A DEFENSE OF IMPURE CINEMA: THE FUNCTION OF THE "OTHER WOMAN" IN *REBECCA* AND *JANE EYRE*

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"What is a woman? I assure you, I do not know."

VIRGINIA WOOLF (1992)

REBECCA AND *JANE EYRE* AS "IMPURE FILMS"

In the 1950s, when André Bazin wrote his fervent defence of "the multiplication of adaptations of literary works" in cinema, he chose to title his essay "*Pour un cinéma impure*" ("For an Impure Cinema"), because, as the French theorist explains, the film critics of his time were too concerned with protecting "the purity of the seventh art", in terms of both themes and language (Bazin, 2005: 70). It is in opposition to this protective stance in relation to a supposed *purity of cinema* that Bazin declares himself in favour of a phenomenon that is not merely concerned with restoring "the essence of the letter and the spirit" of literary works, but that also manages to reach, in relation to the adapted work, "an almost dizzy height of fidelity by way of a ceaselessly creative respect for the text" (2005: 67-68).

It is our aim here to take these words by André Bazin to condense the experience of spectatorship which, in our view, is realised in the film adaptations of both *Rebecca* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1940) and *Jane Eyre* (Cary Joji Fukunaga, 2011), an experience that we understand to be inseparable from the task of "rewriting" the original discourses carried out jointly by the scriptwriters and the filmmakers (Pérez Bowie, 2010: 25). The interpretative analysis of the rewritings of *Rebecca* and *Jane Eyre* proposed here, based on our own experience as spectators, draws both on the "intrinsically passionate movement" from which the semiology of Roland Barthes comes, and on its "political" objective (1991: 137-138), while at the same time being anchored in the structural[1] and psychoanalytical tradition of feminist film theory of the 1970s and 1980s (Johnston, 1976; Mitchell, 1982; Cook and Johnston, 1988; Mulvey, 1992; Pollock, 1992; Kuhn, 1991; Cowie, 1984; Doane, 1987).

In addition, the adjective "impure" as used by Bazin is fruitful for outlining the reasons for our

own personal and political interest in these two films in four points.

Firstly, we argue that these two films are "impure" in both the Bazinian sense that they masterfully combine the literary and the filmic, and in the sense that they are the result of a cultural praxis in which creators of both sexes have collaborated. Not only have the directors chosen to adapt novels by two women, but the *cinematographic* re-writing of the discourse of these novels is also indebted to women. While Hitchcock adapted Daphne du Maurier's novel (1938) using a script he himself wrote together with his wife Alma Reville (uncredited) and with his assistant director and scriptwriter, Joan Harrison, Fukunaga adapted Charlotte Brontë's novel (1847) relying on a particularly brilliant screenplay by the English writer Moira Buffini.

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Secondly, this use of Bazin's term "impure" is also intended to underscore the fact that these Gothic films, far from being *chaste*, expose certain *sexual issues* that affect us and that are of special interest to women today. Although we agree with Mary Ann Doane and Tania Modleski that these films are "particularly valuable" for "feminist analysis" (Doane, 1981: 75) because they can be used "to elucidate issues and problems relevant to women" (Modleski, 1988: 3), we do not share their view that their political value lies in the fact that the protagonists are portrayed as "asexual" (Modleski, 1988: 52) or as mere "passive objects" of a "voyeuristic and sadistic" male sexuality (Modleski, 1988: 1-4; Doane, 1987: 136). Rather, we would argue that the political value of these films stems from the fact that the heroines are portrayed as sexually desiring women[2] who are also possessed by the passion of violence.

Thirdly, the adjective "impure", in addition to serving to define the Gothic heroines, also enables us to define the "Other Woman", a key figure in the stories of *Rebecca* and *Jane Eyre*, as a phantasmatic representation of an "excessive femininity" (Doane, 1987: 137). The interpretation of the function of the Other Woman proposed here aims to move beyond traditional feminist readings which, based on the premise that the Gothic heroine is portrayed as a young woman "repressed by patriarchal culture" (Mulvey, 1996: 61; Gilbert and Gubar, 2000: 338), posit the Other Woman as the embodiment of the protagonist's "double" or "secret self": her imprisoned "hunger, rebellion and rage" (Gilbert and Gubar, 2000: 348 and 370; Russ, 1973: 668; Light, 1984: 18), or as the embodiment of "the Mother" in what would be a female Oedipal narrative (Modleski, 1988: 46-47; Doane, 1987: 143; De Lauretis, 1984: 151). In our view, however, the figure of the Other Woman refers to a *female* fantasy whose function would be to veil that, in the symbolic order, in the texts of culture, the answer to the question "what does it mean to be a woman?" is lacking (Lacan, 2006: 244).

Fourth, based on the dictionary definition of the Spanish word "*impuro*" when used in relation to language or style, it could be argued that these films are also "impure" because they respect or re-create those "strange or vicious[3] constructions" that are characteristic of the Gothic genre. Thus, for example, *Rebecca* is a flashback that is triggered by a dream, yet the intradiegetic narrative of this dream never returns at the end to close the flashback and the film in a full circle; meanwhile, *Jane Eyre* is a film that begins, unusually, *in extrema res*, initiating a winding narrative labyrinth constructed around a series of four flashbacks.

VICIOUS WRITINGS AND RE-WRITINGS

1. *Rebecca*: violence and the heterosexual happy ending

Hitchcock and his scriptwriters' rewriting of *Rebecca*, which foregrounds the romance between Maxim and the second Mrs. de Winter, revolves around two interpretative acts. Firstly, the film subtly links the narrator's dream, which opens both versions of the story ("Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again"), to the flashback that recounts her past, thereby eliminating the narrative present of the novel. Secondly, the filmmaker and scriptwriters not only eliminate the novel's present, which modifies its discourse, but also, by adding in a final sequence absent from the novel, produce a new discourse that inscribes a connection between violence and heterosexual passion.

While in the novel, between the first-person narration of the dream and the flashback, the protagonist wakes up in the present, now far from Manderley, "many hundreds of miles away in an alien land" (Du Maurier, 2015: 4), in the film the opening dream is linked directly to the past, thereby eliminating the part of the story in which Du Maurier narrates the present of the De Winter couple living in exile. In this present time, Daphne du Maurier tells us through the inner voice of the female protagonist, how the troubled couple is trying to put the past behind them. Yet, their past nonetheless returns and becomes "a living companion" (Du Maurier, 2015: 5). In other words, although the couple has left England and established a "dull" life in exile (Du Maurier, 2015: 6), the loss of Manderley, living away from their "little kingdom" (Du Maurier, 2015: 306), and the shadow of Rebecca, still plague their existence: "I can tell," says the protagonist, "by the way he [Maxim] will look lost and puzzled suddenly, all expression dying away from his dear face, as though swept clean by an unseen hand, and in its place a mask will form, a sculpted thing, formal and cold, beautiful still but lifeless" (Du Maurier, 2005: 6).

This interpretative act, consisting in cutting off the narrative present and passing directly from the protagonist's dream to the flashback—which lasts throughout the rest of the film—has at least two interrelated effects. First of all, the screenwriters and filmmaker's decision to drop the chronological conclusion to the story of the De Winters—the present in which the shadow of Rebecca still looms—has the effect of diluting the novel's profoundly melancholic and gloomy discourse (Freud, 1972: 2095). Secondly, this continuity established between the dream and the flashback facilitates a subversion of the melancholic discourse through the production of a vitalist discourse that is supported by the story of a "criminal couple"—while Maxim is glad he killed Rebecca (Du Maurier, 2005: 335), the female protagonist decides to keep the truth of the murder secret—who not only escape jail and/or death but also free themselves from the ghost of Maxim's first wife, the ghost of the Other Woman.

While in the novel Rebecca's murder, which is shared by the couple (as the heroine states explicitly: "I too had killed Rebecca" [Du Maurier, 2005: 319]), does not prevent her *shadow* from continuing to haunt them in the present, Hitchcock's film depicts not only the *murder*, the actual death of Rebecca,[4] but also her second death; i.e., the death that makes her "fully dead, and not simply absent" (Copjec, 1994: 134).

The fact that Rebecca will never again return from the dead to torment the couple is made clear at the end of the film-flashback through a sequence that has, significantly, been added to the depressing romantic story told in the novel. While in the novel the narrative events close with a mournful scene in which the de Winters watch together from afar as Manderley burns down, in the final sequence of the film, what we are shown is the leading couple meeting up again in front of Manderley as it burns, the violent death of Mrs. Danvers, who is crushed under falling beams inside the burning mansion, and a final detail shot

of the R—the metonymic letter of the spectral presence of Rebecca—devoured by the flames.

This *burning* happy ending for Maxim and the second Mrs. de Winter does not merely mean that a romantic heterosexual happy ending has come to replace the funeral-type ending that Du Maurier gives the novel: "The sky above our heads was inky black. But the sky on the horizon was not dark at all. It was shot with crimson, like a splash of blood. And the ashes blew towards us with the salt wind from the sea" (Du Maurier, 1971: 463). Rather, what this alternative Hitchcockian ending brings about is the production of a discourse that ties together a certain *"exteriorization"* of violence—the two violent deaths of Rebecca: her actual death, and the death of her ghost—with the desire to live (Copjec, 1994: 130), or, put another way, with the renewed sexual passion between Maxim and his now not so "young" wife, a passion represented metaphorically by the fire.

2. *Jane Eyre*: the heterosexual passion of women vs. "civilised" sexual morality

Buffini and Fukunaga's rewriting of *Jane Eyre*, with the aim of bringing this "classic" to "a new generation" (as stated on the poster for the film), is also based on two interpretative acts. Firstly, in contrast with the novel's other two film adaptations,[5] Buffini and Fukunaga's version retains the whole third part of the novel, which explores the details of the relationship between Jane and the clergyman St. John Rivers, thereby recovering the "anti-Christian" discourse in Brontë's novel (Gilbert and Gubar, 2000: 338), i.e., the criticism made by the novelist of the representatives of Victorian religious-moral law.[6] Secondly, Buffini and Fukunaga introduce a violent "reversal of chronology" (Bazin, 2005: 64) through which they update the feminist discourse of the novel, a discourse that exposes how the eminently puritanical "'civilised' sexual morality" characteristic of capitalism (Weber, 2002) points particularly to a repression of the sexual lives of women (Freud, 1987: 1257-1258).[7]

Rather than beginning at the chronological starting point of the story, the film opens *in extrema res*, i.e., in the thick of the action, at a point close to the end. Specifically, it begins at the moment that Jane flees from Thornfield Hall and arrives, on the verge of death, at the house of St. John Rivers and his two sisters. This narrative technique of commencing the story *in extrema res* has at least two consequences. The first is that it flags to the spectator that the film will be making use of flashbacks to tell us how Jane has reached this crucial moment. Indeed, the structure of the narrative is organised around four flashbacks, whose total duration (an hour and a half) take up most of the film. The second consequence of this beginning *in extrema res* is that it places us as spectators in a position of both ignorance and awareness. While we are unaware of how the protagonist has reached this dramatic point (what is young Jane fleeing from?), at the same time we know that we will be returning to this opening sequence later on. In other words, as spectators we know that as we approach the end of the story, the sequence of Jane fleeing will be repeated, *answering* the question of the reasons for her flight.

These two aspects of Buffini and Fukunaga's film adaptation of Brontë's novel—retaining the section of the story featuring the character of St. John Rivers and altering the linear structure of the novel, which obliges the use of flashbacks—are actually interrelated. Their combined effect is to turn Jane's *subjective* "memories" as presented in the novel into "symbolically defined events" (Lacan, 2004: 278), i.e., historical fragments referring to the overwhelming weight of Victorian religious-moral law that come back to besiege Jane in the present.

The interpretation that the flashbacks operate in the story not so much as subjective memories of the protagonist but as historical fragments that return in the present to overwhelm her is

supported by the fact that the first and fourth flashbacks, which are structurally the most important, are triggered by "voices from the past" that literally invade the present. Equally important are the signifying and spatial associations established in the film between present and past. While the first flashback underscores the signifying association between the clergyman St. *John* Rivers and Jane's malevolent cousin, *John* Reed, the second and third flashbacks create a spatial association between St. John Rivers' house and the Dickensian religious orphanage of Lowood, a place dedicated, in the words of Mr. Brocklehurst, to "root[ing] out the wickedness" in young girls, so that they may repent and become devout. It should be noted that Jane's wickedness lies in the fact that she is "passionate", as both her unpleasant aunt Mrs. Reed and her dear friend Helen Burns point out to her.

It is only after the long detour resulting from the intrusion of the past returning *in* the present through flashbacks that we reach the sequence of Jane's second flight, which closes a chain of *immoral events*—the humiliating fact of Rochester leading Jane to the altar while still married to Bertha Mason, Jane losing her virginity,[8] and Rochester's *offensive* proposition that they live together in *sin*—and which ends this second time not with Jane arriving at the home of the Rivers but with an abrupt *montage* cut.

This cut, which introduces a structural jump, marks the moment when the story ceases to follow a circular or repetitive logic (Modleski, 1987: 330) and instead adopts a linear, progressive logic. This new temporality effectively links the entry into force of the law of desire with the collapse of Victorian religious-moral law, i.e., with the collapse of the ideal of sacrifice, virtue, and pure spirituality of women, or what Virginia Woolf called "the phantom" of the "angel in the house" (Woolf, 1992: 5). This becomes clear in a scene close to the end of the film, in which St. John Rivers demands that Jane sacrifice herself by going with him to India:

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> Jane: I'll go with you to India. [...] If I may go free. [...] I love you as a brother. As a husband, no. My heart is mute.
>
> St. John Rivers: Then I must speak for it. You've said that you will come. We'll marry. And undoubtedly enough of love would follow...
>
> Jane: Enough of love? [...] Of love? [...] Forgive me, but the very name of love is an apple of discord between us. [...] I earnestly wish to be your friend.
>
> St. John Rivers: You can't give half a sacrifice. You must give all.
>
> Jane: To marry you would kill me!
>
> St. John Rivers: Kill you? That is violent, unfeminine and untrue! I know where your heart turns and to what it still clings. Say his name. Say it! Why have you not yet crushed this lawless passion? It offends me and it offends God!

Here it becomes clear that the sacrifice that the minister is trying to impose on Jane is not simply that Jane should sacrifice her sexual life with a "spiritual marriage", but also, and perhaps more essentially, that she should sacrifice the words which, for the representative of morality, are *offensive* because they name, they declare aloud, that what brings Jane to life, what brings "to life and light [her] whole nature" (Brontë, 1864: 466), is none other than her violent, carnal passion for a man, Rochester.

This scene marking the collapse of the religious-moral law that demands that women must

sacrifice the words that proclaim their heterosexual passion is crucial because, coming after the sequence in which Jane fantasises about a passionate kiss with Rochester, it externalises the violence of her sexual desire for Rochester, i.e., the fact that Jane has ceased forever to be a young governess "without soil or taint", as Rochester describes her, to become a woman "with soil and taint", i.e., "all together a human being", as Rochester, now blind, will say to her in the film's final scene that takes place in the garden of desire.

THE OTHER WOMAN AS A VEIL THAT UNVEILS[9]

It is noteworthy that the protagonists in *Rebecca* and *Jane Eyre* are both portrayed as young women for whom the Other Woman haunts the very heart of their nightmares.

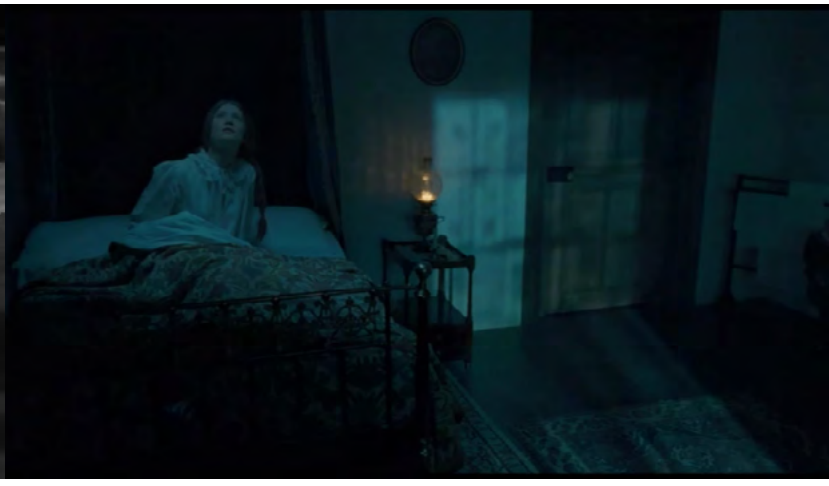
This centrality of the Other Woman is laid bare in both the title of *Rebecca* and in its plot, given that the protagonists' love story is inseparable from Rebecca, the ghostly woman who not only has "all the things that are so important in a woman", but is also the "most beautiful creature" that has ever been seen.

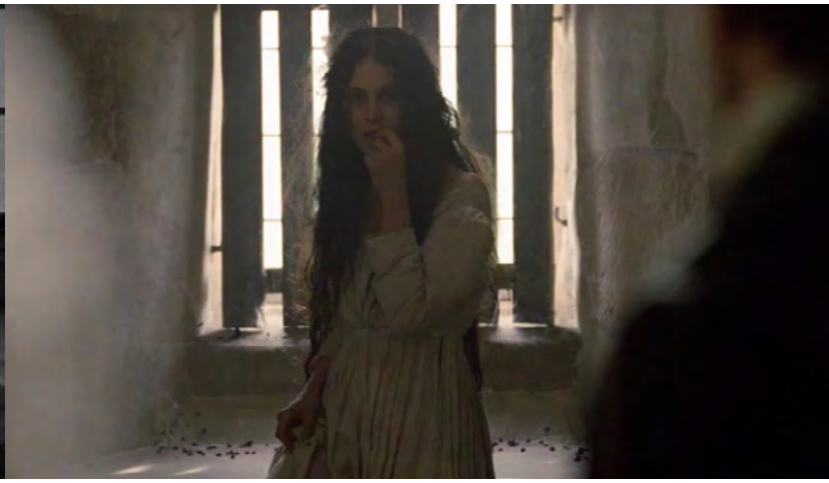
In *Jane Eyre* the Gothic romance is also associated with the ghostly figure of the Other Woman. Bertha Mason, Rochester's beautiful Creole wife, is a woman with "hair black as ebony, skin white as the moon, and eyes like sapphires", who, unlike Rebecca, is still alive, although she is locked up in the attic at Thornfield Hall.

It could be argued that the Other Woman fulfils three functions:

1. If we consider what Rebecca and Bertha share, the first function of the Other Woman would be to name the fantasy or myth that somewhere there exists "The Woman", i.e., a woman who—supposedly—knows what it is to be a woman (Lacan, 2011: 352). Rebecca is "the Woman who knows" par excellence. On the one hand, unlike the protagonist, Rebecca is the woman who knows how to be Mrs. de Winter: she knows how to dress and to be sophisticated, how to keep a huge mansion, how to prepare the flowers, how to choose the menu, how to dance, how to sail, how to hunt, how to ride a horse, etc. And on the other hand, and more basically, Rebecca is the woman who knows about an "absolute *jouissance*", a pure *jouissance* that would be "beyond human", that would be beyond sexual *jouissance* (Mira, 2018). As Mrs. Danvers says when she talks about the lovers that Rebecca used to bring to the cottage on the beach: "She had a right to amuse herself, hadn't she? Love-making was a game with her, only a game. She laughed at you like she did at

Figures 1 and 2. Voice-over of Mrs. Van Hopper: "She was the beautiful Rebecca Hildreth…"





Figures 3 and 4

the rest. I've known her to come back and sit upstairs in her bed and rock with laughter at the lot of you."

This absolute *jouissance,* this *jouissance* without limits, is, mythically, a *jouissance* that verges on the inhuman, insofar as it has the quality either of an arachnid *jouissance*, as displayed by the profusion of spider webs in Rebecca's beach cottage, or of a vampiresque *jouissance*, as suggested through the fantastic tale that little Adele, Rochester's French daughter, tells Jane about the mysterious vampire-woman who dwells in Thornfield Hall: "Sophie told me of a lady who wanders here at night. [...] We lock our door because if she gets in she bites you with her teeth and sucks the blood."

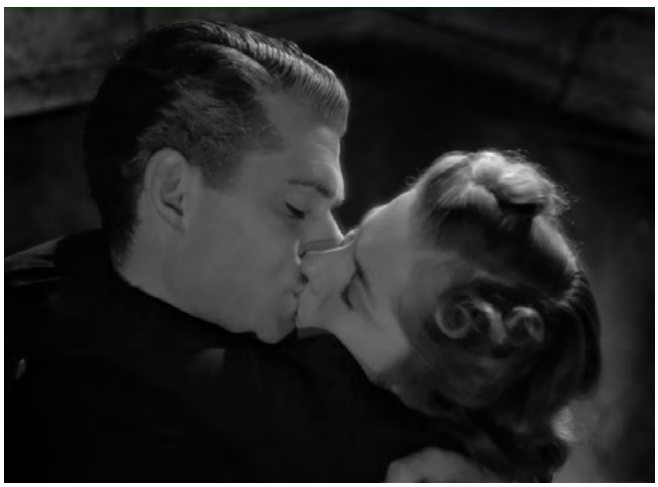
Indeed, it is probably no accident that in both *Rebecca* and *Jane Eyre* the male protagonists, Maxim and Rochester, refer to the Other Woman who haunts their respective mansions, as a "demon".

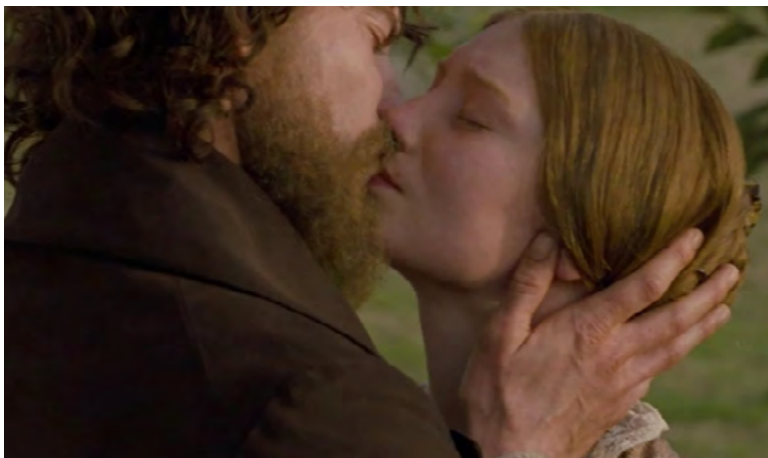
2. If a primary function of the Other Woman is to name the fantasy or myth of an absolute *female jouissance*, a *jouissance* beyond human, we might well ask: what function does this central fantasy have within the plots that are woven in these Gothic films?

Not only is the Other Woman a basic element in the appeal of the sexually experienced Gothic husband, an energetic and violently virile man—in the style of the Byronian hero so admired by Charlotte Brontë—but also, and at the same time, she functions as the obstacle to the realisation of the final love scene.

If the Other woman functions as an obstacle to the happy ending it is because, as is characteristic of the Gothic genre and as much of the story of

Figures 5 and 6





the film version of *Rebecca* is dedicated to showing us, the passionate gazes of the female protagonists, attracted by the fantasy that there is an Other Woman who is "powerfully sexual" (Light, 1984: 13), ultimately trap them in their quest for the knowledge of the Other Woman's absolute *jouissance*.

This investigating gaze of the heroines is displayed through two paintings they look at, in which an Other Woman appears. These paintings are located in the hallway leading to the forbidden room, which is the Other Woman's room.

In *Rebecca*, the protagonist, led by Mrs. Danvers, stops in front of the portrait of Lady Caroline de Winter—one of Mr. de Winter's ancestors—that presides over the hall leading from the east wing to the west wing, where Rebecca's bedroom is located. Ignorant of the fact that she is repeating the costume that Rebecca had once worn, the second Mrs. de Winter copies Lady Caroline's dress for the party at Manderley, and comes down the stairs looking radiant and enraptured, satisfied with the sophisticated aristocratic image that she has finally managed to create for herself.

In *Jane Eyre*, the protagonist stops twice in front of a painting showing Psyche lying naked in her bedchamber next to Cupid/Eros, god of love and sexual desire. Although the scene depicted is of a moment of relaxation and satisfaction after the sex act, both Psyche's sensual, voluptuous body and the presence of Cupid, whose arrows cause an uncontrollable sexual ardour, underscore the theme represented in the image: the sexual *jouissance* of the woman which, after each satisfaction, is reborn rejuvenated—like Cupid.

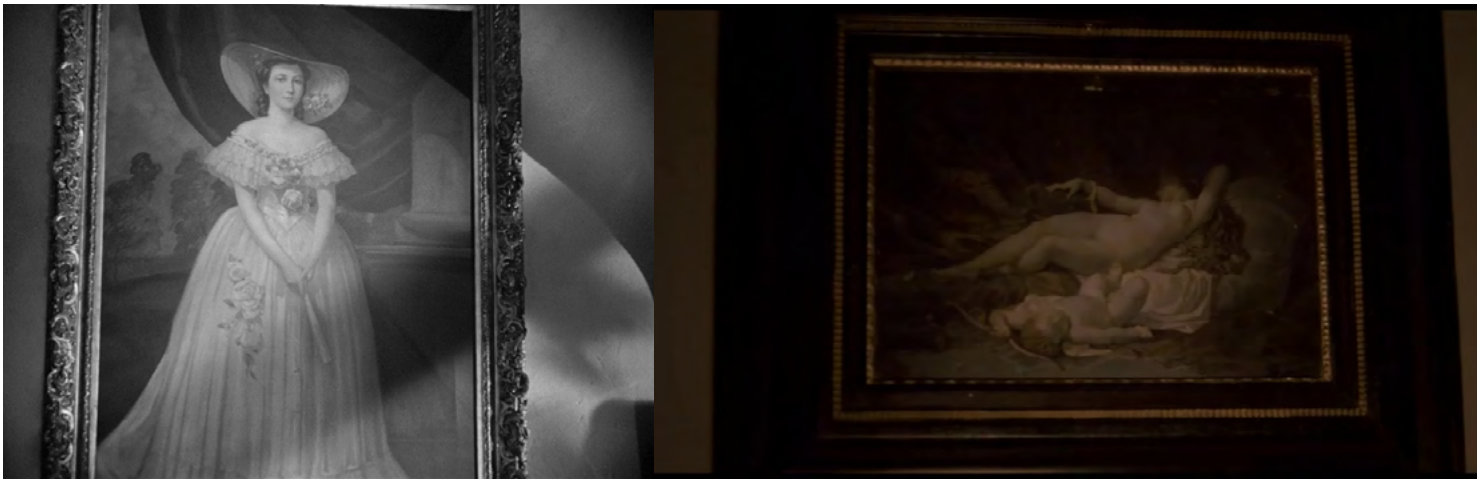
These paintings capture the attention of the protagonists because they outline that horizon of utter satisfaction, of pure, absolute *jouissance*, both diabolical and divine, which they themselves long to know about, even beyond the man they love.

Driven by this scopic drive, a drive to know about a secret *jouissance* which—they suspect—the Other Woman knows about, the two protagonists cross the threshold into the forbidden room.

And yet, what they discover is that there, *behind the door* to the forbidden room, there is no *secret*. What the heroines find on the other side of the door is not "an aspect" or an "embodiment" of themselves (Doane, 1987: 137; Gilbert and Gubar, 2000: 360-362), or even a knowledge about a *female jouissance* that has been locked away or repressed. On the contrary, what they find behind the door is an abyss, a void, a centripetal hole that literally sucks in the living body to cause a kind of "symbolic death" in the protagonist herself.

3. Because this entry into the forbidden room of the Other Woman leads to a hole, to an abyss, to a real limit on the satisfaction of the female

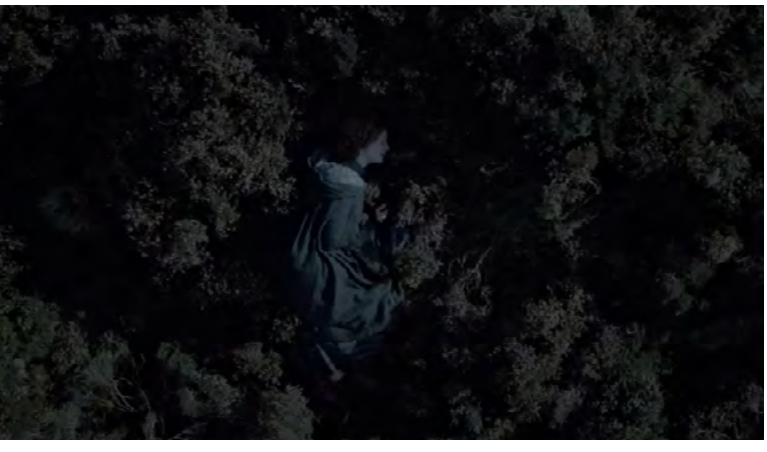
Figures 7 and 8



Figures 9 and 10

protagonists' epistemological passion, the fantasy of the Other Woman could be said ultimately to fulfil the function of unveiling the truth that in the symbolic order there is no knowledge either about *female jouissance* or about how, out of this hole, out of this void, a woman can be born, or reborn.

Figures 11 and 12



While by the end of both films it is clear that the protagonists have matured, that they have been re-born different, it is never shown or narrated how this metamorphosis has occurred. Indeed, in both film texts, the transformation of the heroines takes place during a jump within the text, a gap in the narrative chain produced in the film text after what we have called a "symbolic death". This gap in the text is inscribed in *Jane Eyre* by means of a violent *montage* cut that ends the sequence of Jane's second flight and that structurally coincides with Bertha Mason's suicide at Thornfield Hall during the fire (elided in the film); and in *Rebecca* through a strange temporal ellipsis of one day and one night that occurs between the scene of the protagonist standing on the brink of suicide, goaded by the words of Mrs. Danvers, and the scene showing her running along the beach in search of Maxim after the appearance of Rebecca's corpse.

By way of conclusion, and returning to the idea that one of the types of feminist "resistance" is to bring to light "blind spots, gaps" in the cultural order (Modleski, 1988: 13) and that, therefore, we should try to live up to the "anxiety" that such blind spots "awaken" (Copjec, 1994: 118), we would like to conclude by saying: there is no knowledge in the symbolic order about how one becomes a woman. That much is certain. But sometimes in some "impure" films, we are indeed told that this *becoming a woman* cannot be done without the void, without crossing that lack *in* the field of knowledge, traumatic lack of The Woman, traditionally veiled by the *female* fantasy of the Other Woman. ■

NOTES

* I have written this article, which forms part of a larger work, with Eva Parrondo.

1 The structural method, characteristic of textual analysis, is derived from the branch of modern linguistics established with the teachings of Ferdinand de Saussure in the early 20th century. It finds its origins in the essay by the Russian folklorist Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folk Tale* (1968), and has been developed both by the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan—see, for example, his analysis of the Edgar Allan Poe story "The Purloined Letter" (2013)—and by the semiologist Roland Barthes, among others.

2 In these films, the protagonists are portrayed from the outset as sexually desiring women on at least three different levels. The first is the level of the dialogues. For example, the young Jane speaks of a longing for the presence of men in her life: "I wish a woman could have action in her life, like a man [...] I've never spoken with men. And I fear my whole life will pass...". The second is the level of their actions: for example, the hasty marriage of the protagonist in *Rebecca* to a "stranger". And the third is the level of the editing of the looks between characters. Contrary to Mulvey's generally accepted premise with respect to Hollywood narrative film (Mulvey, 1992), in these films there is an abundance of shots from the woman's point of view in which *foreign* men—the elegant English actor Lawrence Olivier and the attractive Irish-German Michael Fassbender—appear as the privileged object of her look/sexual desire.

3 Translator's note: The adjective "vicious" ("*vicioso*") is used here in its archaic sense of "given to vice", "depraved" or "immoral"; in linguistic contexts, it is used in Spanish to refer to a construction that breaks with linguistic norms.

4 The censorship of the Hays Code did not allow the director and screenwriters to include the narrative detail that Maxim killed Rebecca as they had wanted to do, and thus Robert E. Sherwood, the famous playwright who appears above Joan Harrison in the film's credits, replaced the killing with an *accident* (Spoto, 2001: 187-188).

5 Robert Stevenson made a film adaptation of *Jane Eyre* in 1943 starring Joan Fontaine and Orson Welles, and Franco Zeffirelli brought Brontë's novel to the screen again in 1996 with Charlotte Gainsbourg and William Hurt in the leading roles.

6 It was for this reason that the publication of *Jane Eyre* would cause shock and outrage among literary critics in Victorian England. In 1848, for example, Mrs. Rigby complained that with her tone of mind and thought, Charlotte Brontë had "overthrown authority and violated every code human and divine" (Gilbert and Gubar, 2000: 205).

7 Freud published this article in the journal *Sexual-Probleme* at the request of its editor, the radical feminist Helene Stöcker, who was a member of the World League for Sexual Reform in the early 1900s.

8 The sex act between Rochester and Jane is not shown; however, it is designated and represented metaphorically in the scene where Jane unbuttons her bride's dress, Rochester takes her in his arms just as a bride is carried on the wedding night, and, following a fade out to black, we see Rochester lighting the fireplace followed by a detail shot of the fire.

9 Translator's note: In the Spanish original, the final word used in this heading is "*desvela*", which means both "to unveil" and "to keep [somebody] awake".

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A DEFENSE OF IMPURE CINEMA: THE FUNCTION OF THE "OTHER WOMAN" IN *REBECCA* AND *JANE EYRE*

Abstract

In his article "*Pour un cinéma impure*", André Bazin offers a passionate defence of film adaptations of theatrical and literary works. It is our aim to build on Bazin's defence of an "impure cinema" through the films *Rebecca* (A. Hitchcock, 1940) and *Jane Eyre* (C. Fukunaga, 2011). By presenting an interpretative analysis of these two film adaptations, we raise two points. First of all, that the discourses of both films, by highlighting the Gothic interweaving of violence and sexual passion, come into contradiction with the *"civilised" sexual morality* characteristic of capitalism. And secondly, that in placing the ghostly figure of the Other Woman at the centre of the narrative trajectory of their heroines, both films are privileged artistic spaces for investigating the cultural function played by this classical *female* fantasy.

Key words

Rebecca; *Jane Eyre*; Film Adaptations; Feminist Film Theory; Psychoanalysis; The "Other Woman".

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A FAVOR DE UN CINE IMPURO: LA FUNCIÓN DE LA OTRA EN *REBECA* Y *JANE EYRE*

Resumen

En su artículo *A favor de un cine impuro*, André Bazin lleva a cabo una calurosa defensa de las adaptaciones teatrales y literarias al cine. Hemos querido unirnos a esta defensa baziniana del «cine impuro» y hacerlo vía *Rebeca* (A. Hitchcock, 1940) y *Jane Eyre* (C. Fukunaga, 2011). A partir de los análisis interpretativos de ambas adaptaciones planteamos dos cuestiones. Por un lado, que ambos discursos fílmicos, al poner de relieve la imbricación gótica entre la violencia y la pasión sexual, entran en contradicción con *la moral sexual «cultural»* propia del capitalismo. Por otro lado, que ambos textos fílmicos, al situar la figura fantasmal de la Otra mujer como elemento central en el trayecto iniciático de sus heroínas, son espacios artísticos privilegiados para investigar la función cultural que cumple esta clásica fantasía *femenina*.

Palabras clave

Rebeca; *Jane Eyre*; adaptaciones cinematográficas; teoría feminista del cine; psicoanálisis; la Otra mujer.

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