthetic impact.

Although I have explained why this survey does not include animation and the most contemporary avant-garde films produced in Europe and the United States, it is necessary to mention, in connection with Maya Deren's work, that modern American independent cinema has been expressing dream content in three basic ways: 1) through metaphorical associations related to plot, 2) by photographic distortion of reality and objects within it, and 3) in abstract terms of animation executed by various techniques. The first type of film, by and large, follows the concepts of Cocteau and Deren, emphasizing symbolism of the unconscious processes, as in the films *Horror Dream* (1949) by Sydney Peterson, *Four in the Afternoon* (1959) by James Broughton, and *Invocation of My Demon Brother* (1969) by Kenneth Anger. These filmmakers carried further the psychoanalytical presentation of dreams and stream-of-consciousness with an emphasis on the Jungian interpretation of the

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sexual complex through dream fulfillment. The second and most significant group among the modern American avant-garde filmmakers is best represented by the films of Stan Brakhage, which he labelled "closed-eye vision" (e.g., *Dog Star Man,* 1961-65), a multi-layered series of shots composed of distorted images of reality, often scratched and blurred to the point at which they can be barely identified. Modern American avant-garde film is also exemplified by semi-abstract motion picture images of landscape and photographic contortions of the real environment which, on the screen, becomes reminiscent of modern painting, as in Bruce Baillie's *Castro Street* I(1966), or in films by Michael Snow, whose three-hour long *La Region centrale* (1970-71) produces a strong hypnagogic impact, created by a constant zooming and spiral rotation of the camera placed on a hilly Canadian landscape. The third type of film is the most abstract, often executed with the help of a computer or animated in the form of "mandala" arabesques, the movement of which is aimed at mesmerizing the viewers, as in James Whitney's *Yantra* (1950-55), or in Jordan Belson's *Chakra* (1972). Since the oneiric and hypnagogic aspect of the modern avant-garde cinema is a complex matter belonging to a specific area of research, it must be studied separately.[51]

Among experimental films there are those which use photographs as objects recorded by the motion-picture camera: to bring about an amalgamation of a stationary image and its kinetic reproduction. A unique experiment of this kind was made by the French documentary filmmaker, Chris Marker, in his short feature, *La Jetée* (1963), composed almost entirely of still photographs or "frozen" shots that represent situations of a narrative development. It is, in a way, Bergsonian science-fiction about the protagonist's imaginary travel backward and forward in time. The stationary shots continuously dissolve into one another, creating a unique notion of temporal progression which has a dream-like reverberation, intrinsically different from the projection of slides in slide shows. Artists from different media tried to achieve similar effects, photographing with the motion picture camera their paintings, sculptures, collages, and other art objects. In 1944 Hans Richter attracted five other artists (Fernand Léger, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Man Ray, and Alexander Calder) to produce a feature length "omnibus film," *Dreams That Money Can Buy* (1944-46). These artists used their own medium as material for creating a film sequence to illustrate various aspects of the relationship between dreams and the creative process. Each of them drew upon philosophies characterizing the Dadaist, Surrealist, Cubist, and Constructivist movements. Richter himself stated that this film as a whole was meant to present "the psychic conflict between a person's inner life and reality,"[52] most apparently expressed in his own, last episode entitled, "Narcissus" (which clearly indicates Freudian inspiration). Five other episodes achieve the "psychic conflict" in a more visual manner but likewise within the thematic context. Even in the episide *The Girl with the Prefabricated Heart,* Léger failed to create an oneiric vision comparable to that which he created in his famous Cubist short *Le Ballet mécanique* (1924). With its profuse cinematic rhythm, it is one of the most hypnotic avant-garde films made in the silent era. Similarly,

51. P. Adams Sitney, *Visionary Film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).
52. David Curtis, *Experimental Cinema* (New York: Universe Books, 1971, p. 65.

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Duchamp's episode recreates his "Rotoreliefs" and his painting "Nude Descending the Staircase" with optical dynamism, which creates a certain mesmeric impulse. Richter's own episode, "Narcissus," is a literary allegory about the inner trauma of a man who cannot resolve his psychic problems. Other episodes (Ray's "Ruth Roses and Revolvers," Calder's ballet performed by his mobiles and wire sculptures, as well as Ernst's "Collage of Nightmares") are either pictorial or theatrical presentations of the artist's consciousness.

Among filmmakers involved in the practical exploration of cinema's oneiric capacities is, of course, Jean Cocteau. To promote his surrealistic ideas of literature, theater and painting, Cocteau wrote several essays on this topic, stating that film is the ideal medium for the depiction of "realistic unreality" (*"l'irréalité réaliste"*), rhetorically proclaiming cinema "the new muse which possesses the mystery of dreams."[53] However, in his films, Cocteau opted for the theatrical and literary treatment of dreams, using cinematic devices mainly to enhance the interpretive-symbolic aspect of the dream's content. His *Beauty and the Beast* (1946) is a fairy tale executed with great skill, achieving fantastic imagery on the screen, but, like many other fairy tales adapted to film, such as Victor Fleming's *The Wizard of Oz* (1938), or any of the numerous Arabian Nights movies, Cocteau's film follows the enchanting narrative with no pretension to explore the cinematic aspect of the oneiric events. Unlike Renoir, who in his *The Little Match Girl* (1928) employed specific cinematic devices to *stimulate* a dream-like mood in the spectators, Cocteau used film technology to *depict* extravagant images as if painting them on a canvas (the same holds true for animated fairy tales, such as Disney's *Fantasia* (1940), or *Peter Pan* (1953), which—because of the nature of the cartoon—lack oneiric impact regardless of how fantastically the animated shots are drawn.) Even in his much-discussed film, *Blood of a Poet* (1930), Cocteau did not go beyond the symbolic illustration of bizarre events and the unaccountable shifting of scenes. While subverting the narrative continuity he failed to construct a truly cinematic utterance of dreams. As a "picture of the poet's own self," the oneiric imagery of Cocteau's films is presented histrionically, in spite of the fact that many technical resources of the camera are used to convey poetic visions, unconscious obsessions and dream associations. Cocteau showed the greatest sense for the cinematic rendition of dream imagery in his *Orpheus* (1949), the modernized version of the classical myth. Although the literary and performing components prevail in this film, several sequences are conceived in a cinematic manner, especially the fascinating tracking shots of Orpheus and Heurtebise descending into and exiting from the infernal regions. Being a man of the stage, Cocteau never abandoned theatrical *clichés* in presenting dreams on the screen: in his last and philosophically most complex film, *The Testament of Orpheus* (1959), the symbols of death and dream are executed theatrically prior to the shooting process, so that the camera is reduced, more or less, to a recording instrument. This means that the bizarre symbiosis of objects and human beings involved in the film's surreal plot is

53. From the statement Cocteau made in 1959 as a calligraphic inscription in his diary. In French, the statement reads, "Vive la jeune muse Cinéma, car elle possède le mystère du rêve et permet de rendre l'irréalité réaliste."

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achieved by extracinematic means. Besides Cocteau, no other director in post-war France showed any substantial interest in the oneiric aspect of cinema, with the exception, perhaps, of René Clair and Marcel Carné. Clair depicted mystic atmosphere in his version of Faust, *La Beauté du diable* (1949), creating several sequences which demonstrate an exquisite poetical touch and dream-like flair. Carné conjured up eerie moods in a poetical manner, predominantly using soft focus and dazzled lights, as exemplified in the forest sequences of his *Juliette, ou la clé des songes* (1951).

Throughout American narrative cinema, dream content has been generally used as a sporadic element tenuously attached to the story line. Hence, the most popular example used by American film teachers to demonstrate how cinema can visually convey the unconscious is the film adaptation of Ambrose Bierce's story, *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*, produced by the French director Robert Enrico in 1962. Although predominantly illustrative, this short feature contains several sequences which intelligently mimic oneiric sensations and capture the subliminal flashes occurring in the protagonist's mind at the moment of his death. The climactic sequences are achieved by combinations of slow motion of action, fast camera tracking forward, and backward zooming of the lens (particularly at the end of the film before the protagonist reaches his home and is about to embrace his wife—moments which prove to be final visions of his expiring consciousness). Simultaneous expansion and compression of the illusion of space, as exemplified in Enrico's film, has a unique oneiric power that no other medium can provide.

In most Hollywood films dream content is treated only fitfully, even in cases when the script relates directly to psychoanalysis, as in John Huston's *Freud: The Secret Passion* (1962). Initially, Huston intended to use all kinds of cinematic resources in depicting dream imagery: all dream sequences were photographed in chiaroscuro, with specific details standing out like luminous figures in "tunnels of blackness," thus mirroring inner visions; in contrast, flashbacks were shot "through a plate of glass in order to blot out all details except those clearly recalled by the patient."[54] The completed film ran two hours and forty-five minutes, but Universal Studios cut a half-hour from the film, eliminating mainly the stream-of-consciousness sequences and leaving only segments of the hallucinatory recollections which haunt Freud's patient. Sidney Lumet, in *The Pawnbroker* (1964), composed a series of haunting flashbacks to illustrate the protagonist's memories of his experience in a nazi concentration camp. Most of these flashbacks are filmed in slow motion with minimal contrast of the photographed image to illustrate the uncertainty of recollections and set them apart from the present. Robert Altman, in his *3 Women* (1977), created a symbolic dream sequence borrowing techniques used by contemporary avant-garde filmmakers. Although thematically justifiable, the structure of this sequence has not succeeded in transcending the conventional Hollywood cliché of illustrating dreams through multiple exposures and blurred images

54. According to Huston's cameraman, Douglas Slocombe, as quoted by Jacob Zelinger in his essay, "Bergman and Freud on Dreams and Dreaming," published in this book.

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reminiscent of the old-fashioned optical effects used by the early German Expressionist filmmakers. Singular decorative dream sequence can also be seen in the film version of the musical *Hair* (1979), in which Milos Forman engaged the most sophisticated Hollywood technology to illustrate (on a wide screen and with support of the "Dolby" sound system) the fantastic "Wedding Dream" hallucinated by a young man tripping on LSD. A more substantial cinematic suggestion of a nightmare is presented in the beginning of Francis Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979). In fact, the entire film can be taken as a nightmarish recollection of the horrors of war, particularly the introductory sequence which depicts the protagonist's recurrent vision of his personal experience on the battlefield: the images of destruction and chaos are presented through an amalgamation of multiple exposures (each containing different movement) reflecting the process occurring in a mind overburdened by anxiety.

When citing American narrative directors who have creatively employed cinematic devices to convey oneiric and psychical moods, we think immediately of Alfred Hitchcock. Already in his British silent film, *The Ring* (1927), he used lens distortions to indicate a loss of consciousness and its gradual recovery in the hero. At a crucial narrative point in *Blackmail* (1929), several shots (with pedestrians moving in opposite directions) are superimposed to mirror the inner turmoil of a girl walking down a street after she has just committed a murder. In the nightmarish opening of *Vertigo* (1958), the camera tracks through crowded streets, zooming in and out, inducing in the spectators the "vertiginous" tension which will dominate the film. It was a combination of tracking and montage that created Hitchcock's most "psychic" sequence in *Psycho* (1960), containing seventy-nine shots, mostly close-ups of the murderer killing his victim in the bath tub. In *Spellbound* (1945), Hitchcock specifically planned to incorporate a long dream sequence and engaged Salvador Dali for its realization. The Surrealist painter designed the composition of every shot, but the final result was disappointing. Those who saw the original version containing Dali's twenty-minute segment claim that it possessed truly dreamlike qualities. Unfortunately, the production company drastically cut the sequence and turned it into a brief Surrealist "special effects," without a significant cinematic impact.

Orson Welles, too, has been preoccupied with the mind's subliminal levels. His nightmarish finale in *The Lady from Shanghai* (1947) fully enthralls the audience with its Expressionistic distortion of images reflected in fragmented and curved mirrors. In his most hallucinatory film, *The Trial* (1962), Welles created a depressing Kafkaesque atmosphere through the use of compact cinematic interaction between light, architecture, camera movement and sound. Mention should be made of the dreamlike visions Stanley Kubrick's surviving astronaut perceives aboard a space-ship on a galactic journey in *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). The three-dimensional illusion of penetration through space in juxtaposition to the abstract patterns of the moving stars stimulate a powerful oneiric sensation, especially when the original 70mm print of this film is projected on a wide screen and accompanied by stereophonic sound.

Japanese modern cinema often depicts ritualistic events suffused with an unearthly atmosphere which cannot be described with any certainty to

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reality. Inspired by literary tradition, Kenji Mizoguchi adapted two short stories from Akinari Ueda's 1776 collection of supernatural fantasies onto a film with the same title, *Ugetsu Monogatari* (1953), in which illusion and reality merge in an auditory-visual imagery of enthralling lyrical mysticism. The "leaden" texture of photography and slow dissolves contribute to the mystical connotation of the oneiric sequences in Mizoguchi's film. Akira Kurosawa has explored more subjective states of his characters in *Rashomon* (1950), using both montage and hand-held camera movement to stimulate psychophysical sensation in the audience. The film exposes the same event from various, extremely personal angles; but it is not merely the ambiguous psychological point of view from which each character recalls the event, but the way each view is presented on the screen visually that makes Kurosawa's film dream-like. The most exciting re-creation of the key event is the woodcutter's recollection, "told" by the images which fluctuate visually because of the camera's oscillating movement through the forest, producing recurrent trackings unexpectedly interrupted by intercuts of static details. Similarly, in his *Throne of Blood* (1957), Kurosawa created a mysterious mood through dynamic montage (of speeding horses) and photographic recording of weird events (materialization of the spirits in a phantasmagoric forest). Nagisa Oshima's *Ceremony* (1979), though replete with historical references, is structured as a series of recollections which, especially near the end of the film, acquire a dream-like quality with their recurrent themes, the constant subversion of space and the unpredictable development of the narrative which typifies subconscious or hallucinatory states of mind. In his most recent epic film, *Kagemusha* (*The Shadow Warrior,* 1980), Kurosawa created an explicit dream sequence, using drastically contrasted colors and slow motion to depict the oneiric reflection of an event which the dreaming character had experienced (as an unpleasant visual shock) in an awake state; near the end of the film, Kurosawa built another anxious and strongly hallucinatory vision of the fatal battle (as seen through the eyes of the dying protagonist), emphasizing the horror of killing by both slow motion and lateral camera movement.

Contemporary East European cinema, inspired by fairy tales and medieval fantasy literature as well as Surrealist painting, demonstrates a considerable interest in dream topics. The Polish director, Jerzy Skolimovsky (*Barrier,* 1966), and Czechoslovakian directors Vera Chitilova (*Daffodils,* 1967) and Pavel Jurachek-Jan Schmidt (*Josef Kilian,* 1963), displayed great cinematic sensitivity in their treatment of dream-like content drawn from the Surrealist literary tradition to conceal latent political hints in their films. Of all these, Skolimowski and Chitilova especially used many filmic devices (including combination of colors and distorted sound effects) in creating oneiric and nightmarish imagery on the screen. In *The Shout* (1979), based on a mystery story by Robert Graves, Skolimoswki tried to create the eerie, surreal, hallucinatory world of an insane mind by both visual and auditory means. Yet he failed to achieve the necessary cinematic unity (of the stylized and veristic elements) in presenting the events of psychic horror, mystical visions, and primitive sorcery. Czechoslovakian directors Jan Kadar and Elmar Clos used cinematic devices to replace the illusion of reality on the screen with a dream-like situation, as for example in the slow-moving

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finale of *The Shop on Main Street* (1965). Two Yugoslav directors, Bostjan Hladnik (*Dancing in the Rain,* 1961) and Vatroslav Mimica (*Monday or Tuesday,* 1966), created several sequences related to the stream-of-consciousness process by using Expressionistic decor and the photographic distortion of objects. Dusan Makavejev's *Sweet Movie* (1974) can be considered a metaphorical (Dadaist-like) dream structure composed of newsreel footage and reconstructed dramatic sequences, juxtaposed in the manner in which dream collage is formed. Similarly, documentary facts and staged events are concatenated in Makavejev's *Innocence Unprotected* (1968) and *W. R.: Mysteries of the Organism* (1971); in the latter film, especially the final sequence in which Milena's head is animated although severed from her body, the imagery assumes hallucinatory notion as ideological commentary on the political implications of the event within the context of the narrative. Another Yugoslav director, Alexander Petrović, in his film *Master and Margarita* (1976), based on the fantasy novel by the great Soviet writer Mikhail Bulgakov, used extensive camera movements in close-up (in the scenes which take place in the mental hospital and the sequences which depict panic in the theater, created by the sudden "rain" of the consumer's goods pouring onto the audience) to approximate, visually, the state of mind of the protagonist, a "genius turned into a madman." Although the films of the great Hungarian director Miklos Jancsó do not deal with dream content, their cinematic structure has many features—among them abrupt spatio-temporal disjunction of the narrative as well as the unaccountable behavior of the characters—which are characteristic of dreams. But most of all, the prolonged trackings of Jancsó's camera, which restlessly "dances" through space in *Winter Wind* (1969) and *Red Psalm* (1972), oneirically enhance the dynamism of the shot composition. With their lengthy spatio-visual permutations, these tracking shots become a kind of kinesthetic ballet. Because of the choreographic interaction between the movement of the camera and the actors' mise-en-scène, Jancsó's trackings become pure *mise-en-shots*[55] replete with hypnagogic impact. Another Hungarian filmmaker, István Szabó, uses special lens and flashback narrative structure to indicate the ambiguity of the past events and their merger with the present in his film, *Father* (1966). In his most mature work, *25 Firemen's Street* (1973), Szabó came closest to the technique initiated by Alain Resnais. Several aspects of past events are juxtaposed with the present, so that both are visible in the same shot. Thus the viewers are reminded (on the pictorial level) that the presented action is imaginary, while they are at the same time forced (on the level of performed mise-en-scène) to perceive it as reality, i.e., the life of a group of citizens occupying a big old house in Budapest who are recalling their past.

Two contemporary German directors, Rainer Werner Fasbinder and Werner Herzog, also include oneiric material in their films. In his pseudo-historical *Aguirre, The Wrath of God* (1973), Herzog creates an eerie atmosphere with surreal imagery, as when the conquistadores' depleted

55. Mise-en-shot (by its kinesthetic interaction between moving objects/characters and the camera, especially in close-up and by its intensified spatial dynamism created by prolonged camera tracking and craning) and montage are among the most effective shooting devices that stimulate dreamlike sensations in the viewer's neural centers, regardless (or in support) of the film's content.

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crew "sees" a surreal combination of objects (e.g., a boat at the top of a tree), and, still more effectively, with the frequent use of spiraling camera movements, which contribute to the hypnagogic impact of the opening and closing sequences. Herzog employed similar movements to an even greater extent in his earlier film, *Fata Morgana* (1971), in which prolonged gliding shots generate a perceptual entrancement, especially the aerial shots of the African landscape, photographically distorted so that the spectators perceive them as moving chromatic patterns saturating the screen. In his 1978 version of *Nosferatu,* Herzog created a haunting atmosphere using color as a substitute for the symbolic chiaroscuro lighting in Murnau's 1922 classic *Nosferatu.* Among numerous screen adaptations of Bram Stocker's novel *Dracula,* the films of Murnau and Herzog far surpass other attempts at depicting the bloodthirsty tyrant; insisting on the atmosphere, they avoid trivial effects in creating the air of mystery and horror on the screen. Though much less concerned with dream content, Fassbinder in his 1978 adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov's novel, *Despair,* displayed the subliminal levels of a deranged mind. It is not so much that this film shows (quite unconvincingly, by the way) the protagonist being pursued by his alter ego (numerous film versions of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* focusing on the same subject, have regularly failed to transcend the clichés of the horror genre). On the visual level, *Despair* demonstrates Fassbinder's skill in loading virtually every shot with the "threatening" objects blocking the foreground, provoking optical irritation in the viewers. Many tracking and panning takes in this film are photographed through interlacing patterns of screens, grille-works, glasses, sculptures and other arabesque objects constantly moving—both as shadows or shining surfaces —close to the camera lens, thus "bombarding" the viewer's perception in an irresistibly hypnotic way. This cinematic feature is what gives an oneiric flair to *Despair,* a film which works much better in its cinematic dynamism as it affects the viewer, then in its rather far-fetched narrative flow.

In 1974 the German director Fred Hines made an attempt to transform Hermann Hesse's novel, *Steppenwolf,* into a film. This film can be analyzed as an unsuccessful transposition of literary dream material into cinematic imagery. Hermann Hesse is one of the most oneiric writers in our time; in *Steppenwolf* he effectively conveys the so-called "Magic Theater," a type of dreamstage on which the hallucinatory visions of the hero, Harry Haller, occur. Hesse's literary expression of dream events is extremely tactile as well as visual. He gives a detailed description of sounds, music, space and colors in order to create the most tangible dream environment. Hesse describes dreams as "the many-threaded webs of senses suffused with soul." His character Hans Giebenrath (in *Beneath the Wheel*) has "bright, delicate, unusual dreams, while feeling warm sensations as if a light slips over his body with a soft contact." (There is a strikingly similar moment of such a soft physical touch in Bergman's *Autumn Sonata.*) Hesse refers to dreams as "images, pictures or desires which draw me away from the outside world, so that my relationship with these pictures in me, with these dreams and shadows, becomes more and more alive than it is with my real environment (*Damien*)." This emphasis on the authenticity of the dreamed event—no matter how strange and distorted—characterizes great dream writers.

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And film is the most ideal medium for achieving such a sensation in a unique visual/auditory/sensorial manner. Instead of investing their energies in finding the proper cinematic means that would make dream events "more alive" than real events, most film directors—and Hines is among them—reduce the camera to the passive recorder of a symbolically arranged environment and surrealist action that represent dreams on a literary/theatrical level. That is why *Steppenwolf*, like most other conventional narrative dream films, lacks the oneiric qualities that are so intense in Hesse's novel.

If there is one literary work that effectively employs the stream-of-consciousness technique, it is certainly James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Sergei Eisenstein was fascinated by the Joycean method of writing and contemplated applying it to cinema. He wrote about "an almost physiological palpability" of Joyce's inner monologues which "abolish the distinction between subject and object,"[56] and claimed that Joyce himself showed a considerable interest (when the two men met in Paris) in Eisenstein's "plan to develop inner film monologues with a far broader scope than is afforded by literature."[57] Eisenstein believed that cinema is capable of not merely visualizing the multi-layered symbolic imagery verbally described by Joyce, but moreover of conveying the complex subconscious associations and emotions caused by dreams and various psychic states of mind. Four decades later, Joseph Strick made *Ulysses* (1967) as a film, but without a serious attempt to transpose Joycean psycho-analytical procedure into cinematic terms. Instead, his film followed—pedestrianly—Bloom's and Stephen's symbolic relationship, while the surrealistically conceived sequences failed to penetrate the protagonist's subconscious world, which gives Joycean narrative a genuine dream-like flair. Since the oneiric impact and metaphorical meaning of Joyce's prose lies, above all, in its formal linguistic construction, the director's basic task is to find the cinematic equivalent for such an unconventional literary structure, and not to pursue the story line, whose apparent function is to serve as a scaffold for the intricately built entity behind it. Strick's *Ulysses* is an example of the perfunctory transposition of an oneiric literary text into cinematic images; it is also a consequence of the obsolete, yet still alive, contention that cinema—by its nature—is not capable of expressing a character's inner life, let alone subconsciousness and dreams. An introductory note to the film, *Ulysses*, explains that Joyce did not make any specific distinction between the (real) events occurring in the present and those representing stream-of-consciousness, recollections, associative flashes, unfulfilled desires. The film, according to this note, tried to do the same. However, while Joyce achieved this amalgamation of diverse material in a truly literary way, Strick merely illustrated the Joycean literary procedure without finding cinematic equivalents for it. Hence, all the visual inserts meant to reveal the character's subliminal activities or inner monologues turned into a mechanical depiction of the off-screen narration or a theatrical presentation of the unconscious imagery (in the form of a stylized stagy mise-en-scène.) We shall see how Buñuel, Fellini, Saura and Bergman did succeed in finding a proper cinematic way of

56. Eisenstein, *Film Form* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1949), p. 110.
57. Eisenstein, ibid.

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fusing the unconscious imagery and real events into a unique cinematic entity.

The Australian filmmaker Peter Weir, in his two feature films, *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975) and *The Last Wave* (1977), employed many cinematic devices (over-exposed photography, diffused colors, oblique angles, spiraling camera movements, stop tricks, and bizarre shot composition of an otherwise realistic environment) to enhance the sense of the supernatural and mysterious occurrences. In some sequences of *Picnic at Hanging Rock,* Weir made his camera a haunting explorer of the exotic environment, and not merely a recorder of the enchanting landscape. On a cinematic level, Weir's shooting strategy is instructive, particularly if compared to that of other filmmakers who often choose exotic environments for cheap mystery effects. For example, John Boorman traveled as far as Abyssinia to search for alien landscapes and primitive rituals, to use them as an eerie background for the mystery story of his film, *The Heretic* (1977). Interested primarily in the external attractiveness of an extraordinary ambience, Boorman brought back with him to Hollywood animated postcards lacking oneiric substance. As such, and together with its counterpart, *The Exorcist* (1973), directed by William Friedkin, *Heretic* exemplifies the mechanical exploitation of cinema's oneiric capacity: both films are superficial records of curious events and environments without deeper psychic connotations, let alone poetic implications. Such is the case with the majority of horror movies that include cinematic devices merely to titillate the mass audience, and provoke shallow feelings of anxiety.

Elements of dream structure can be detected in the works of many contemporary filmmakers who otherwise do not show particular interest in dream content, but indirectly touch upon surreal and oneiric realms in order to enhance the subliminal and psychic aspects of the events and characters in their films. Jean-Luc Godard, for example, approached a dreamlike vision of the future in his science fiction *Alphaville* (1965), a film composed as a collage of uncommon events related to each other in a series of subliminal associations. Shifts of events and aggressive cutting are elements which generate an oneiric flair in some other of Godard's films, among them *Pierrot le fou* (1965) and *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* (1966), whose "open" narrative structures are subverted by the associatively mixed sound track related metaphorically to the images, and meant to reflect the protagonists' stream-of-consciousness. Michelangelo Antonioni ended *Blow Up* (1966) with a dreamlike event (a tennis game played with an invisible ball) which symbolizes the uncertainty of human experience and the ambiguity of "facts" occurring in reality. In *Zabriskie Point* (1970) as counterpoint to an actual course of events, Antonioni situated some of the sequences in an eerie landscape and photographed them in a style which exerts a dreamlike impact on the viewer. Spanish director Carlos Saura builds his films around a spatio-temporal disintegration of recollected events, juxtaposed with events occurring in the present. *Peppermint Frappe* (1967) and *Rear Ravens* (or *Cria*) (1976) brilliantly succeed in conveying the ambiguous connotation of subjective memories haunting the characters (e.g., a provincial dentist's obsession with his friend's wife, or the recollections of the past as seen through the eyes of a nine-year old girl.) In his most complex film, *Cousin Angelica* (1974), Saura erased

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every visible distinction between the evoked past, recreated past, daydreaming, and the future, so that the film as a whole assumes a nightmarish connotation symbolic of the protagonist's deranged psyche. For Saura, dreams and inner visions are equally real and tangible as present reality.

In *The Garden of Delight* Saura explores hallucinations, fantasies, and phobic associations that haunt a middle-aged industrialist, paralyzed after a car accident. Like Buñuel, Saura avoids stylistic distinction between several layers of imagery representing the inside and outside worlds which expose the protagonist's struggle to regain his lost memory. The merger of facts and fantasy is meant to erase the difference between reality and imagination. But the audience becomes aware of the "seam" that connects the two worlds, not only because the imaginary events appear "strange" but because of the camera's unusual "behavior," particularly when it mimics the protagonist's movement in the wheelchair. In conceiving his films, Saura was obviously inspired by his fellow countryman, Buñuel, whose sense for oneiric expression has been demonstrated throughout his work in which dream sequences mark climactic moments of the narrative development providing a metaphorical connotation. Contrary to this, Bernardo Bertolucci draws the border between the oneiric world and reality on a structural level. The inserted associative shots in the beginning of his film, *Before the Revolution* (1964), reflect the young hero's daydreaming presented in the form of a subliminal montage. Another sequence (with the little girl climbing a tree while chanting nursery rhymes) evokes childhood recollections executed in a stylized manner and enhanced by the contrast photography and agitated camera movements. In a different way, Lucino Visconti's *Death in Venice* (1971) is saturated with dream-like imagery reflecting the protagonist's "subjective experience" of reality; the mood of the interior world is here achieved by pure photographic means, mainly the extensive use of the zoom lens and distorted sound complemented by Gustav Mahler's Fifth Symphony. Visconti's compatriot, Pier Paolo Pasolini, used a similar concept of creating "unusual" shot composition and color tonality in *Arabian Nights* (1974) to indicate dream-like and fantastic situations, or applying jump-cuts and distorted perspective to denote supernatural aspect of scriptural incidents in *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (1964).

Some of Ken Russell's films, particularly *Tommy* (1974) and *Lisztomania* (1975), in spite of all their pretentious optical effects and symbol-ridden imagery, have nightmarish and mesmerizing effects achieved by the absurd course of events, highly-stylized surrealistic sets, hectic montage pace, and the vertiginous camera movement. A close analysis of Russell's directorial style would reveal that his flamboyant, often self-indulgent, visual imagination could produce powerful dream films provided the content of his scripts were more substantially integrated with the extravagant images which Russell obviously has no difficulty conceiving. Unfortunately, this is not the case with Russell's most recent "psychedelic" film *Altered States* (1980), which incorporates three quite impressive sequences (made with the help of an optical printer and video synthesizer), illustrating, rather vividly, the protagonist's "trip" provoked by the hallucinogens, but lacking a deeper thematic meaning or any substantial reference to the (extremely trivial) story.

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However paradoxical it may seem, some of the most militant films by prominent Latin American and Third World filmmakers contain oneiric components. The young Chilean director, Miguel Littin, in his epic-historical saga depicting social turmoil in Chile during the 1930s, *The Promised Land* (1973), uses symbolic-surrealistic imagery to enhance the allegorical connotation of this highly political film. A similar mixture of reality and illusion, with an emphasis on surreal imagery, can be found in the poetical, yet ideologically determined film, *The Fantastic World of Maria Montiel* (1977), by the Argentinian director Zuhair Jury, or in *Saverio the Cruel* (1978) by another Argentinian filmmaker, Roberto Wulicher. The young Ethiopian director, Haile Gerima, in his films *Harvest: 3,000 Years* (1975) and *Bush Mama* (1976), depicts the fantasy world of ordinary people who try to escape from unbearable reality, literally dreaming about their sufferings and visualizing their desire to become free. Hence the retrospective deliverance of the narrative in most of these films, including *Bush Mama*, which depicts the subliminal processes occurring in the mind of the oppressed heroine. These sequences are conceived as "metaphorical inserts" within a predominantly realistic plot, and they often reveal an original directorial imagination unburdened by Western oneiric clichés.

As one can see, most of the aforementioned films include dreams only in a few sequences within the overall narrative structure. The absurd course of events and bizarre imagery in these sequences have more Surreal implications than they have genuine oneiric impact. It is therefore necessary to make a clear distinction between dream cinema and Surrealist films which, although using identical shooting techniques, have different objectives. The best illustration of this distinction is Buñuel's film *L'Age d'or* (1930), a typical surrealist work with absurd situations meant to shake conventions, dogmas and behavior of bourgeois society. To obtain a screening permit, Buñuel presented his film to the French censors as "the dream of a madman," while in fact it exemplified a cinematic version of the Surrealist revolt in 1930. In contrast to this film, Buñuel's *Un chien andalou* (1928) possesses more oneiric quality, as has already been discussed in this survey. This is not to say that all Surrealist films lack dreamlike components. Two of the most Surreal contemporary films, *El topo* (1971) by Alexander Jodorowsky, and *Viva la muerte* (1972) by Arrabal, contain sequences of intense oneiric power. Preoccupied with sado-masochistic nightmares and hallucinations, Jodorowsky and Arrabal express their heedless reaction to the conventional order of things in society, with all the peculiarities typifying Surrealist tradition. At climatic moments, however, they transcend the Surrealist exhibitionism and introduce bizarre visions which capture moments of daydreaming and anxiety. Compounding antithetical elements, shifting randomly from one location to another, and developing the story in an unpredictable way, they rely on chance as the major vehicle of dramatic tension. The result of such an incoherent narrative, based solely on free associations, evokes dream symbolism and creates an oneiric impact whenever executed by the proper filmic devices. Roman Polansky resorts to a similar procedure when he presents psychic states of the human mind, as in *Repulsion* (1965), which contains several sequences depicting schizophrenic hallucinations propelled by sexual drives.

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Some of these sequences are visually impressive, yet lack the capacity to stimulate the viewers' sensory-motor centers. This is because *Repulsion* is executed in a typical Expressionist pictorial fashion, which ignores cinematic spatiality and its oneiric potential.

The Italian and French cinemas of the early 1960s were the first to explore the perceptual kinship between the act of dreaming and the act of watching a film. Two seminal films in this respect are Alain Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961),, and Federico Fellini's *8½* (1963). Each of the directors, in his own manner, departed radically from the traditional practice of *illustrating* dreams by unusual symbolic shots. Instead, they sought to provide the viewer with a sensory experience similar to that which one undergoes during daydreaming or in altered states of consciousness. The narrative continuity in these films is subverted on all levels, so that it becomes impossible to clearly distinguish reality from imagination-fantasy through most of the film. This ambiguity constantly surrounding events presented on the screen is akin to those feelings we have during dreaming or immediately after dreaming. To achieve this, both directors use extensive camera movements and dynamic mise-en-scène in an environment filled with sculptural objects which emphasize depth of field and change the photographic texture or lighting within the same shot, thus indicating a transition from reality to a dream or imagination. But above all, the jump-cuts, denying spatio-temporal unity, represent the device which stimulates a dream-like sensation in the viewers.

Following the writing style of the "New Novel" (*nouveau roman*) as presented to him in the script written by Alain Robbe-Grillet, Resnais constructed *Marienbad* as a series of events related to one another through an ambiguous presentation of space and time. As though in a dream, the action is repeatedly disrupted by an unexpected turn of or shift of events to another locale where the action continues as if nothing has changed. These visual shifts have a dream-like quality which affects the viewers' sensory-motor centers. The disrupted "story line" in *Last Year at Marienbad* creates psychical tension between the credibility of events as they existed before the camera (during shooting) and their distorted appearance on the screen (within the film's structure). As a result, viewers find themselves immersed in a world representing a metaphorical amalgamation of reality and fantasy, paralleling the emotions experienced by the characters on the screen who are baffled by the equivocal situations in which they find themselves. This ambiguity is emphasized by specific cinematic devices which launch the spectator into a somnolent mood similar to that experienced in dreams. Among the techniques used are continuous zig-zag trackings and cranings executed by the gliding camera through the corridors of a vast baroque hotel or floating around statues and plants in the garden. These movements provoke in the viewer a physiological strain and contribute to a mesmeric sensation. This sensation, however, is stronger in *Last Year at Marienbad* than in Resnais' previous film, *Hiroshima, mon amour* (1951), whose plot is less ambiguous and more concerned with the *psychological* aspect of the heroine's recollections. The recurrent insertion of flashbacks in this film interrupts the narrative flow at crucial points, strengthening the integration of the characters' past and present and

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deepening the film's metaphorical meaning (inherent in the script, *Hiroshima, mon amour,* written by Marguerite Duras), yet without the oneiric impact which stems from *Last Year at Marienbad.*

Resnais' and Robbe-Grillet's films testify that the full success of a film designed to parallel dreams on the structural level depends on a balance between poetic symbolism and the cinematic credibility of shots which depict dream events. However radically the narrative line is subverted, it is indispensable to preserve its cinematic integrity; otherwise, the oneiric impact of the film loses its psychical intensity. This is obvious in *L'immortelle* (1962), a film by Robbe-Grillet: on the one hand, the author was extremely radical in annihilating the borderline which distinguishes reality from fantasy, but on the other hand, he failed to strike the necessary balance between the logic of the narrative (which although disjunct, exists in the film) and the illogical course of stream-of-consciousness (used as the associative pattern of the film's structure). In so doing, Robbe-Grillet undermined the cinematic credibility of the unconscious imagery, confirming that it is not enough to merely bewilder the spectators with a puzzling tapestry of events, but that it is also necessary to carefully weigh symbolic ambiguities in the ontological authenticity inherent in the motion picture image. Without such authenticity, a narrative film, whose main purpose is to involve the audience in the action, remains rather a literary metaphor. Resnais was much more aware of this problem, and in *Muriel* (1963) he achieved a relatively coherent fusion between photographed reality and its subjective presentation as reflected in the heroine's disturbed mind, avoiding theatrical stylization of the visual symbols. However, in *Providence* (1976) Resnais' exaggeration of graphic stylization of the environment through an excessive use of theatrical conventions (i.e., painted backdrops as a symbolic background for the action to illustrate the characters' daydreaming) diminishes the oneiric impact of the film.

Federico Fellini described his film *8½* (1963) as "something between a muddled visit to a psychiatrist and an examination of a distorted conscience with Limbo as the setting."[58] In a structural sense, Fellini explored the oneiric nature of cinema more substantially than had any other director before him. The camera's penetration through space, combined with the translucent photographic texture (ranging from extreme black-and-white contrast to a maximum of whiteness) creates a hypnagogic mood in this film. The spatio-temporal shifting of scenes and compressed shot compositions endow Fellini's film with kinesthetic energy. The function of such a dynamic integration of purely cinematic elements is to stimulate sensory-motor experience in the viewer. This is particularly evident near the end of the film, when the camera movement reaches a peak of contrapuntal interaction. The combination of movements produced by the mobile camera or walking characters and juxtaposed to dynamic editing, mirrors the protagonist's obsession with his past life, his anticipated future, his personal desires and actual events. The conflict between antithetical directions of movement on the screen parallels the protagonist's psychic conflict, subliminally sharpening the tension which permeates his being in a vortex of heightened awareness

58. As quoted in George Sadoul's *Dictionary of Films* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 266.

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and pain of creativity. Fellini's next film, *Juliet of the Spirits* (1965), offers a more pictorial depiction of the obsessions, memories, fears and premonitions which torment a woman struggling to find her emotional identity. Her inner visions are presented on the screen in a surrealistic manner by the extensive use of camera movement through a bizarre environment, designed and arranged with an intention to affect the viewer by the conflicting colors which have symbolic meaning. Like Guido's dreams in *8½*, Juliet's dreams can be interpreted in Freudian or Jungian terms (as most reviewers have done), but it seems more important to realize that Fellini's method of composing shots stimulates an oneiric mood in the viewer. In his film, *City of Women* (1980), Fellini portrays his sexual daydreams in a rather grotesque manner. It is a Freudian kaleidoscope of "infantile-regressive fantasies," which the protagonist (Mastroiani) experiences while attending a feminist convention. Thematically this may be seen as an expansion of the famous "Harem Sequence" in *8½*, including many similar shooting devices used to enhance the oneiric nature of the photographed events. Among them is "insertive montage" by which Fellini infuses various extraneous objects with symbolic meaning, some of them alluding to his earlier films. Above all, the metaphorical use of color and allegorical mise-en-scène provide a hypnagogic mood to *City of Women*, a surreal spectacle, justified by Mastroiani's acting (he clearly shows that he is daydreaming in order to avoid reality).

Aware of the situation that exists in contemporary narrative cinema, one should understand why the films of Resnais, Fellini, Buñuel, and Ingmar Bergman are significant in breaking with the conventional ways of presenting psychical states, dreams and visions on the screen. Unlike many others, these directors have not considered it sufficient to merely *remind* the film viewers of their own dreams through the use of bizarre events and disconnected plots which provoke symbolic interpretations; moreover, they have sought to develop strategies capable of stimulating in the viewer psychophysiological responses similar to those of the dreaming state. Therefore, Resnais, Fellini, Buñuel and Bergman are the most important contemporary filmmakers in their explorations of the oneiric nature of cinema beyond the thematic, symbolic and literary connotation of dreams. The oneiric aspect of Resnais' and Fellini's films have already been emphasized, hence let us end this survey by focusing on Buñuel and Bergman.

Buñuel has included at least one sequence depicting dreams or psychic states in virtually every one of his films since *Un chien andalou* (1928), which he made in collaboration with Salvador Dali. As has already been mentioned, this is one of the rare films in the silent era to explore the ambiguous spatio-temporal structure characteristic of the dream process. In most film histories, this short feature is labelled a Surrealist movie because of its pervasive use of free (automatic) associations. Its disjointed narrative line, its characters' absurd actions function on a subliminal level, despite the incongruity of the sequential events. The most dreamlike portions of this film are imbued with images that generate physiological shocks in the viewers, an experience we undergo in our wildest nightmares. Buñuel's musical accompaniment for this film (alternating the "Love-Death" motif from Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* with the theme of a trivial Argentinian tango) is meant to further

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intensify the jolts occurring on the visual level. In Buñuel's sound films, two exceptional sequences ought to be singled out as visual structures that provide a dreamlike dimension for the narrative in general and unveil the characters' subconscious drives. These sequences identify with the climactic moments of *Los olvidados* (1950) and *Robinson Crusoe* (1952). Both are charged with symbolic connotations supported by numerous shooting devices that make the photographed events surreal and ambiguous. *Belle de jour* (1966) is a typical daydreaming film whose structure follows the unpredictable course of the subconscious. *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* (1974) and *That Obscure Object of Desire* (1976) mimic the evasive stream-of-consciousness fluctuation: both films depict the deranged states of mind of their characters by use of various cinematic devices (slow motion, multiple superimpositions, montage, optical distortions, over-lighting, and camera movement). In general, Buñuel treats his characters' nightmarish visions as an emotional counterpoint to the predominantly realistic course of events prevailing in his films. The absurd situations occurring in his dream sequences thus contribute to the symbolic meaning of the otherwise logical narrative and give oneiric flair to the key sequences; as a result of this, commonly justified attitudes and natural gestures of Buñuel's characters suddenly assume a mystical reverberation. With their thematic ambiguity and auditory-visual bizarreness, most of Buñuel's dream sequences affect the viewer psychologically rather than physiologically; yet, at the same time, the extraordinary pictorial composition of Buñuel's shots—uncommon and visually perplexing—is suggestive of the imagery belonging to dreams and the unconscious.

The extent to which Ingmar Bergman's oneiric visions saturates his films ranges from the insertion of one or two sequences to the construction of an entire film upon the pattern of a dream. However, it is not the *number* of dream sequences in Bergman's opus that makes him the greatest exponent of dream cinema among contemporary filmmakers, but the originality and subtlety by which he conveys dream imagery. For this reason, Bergman's films are deserving of a comprehensive cinematic examination to which this book is dedicated. Here I will briefly point to the evolution of his preoccupation with dreams in his entire career, so that the reader can place the forthcoming analyses of Bergman's specific films within the context of his entire work.

One of Bergman's earliest portrayals of nightmarish imagery appears in a sequence of his film *Prison* (1949); the dream content in this film becomes most powerful when the camera (in motion) focuses on the human faces and symbolic objects moving menacingly in the foreground. The insertion of symbolic details in the foreground of the moving shot is meant to create the subliminal tension of mise-en-shot, and has become characteristic of the directorial style in Bergman's later films, which deal with dreams and the subconscious. The effect of this strategy is highly hypnagogic and is best exemplified in Bergman's more recent film, *Face to Face* (1976), of which the overall structure is based upon a series of dreams and nightmares experienced by the female protagonist.

In Bergman's films of the early 1950s, montage juxtapositions and camera trackings are extensively used to support the symbolic connotation of dream material. In *Summer Interlude* (1951), for example, events

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occurring in the present interact with montage insertions of events which took place in the past. The metaphorical flashbacks in *The Naked Night* (1953), which illuminate the ambiguous relationship between a circus clown and his wife, are achieved by a combination of montage and lengthy camera trackings. *Dreams* (1955), although not an oneiric film as its title might suggest, contains a brief montage sequence composed of subliminally edited shots of inanimate objects (in a speeding train) designed to suggest the phobic frustration afflicting the heroine's mind.

In his films from the mid-1950s to mid-1960s, Bergman used a more diverse range of cinematic techniques to stimulate the dream mood. In *The Seventh Seal* (1956), the symbolically composed shots are inserted to denote the religious apparitions in the mind of the protagonist, such as the vision of the Blessed Virgin and Child, while superimpositions and dissolves are used to uphold the surreal quality of events (e.g., the "materialization" of Death). The overall structure of *Wild Strawberries* (1957) is based upon that of dreams; two of its sequences directly mirror the dream process as explained by the Freudian theory of dreams. *The Magician* (1958) culminates in the resurrection of Vogler, a sequence which, due to its aggressive perpendicular camera movement through a dimly lit attic filled with threatening objects in the foreground, becomes one of Bergman's most exciting nightmarish takes. The motif of psychic depression, which recurs throughout the trilogy formed by the films *Through a Glass Darkly* (1961), *Winter Light* (1962) and *The Silence* (1963), is underscored by chiaroscuro lighting, gliding camera movement and symbolic use of sound. The interaction between sight and sound in *Through a Glass Darkly* augments the anxiety which reflects the mental frustration and spiritual alienation of the schizophrenic female protagonist, while most of the sequences in *The Silence* are saturated with an hallucinatory mood enhanced by the camera's spatial exploration of the environment (the hotel) in which both the characters and the camera move at a somnambulant pace.

Persona (1966) is an oneiric film of the highest order: its two female protagonists symbolize the two conflicting yet dependent aspects of the same person. The film can be read as one person's dream in which another person appears to dramatize the subliminal conflict in the human psyche. This is implied by the introductory sequence (appearing before the credits), which is composed of about a hundred unrelated images (some of which Bergman borrowed from his earlier films), producing visual flashes and rapid shifts of scenes typical of a phobic dream. Unlike the introductory sequence of *Wild Strawberries,* which conveys the protagonist's dream on a *thematic* level, the introduction to *Persona* is purely dreamlike on the *structural* level. As such, it encapsulates the disjointed narrative flow of the entire film, which subverts its own spatio-temporal continuity, turning it into a nightmarish dream.

Although less oneiric on the whole, *The Hour of the Wolf* (1968) contains several captivating hallucinatory sequences enhanced by the use of Expressionistic lighting, symbolic shot composition and kinesthetic camera movement through space. The oneiric moods of *Shame* (1968) and *A Passion* (1969), both of which contain daydream imagery, are related thematically: disturbing events shown in the earlier film are used as the dream material for the later film, as though in testimony to Freud's thesis that one's daily experiences stock the arsenal of one's

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dream imagery, which recurs during sleeping at various stages of the character's psychic crises.

Of the Bergman films produced during the 1970s, four contain dream-related sequences to a greater or lesser degree. The pathological relationship between the four women in *Cries and Whispers* (1973) is paralleled by an absurd course of events, as well as the claustrophobic atmosphere of the ambience, which makes the protagonists believe that "all this is a dream." The nightmarish quality of the finale in *The Magic Flute* (1976) is achieved by an emphasis on mise-en-shot, musical rhythm and a complex juxtaposition of color to camera movement which is a visual equivalent for Mozart's music. Bergman's more recent film, *Autumn Sonata* (1978), contains only one shot which affects the viewer as a hallucinatory shock: this single shot occurs when Ingrid Bergman senses that "something" has touched her in her sleep (her sensation is intensified by the unexpected cut, so that the close-up of a hand touching her produces an astounding sensorial impact upon the viewer). In *From the Life of the Marionettes* (1980) there is an explicit lucid dream sequence denoted by the protagonist's statement that he dreamed he was asleep and dreaming. The sequence is executed with chalk-white, overexposed photography, slow motion, series of time-lapse dissolves, the camera moving over the bodies in close-up, and an abrupt change of the point of view. The action (involving the two lovers caressing each other), seems to occur in an indistinct space, "without the room's contours," yet the camera angles imply that the environment extends outside the screen frame. The "burning light," dominating the shots, generates a strong oneiric quality to the sequence, making it extremely illusionary and at the same time tangible.

Bergman's interest in dream material has been consistent in both his theatrical and cinematic works. Through his exploration of the similarities between the perceptual experience of viewing films and the sensory-motor activation characteristic of dreaming, he has succeeded in freeing dream imagery from its narrative function alone. The following essays investigate more closely the techniques Bergman has used to create oneric cinema, with particular attention to those sequences whose structure parallels the configurations common to dreams, nightmares, anxieties and stream-of-consciousness.

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Ingmar Bergman directing *Persona*

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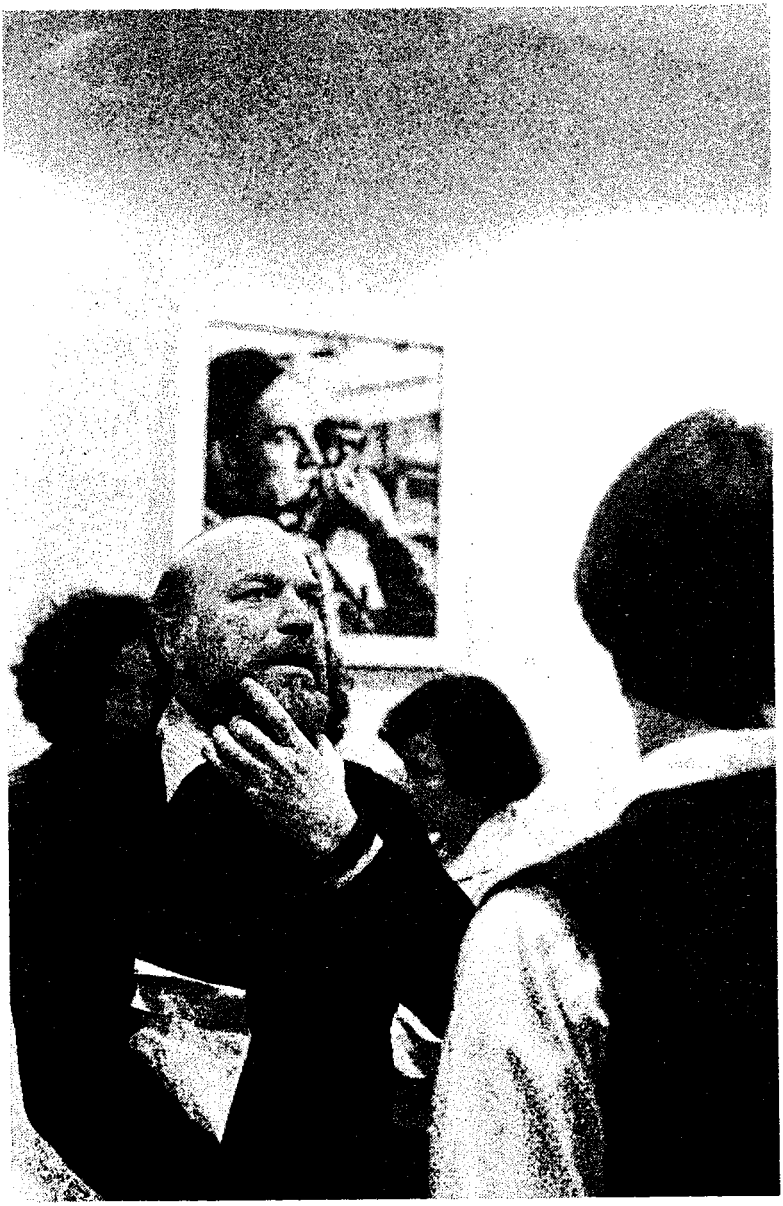

Stanley Cavell

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