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A Study of Scene Scheduling in the Narrative Space of Heterotopian Cinema

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ABSTRACT

This paper takes the concept of “heterotopia” as an entry point to explore the specific expression and significance of the concept of heterotopia in movie scene scheduling. Scene scheduling plays a crucial role in creating film atmosphere and promoting narrative development, such as scene scheduling, camera, color, lighting, composition, editing and other audiovisual language skills, which can help to convey the deeper cultural connotations of the film. This paper will also analyze the construction mechanism of heterotopian film narrative space with the help of film semiotics theory. By breaking the linear narrative of traditional movie structure, heterotopian space creates a unique sense of time and space interlacing, which provides a useful reference for the theoretical research and creative production of movie art.

1. Research Background

Heterotopia is composed of Greek words meaning heterogeneous space. Heterogeneous space breaks the mold, challenges the established order, and is both realistic and transcendent. The concept of heterotopia first appeared in Foucault's lectures and was developed in his book *Words and Objects*. He proposed the concept of “the age of space”, emphasizing that modern society should reinterpret history from the perspective of space.

Heterotopia provides a space for people to reflect on reality and imagine the future. It exists not only in physical space, but also in people's psychological and cultural space. Heterotopia is a special space that exists in reality but functions differently or oppo-

site to other spaces, with heterogeneity and contradiction. Examples include prisons, hospitals, insane asylums, and playgrounds. These spaces are both part of society and at a distance from society as a whole.

Heterotopias are characterized by otherness, marginality, and difference, respectively. Heterotopia is at the edge of the social order, an opposition to and dissolution of reality, an inverted existence of reality, and a space of otherness. Heterotopia exists in difference from the dominant social values and spatial order. There are three functions of heterotopia, which are social criticism, identity, and escapism. First, heterotopia helps to reveal social problems and is a challenge to mainstream values. Second, heterotopias

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are places that provide identity. Finally, heterotopias can provide psychological refuge from reality.

Heterotopia theory provides a framework for analyzing and understanding spatial symbolism in film, literature, and other cultural products. First, Heterotopia is an aggregation of symbols. Heterotopia is a complex system of various symbols. These symbols include architecture, landscapes, behavioral norms, language, customs, and so on. Second, heterotopias are places of production of meaning. These symbols are endowed with specific meanings in specific cultural contexts, and the combination of these meanings forms the unique cultural identity of heterotopia. Finally, heterotopias are embodiments of power and knowledge. The symbol system in heterotopia carries power relations and knowledge system, reflecting social structure and ideology. The core function of heterotopias as symbols is to convey social criticism or the psychological state of the characters through metaphors.

Heterotopia is not only a narrative background, but also a carrier of symbols and metaphors. The object of this paper is the film *Shine*, which analyzes how the scene scheduling in the film demonstrates the concept of heterotopia. Through the audio-visual space and scene scheduling, it reflects the plight of the real society and the inner world of individuals. *Shine* is a 1996 Australian biographical film about the life experiences of pianist David Helfgott. Under his father's harsh education and torture, David longs to escape and find freedom.

The movie shows the protagonist's struggle between his musical talent and mental illness through masterful scene-setting. The greatest fortune and misfortune in his life is that he has a paranoid father. The film does not positively confide in the audience the identity of his father, Peter, but the reason for his father's unthinkable behavior is that he is a Polish Jew who lived through the genocide pogroms. Therefore, the father presented in the movie is a man who loves his son as much as he does, and is a violent, tyrannical, and intimidating man. The father is motivated by his fear of splitting the family as well as losing his son, so he burns David's acceptance letter to study in the United States, forcing his son to stay at home, unable to leave the house, but only to stay with himself.

The application of heterotopia in the movie is reflected in the design of the movie space. Using Michel Foucault's heterotopia theory as a research support, this paper explores the spatial presentation

of heterotopia in the movie in order to reveal the deep-seated repression and resistance within David's family. In addition, this paper will use the research method of semiotics as an entry point to further study the scene scheduling of heterotopian space.

Utopia, dystopia, and heterotopias are concepts that have gradually become ambiguous over a long period of academic debate. Hence, there is a need for research. Utopia, anti-utopia and heterotopia are three interrelated but differentiated concepts. They each provide different perspectives on ideal societies, possible forms of future societies, and specific spaces in real societies. Utopian works aim to depict the ideal society. However, the more one reads utopian works, the more one feels the unreality of utopia. It reflects the deep psychological and cultural structure of human beings, especially the fear of unknown and uncontrollable things.

Anti-utopia is the antithesis of utopia, which depicts a seemingly perfect, but horrific society. This society is usually based on totalitarianism, technological control, or other extreme ideas where people lose their freedom, individuality, and human dignity. Heterotopias and utopias are related and different. Utopias are places without real places, while heterotopias are real. Heterotopias can be real places and spaces. Heterotopia is a description of the liminal space of reality, emphasizing polysemy and dynamism. It is more concerned with the particular significance of localized spaces, as opposed to the holistic social conceptions of utopias and anti-utopias.

2. The Construction of Heterotopia Space From the Perspective of Film Semiotics

In heterotopian theory, space itself can serve as a symbolic system with the significance of carrying and expressing society, culture and individuals. Therefore, it is of sufficient and necessary significance to study the scene scheduling of the heterotopian space with the research method of semiotics. Analyzing this film from the perspective of semiotics helps to dig deeper into the cultural logic and social mechanism behind its heterotopian space. Semiotics emphasizes the fluidity of symbolic meaning, and heterotopian space also has the quality of metamorphosis or transformation. Semiotic analysis tends to focus on the static symbolic meaning of space, but heterotopia is usually given dynamic meaning in films through the interaction between characters and space.

Semiotics is concerned with how symbolic systems convey meaning. For example, images, sounds, and words can be called semiotic systems. Symbolic systems in movies include visual symbols and auditory symbols. Visual symbols include color, light, and composition. Auditory symbols include music, dialog, sound effects, and so on. Visual symbols and auditory symbols work together to build the narrative and theme of a movie. Symbols in movies are not only symbolic aggregates of images and sounds, but also carry deep cultural, social and psychological meanings. The heterotopian space in a movie often echoes the psychological state of the characters, such as emotions of loneliness, fear, hope or despair. Movies reflect characters' inner worlds and social issues through symbols and allusions. Heterotopian space is not only a physical existence, but also a symbol full of symbolic meaning. The analytical method of semiotics can reveal the hidden meanings and help to study the movie at a deeper level.

The heterotopian space in the movie ultimately points to the social structure and identity construction. First, from the perspective of social structure, heterotopian space reflects social structure and power relations. Heterotopian spaces in movies can reveal the oppression of the social order and the challenge to the power structure. In semiotics, these spaces reveal marginalization, alienation, and power struggles in society. By analyzing and interpreting these semiotic elements, social phenomena and issues can be understood more deeply. Second, heterotopian spaces are closely related to individual and collective identity construction. Through the symbolic expression of space, individuals and social groups are able to define identity. The relationship between the scene scheduling of heterotopias and identity is further investigated through semiotic research methods.

Semiotics provides a reconfigured analytical tool for the study of scene scheduling in heterotopias, specifically including the encoding and decoding of heterotopias. The director encodes the space through narrative devices, while the audience comes to decode these symbols. Thus, the interpretation of heterotopian space is a process of encoding and decoding. Firstly, it is necessary to find the way in which heterotopian spatial symbols are encoded in a particular culture and how this encoding affects the understanding of heterotopia. Secondly, to find the mechanisms by which power operates in heterotopian symbols. Analyze how symbols are used to construct and maintain power relations.

The dimension of the analysis of heterotopia as a spatial symbol system is to be developed in two ways. First, the referential relation of symbols. That is, to analyze the real or conceptual world to which the symbols in heterotopias refer. Second, the sign's energy and reference. That is, to examine the relationship between the physical form of symbols (energy reference) and the meaning they represent (reference). Able to refer to represent the physical manifestation of space, such as prison, garden, jail. The referent (Signified), on the other hand, is the meaning that the space represents, e.g., the aspiration to freedom, the symbol of power, the fracturing of identity. Specifically, Foucault describes the mirror as a typical heterotopian space. Under the semiotic framework, the mirror as an energy refers to the opposition and intersection between the "real me" and the "virtual me", and this relationship forms a metaphor in the symbolic system.

Specifically, the movie shows that as a child, David also resisted, but in return, he was beaten by his father. As a result, David has lived under his father's control for a long time, and his ego has not grown well; although physically he is an adult, psychologically he is still a helpless child. Although he has a mother in the family, psychologically, the role of the mother is always absent.

In the face of such a strong father, he was actually in great need of moral support from a powerful woman. This is exemplified by his later relationship with the writer Catherine, and his wife Angela, to whom the grown-up David clung like a child. Katharine was an independent and free-spirited woman, and in Katharine David received firm but gentle support, and it was thanks to Katharine that David first truly rebelled against his father and took the plunge to study in England. David's relationship with his wife Angela was similar, in that the absence of a mother's role in his upbringing actually led to a search for such a role to fill later in his life.

Completing the Third Piano Concerto was an expectation from his father, and as David grew up under his father's authoritarianism, this expectation has become the entire meaning of his life. When he breaks with his father, the meaning of life that supported him seems to cease to exist. After David finishes playing, he falls into a coma. The coma is a symbol of another form of death, after which he is about to welcome his true self. It can be seen that through the lens of semiotics, one can understand the movie at a deeper level and discover the artistic value of the movie. This

is because the research method of semiotics can analyze the logical relationship of symbols within the movie, and then dig out the core cultural connotation in the movie.

Symbols also have the polysemy of meaning. For example, the cemetery in the movie *Shine*, as a heterotopian symbol, can symbolize both eternity and death. The passing away of David's father is a symbol of both death and the liberation of David's mind. Thus, the symbol of the cemetery presents a dynamic interplay. In summary, the semiotic perspective provides a powerful analytical tool. Heterotopia can be regarded as a semiotic system, and by analyzing the symbols, codes, and meaning constructs in it, the cultural logic, power relations, and social significance behind the heterotopian semiotic system can be excavated, so as to better grasp the role of scene scheduling in heterotopian space.

This paper uses Foucault's heterotopian theory as an analytical tool to explore heterotopian space in film. A theoretical foundation is provided by sorting out and summarizing Foucault's ideas. The research method is mainly based on textual analysis and visual analysis. Textual analysis mainly analyzes the heterotopian space in the film and extracts the elements and characteristics of the heterotopian space. It includes mental hospital, bathroom, cemetery, garden, park, beach, bar and mirror. Visual analysis focuses on analyzing the visual elements in the film, such as low key lighting, use of frames, reflections and transparency, and how they enhance the narrative and express the psychological state of the characters.

First, a systematic analysis was conducted based on the scene scheduling in heterotopian spaces. There are five main spatial categorizations of heterotopias: heterotopia as escape, heterotopia as biological transgression, heterotopia as timeless heterogeneity of space and time, heterotopia as temporary heterotopia, and hybrid heterotopia.

First, heterotopia as escape. The specific presentation in the movie is the asylum space. The asylum houses those who deviate from the norms of society, and the line between normal and abnormal is drawn inside and outside the asylum. The spatial design of Heterotopia contains two specific aspects, namely composition and light. Firstly, in terms of composition, the main composition used is the framed composition. Framed composition symbolizes the depressing atmosphere, and the characters are within the framing range of framed composition, which can highlight the sense of restraint. For example, the checkered

pattern and windows in the movie are all framed compositions. The structure and decoration of the home and other art scenes are designed to reflect the oppression, and the frequent appearance of room doors and bedroom doors symbolize the psychological break and lack of communication. In the design of the lighting, mainly low key lighting is used, which helps to express the oppressive atmosphere. David in the mental hospital looks out the window at the bright world, showing his inner loneliness through low key lighting. The space David is in is dark, forming an obvious contrast with the light outside the window, and David's back is thus symbolic.

Second, as a heterotopia of biological transgression. This is specifically reflected in the scene design of the bathtub space. Home is supposed to be a haven, but David's home is a prison. In the movie, the scene of David curled up in the bathtub appears several times. The bathtub is a heterogeneous space, a place where David longs for freedom. This is used to show David's passive resistance. As an adult, David still enters the bathtub many times to express that his father's oppression has become the psychological shadow of David's life.

Third, heterotopia as eternal heterogeneous space and time. This is specifically reflected in the scenes of spaces such as the cemetery, the garden and the park, which are typical heterotopias. At the end of the film, the scene of the cemetery appears, symbolizing David's freedom from his father's oppression and finding spiritual peace here. The park that appears in the film is surrounded by layers of barbed wire, symbolizing David's difficulty in getting rid of his father's shackles, but in the end, David runs to the bright place, a physical action that reflects David's desire to get rid of his pain. In addition, the garden of David's house is also very different from the general garden of multi-layered space. The garden of David's house symbolizes oppression, loneliness and the shackles that are hard to get rid of.

Fourth, the bar space as temporary heterotopia. Temporary heterotopias, as the name suggests, are temporary and effective utopias that allow for a break from the everyday space of time. In the movie, David plays freely in the bar with a blue backdrop decorating the wall in the background. The color blue has many symbolic meanings, and the blue color here symbolizes David's psychological freedom, which fits with David's state of mind.

Fifth, the mirror space as a hybrid heterotopia. Mirrors are heterogeneous spaces that can distort and

fragment reality, causing a break in space and time. Mirrors in the movie can expand space as well as reflect the inner self. In addition to the mirror itself, the diagonal cracks on the mirror are symbols of an unfortunate life. The windows of the car also function as mirrors, as David sits in the car and looks at the image reflected by the dry branches of the tree, a scene that also reveals David's inner dryness.

3. The Shaping and Construction of Spatial Narrative in Cinema by Scene Scheduling

The narrative space of the film is the form of existence of the film's expression of the story, which mainly includes the space of the dialog between the characters and the self, the space of the social relationship between the characters, and the intertext between the space of the people and the environment. In this section, we will start from the means of scene scheduling and montage to select, express, arrange and combine the narrative space and other artistic treatments, and make a preliminary exploration of the problem of spatial narrative through the study of narrative media.

Scene scheduling is also an important factor and carrier of movie spatial narrative. The term "scene scheduling" comes from the French word "Mise-en-Scène", which means "placed on the stage". The term is derived from stage play, which initially refers to the director's design of the actors' position in the scene. With the development of the art of cinematography, it has come to mean, among other things, "the movement of the camera". In the movie, the scene scheduling contains two aspects, one is the actor scheduling, the other is the camera scheduling. Actor scheduling, as the name suggests, and camera scheduling refers to the director's control of the point of view through the narrative logic, and the clues of the story from the behavioral relationship of one or more characters. Scene scheduling mainly consists of three elements, which are narrative element, dramatic element, and picture element.

Movie space can be mainly divided into internal space and external space, the so-called internal space refers to the indoor space constructed by the building within the screen frame, and the external space refers to the external environmental space in the screen frame. Cinematic space is the visualization of narrative strategy, which can make the audience produce a kind of spectacle and hypothetical experience at the first time. To create this hypothesis,

it is necessary to combine the narrative, characters, theme and space to perfect the space narrative as a whole. Movie space itself is a triangle that is narrow in front and wide in the back, expanding to the far side, including reproduction space and composition space. The reproduction space is to use the recording function of the camera to realistically reproduce a real or imaginary scene; the composition space is to use montage to combine a series of individual scenes shot piecemeal into a unified and complete scene, suggesting a deep space.

Director Scott Hicks utilizes a large number of close-ups in the film, especially in the scenes where David plays the piano, capturing the nimble movements of his fingers on the keys and the subtle changes in his facial expression, conveying his deep commitment to music and his emotional ups and downs. In addition, the movie also adopts slow motion and subjective point of view to bring the audience into David's inner world, feeling his psychological state and emotional ups and downs. Through the use of the above camera language, the movie successfully brings the audience into David Helfgott's inner world to feel his path of genius, pain and rebirth.

Scene scheduling constitutes the picture system through the organization of relational objects. The significance of the movie does not lie in a shot itself, but in the rushing between the shots and the shots, transcending the time and space limitations of the movie, scene scheduling is a unique way of expression of the movie space narrative. Scene scheduling has physical, temporal and psychological functions. It shows the unique aesthetic charm of film space narrative.

4. Reach a Verdict

By analyzing the heterotopian space in *Shine*, this paper reveals how the film reflects the protagonist's inner world and real dilemma through different spatial settings. The heterotopian space reveals the deep-seated repression and resistance within the family and the protagonist's desire for freedom.

The heterotopian space is not only a physical space, but also a psychological space, a mapping of the protagonist's inner world. It reflects his loneliness, fear and confusion. Heterotopian space shows the oppression of the real environment and is a symbol of the protagonist's escape from reality and pursuit of freedom. There are five main spatial categorizations of heterotopias, which are heterotopia as escape,

heterotopia as biological transgression, heterogeneous space-time as eternity, heterotopia as temporary heterotopia, and hybrid heterotopia. Heterotopian spaces drive the narrative through the means of intensified visualization, which in turn expresses the inner workings of the characters. The movie becomes a driving force for the narrative through the visual body, reproducing the derivation of the physical narrative through the physical situation.

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