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ἐπεὶ δὲ ταύτην τὴν ἐπιστήμην ζητοῦμεν

The pathic/haptic relationship in philosophy of cinema. The case of *Doubt* (John Patrick Shanley, 2008).

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RESUMEN

Partiendo de algunos pasajes del *Tratado de la Argumentación* de Perelman y Olbrechts-Tyteca y de la *Retorica* de Aristóteles, el artículo examina el papel de la componente emocional (denominada "pática") en la experiencia fílmica. La discusión comporta tres pasos: 1) se recuerda el concepto de *significación añadida* que Kulesov y Canudo atribuyen al cine; 2) se muestra *in situ*, en relación con la película *Doubt* (J.P. Shanley, 2008), el modo en que actúa tal significación, lo que nos lleva al análisis del concepto de lo "háptico"; 3) se intenta buscar, mediante el uso de los instrumentos analíticos de la fenomenología husserliana, el origen de la componente pática. Se concluye que nuestro análisis indica la pertinencia de un nuevo concepto de racionalidad definido por la "razón pática".

PALABRAS CLAVE: experiencia fílmica, fenomenología, háptico, razón pática, significación.

ABSTRACT

Starting from some passages of the Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's *Treatise of Argumentation* and Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the essay examines the role of the emotional component (defined 'pathic') in the filmic experience. The discussion is divided into three levels: 1) by recalling the *added signification* of the cinema, as observed by Kulesov and Canudo, 2) by showing *in situ*, with reference to the film *Doubt* (J.P. Shanley, 2008), the action of such a signification, with the consequent analysis of the concept of 'haptic'; 3) trying, with the analytical tools of husserlian phenomenology, to delineate the origin of the pathic dimension. In conclusion, the analysis indicates the action of a new concept of rationality, defined as "pathic reason".

KEYWORDS: filmic experience, haptic, pathic reason, phenomenology, signification.

1. INTRODUCTION

A passage in the early pages of the *Treatise of Argumentation* by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca is of particular interest for my purposes. Perelman in fact talks about the need, not only as a pre-condition for the launching of an argumentation in the strict sense, to set up a «contact between minds» (§2) (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1982: 16), adding that «It is not enough to talk or write, one must also be listened to and read» (1982: 19) and that «knowing the audience can be seen independently from knowing the ways to influence it, in fact the issue of the kind of audience is linked to that of its conditioning» (1982: 25). In §10, he also recalls that: «argumentation is successful if it can increase this intensity of identification so as to cause the desired action among the listeners» (1982: 48). These words of Perelman remind us of the words used in the *Rhetoric* by Aristotle to introduce the question of the style of argumentation: «it is not enough to know the arguments one is to expound, but one must expound them appropriately» (*Rhetoric*, 1403b). What type of component are these passages from Aristotle and Perelman referring to? When looked at more closely, they give rise to the emphasis on a component related not just to the rational aspect of the "content" of the process of argumentation, but rather to the emotional component. It is a necessary and sufficient condition for the augured contact of minds and therefore for argumentation *tout court*, as Perelman himself points out: «The contact between the speaker and his audience does not just involve the pre-conditions for argumentation, but is essential for its whole development» (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1982: 20). Therefore, along with the structure and type of argumentation, we must envisage a further level, not subordinate to the first, and contributing to successful argumentation. My thesis is that the cinema is an excellent lens through which to see the working of such a process, which I would here like to call "pathic". Explaining the meaning of the pathic and how it is related to the haptic, which refers to the habitability of something[1], is what I intend to do in these brief comments. For a start, I would like to just mention the sense of the pathic, which I feel is magnificently summed up in these words by Maria Zambrano: «Passion alone frightens off truth, which is alert and agile enough to escape from its grasp. Reason alone is not able to surprise the wildlife. But passion and reason together, with reason launching itself with impassioned energy only to stop at the right moment, can capture the naked truth without damaging it. [...] It would be good to come to discover the soul in those forms in which it was seeking to express itself alone, forgetting for the moment what the intellect had to say about the

[1] *Cf.* Hatwell, Streri, Gentaz, eds., 2003; Hatwell, 1986; Heller, Schiff, eds. 1991; Lhote, Streri 2003.

underlying soul. To reveal the reasons of the heart that the heart itself has discovered by exploiting its state of solitude and abandonment» (Zambrano, 2001: 19-20; 30, my translation).

2. THE '*ADDED SIGNIFICATION*' OF THE CINEMA: KULESOV AND CANUDO

The attempt to clarify the relation between pathic and haptic will be made by considering one film in particular, John Patrick Shanley's *Doubt* (2008), showing that in it certain factors connected to the pathic component I mentioned earlier are absolutely decisive. I think it is important to recall some basic points in film language theory. It is well known that in every film two elements can be found. The first, and easiest to grasp, concerns what we could call content (the screenplay, the narrative plot), while the second concerns the style used to try to put the content on the screen. In a film these elements are jointly present and I am separating them only to make my train of thought clear. Technically speaking, in relation to these two aspects, the way a film works is not different from a novel. Does this then mean that there is no specific difference between a film and a novel? The question is obviously rhetorical, since not only does such a difference exist, but it is in fact the beating heart of film language. It may be useful to recall one of the first places where this difference was manifested. I am referring to the famous experiment carried out by Kulesov, narrated by Pudovkin in *The Seventh Art* (Pudovkin 1961: 56): in a cinema, before a chosen audience, three different sequences of images were projected: the first was the photo of an actor with an impassive expression; the second showed a woman's dead body; the third, a bowl of soup. In the audience's perception, the actor's expression changed according to the order in which the photos were projected, changing from sad to happy depending on whether it was followed by the photo of the dead woman or by that of the bowl of soup. The Kulesov-Pudovkin experiment showed that the projection in a certain rhythm of the same images, or we could say of the same content, causes an increase in signification: the meaning of identical content can vary according to the way it is shown. Starting from that initial evidence, we can say that in a film the skill of the director lies in the way he or she is able to "steer" this added signification. Having recalled the cinema's force of expression in the way it is manifested, I would now like to let you hear one of the first witnesses of the birth of the cinema, the Italian Ricciotto Canudo, briefly showing three aspects of his theoretical stance:

1) For Canudo, who lived up to the early 1920s, the cinema was an absolutely modern art, suited to the new era. It was Canudo who coined the neologism *écraniste*

to refer to the artist who gets his bearings from the new art[2]. Canudo distinguished between the arts of time (music, poetry and, later, also dance[3]) and the arts of space (architecture, sculpture, painting). The former are mobile rhythmic arts, the latter immobile and plastic. The cinema has to be placed at the top in that it manages to reconcile both types of art and is therefore a spatial-temporal «total art», suited to the rhythmic dynamism of modern culture;

2) Cinema's strength lies in the capacity, embodied in the *écraniste*, to involve not only intellectuals but also the broader public: «it is the desire – he wrote – for a new Celebration, for a joyful new humanity, taking place in a show, in a place where people come together, where they achieve, to a greater or lesser degree, the annulment of their isolated individuality» (Canudo, 1908: 3);

3) The third aspect comes from the following passage, which I will quote in its entirety: «We are witnessing the birth of this sixth art. Such a statement at a twilight time like ours, still poorly defined and uncertain like every period of transition, is repugnant to our scientific mentality. […] only practised eyes with the will to discover the original or invisible signs of beings and things can find their way amidst the obscure vision of the *anima mundi*. However, the sixth art prevails on the restless, searching spirit. And it will be the superb reconciliation of the Rhythms of Space (the Plastic Arts) and the Rhythms of Time (Music and Poetry)"» (Barbera and Turigliatto, 1978: 15 ff, my italics)[4]. Canudo's words mention a particular "vision", which is triggered not independently from the establishment of a particular attitude on the part of the viewer. For this attitude to emerge one must be practised in capturing "the original invisible signs of beings". Summing up: Canudo grasps a specificity of the cinema that cannot be linked to any of the pre-existing arts; this specificity enables the audience to be more involved; both these factors are then attributed to a modality which, properly speaking, happens in the viewer when there is a manifest willingness to go beyond the visible. Both in Kulesov and Canudo, those we can consider witnesses of the birth of the cinema, we see an emphasis on the pathic aspect. This proves to have a very strong influence, though it does not really belong to the narrative dimension of the cinema. What is the role of the pathic component when we are talking about a film like *Doubt* in which the role of the content (dialogue, plot, narrative) is highly significant? Will this film confirm my hypothesis?

[2] At the same time, Delluc with similar intentions was coining the term *cinéaste*.
[3] This is why at first Canudo talked about cinema as the new "sixth" art.
[4] See also, Mossetto, 1973.

3. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN PATHIC AND HAPTIC IN THE FILM *DOUBT*

In *Doubt* the story is set in 1964, in the Bronx, in the St Nicholas Parish college. 1964 was the year after Kennedy's assassination, and American society was still experiencing the trauma of loss, but it was also the year when the innovations of the 2nd Vatican Council were announced, with the liberalisations of the Church, which was no longer afraid to go out into the world. While this was the background to the story narrated in the film, it was the words uttered during a sermon by Father Flynn, played by Philip Seymour Hoffman, that acted as the catalyst of the whole story. «I want to say to you: Doubt can be a bond as powerful and sustaining as certainty. When you are lost, you are not alone»[5]. Doubt – says Father Flynn – can be a shared bond as reassuring as certainty, thus sanctioning this aspect of the human being, often considered to be the inevitable synonym of error. In actual fact, at least in some circles, one may be led to see doubt as a fleeting aberration, a shadow to be quickly left behind. After all, don't we say that our decisions are actually decisions when they "leave not a shadow of doubt"? The scene in which Father Flynn delivers the sermon also enables us to understand the characteristics of the film's other main character, Sister Aloysius, played by Meryl Streep. It is in fact during the sermon that Sister Aloysius is shown methodically preventing and harshly restraining the lack of attention of some children sitting in church. The first scene of the film is in this sense a synecdoche, that is, it manages to convey to us the entire film based on the contrast between an attitude of openness to life embodied by the young priest and an attitude of closure and defence of the hierarchy embodied by Sister Aloysius. Between these two very different figures, there will appear the young and perhaps over-naïve Sister James, played by Amy Adams, in appearance very easily influenced. Sister Aloysius embodies a very common attitude, which can be called insular selfsufficiency: at times we are so deeply rooted in our positions that we do not even want to see beyond. Not only does everything seem to be in our possession, even the criteria of truth and falsity, but we have operated a form of absolute selfjustification on the removal of the filter towards the world. At that point, the result is that we are inevitably rooted in our own self[6]. As the film's narrative goes ahead one is led to doubt the correctness of Father Flynn's attitude to Donald Miller, the only African-American student in the school. When the priest is accused of molesting the boy, the clarification that follows is the stage on which the protagonists' attitudes to life are played out.

[5] Script of the film *Doubt*, 8. The script is available at: miramaxhighlights.com/uploads/Doubt_Script%5B1%5D.pdf.
[6] A further form of this attitude can be found in the film *The Visitor* (USA 2007) by Thomas McCarthy.

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Flynn: [...] You had a fundamental mistrust of me before this incident! It was you that warned Sister James to be on the lookout, wasn'it?
Sister Aloysius: That's true.
Flynn: So you admit it!
Sister Aloysius: Certainly.
Flynn: Why?
Sister Aloysius: I know people.
Flynn: That's not good enough!
Sister Aloysius: It won't have to be.[7]

Now, undoubtedly the position of Sister Aloysius is important, when she claims she is sure of the accusations against the priest; of clear importance is also the position taken by the priest, who while defending himself recalls the force of doubt against the nun's adamantine certainty; and it is clearly important that Sister James' gaze is awakened. In all this, there are elements of enormous interest, thanks also to the actors' exceptional performances. It seems to me however that focusing exclusively on these aspects of the content, though they are very important, will allow us to only partially grasp the specific nature of the film. In the confrontation between Father Flynn and Sister Aloysius, what really matters is the position the viewer must adopt to get into the film. From this particular perspective, the very distance that separates us as viewers from the story told in the film, set in 1964 in the Bronx in the St Nicholas Parish college, slips into the background. Inevitably, the dialogue in the film has a certain strength and eloquence. But the contrast between the two main protagonists shown in the film does not only depend on the dialogue's narrative strength. Assessing Father Flynn's behaviour, deciding whether or not he is innocent, and assessing the truth of Sister Aloysius's accusations cannot be done by staying on the semantic level within the system created by the clash of the two protagonists. To explain this step, concerning the option of choice triggered by/in the viewer, we need to refer to the phenomenology of choice. Choosing is a dynamic process. The choice is made when one is able to make a distinction, to identify a gap. What is chosen is what one has managed to separate from what remains unchosen. In this sense, there is, in every choice, a selection. It is no accident that the Latin verb *eligere*, composed of *ex* and *legere*, takes the meaning of "choose between". The propension, or the start of a choice, is a gradual process, which is asserted by degrees insofar as one element that has become decisive is identified and distinguished on a background of uncertainty. Choosing means tending to favour a certain option. However, even if the "most certain" choice (if one can say that), marks a distancing from what one has decided against, it can never be transformed into a total rejection of the possibility of doubt, even about the question on which the original choice was made. To make this clearer, on the question of choosing, doubt has a structural and preparatory role and this remains as a constant

[7] Script of the film *Doubt*, 82

spur and a constant source of verification of the rightness of the choices made. Choosing in favour of Father Flynn or of Sister Aloysius can be done insofar as the viewer, for whose sake the dialogue between the two protagonists is performed, is able to relive, or to experience the theoretical positions represented by the two protagonists. So as viewers, watching the representation of the dialogue between doubt and choice, we discover how easily one can be identified with one's prejudices and how difficult it can be to distance oneself from that which seems easy and natural to believe. It is this aspect of the film that allows us to recall the strength of argumentation that, being a union of the narrative aspect and the pathic aspect, is perfectly embodied in the cinema in general and in the film *Doubt* in particular. At this point we cannot avoid mentioning a comment by Hugo Münsterberg, «The deviation from reality begins with that resolution of the continuous movement which we studied in our psychological discussions. We saw that the impression of movement results from an activity of the mind which binds the separate pictures together» (Münsterber, 1916: 67). As Andrew Dudley pointed out in his critique of Munsterberg's theory, «If a part of nature or a piece of drama is to function aesthetically in a film, it does so, he states, by submitting to the poetics of the screen, forming a new object, a film object of contemplation. For Münsterberg this is a mental object, an object which flows and finds its rest according to the laws of the mind. Here we can recognize the coincidence of his aesthetic theory and his psychology of film. The belief that film's only claim to aesthetic validity lies in its transforming of reality into an object of imagination has its echo in the psychological claim that film in fact exists not on celluloid, nor even on the screen, but only in the mind which actualizes it by conferring movement, attention, memory, imagination, and emotion on a dead series of shadows» (Dudley, 1976: 24-5).

I have just written about the viewer's capacity to relive what happens on the screen. This reference to such an aspect of experience will now enable us to clarify the meaning of the reference to the pathic.

4. THE PATHIC

Two separate, interacting dimensions converge in the concept of experience: it is in fact the knowledge and the practice of things acquired in trials made by ourselves and others. The Greek term *empeiría* (ἐμπειρία) indicates not only experience proper, but what is obtained by passing through. In the Latin form of the term, the semantic nucleus refers to the term *ex-perientia*, in which the addition of '*ex*' to the verb *perior* signals the completion of the passage through, what remains after it has been tried. Getting through and the indispensable nature of the trial: this is how we can sum up

what the etymology tells us about experience. Two separate but interacting dimensions can be identified: a) the first phase, sensitive, antepredicative, primary b) the second phase, intellectual, predicative, the conceptual organizer of the material presented. These dimensions can however be indicated with different terms: in the first case as *pathos* (πάθος), *affectio*, Erlebnis and therefore life lived, sense – we have entered the realm of feeling, of pathicity; in the second case, as *empeiría* (ἐμπειρία), *experientia*, Erfahrung and therefore experience in the sense of the constitution of an object, the ideality of a representation, signification. In lived experience there is the sense of a new gnoseological approach to psychological facts: approaching life with life. This is possible only if the living thing is considered in a vital act which lets him re-live (Nacherleben). The other is therefore an event. If intentionality, in the sense of aiming at a target, constitutes a way of relating logically, then being taken as a target (as in the case of pain), the root of passive subjectivity, embraces all mankind. It can be rightly raised to become not merely an anthropological, but an ontological, dimension. On this, Masullo acutely observed: «This is actually the condition not only of emotion but of any lived experience. Not only is there no truly human pleasure or pain, reasoning or action, imagination or memory, albeit hidden away but always ready to spring out and make itself felt in the various moments of life, that does not bring with it “the astonishment of the manifestation of the self” and “the anguish of being affected by events for no reason”. Every occurrence affects me, just me, without me knowing why, just as I do not know where this 'me' comes from and where it is going, or even why it has been just my turn to be affected» (Masullo, 2004: 126). The viewer is therefore not only the person witnessing the performance but in a certain sense the one taking part in it, though at a distance from the screen. The cinema is consequently not only a moment of escape or a pre-text, but is endowed with the extraordinary expressive power to project us towards the thing, as Gadamer confirms with reference to the image: «The more one immerses oneself in it, the more one is in touch with what is being represented» (Gadamer, 1983: 37). Watching two characters in the film heatedly discussing certainty and doubt is not a static operation lacking consequences. From this angle, we could in fact say that the success of the film lies in the capacity to uproot us from our distance as viewers and to bring us to question ourselves, not only on an abstract level of argumentation, but on a pathic level, about the meaning of what we are seeing. We are thus authorised to enter the film, to “inhabit” it. And it is here that the pathic is converted into haptic: it is as if we too were in that room where the clash between Father Flynn and Sister Aloysius is taking place. As Giuliana Bruno writes, «the cinema is an imaginative architectural toy, a house of “raptures”. It is a machine that expands our capacity to map the world by extending our sensory system. By

confronting us with our environment, the cinema offers touching visions and at the same time it explores the relation between movement and emotion, the sensual space of emotion. [...]. The cinema has given modern man a new tactic to get his bearings and to give a "sense" to this movement, which includes the movement of the emotions. [...]. Being the domain of images in movement, the cinema, like the house we live in, is deeply liveable. [...]. It appeals to our emotion in order to spread it. And it does so tangibly» (Bruno, 2002: 183, 227).[8]

5. PREDICATIVE INTENTIONALITY OF THE IMAGES

Before concluding, I would like to try to show the conditions for the possible relation between pathic and haptic. They can be found at the level of predicative intentionality of the images. We start from the immediacy of the images. Images have a special power to enthrall which forces us not to remain neutral, but to take a stance. At the same time, it is precisely this willingness calling for the imaginative completion of what emerges in viewing, that enables us to say that the innate potential of an image is never immediately accessible, but requires mediation. The first look alone is not enough, because it refers to the perceivable appearance, neglecting the fundamental point that in the image it is possible to capture something beyond the image. In what ways can this reference be grasped and what does it involve? Initially, the fact that the image extends beyond itself suggests a deeper connection between what the image is saying, and methodologies of thought and judgements. This first finding therefore enables us to assert the symbolic power of every image in the sense that through the image, which is visible, there is the allusion to something not immediately given, and therefore invisible. A path therefore exists leading from the visible to the invisible, from seeing to thinking. Images in this sense call up the complexity of our experience, summoning history, memory, a series of "values" (ethical, aesthetic, spiritual) which make it a stable reality of our knowledge and not its contingent simulacrum. This path however involves a suspension of all the certainty that is initially seen to be natural. Taking this path means trusting the power of thought about the facts of the viewing and more generally about the viewing itself and the conditions that make it possible. It is a matter here of using reason to establish a distance from the immediately perceivable reality so as to grasp the conditions where it is possible, or to effect an essential epoché, following Husserl's pointers: «We do away with the general thesis about the essence of the natural attitude, we suddenly put what it embraces in brackets … therefore the whole natural world, which is constantly "here for us", "at hand" and that

[8] See also Millar ,1994.

will continue to exist as "reality" for the consciousness, even though putting it in brackets is to our liking» (Husserl, 2002: 66 ff.). It is therefore a question of distancing oneself from the natural tendency of the spirit to believe that everything is immediately accessible, that everything is "at hand". Life lived following this disposition is totally directed at such things. Can we give an example of this process, starting from an image? I think we can, if we examine the famous painting, *The Ambassadors* by Hans Holbein the Younger, painted in 1533. It is well known that it depicts two important political figures of the time. The dignity and rank of the two men can already be seen in the magnificent clothes and in the setting in which they are depicted. Between the two men there are also several objects (a globe, books, a sundial) symbolising the power that was available to these two men. The globe indicates men's power to represent the infinitely great; the books represent the sphere of knowledge, and the sundial is in a sense the most sophisticated instrument of this power, alluding to the capacity to measure the epitome of the invisible, time. Putting all these elements together it would therefore seem that Holbein wanted to depict, with the two men, the character of a whole age. However, if one looked only at these superficial elements, one would not grasp the true meaning of the painting. This meaning can only be understood if one looks at the painting from a particular angle which reveals an anamorphic figure between the two ambassadors' feet. What is this figure which, seen from a normal angle, looks indecipherable? It is a skull. At the feet of the two men (between their feet) Holbein places the symbol of fallibility. This presence, discrete and invisible, has the power to radically change the meaning of the entire painting. Holbein is not celebrating the power of man, but is instead denouncing the vanity of all power unless it is connected to the element that underlies all others: human fallibility. While the two ambassadors with their instruments for measuring things seem to be measuring the world, they are actually being measured by a unit of measurement, death, which underlies them and constitutes them. So what does one achieve by going beyond the immediacy of the image? First of all, the image is the typical way things appear during the person's intentional activity. Every object of external perception becomes, for the perceiver, an image. An object is therefore perceived through a series of images of it, produced inside a person as a passive function (the images prevail over the person), and with a productive function (the unification of the various images of an object due to the kinaesthetic movements of the person him/herself). Secondly, we can recall acts of memory that have the power to place a theme along an objective time-line. This however is related to the level of reproduction of a positional consciousness. It is however on the third level that we specifically find the imagination proper, consisting of the "quasi" positional consciousness (*Quasi-posizionalität*), or of proceeding as if, that

is, the fact that the experiences of the imagination have no connection with perceptions. The objectivities of the imagination are not part of the objectivities of perception. Fantasies «no longer have a connection in referring to objects, neither among themselves nor with perceptions» (Husserl, 1965: 183). Husserl in *Experience and Judgement* comments: I can imagine a motorcyclist or I may have imagined a hippopotamus but these two images have no direct connection with the table that I am now perceiving, in other words they have no temporal position concerning one another. While it is possible to dislocate past experiences in time, placing them along a line where one can distinguish a before and an after, this is not possible for the objectivities of the imagination: «the motorcyclist is neither before nor after the hippopotamus or the table that I now perceive» (Husserl, 1965: 184). Keeping in mind this feature of the imagination, we can think of the importance of what Husserl himself in *Ideas* calls the «privileged position» of imagination compared to perception. The example given is that of the draughtsman, who when drawing plans, must keep in mind real, concrete data, but at the same time, by using his imagination can expand the possible, enjoying in Husserl's words, «incomparable freedom in the arbitrary transformation of the designs imagined» (Husserl, 2002: 169). There is such imbalance between perception and imagination that «even when the design is "being thought about", the new thought processes that follow are processes of imagination the results of which are established by the new lines added to the design» (Husserl, 2002: 169). What is true for the draughtsman is even more so for the phenomenologist, since he too starts from limited initial data. That is why, though one cannot disregard what is initially available, «the freedom to seek the essence necessarily requires one to work with the imagination» (Husserl, 2002: 170). It is by means of the specific relation between perception and imagination that images lead beyond themselves, serving in the passage towards meanings and enabling the invisible to be reached. For this reason they cannot be considered equal to a mere sign. From this point of view it may be useful to return to the distinction between "indicative signs", or signals (Anzeichen) and "expressive signs" or expressions (Ausdrücke) which Husserl deals with in the First of *Logical Investigations*. Indicative signs, like road signs, have the simple function of indicating something. Their function consists of standing for something else and of pointing us to the referent. This is different from expressive signs, such as a smile for instance. A smile is in fact a sign of the joy felt, in the sense that it indicates joy, it refers to joy, but it is itself an expression of that joy. In this case, there is a participation that constitutes the value itself of the sign. In this type of sign there is an immediate intentional transfer between the physical appearance of the sign and its intentional meaning. The image therefore provides an example of the path needed for the correct approach of

philosophy of cinema, which while it acknowledges the full validity of the phenomenon, believes it should go beyond this. The symbolic-image is therefore itself an expressive sign because while it shows that it is possible to proceed beyond the mere phenomenological data, it is itself sure evidence of the existence of an eidetic order.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In these comments I have tried to recall the specificity of cinema communication which intercepts the very heart of the process of argumentation. Thinking about these aspects means at the same time trying to salvage the dimension of rationality that can be called pathic reason, far both from a disenchanted rationality and from a pathos lacking all theoretical depth. In this sense, I think the best way to finish is by referring to the following passage from Maria Zambrano: «There must have been an initial moment when feeling and understanding were not separate, that first moment of knowing that is neutral enough to be situated or not situated in a certain time, in a more or less precise *illo tempore*, since every beginning is also a destination: where it makes itself available in all its active purity, that is the place of "knowledge that is sought". When knowledge began, understanding and feeling could not have existed separately; and it is by bringing them into contrast, playing on the separation that later emerged, that shows the distance between those who in this way pursue this knowledge that is sought – and those who are present right from the start» (Zambrano, 1992: 93-4).

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