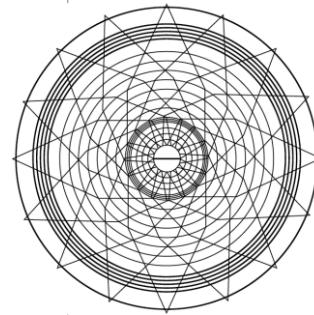


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*Narrative Structure and Decoupage Patterns
in the Final Sequence of Classical Cinema*



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NARRATIVE STRUCTURE AND DECOUPAGE PATTERNS IN THE FINAL SEQUENCE OF CLASSICAL CINEMA

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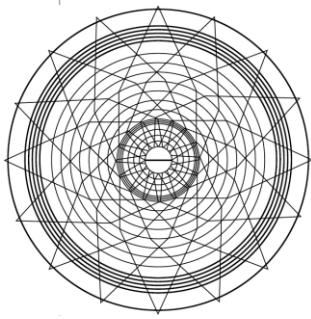
Abstract:

The ending sequences in classic films possess a distinct design. The narrative pattern for these films utilizes a closed ending in the resolution of these works, answering all the questions raised in the viewers' minds and unraveling the chain of cause and effect formed throughout the film. The narrative of classic films, in most cases, is accompanied by a happy ending, which results in creating a sense of satisfaction in the film's audience. The découpage structure of the final sequence of classic films also has its own specific conventions. Classic cinema directors, in this sequence, while approaching the end of the story, are thinking of taking the audience out of the film's world. Filmmakers advance the découpage of the final sequence according to a pattern that, before the end of the film, by giving a kind of foreshadowing of the end and creating a sense of reaching the final moment, allows viewers to prepare themselves for exiting the world of the story and leaving the cinema hall a few moments before the end of the film. For this purpose, directors use the bracketing structure and ending codes. The bracketing of the film by returning to the découpage structure of the film's opening sequence and the ending codes by creating a sense of leaving the story can create the ability to predict the moment of the end in the viewer.

Keywords: classic cinema, narrative, ending sequence, closed ending, bracketing

Introduction

In 1964, François Truffaut, in an article for *Cahiers du Cinéma*, commented on classic Hollywood cinema: "In the final analysis, we loved American cinema because all the films resembled one another" (Truffaut, 1964, p. 16). This quote initially seems rather ambiguous and problematic, as it is impossible to consider any two films (even if they are based on each other or adapted from a common story) as identical. Each film has its own specific expression, which the director and its crew try to present in the best possible



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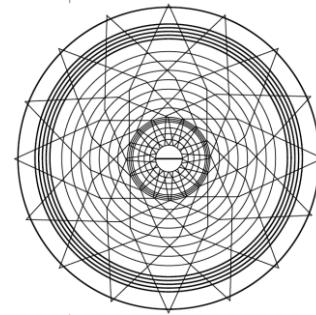
way, and from among the countless available techniques, they implement the best ones in the film according to their own ideas. Considering that Truffaut was one of the leading writers of the "auteur theory" and believed that in American cinema, directors distinctively put their signatures on their works, mentioning the phrase "all American films being similar" by an auteur writer further increases the ambiguities of Truffaut's quote. Truffaut has another quote in an interview regarding the ending, which echoes the quote mentioned earlier and can help to resolve its ambiguity. "Because audiences see the same scenarios in many films, they have become good scriptwriters and can always predict what will come next and how it will end" (Baby, 1993, p. 129). The word "predict" plays a key role in this quote, because if the endings of the films were similar, the audience would not need to predict and would know the ending from the beginning. The audience, because of watching many different films, becomes familiar with the existence of rules and conventions on which cinematic works are based, and thus can predict the film and guess the events that will follow the sequences. Therefore, the issue of American classic films being similar does not mean that they are all the same, but rather it refers to the establishment of a system of rules in the structure of these films that makes them similar to each other.

The Hollywood studio system had rules and conventions for the structure of classic films. These rules defined dos and don'ts for the method of narration and patterns for the découpage structure of these works, which directors were obliged to observe, and the final sequence of the film was no exception to this rule. Rules such as center-oriented framing, continuity editing, unity of space and time, and the evolution of the chain of causality are among the most important rules that have been used in the overall texture of all classic Hollywood films and made them similar to each other. In a general classification, Muka Ovsky has enumerated four general rules that works of art contain within themselves; a classification that is fully applicable to classic Hollywood cinema and its endings. First, there are rules related to the materials of a work of art, such as the relationship between poetry and language, cinema and moving images. Second, there are technical rules that are used through the design of the materials within the work of art, such as the gradual reduction of the size of the shot and the narrative resolution in the final sequence of the film. Third, there are practical rules or socio-political rules, under which the happy ending in classic cinema falls, and fourth, there are aesthetic rules, the function of which varies depending on each film from among the diverse cinematic techniques; for example, the use of soft light and eye light in the lighting of the final sequence of romantic works, which is one of the aesthetic rules related to this style of films.

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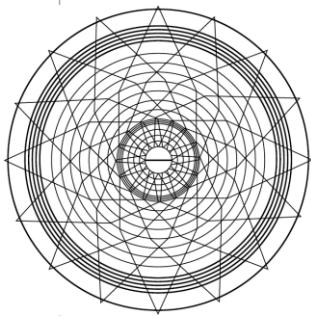


This research, considering the technical rules in the final sequence of classic cinema, distinguishes between two methods of ending. The first case is "thematic completeness" (the character has reached his goals, and all the main events have come to an end) and the second case is "stylistic closure". David Richter believes that a narrative can complete its story action, but still seem weak due to the use of incorrect stylistic techniques in the ending (Neupert, 1995, p. 13). Therefore, "the aesthetic pleasure of the ending is as much rooted in achieving completion as it is in the correct and appropriate Closure devices" (Richter, 1974, p. 170). The principles of ending in classic cinema also include conventions of stylistic ending and conventions of narrative ending, which will be discussed later.

Hollywood cinema has always prioritized the commercial and entertainment aspects of cinema over all other goals, and its first demand from filmmakers was storytelling for the audience. In these films, the heroes overcame the evil forces and advanced the story with their actions. The hero of classic cinema and his fate were very important for the audience, and they were waiting for his redemption. This empathy with the characters of the film prompted the directors to unravel the ambiguous points of the story and all the events in the final sequence. After giving reassurance about the fate of the hero to the viewer, it is now time for him to prepare to leave the cinema hall and return from the world of dreams to the real world. The découpage structure of the final sequence was responsible for this groundwork. In this sequence, all the cinematic techniques and devices are used to bring the film and the viewer to the end point. This research seeks to examine the narrative patterns and découpage structure of the final sequence in classic films.

Narrative Pattern in the Final Sequence

Firstly, it is necessary to ask what exactly is meant by the ending of a film and what its limits include. Barbara Herrnstein Smith, in her work titled "Poetic Closure", distinguishes between "end" and "conclusion". According to her, any event or narrative can simply stop and end, but only a text or work of art can conclude, a conclusion that leads to a Termination point (Smith, 1968, p. 2). For this purpose, she considers the ending in literary works to consist of two parts: the end and the conclusion. Like Herrnstein's division, David Bordwell also divides the ending in classic Hollywood cinema into two parts: resolution and epilogue. The first part is related to the narrative resolution of the story, where the knots tied in the sequences of the story's development are untied and all the questions and ambiguities of the story are clarified for the audience. The second part of the ending is what Bordwell refers to as the epilogue. "In classic Hollywood cinema, there are usually two ways of concluding the action. The first case is 'resolution',



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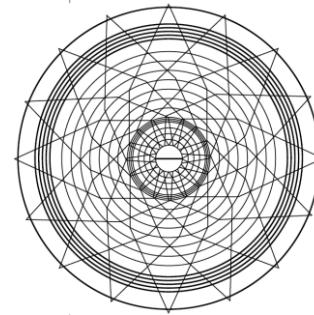
which Aristotle calls 'unting', and it is overcoming obstacles, achieving the goal, and solving the problem... But in most classic films, there is also an ending section that I call the epilogue. The epilogue acts to provide the stability and permanence of the ending achieved by the narrative: {where} the future of the character is determined" (Bordwell, 1982, p. 4). In fact, the epilogue serves to guarantee the restored order in the future for the audience. Frances Marion has also stated in this regard that the film should be ended as soon as the action is united, but "not before the rewards and punishments are fulfilled... The final sequence should show the protagonist's reaction when he achieves his goals. Let the audience be satisfied that the future is guaranteed" (Marion, 1937, p. 84).

The existence of an epilogue has a function in restoring peace and order to the world of the story. In classic cinema, the beginning of the action is a few minutes after the start of the film (after the opening sequence), and the opening sequence, while introducing the main characters of the story, emphasizes the existing order in the film's world, which is threatened by the start of the story sequence. The story development sequence is the place of struggle between the two forces of good and evil in the story and emphasizes the disrupted order. Finally, in the final sequence, the narrative balance is established, and order is returned to the world of the story. Noël Carroll, in his article "Narrative in Cinema" which is included in the book "Narrative and Counter-Narrative", quotes Stephen Heath as saying; one of the major metaphors for describing the work of cinematic narrative is to put things back in their place. Carroll believes; contemporary theorists are trying to use the equilibrium pattern as a comprehensive pattern for examining the narrative of realistic cinematic films. In this pattern, the narrative of the films begins with an initial situation, and after this initial equilibrium is disrupted during the film, the initial situation is found and established again at the end. Tzvetan Todorov also considers the ideal narrative to be a narrative that "begins with a stable situation that is disrupted by a force. The result is an unbalanced state. When the disrupting force is directed in the opposite direction, the balance is formed again" (Todorov, 1977, p. 111). All films, to advance the narrative, do not need to disrupt the initial balance, but they need a transformation that may not disrupt the initial balance of the story, nor is there a need to return to the initial state, but in this case, they will ultimately achieve the ideal state at their end. Some films begin their narrative with an unstable and chaotic situation and end in the opposite situation. In classic cinema, the story's plot is formed from the transformation of several situations due to the imbalance and at the end, from among these transformations of situations, the narrative balance emerges. The narrative in classic films is a chain of causes and their dependent effects, and step by step, it guides the film's viewer to find answers to the questions that have formed in his mind. Robert McKee writes about classic narrative: "Classic design is a story based on the life of an

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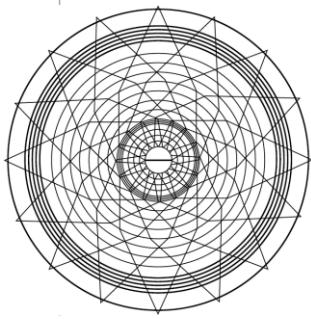
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active hero who fights against mostly external and objective opposing forces to achieve his goal, that is, moving along the time within the framework of a fictional reality that is integrated and has causal links and reaching a specific end that is considered an absolute and irreversible transformation" (McKee, 2023, p. 32). The "active hero" in this quote by McKee is noteworthy because he plays the main role in classic narratives. In classic films, the story revolves around the main character, a character who pursues goals. The knot is created in the path of the hero's achievement of his goals, and he unties the knot with his own devices and ultimately determines the end of the film. Even in the few works of classic Hollywood cinema that do not have a happy ending, the character and his decisions determine the unhappy ending of the film (such as the film "A Place in the Sun"). The relationship between the character's goals and the structure of the story leads to what Thierry Kuntzel calls the "classic progression", which "presents itself from a narrative and stylistically autonomous, detachable and self-sufficient perspective, and at the same time it is a link in a chain: an action that ends from the perspective of a progression starts a new action from the perspective of the whole narrative" (Kuntzel, 1975, p. 153).

Classic cinema has always tried to present a simple and comprehensible narrative in an imperceptible structure and not to engage and confuse the viewer too much, despite placing him in a chain of narrative whys. Because classic cinema believed in the entertainment aspect of cinema and made the principle of the viewer enjoying the film and leaving the cinema hall satisfied with the end of the story its motto in the production of cinematic works. Films have always tried to convey messages containing high cultural and human values to the viewers during the film's narrative and, from this result, emphasize the place and role of the individual in society and the mutual duty of society to the individual and present the clichés of good and bad human behavior to their audience.

Classic cinema adhered to a specific type of ending. In the final part of the films, through the causal chain of previous events, a stable situation was established. All cinematic devices came together to achieve the unity desired by the film's director and reached the final point of the film. This strategy of ending the film was completed with the stabilization of the film's main characters. This epilogue not only intensified the tendency towards a happy ending but also caused the audience to be satisfied because the film's viewer considered the story of the film to be over and no longer remained mentally involved with the events and characters of the film. At the end of the narrative, the viewer was ready to leave the characters and the world of the film with a confident heart about the happy ending and a long life full of happiness and ease for the characters. "The classic film always ends with the title of 'The End', and this is a good reason that the



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classic narrative intends to make everything it has presented during the film appear stable, lasting and real; and to express that their lives are going on and what is over is the time that we have devoted to seeing their world" (Moayerian, 1998, p. 182).

Closure: The Sense of Resolution or Completion at the End of a Narrative

Closure undoubtedly constitutes the most important component of a narrative because the result of a narrative is determined in its closure; the necessary condition for a valuable narrative is a logical and well-calculated closure. Mark Vernet, while emphasizing the direct impact of closure on the quality of the narrative, adds: "The closure of the narrative is important for its development. On the one hand, [closure] acts as an organizer of the components of the text, which is considered its final function; on the other hand, it allows the details of the textual system to arrange the narrative" (Vernet, 1992, p. 12). In narratives based on the chain of causality in classic cinema, closure "shows to what extent, at the ending of a narrative film, the effects of the narrative causes are revealed and to what extent the lines of action are resolved or 'closed'" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2022, p. 522). A classic closure "leaves no question unanswered for the viewer about the consequences of the most important events of the narrative" (Phillips, 2015, p. 547) and "overall, what was open is now closed" (Mortimer, 1985, p. 15).

The characters of classic cinema have the potential to end a confrontation or achieve a purpose within themselves, and in line with the chain of causality, with their constant and specific characteristics and temperament, they are the main factor in realizing their first internal power and, by following the path of the narrative, bring the story to an end. Now, the director's task is to answer all the remaining questions in the chain of causality, which is accomplished by using cinematic devices in the film's closure. "Classic narrative cinema, regardless of its genre, must have closure, in other words, the narrative must reach the end point (whether happy or not) and any ambiguity in the plot and conspiracy must be resolved... Closure, in whatever form it may be, will almost without exception present or express a message that forms the core of the dominant ideology: the triumphant law arrests the criminals, the good gunslingers of the Wild West destroy the villains, and so on" (Hayward, 2020, p. 179).

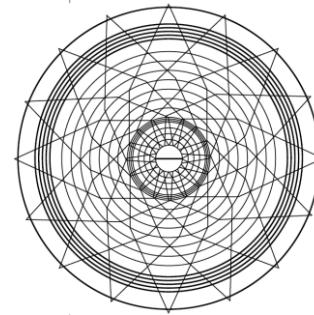
Closed-Ending Stories

Robert McKee, in his book "Story," believes that the story should end with a final action that the audience cannot imagine beyond. If people leaving the cinema hall imagine scenes that they should have seen before or after the end of the film, then something is missing in the film. McKee believes that the viewer wants to go to the extreme point where all questions are answered and all emotions are satisfied, that is, the end of the line, and the hero must take the audience to the final limit. The meaning is

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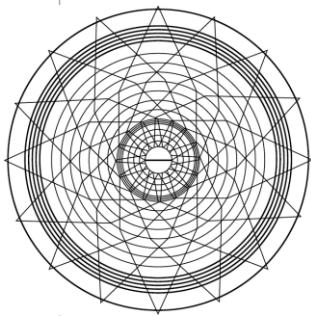
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that every story must inherently and independently reach a definite end (McKee, 2023, p. 98). If it is accepted that ending something and ensuring its certainty in all phenomena of human life is more of a custom and rule than leaving it unfinished, this issue should also be generalized to the world of the story and wait for the end of any narrative that has begun. In every story, "it seems that the most common and popular story form is the circular or closed form, in which the narrative returns to the starting point. In this structure, you can return the hero with a complete turn, literally to the place or world from which he started" (Vogler, 1401, p. 259). The classic narrative invites the audience to watch the film and enjoy watching it. This narrative pattern inherently does not intend to provoke its audience. Classic cinema gives the audience an illusion of continuity and its process without asking them to be aware of its technical devices. The classic form invites the audience into a comforting space in the middle of the story and creates a story of the desire for excitement, danger, and transgression, but satisfies all these desires at the end of the film. The purpose of the end of the story is that the viewer has a clear understanding of the issue that everything is over. Christopher Vogler writes about the end of the story: "The needs of your story and the attitude you have may dictate an ending with the feeling of a point, an image or a line of dialogue that explicitly declares a news statement: 'Life goes on', 'Love conquers all', 'Good triumphs over evil', 'This is life', 'There is no place like home'... The end of the story must somehow announce that everything is over - like the sentence that came at the end of the Warner Brothers films, 'That's all folks'" (Vogler, 2023, pp. 268–269). The film viewer at the beginning of the film knows nothing, and during the progress of the story, information is accumulated, and at the end, he is aware of everything. This is actually all that is expected from a narrative with a closed ending. "The characteristic of the narrative structures of classic Hollywood films is often that they have accurate and coherent plots, and the reason for the occurrence of most or all events is clear and obvious to the viewer... Most of the pleasure of classic Hollywood style narratives comes from the combination of excitement and doubt, but we know that in the end everything will be resolved" (King, 2021, p. 120).

The audience of classic cinema, according to the mindset prevailing in the Hollywood studio system, has been trained in such a way that at the end of the film, they look for all the ambiguous points of the narrative and find definite and clear answers to their questions. This pattern of classic cinema prevailed in the Hollywood cinema system for about forty years, although sometimes some filmmakers moved in the opposite direction of the pattern and were usually met with reactions from the studios, who were either forced to retreat from their plan or ultimately cut off their cooperation with Hollywood after making one or two films. Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson write about the ending that the ending is the last effect of a chain of causes and effects and, like the rest, must



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be defined in terms of causality, and they add that it is necessary for the ending to show the definite outcome of the causal chain of the story (Bordwell, Staiger & Tompson, 1985, p. 18).

Hollywood and the Happy Ending

Jean Mitry, in his book "Psychology and Aesthetics of Cinema", writes about the content of American screenplays: "As far as possible, they presented simple and uncomplicated scenes and tried as much as possible to get close to real life and repeatedly based their stories on trivial issues and arranged happy endings. The ultimate goal of American filmmakers was to prove with this method that more than anything else, people and their lives are important in the film" (Mitry, 2020, p. 394).

The happy ending was one of the obvious and audience-approved rules for producers and directors in classic Hollywood cinema. The title of "happy ending" was considered an American characteristic outside the borders as well, as Irving Thalberg specifically mentions this issue that an ending that is successful in gloomy Russia is not necessarily responsive in America (Tibbetts, 1977, p. 122).

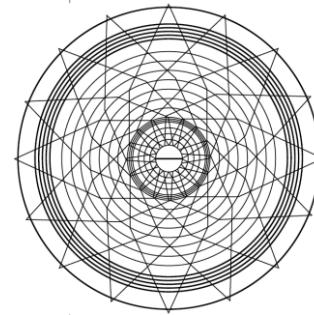
The happy ending was one of the obvious rules and characteristics of classic Hollywood works and, above all, contains ideological and social implications. According to Jacques Aumont, "The happy ending is a micro-structure of narrative that is acutely hypercodified – it is also an essential form for presenting the Ideology of reconciliation" (Aumont, 1980, p. 50). Therefore, the reason for the emphasis on happy endings by the studio system should be sought with regard to the socio-political conditions of America and the world. Classic cinema, which lasted for about 40 years, coincided with the great socio-political events of the twentieth century. World War I (from 1914 to 1918), the Great Depression (from 1929 to 1939), World War II (from 1939 to 1945), the Cold War (from 1947 to 1991), McCarthyism (from the late 1940s to the mid-1950s) are only part of the events that severely affected the world and America. Cinema, as the largest mass entertainment, was not immune to these conflicts. Coincidence with the greatest tragedies of the century, along with the dramatic increase in cinema audiences, prompted the studio system to separate the audience from the anxieties of the outside world for at least a few hours and, while creating a sense of hope and joy in them, "and finally, by giving us renewed assurance that everything is going well in the world, they bring the narrative to an end" (Kolker, 2005, p. 218) and also guarantee the economic success of their works.

The happy ending as the outcome and overall conclusion of the film has always had its supporters and opponents among critics. Stuart Blackton, in a comprehensive defense of Hollywood happy endings, stated that: "The happy ending is a natural heritage of a happy and democratic nation... So let us not ridicule the happy ending and thank cinema

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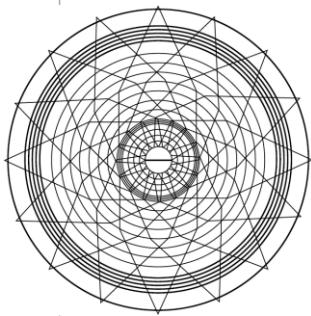


for developing a spirit of joy and optimism and bringing hope and a good face of life throughout our land" (Blackton, 1926, p. 3), which, considering the political events of that time, makes the audience's tendency to a happy ending quite justified. John Emerson and Anita Loos have also pointed out that "audiences do not want a tragic story that will make them sad for another day" (Emerson & Loos, 1920, p. 74). On the other hand, Parker Tyler believed: "Hollywood considers all endings as an absolutely formalist convention and often like a crossword puzzle with childish logic" (Bordwell, 2017, p. 31).

Classic Hollywood cinema included the happy ending as part of the filmmaking rules in its studios, and their films were often such that the main characters (who were in a way the embodiment of the dreams and patterns of the American people) succeeded in achieving their goals and restored peace to the world of the story. The victory of the film's hero, which at the beginning of the film seems impossible due to the better conditions of the evil forces, at the moment of achievement, aroused the admiration of his community, and this atmosphere also prevailed in the cinema halls through the film. These happy endings and the insistence of the Hollywood studio system on them went so far that even if the hero or one of the positive characters of the film was killed, his death would still lead to the happiness and well-being of the other people in the story. Because the death of the hero at the end of the film occurs when he has overcome the evil forces and from now on the people of the community (city or village) will live happily and well together. For example, in the film "Shane", Shane, wounded, leaves the Starrett family while the family's child has learned a lot from him, and from now on he will live happily with his parents in their farm without fear of the land grabbers.

Denouement

Near the end of the film, the climax sequences are placed. The directors of classic films tried to convey the necessary excitement to the viewer in the film's climax sequence. The climax is usually accompanied by close-ups, a fast-paced montage rhythm, and music that has an impact on the audience, and this structure, by increasing the energy in the images and music, brings the viewer to the highest point of excitement. At this moment, the viewer unconsciously shows reactions of shouting, crying, and even cheering. Now, after the climax of the story, it is time for the excitement in the viewers to gradually dissipate, and the viewer, by returning to the world outside the story, can prepare himself to leave the hall in a few moments. One of the most important tasks of the director in the structure of the film's final sequence is to slow down the fast pace resulting from the film's climax sequence. "In classic films, too, the rhythm is slow at first, becomes fast at the climax of the film, and in the final sequence, where the 'denouement' begins, the rhythm slows down again to end the film" (Adel, 2012, p. 127). Classic cinema in the final sequence



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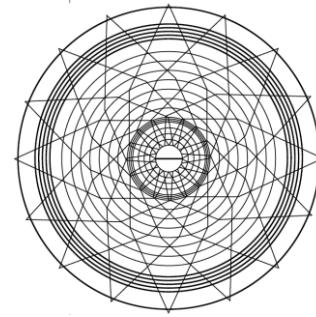
moves towards a slow montage rhythm, minimal movement of the subjects, and the use of more distant shots for the formation of the denouement, and always tries to minimize camera movements in these sequences, and if camera movements are used, these movements are very smooth and imperceptible. In addition to the above, undoubtedly the music of the final sequences, with its special structure, intensifies this feeling of final calm of the film, and is effective in conveying the concept of a good and happy ending of the films, along with other cinematic devices. This issue is so noticeable that some classic films design a wedding or celebration for their ending, and the intra-textual music of this scene causes separation from the tensions of the climax sequence and creates peace in the film's viewer.

The film's narrative also plays an important role in creating the denouement situation at the end of the film. Noël Carroll, in his article "Narrative in Cinema", writes about the ending in classic narrative: "Classic films are a collection of proportionate and harmonious repetitions: a classic film is a movement towards difference and then reaching repeated images during this movement. Storytelling or the process of producing a fictional (narrative) film is to create balance and connect several elements (or a collection of potential works, rhythms, depths, times, and differences) in a continuous and orderly line. The film's story is always a game between repetition and difference, a game between balance and imbalance. The pleasure we get from watching the film arises from this game. But ultimately, it must be said that the brevity of the cinematic narrative is rooted in this balance; and what is disrupted or unbalanced during the story is returned to its place at the end" (Carroll, 1998, p. 112). Denouement is the state of calm after the climax. It is obvious that if the film ends in the same climax sequence, considering that these sequences are usually very exciting, the viewer will not even be ready to leave the hall at that moment. Robert McKee, in defining the characteristics of the film's final denouement scene, writes: "If the climax of the film has shaken the viewers, if they laugh involuntarily, are horrified, are angered by social injustices, or wipe their tears, it is impolite if the screen suddenly goes dark and the film's titles appear. These signs tell the viewers to leave the hall, and they do so, but while grappling with their emotions, they stumble in the darkness of the hall. The film needs something that is called a 'slow curtain' in the theater. A line of explanation at the end of the last page of the screenplay that predicts a few seconds of movement for the camera so that the viewer can take a breath, regain control of himself, and leave the cinema with dignity and poise" (McKee, 2023, p. 206).

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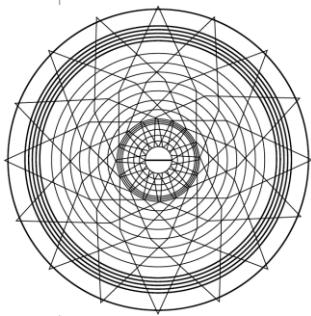
The découpage structure of the final sequence

An important rule in classic cinema is the rule of approaching the subject from a distance. Classic cinema has always gradually moved from long shots to close-ups, and according to the principles of cinema continuity, a series of medium shots were placed between these two shots. In the découpage of the opening sequence of classic films, filmmakers, in order to facilitate the audience's entry into the world of the film, had to answer four basic questions. Where? When? Who? And what? These four main questions are for the audience to enter the world of the film, which are answered in the opening sequence, before the start of the story, so that the audience is fully prepared to enter the world of the story.

Where?: The beginning of the découpage of the opening sequence in classic cinema is the answer to this question, so the first shots introduce the place where the story takes place. Sometimes this introduction consists of several shots, the best example of which can be seen in the works of Western cinema. In these films, usually at the beginning, a view of the landscape of the mountain and the plain from which the hero enters the city is shown, and then gradually the shots of the film become closer and closer. The hero of the film usually enters a small town, which shows shots of this town, its streets, banks, and shops.

When?: The type of urban architecture, the lifestyle and the type of clothing of the characters introduce the time of the story, and it is obvious that due to the more details that exist in this series of shots, it is necessary for the camera to be at a closer distance to watch the world of the story so that the audience can get the necessary understanding of the historical period and the time of the story.

Who?: After introducing the place and time of the story, the camera approaches the main character and introduces him, who faces his main conflict in the city. In this method of découpage, the director gradually and with shots that are arranged together with a structural order (from long shots to close-ups), enters the viewer into the world of the story. The purpose of the opening sequence of the film and its purposeful découpage is to guide the viewer towards the place, time, and subject (characters and events) of the film. With this trick, the director draws the viewer into the world of the story in the initial sequence.



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What?: This question is the place of transition of the audience from the opening sequence to the beginning of the story and the sequences of the story's development. This question is the motivating event of the film and the beginning of the story and informs the audience about the goals of the main character and the dangers that threaten him.

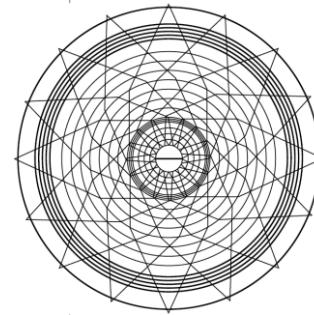
In Figure 1, the structure of the opening and ending sequences is drawn along with pictures of shots from the film "My Darling Clementine." In the structure of the opening sequence (left triangle), the horizontal axis is related to the time progression of the film, and the vertical axis shows the progression of the shot size. As it is clear, the more the opening sequence progresses, the size of the shot in it gradually decreases. In classic cinema, the range of progression of shot sizes ranges from the extreme long shot (E.L.S) to introduce the location of the story to the close-up (C.U) to introduce the main character. It should be mentioned that the progression of shots from far to near (or vice versa) in classic cinema happens completely gradually. For example, before presenting a close-up of the main character's face, he is definitely shown in a medium shot (M.S). "My Darling Clementine" begins with an extreme long shot of a desert, which shows the audience the location of the story and its geography (answer to the question where?). In the following and in the next shot (long shot), a number of cowboys riding their horses are guiding the herd. From the clothes (especially hats and boots) and also the use of horses for transportation, the audience understands that the film is telling a story of the Wild West (answer to the question when?). Next, it is time to answer the third question and the audience gets acquainted with the main character of the story (who?). Henry Fonda in a medium long shot is riding his horse and guiding the herd. The use of low angle and placing him in the background of the sky also has a function in the service of characterization. In the last shot of the opening sequence, in a medium shot, two characters are planning to steal the herd (what?). This shot, while introducing two other pivotal characters in the story, also provides the ground for the start of the story.

After the opening sequence, there are the story development sequences, which are a combination of the beginning of the story sequences, montage sequences, chase sequences, climax sequences, etc. After the climax of the film, which is usually a sequence with a fast rhythm and maximum action of the characters, the rhythm of the film should move towards slowing down so that the viewer gradually prepares to leave the world of the film. Directors solve the issue of fast rhythm with a gradual movement from closer shots to farther shots. Observing the same principle of moving from closer shots with a short display time on the screen to farther shots with the possibility of longer

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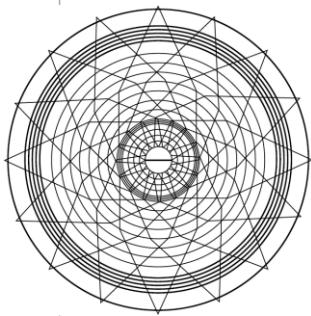
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display time on the screen, imposes a slow rhythm on the final sequence. The classic cinema pattern for the closing sequences is to follow the reverse path of the opening sequence's découpage of the film. Therefore, they used a gradual movement from close-up shots to farther shots for the découpage of this sequence. For this purpose, after the end of the final conflict and the climax of the film, a special design was used to separate the viewer from the world of the story in the final sequence of the film. After the climax, the fate of the film's hero is now clear, and the viewer has reached the answer to his initial question in the film's narrative process. After the story is clarified, the viewer has also reached a clear understanding of the time of the event, the film viewer knows in what historical period and during what time frame the film's narrative has taken place, and now it is time for the director to end the film with shots of the location of the story.

In Figure 1, in the structure of the final sequence (right triangle), the reverse structure of the opening sequence is followed so that the audience has a calculated exit from the world of the story and is aware of the end of the story before the "end" is imprinted on the screen. In the final sequence of "My Darling Clementine", at the beginning, in a medium shot, the main character of the film (Henry Fonda) is shown. The next shot is a medium long shot in which the main character is riding his horse and intends to leave the city. Here, the camera remains in its place and watches the hero of the story leaving the city, so in the third long shot and the fourth extreme long shot, the hero is riding his horse and moving away from the camera. In Vogler's words: "Sometimes a final image, such as the image of the hero galloping towards the sunset, can summarize the theme of the story in a visual metaphor and inform the viewer that the story is over" (Vogler, 1401, p. 269).

It is worth mentioning that despite the identical structure that classic cinema works have in the opening and ending sequences, the role of genre in how these sequences are presented is undeniable. "My Darling Clementine" ends in a way that is specific to the Western genre; the homeless hero, while moving away from the camera, returns to the place where he belongs – the desert. In addition to this, genre is a major driver in how the shot size is used. In a genre such as Western, which includes vast and eternal landscapes, starting the film and ending the film with an extreme long shot is considered a common thing, but in a genre such as Noir, which takes place in urban environments, the use of an extreme long shot is an unusual thing and instead, long shots and medium long shots are used.



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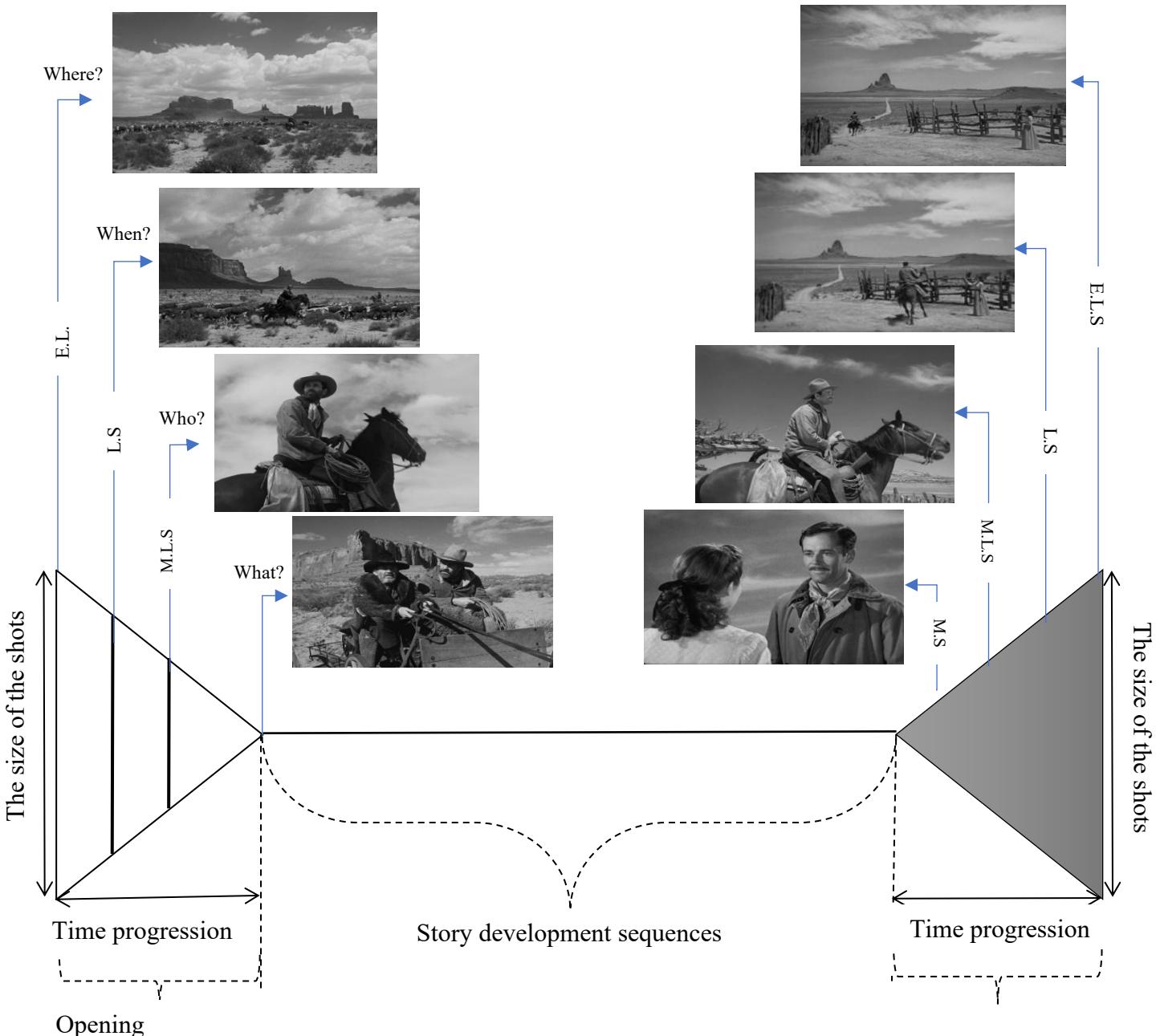


Figure 1. The structure of the final sequence

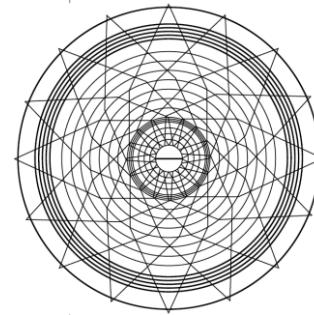
Bracketing

One of the structural features of cinematic films is that the director decides to place the body of his film in a specific frame. This is like placing a phrase inside a bracket, which can be visual (visual bracketing) or audio (audio bracketing) or both. Cinema directors apply bracketing at the beginning and end of the film, in the structure of their work. The best example for this cinematic structure is its similarity to the cover of a book. The reader

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always opens the cover of the book to read the story and enters the world of the story, and at the end, by closing the back cover of the book, he announces his exit from the world of the story. Bracketing is a structure that contains this concept within itself that the beginning of each film is not its beginning, therefore the end of the film cannot be the end of the end, but the world of the story has always been before the start of the film and will continue after the end of the film, and the audience is only observing a part of it that is consciously placed between these two brackets. Therefore, final bracketing allows the director to continue the world of the story for a few moments after the story is over, because otherwise the film ends abruptly and quickly. In the words of Raymond Bellour, in the classic film, the conclusion appreciates itself as the result of the beginning (Bellour, 1976, p. 331), therefore the final bracketing, in addition to its function, while performing the function of the epilogue in the final sequence, also refers to the opening sequence. "Bracketing by means of identical opening and closing sequences or the blending of elements enables a narrative film to maintain a circular unity for its narration. The use of identical situations for the beginning and end of a film can act comically or dramatically to drive the story towards a controlled narrative. At the same time, such bracketing proves that the narrator knew all along in which direction the story was moving" (Neupert, 1995, p. 2).

Visual bracketing

"Visual bracketing is the product of the découpage of identical shots in the initial and final sequences of the film" (Sadraei, 2013, p. 59) that at the beginning and end of the film confronts the audience with identical visual frames. This identical visual frame can include a person, an object, or a place. In the film "Winchester '73" directed by Anthony Mann, the film begins with a picture of a gun with a writing on it (Figure 2) and again ends with a picture of the same gun (of course in another place) (Figure 3).



Figure 2

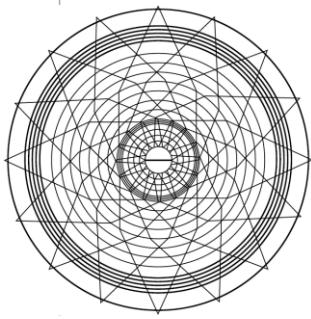


Figure 3

Figure 2–3. The example of the visual bracketing

Return to the familiar scene

"Return to the familiar scene" is a method used in visual bracketing in which the film uses the location as a structural element in presenting the story. The repetition of the



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location in the final sequence of the film is considered a familiar scene for the audience. In the film "Detour," the main character enters a cafe (Figure 7). In the final sequence, he is again sitting in the cafe (Figure 8). In the most basic interpretation, the return to the familiar scene can be considered as returning the constituent elements of the film to their original place. This interpretation is true about the visual elements (the location of the story and the *mise-en-scène*), however, it is possible that despite the identical repetition of visual elements, significant narrative changes have occurred between the presentation of this visual closure, and ups and downs in the characterization of the person (or people) present in that place have occurred, in which case the location can play a prominent role in advancing the story's narrative and contain implicit connotations.

Visual bracketing can be considered a subset of the opening and closing sequences, which in some cases overlap with each other. Therefore, the W's rules in the opening and closing sequences are also traceable in the visual bracketing. In the film "Detour", at the moment of the film's beginning, in Figure 4, the main character of the story is walking in a street in a long shot. In the same image, the car that passes by him acquaints the audience with the time in which the story takes place (the present time). Then, in a knee-up shot (Figure 5), the director answers the question of who? Then he gets into a car (Figure 6) and is shown in a medium shot. Finally, he enters a cafe and is introduced to the audience for the first time in a very close-up shot (movement of shot size from long shot to very close-up). This close-up shot also has a function in the service of the character's characterization, because he looks disturbed.

In the visual bracketing of the film's ending, the audience gradually moves away from the main character. The character is shown in a very close-up shot (Figure 8). He leaves the cafe and walks in the street behind the camera in a knee-up shot (Figure 9). At the end, he is arrested by the police and while the camera is stationary, the police car exits the frame (Figure 10).

Audio bracketing

Audio bracketing relies on the use of an audio structure for the beginning and end of the film. Richard Neupert believes: "Images are not the only meaningful argumentative elements of bracketing, and in addition to identical shots, the opening and closing sequences may also include narration over images and musical themes, which are initially established and then achieve their own specific semantic patterns" (Neupert, 1995, p. 22).

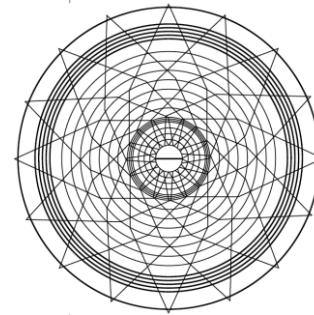
Narration

Narration is an audio structural bracketing that is accompanied by the speech of a character and often with the voice of the main character. The most important feature of this type of bracketing is that the narration and the tone of the narrator's speech should

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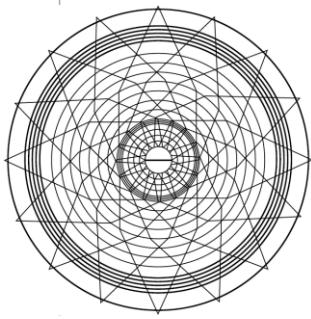
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be so prominent that the viewer remembers it because the viewer, after hearing this speech at the beginning of the film and after about two hours, should again remember the initial narration of the film by hearing it again. "The initial narrator controls the voice that is formed in the viewer's mind without the presence of the narrator's signs and ultimately brackets the text. This bracketing function operates on the large textual level and uses textual codes to address the viewer, start the narrative, and finally close the narrative and the text" (*ibid*, p. 26). In the film "Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior" also known as "Mad Max 2", George Miller uses narration bracketing: "The plot begins with an off-screen speech in which the old narrator recalls 'Max the Warrior'. The narrator, after providing an account of the global wars that turned society into a bunch of scavengers, becomes silent. The identity of the narrator is not revealed... In the final moments, the narrator's voice is heard again, saying that he is the same wild boy that Max loved. The desert dwellers leave the scene, and Max remains alone in the middle of the road. The last image of the film is a shot of Max alone, which becomes smaller and smaller by pulling the camera back... The presence of the narrator at the beginning of the film makes us expect his return at the end, perhaps to say who he is. In this way, both the cause-and-effect arrangements and the storytelling pattern help the film to end" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2023, p. 89, p. 90). This type of bracketing had a lot of applications in the films of the Noir genre. For example, one can refer to the film "Sunset Boulevard" and "Detour". In the film "Detour", the main character, after entering a cafe, flashbacks to the past through narration and narrates the events that have happened to him (Figure 7, initial bracketing of narration). At the end of the film, the audience returns to the present time again through narration, when the character is sitting in the cafe (Figure 8, final bracketing of narration).

Music

It is possible that audio bracketing may also be seen in films in the form of a piece of music. In this type of bracketing, too, what is important is the memorability of this piece of music, so that by hearing it again at the end of the film, the viewer can feel the approach of the film's end. "Music, like camera movements, the construction of identical shots, and the end credits, places the viewer in the midst of the film's unique text. After development throughout the film, music may return as a means of closure to mark the end of the narrative oratory" (Neupert, 1995, p. 22). Also, "music acts as a cohesive internal logic and structures a system that it starts and ends itself, while simultaneously progressing parallel to the film's story. As a result, the technique of ending the [film's] music, along with other textual components, doubles the impact of closure for both music and film" (*ibid*, p. 54). The piece of music that is used for bracketing should be repeated exactly at the



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beginning and end of the film. This music can have both a narrative source within the film and can also be used as a piece outside the space of the story. Directors who use the audio bracketing technique for ending their works intend, in addition to applying a kind of audio order to the structure of the film, to create a sense of the end of the story in the viewer because "musical repetition and closure reinforce narrative and stylistic closure" (Gorbman, 1987, p. 82). Orson Welles has used this audio technique in the film "The Trial". Welles considers a piece of music for the beginning of his film, which is repeated exactly at the end of the film. In addition to the narrator's voice and music, sound effects can also be used for film bracketing. For example, in the film "The Birds", the film begins with the sound of birds and at the end, the sound of birds is also heard. In fact, Hitchcock has used the sound of birds as an audio structure for bracketing the beginning and end of the film. In the film "Detour", after the main character enters the cafe, the jazz music that is playing catches his attention. This music acts as an audio bridge that takes the character through a flashback to his past (Figure 7, initial bracketing of music). At the end of the film, when the film returns to the present time, the sound of music is heard again in the cafe (Figure 8, final bracketing of music).

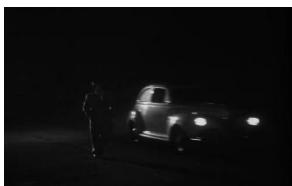


Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

Figure 4–10. The example of the "Return to the familiar scene" method

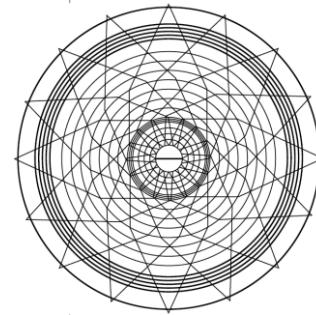
Predicting the End Moment with Ending Codes

"By studying and examining the final shots of films, we arrive at a set of cinematic conventions for the end point of the film. These ending codes or signs are a set of cinematic devices that are designed in a way for the final sequences of films that can evoke the feeling of approaching the end of the film in the viewer and thereby, in addition to creating a kind of mental awareness of the end of the film, prepare the viewer to leave the cinema hall" (Sadraei, 2013, p. 63).

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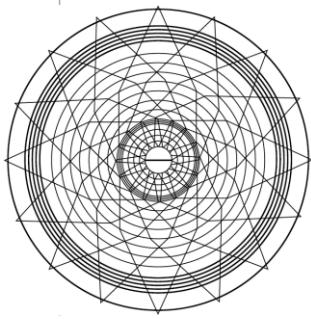
Closing the door / fade out

Perhaps the first ending code can be found quite accidentally in one of the earliest works of cinema history. In the film "Employees Leaving the Lumière Factory" by Louis Lumière, at the end of the film, the factory door closes and, in a way, the feeling of the end is conveyed to the viewer. The same motif (closing the door) has been used in the films "Notorious" and "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt". Closing the door in the final shot of the film is rooted in the multi-thousand-year tradition of the art of theater. In the theater, after the end of the performance, the most clichéd ending code occurs, which is the pulling of the stage curtain. Simultaneously with the movement of the curtain, the viewer inside the theater hall realizes that he should applaud the actors and leave the hall, so closing (the door or curtain) can be considered the archetype of the end for the performing arts.

The most common ending code that has maintained its place for many years in the last shot of the final sequence and is also used in many modern films is the fade out of the final shot. This cinematic convention has been accepted for a long time by filmmakers and cinema audiences as the terminator of film sequences, especially at the end of the final sequence of the film and is always accompanied by a sense of ending. The Hollywood studio system was determined that before the film was completely finished, viewers should gradually prepare to leave the cinema hall in the final moments, because the schedule of cinema screenings dictated that the hall should be prepared for the next screening in a certain amount of time.

Final camera movements

In the final sequences, camera movements serve to create a sense of the end of the film. Classic cinema directors try to create in the viewer the readiness to exit the story and leave the cinema hall a little before the film is completely finished. For this purpose, they established special patterns for camera movement in the final sequences, especially in the final shots of the films. The audience of classic cinema, by receiving the patterns of camera movement, can unconsciously guess the end of the film a few moments before the film ends and gradually prepare themselves to leave the hall. "Camera movement, like other techniques, shows how the viewer is able to make inferences about the stylistic patterns that are presented to him" (Bordwell, 2018, p. 97). The camera in the final sequences and after the climax of the story gradually moves towards soft and slow movements and avoids any fast and exciting movement.



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Moving the camera away from the actor

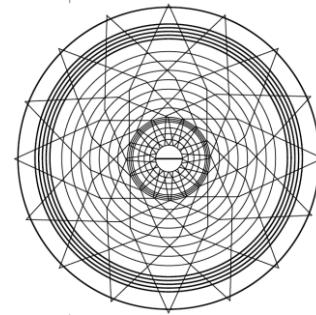
In classic films, the movements of the camera in the final shots of the films can be classified into several groups. The camera in the final shots of the films faces three types of movement: either it moves physically in a horizontal line away from the subject, or it moves physically in a vertical line upwards and moves away from the subject (crane up), or it leaves the subject with a movement inside the camera lens, i.e., a zoom back movement. These three types of movement are the most common camera movements in the final shots of classic films. The movement of the camera to move away from the scene (subject) is one of the most common ending codes at the end of classic films, and this ending sign is also used in contemporary films. "The backward movement of the camera may create a sense of liberation or ending... A similar effect is achieved when the stories of films end while the main character moves away from the camera" (Phillips, 2016, p. 107).

Pulling the camera back in the final shot creates the feeling that the film is ending, and the purpose of this camera movement is to give the film's viewer the power of prediction so that he can guess the end time of the film moments before it ends. In this ending code, a few points should be considered. In the shot where the camera is moving away from the actor (or the location of the story), the actor must be stationary and not make any movement in the direction or against the direction of the camera. This movement has been used extensively in films in which the story character dies at the end of the film and is unable to move away from the camera. This ending pattern is one of the oldest and most common ending codes of cinematic films. In the film "The Blue Angel", because the character is dead and can no longer move, the feeling of the end of the film is created by the backward movement of the camera, and the camera takes the audience out of the actor and his world. Another ending code is the crane up movement of the camera in the final shots of the films. This ending pattern, like the previous pattern, has also been welcomed in contemporary films, and many films in recent years have benefited from this ending code. In this pattern, the camera, in a crane up movement, leaves the world of the story that remains on the ground. In this ending code, the subject usually moves away from the camera and at the same time the camera slowly cranes up. The use of these two factors together strengthens the feeling of the end in the viewer. The film "Casablanca" has one of the most memorable final shots. While Rick and Captain Renault move away from the camera, the camera starts to crane up and announces the end of the film. Sometimes, the zoom lens movement of the camera is used as an ending code of cinematic films. In this pattern, instead of the physical movement of the camera backward, zoom back is used. This can have several reasons, including that this movement may be due to the unevenness and uneven ground between the camera and

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the subject, so that the camera cannot easily move backward. In the film "Duel in the Sun", in the final shot, due to the special location of the film and the existence of the valley and unevenness, there was practically no possibility of moving the camera backward, so the zoom back movement was used for the final code of the film.

Moving the actor away from the camera

One of the coded endings influenced by generic rules can be considered the movement of the actor away from the camera in the Western genre. In the final sequence of the film "My Darling Clementine", the main character, riding his horse, moves away from the stationary camera and disappears into the desert (Figure 1). In numerous works of Western cinema, this ending code can be traced, such as "The Searchers", "Cheyenne Autumn", and "Rio Bravo".

Moving the actor away from the camera is not limited to the Western genre. In many works from different genres, this code has been used. For example, in the films "The Wrong Man", "Scarlet Street", "The Woman in the Window", "In a Lonely Place", "The Unfaithful", and "Carmen Jones", the actors move away from the camera in the final shot. Moving away with a vehicle is another frequently repeated code. In the film "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance", in the final shot, the train in which the main character of the film is located moves away from the camera. The movement of the vehicle away from the camera can also be traced in the films "North by Northwest" (train), "Kiss Me, Stupid" (car), and "Exodus" (car).

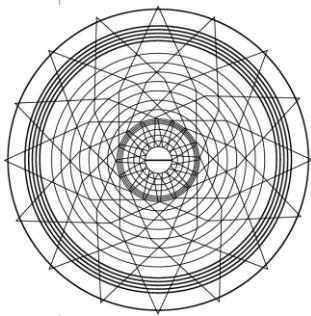
The examples mentioned were examples that conveyed the feeling of exiting the film's world to the audience, however, there are always exceptions, even in classic cinema with its calculated and coded rules. For example, in the final shot of the film "Sunset Boulevard", Gloria Swanson, while looking at the camera, moves towards the camera (Figure 11) and then a fade occurs.



Figure 11. The final shot of the film "Sunset Boulevard"

Dialogue

The use of dialogue is another common method for providing the ending code to the audience and preparing them for the end of the film, which can also be traced in the early works of cinema. For example, in the film "Love and Law", near the end of the film, an



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intertitle with this sentence appears on the screen: "Be patient, dear audience, there is only one thing left" and in this way prepares the audience for the final sequence. This technique, in the spoken works, became a common technique for providing the ending code to the audience. In the film "Uncertain Glory", near the end of the film, Bant says: "It has been a long way" and Jane replies that: "But it has come to a proper end." In The "Playgirl", the main character of the film asks her servant to bring her perfume, which she uses before special ceremonies, and tells the servant: "For the last time Josie... for the last time". In "A Passenger from Arkansas", the passenger says to John: "When everything is over, I want you to remember one thing..."

Size of the Final Shot

In accordance with what was previously mentioned regarding the W's rules, it is expected that the size of the final shot, as far as possible, moves towards the extreme long shot. The use of the extreme long shot in the final shot of the film in the Western genre is more used than other genres due to its capability (desert and vast plains). The final shot of "My Darling Clementine", "The Searchers", and "Cheyenne Autumn" are examples of this category. However, in other genres, we can also see the use of the extreme long shot in the final scene of the film. "Rear Window" shows the skyscrapers of New York in an extreme long shot. "Ben-Hur" and "The Other Side of the Pit" are other examples from other genres.

However, many films do not necessarily end with an extreme long shot. On the other hand, the feeling of the end for the audience does not necessarily happen with an extreme long shot.

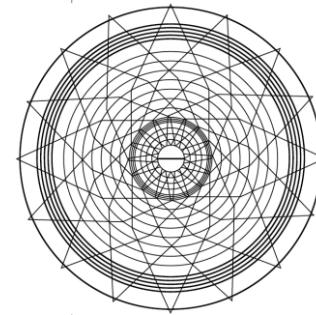
Conclusion

The study and investigation about the final sequence in classic cinema films shows that the Hollywood studio system had two main goals in designing these sequences. First, that the directors, by finally untying the knot in this sequence and resolving all the ambiguities regarding the story, can create the satisfaction of the viewers. The audience of classic cinema should leave the cinema hall with a calm mind about the fate of the characters and with confidence in the happiness and prosperity of the hero. To achieve this goal, the narrative pattern governing the closure of these works was a narrative with a closed ending, which led to the formation of the denouement state and brought the film's narrative to an end. The second goal in designing the final sequences was a structure that could eliminate the excitement and anxiety resulting from the climax sequence in the viewers and create the necessary calmness to leave the hall. The bracketing structure and the ending codes could achieve this goal. The viewers, by repeating these cinematic conventions in numerous films, were in a way trained to predict

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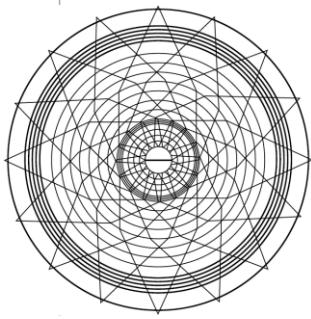
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the moment of the film's end so that immediately after receiving the bracketing or observing the ending codes, they would realize that they should be prepared to exit the world of the film. The découpage of the final sequence was in the service of creating the feeling of approaching the end of the film and should evoke the feeling of farewell and separation from the subject in the viewer, and finally, from all this structure, one sentence should be understood, the viewer's satisfaction with the end of the film, and this was one of the most important rules of classic cinema.

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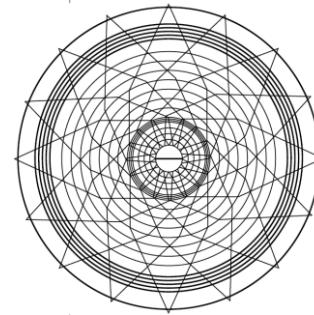
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ПОВЕСТВОВАТЕЛЬНАЯ СТРУКТУРА И ПАТТЕРНЫ ДЕКУПАЖА В ЗАКЛЮЧИТЕЛЬНЫХ ЭПИЗОДАХ КЛАССИЧЕСКОГО КИНЕМАТОГРАФА

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Аннотация:

Финальные сцены в классических фильмах отличаются особым дизайном. Повествовательная схема этих фильмов использует закрытый финал в разрешении этих произведений, отвечая на все вопросы, возникающие в сознании зрителей, и распутывая причинно-следственную цепочку, формирующуюся на протяжении всего фильма. Повествование в классических фильмах в большинстве случаев сопровождается счастливым концом, что приводит к возникновению чувства удовлетворения у зрителей. Декупажная структура финального эпизода классических фильмов также имеет свои особенности. Режиссеры классического кино в этом эпизоде, приближаясь к концу истории, думают о том, чтобы вывести зрителей из мира фильма. Создатели фильма заранее продумывают развязку финального эпизода в соответствии с шаблоном, который перед окончанием фильма, как бы предвещая развязку и создавая ощущение приближения финального момента, позволяет зрителям подготовиться к тому, чтобы окунуться в мир истории и через несколько мгновений покинуть кинозал. перед окончанием фильма. Для этой цели директора используют структуру скобок и конечные коды. Заключая фильм в скобки, возвращаясь к декупажной структуре вступительной части фильма и кодам концовки, создавая ощущение того, что вы покидаете историю, можно создать у зрителя возможность предсказать момент окончания.

Ключевые слова: классическое кино, повествование, концовка, закрытый финал, заключение в скобки