

INTRODUCTION TO FILM ANALYSIS VOCABULARY

Session 1: THE FRAME

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER THEORY

Formats

Jean-Loup Passek, *Dictionnaire du cinéma*, Larousse, 2001.

Vincent Pinel, *Vocabulaire technique du cinéma*, Nathan Université, 1996: re-edited by Armand Colin, 2005. Xavier Remis, "Les formats cinématographiques", 2001, <http://www.ac-nancy-metz.fr/cinemav/docu/format.htm>

Frame, onscreen, offscreen

Jacques Aumont, *L'image*, Armand Colin, 2005 (English-language edition: *The Image*, British Film Institute, 2009, translated by Claire Pajackowska).

Jacques Aumont, Alain Bergala, Michel Marie, Marc Vernet, *Esthétique du film*, Armand Colin, 2005 (English-language edition: *Aesthetics of Film*, Jacques Aumont, Alain Bergala, Michel Marie, Marc Vernet, translated and revised by Richard Neupert, University of Texas Press, 1992).

Jacques Aumont, Michel Marie, *Dictionnaire théorique et critique du cinéma*, Armand Colin 2007.

The entry on "diagesis" proposes a very useful explanation on the history and the different accepted meanings of the term, which has a meaning in narratology different from the one that we have used.

André Bazin, *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma ?*, éditions du Cerf, 1990. (English-language edition: *What Is Cinema?*, André Bazin, Caboose, 2009, translated by Tim Barnard).

Reading some of Bazin's articles helps to broaden reflection on the specificities of the cinematic space as constructed on the basis of the relationship between the notions of frame, onscreen and offscreen, compared to the space constructed by other representational arts. See in particular the article "Theatre and Cinema", in which Bazin opposes theatrical space, hemmed-in on itself, and cinematic space conceived as a "window onto the world" (cf. "Theatre and Cinema" In *What is Cinema?* Vol. 1. by Andre Bazin, 76–124, translated by Hugh Gray. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967). This metaphor of the window could be borrowed from the treatise *De Pictura* (1435) by Leon Battista Alberti, an Italian Renaissance architect who applied it to the pictorial frame, comparing the frame to "an open window through which the *historia* is observed" (*Leon Battista Alberti, On Painting: A new translation and critical edition* by Rocco Sinisgalli, Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 167).

Pascal Bonitzer, "Décadrages", in *Cinéma et peinture. Décadrages*, éditions de l'Etoile/Cahiers du cinéma, 1995.

We should not confuse shots that cut off part of an object or person in the foreground, a classical device that relies of placing an element between the camera and the main subject, with the effects of a brutal decentring that can produce specific framings in which the subject is deliberately cut off by the edge of the frame. This type of framing marked by an decentring can be termed "de-framing" (*décadrage*), and is used notably by Pascal Bonitzer, in his book, *Décadrages. Cinéma et peinture*. Striking examples of this are to be found, in Carl Theodor Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928).

Noël Burch, *Praxis du cinéma*, Folio, Essais, 1986.

In *Praxis du cinéma*, Noël Burch works very precisely on the notion of "offscreen". He notably distinguishes what he calls "concrete offscreen" and "imaginary offscreen". The vocabulary used here poses a problem insofar as any offscreen space is by definition imaginary, but the distinction he introduces is interesting for film analysis. The "concrete offscreen" comprises elements that were previously included in the field of vision. The viewer can thus remember them: in *The Shining*, when Jack has entered the lobby of Overlook Hotel, the façade is then offscreen, but we know what it looks like. On the other hand the "imaginary offscreen" comprises elements that have never been in the field of vision: this means that they have necessarily to be imagined or mentally projected by the viewer. Thus Charlie in *Charlie's Angels* belongs to an offscreen world that can only be imagined

Finally, from a descriptive point of view, Noël Burch distinguishes six offscreen "spatial categories" that can be delimited by the screen: the space that is above the screen, the space below and left and right of the frame, the space that is beyond the frame (i.e. the space behind the camera) and finally the space that is hidden by set.

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