

Do you remember Sammy Jenkins? Film narration and spectator's memory.

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* Abstract *

One of the best commentaries of the film Memento (by Chris Nolan) is the following one, posted by a viewer to a newsgroup: "I loved this movie because it made me feel as if I had a short-term memory deficit". This happens because the basic functions of memory are hindered by an unusual movie construction. As the film moves backwards, the viewer is progressively obliged to put the film's scenes into the right order. But it is really difficult to recall the past data, related with future events, and put everything into a coherent sequence.

This difficulty can be a good example, leading us to consider the normal way the film triggers the spectator's comprehension and memory. A basic tenet of the cognitive perspective is that the viewer is active, and that he or she is able to perform a series of mental operations. In these operations memory plays a central role.

The paper will be a first assessment based on some case studies, and will focus on the relationships existing between the film's composition and the viewer's memory.

A very good story concerning the use of memory is told by Cicero in *De Oratore*, one of his works concerning rhetoric. It is about Simonides, a Greek poet living in the sixth century before Christ. One day he was at Scopas', a rich and noble man, hired to celebrate a victory. The poet declaimed his poem, praising Scopas, but also honoring Castor and Pollux. At the end of the banquet the poet demanded his fee but Scopas stingily said that he would have only a half of it, because he was too keen to glorify the two divinities. He also said to Simonides he would have to ask them for the second half.

At that moment someone announced two young people waiting at the exterior door to see the poet. Simonides went out to speak with them, but when he reached the door no one was there. Meanwhile he heard a sudden noise coming from the house. He went back inside and found that the ceiling of the banquet room had broken down, killing all the participants. The impact was so violent that the victims were completely disfigured and their identities were in doubt. Simonides helped the relatives to recognize the victims recalling in his memory the position of each participant at the table. In this way it was possible to give a name to each corpse, and all the men had a proper funeral. In Cicero's words: "In this way Simonides discovered that above all is order that enlightens memory".¹

Following this story Simonides was said to be the inventor of the mnemonic, the art of memory, the capacity of using at best the faculty of remembering: a natural faculty which can be helped by many sorts of techniques. In oral cultures a trained memory was important: books were difficult to find and it was necessary to be sure of one's own knowledge. A man with memory skills was at ease as a doctor, a lawyer, a poet, and so forth. Some memory masters, like Metrodore, were famous for their incredible ability to remember and repeat, in direct or even in reverse order, long lists of words. From the antiquity to the Renaissance the art of

memory was part of school teaching, as a branch of rhetoric.² The methods employed as memory aids are also mirrored in text composition techniques: order, subject's disposition, richness in words and adjective lists were amid the main characteristics of such texts.

In our times, after the invention of printing, and with the development of information technology, things have changed. But in the movie theaters, for the film viewers the situation is similar to that of the ancient listeners, who had to be certain that their memory could retain the information they considered important. The contemporary viewer sitting in the darkened movie theater can only rely on his or her own viewing skills, and on the procedural schemata permitting the construction of a reasonable *fabula* while watching the ongoing events on the screen.

For these mental activities the role of memory is of central importance. This is the opinion of several authors in cognitive film studies. David Bordwell, in his seminal book about film narration, assigns to the viewer's memory a central role in the processes of *fabula* construction:

Memory of course plays a role as well. [...] Memory must be seen not as a simple reproduction of prior perception, but as an act of construction, guided by schemata.³

Edward Branigan affirms that memory "must be carefully studied", because it holds with:

special mental operations that play decisive roles in redescribing data and recognizing global relationships, whether narrative or otherwise".⁴

Troben Grodal gives memory a key function in the brain processing of the audiovisual input: in the model he proposes, memory matching is the second step, which enables the viewer to

determine the identity of the shapes presented by the audiovisual flow. This can elicit emotions, because:

The items in the memory-files are not only stored by, say, visual structures, but also with affective values, affective labels.⁵

There is no doubt that the study of memory functions, connected with film vision, presents a lot of inviting possibilities. Yet, despite the central role played by memory during film vision, there are not specific studies on the subject. Our investigation will focus on the importance of memory as a key faculty, which is always taken for granted, but which lacks broader theoretical investigations. The simple fact that the film narration "implies" the viewer's memory skills is a significant issue, which demands further explanations.

Watching *Memento*

One of the best films about memory is *Memento* (by Chris Nolan, 2000). This is not only because the title itself makes an overt reference to the possibility of remembering. As a matter of fact, in this film two characters suffer from a memory disease, and they have problems in remembering things. Sammy Jankins is a man whose memory span is no more than two minutes. He can watch and enjoy television commercials, but he is unable to watch a film. A similar problem affects Leonard Shelby, the main character of *Memento*, although he has a longer memory span.

These characters, and their stories, give us the opportunity to appreciate the importance of our memory as film viewers. If we can remember Sammy Jankins, this happens because we could use our memory when seeing the film, and because we are still able to remember it. Moreover, our comprehension is necessarily bound to

the possibility of storing film data, as the action proceeds and we need to combine different pieces together. It is impossible to keep in mind the entire film: we have to "process" it moment by moment, and we have to store the results of our mental operations.

With *Memento* this task becomes difficult: the film has a very particular narrative structure, and watching it is a challenging experience. A striking comment, maybe the most revealing, was posted by a viewer to the community of "Yahoo movies":

I loved this movie because it made me feel as if I had a short-term memory deficit.

The film form is complex and it is hard to provide a coherent version of the story. In addition, at the end of the film we also touch on the unreliability of the main character's recollections, and we have to reconsider the whole story from a different point of view.

With the backward structure fabula construction is difficult because facts are presented neither in chronological order, nor following the causal relationships. While watching *Memento*, we directly experience the retrogression of the film form: we have to grasp the film structure, the diegetic temporality, the structure of actions. We don't find it difficult to place the narrative elements of a scene into a coherent structure, but we feel a sense of difficulty in using our own memory to remember the different scenes. This happens during the film screening, because other competing perceptive and cognitive tasks are assigned by the ongoing vision. But it also happens after the screening: when recalling a part of the film, we are not able to place it in its right position between other facts, because we cannot remember if it was before or after. We are at odds with any sort of reconstruction: with the structure of the film and also with the film's *fabula*.

The mental work we do while watching *Memento* begins with the determination of the film form. In a way that is different from more traditional films, the initial parts of *Memento* require the viewer to construct a specific schema, to comprehend the way in which the film proceeds. At the beginning of the film, the comprehension of *what* it narrates in each sequence is not difficult, it is hard to determine *how* the film is narrating. Knowing the narrative form of a film constitutes a heuristic schema: the viewer who is constructing the story must be able to put the narrative information into connected cognitive modules, which are constantly memorized and revised as the film proceeds. In this sense we find a direct link with the story of Simonides: the positional order of the guests at the table becomes here the narrative structure, the particular order given to the represented events. At the outset of *Memento*, we have to make an hypothesis concerning the film's form.

Grasping the film form

Because of the characteristics of the film's composition, we need to see at least the first five scenes, before we can draw an acceptable hypothesis concerning the film form.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| (C ₁) | Credits sequence (in reverse motion) |
| (BW ₁) | Black and white sequence |
| (C ₂) | Color sequence (motel, derelict building) |
| (BW ₂) | Black and white sequence |
| (C ₃) | Color sequence (motel room, photograph of Teddy) |

The credits sequence (C₁) shows a Polaroid photograph, where the image gradually fades to white: this aspect assumes evidence because it is contrary to our normal perception. Thus the viewer directly witnesses the retrogression of the temporal direction: the reverse motion of the sequence is accurately prepared to show

events moving in the opposite direction. Time "turns back": the photograph returns into the camera, the killer throws away the gun, the cartridge comes back into the gun, the killer shoots, the victim shouts a last, ineffective invocation.

The question posed by the viewer at this point is obviously why this form of presentation has been adopted. The following sequence (BW₁) does not offer a way to solve the perplexity.

While the sound of the shooting is still echoing in the black of the fading out, an extreme close-up shows the eyes of the main character. The voice over presents his inner thoughts: Leonard is asking himself where he is. Also the viewer is wondering whether a relationship exists between this black and white sequence and the preceding colored one. Are there any temporal, or causal connections?

The use of the fading and the black and white cinematography create a neat separation between sequences. The identity of the character is the only shared element. No convincing hypothesis is possible at the moment, except for considering that the color sequence is a dream that abruptly woke Leonard up.

The second color sequence (C₂) shows Leonard at the motel reception office. From a photograph, the reception clerk recognizes Teddy, who is arriving. Leonard goes out with him, and they reach a derelict building. Leonard finds some bullets on the seat of a pickup truck parked in front of the building. Then Leonard enters the house and finds a photograph of Teddy in his pocket. On the back, he sees a handwritten message: "He is the one. Kill him". Leonard draws a handgun, he leaps on Teddy who has entered the house, and after an impressive dialog with him, he shoots.

Teddy's last scream and the noise of the detonation enable the viewer to find a relationship between the second color sequence and the first one. A pattern of construction is now recognizable. We have two connected color sequences, and a black and white

sequence embedded between them. The order of the events portrayed in the two color sequences is reversed: C_2 is after C_1 , the event (e-1) in sequence C_2 , is anterior to the event (e) portrayed in C_1 .

$$[C_1(e) + BW_1 + C_2(e-1) \dots]$$

When this pattern is recognized by the viewer, a primary hypothesis concerning the film's form is possible: color sequences and black and white scenes are systematically alternated.

This hypothesis is confirmed by the next scene (BW_2), a black and white one. The action continues from the break caused by the change of sequence: Leonard is still sitting on a large bed and goes on asking himself the same questions, while surveying the room. He also says something about his disease, concluding that he has to adopt a rigorous method to cure it.

A new color sequence (C_3) appears after a fade to black. Leonard is in a motel room: he is writing "Kill him" on the back of a Polaroid photograph. It is the same sentence he read before Teddy was killed. Recognizing the sentence is a way for the viewer to find a relationship with the events depicted in sequence (C_2): the sequence shown before, presenting subsequent events. At this point, a more comprehensive hypothesis about the film's form is possible: we find a reverse concatenation of events. What we are seeing (e-2) temporally precedes what we have seen (e-1) in the last color sequence, and what happens in the credits sequence is the most advanced event along the temporal line.

The composition pattern of the film is now understandable, and it will be confirmed in the ensuing sequences. The film structure alternates color sequences with black and white scenes. The black and white scenes present a continuous event, interrupted by the changes of sequence. The color sequences show a flow of events that moves backwards.

$$[C_1(e) + BW_1 + C_2(e-1) + BW_2 + C_3(e-2) \dots]$$

Although the pattern of construction is complicated, it constitutes the basic schema of comprehension for the film form. As such, it becomes a cognitive device, memorized and used when necessary "from the top down", testing it each time a new sequence begins. The presence of a different compositional pattern in the final sequence, which passes from black and white to color, is a cue permitting the viewer to complete the compositional schema. As I noted elsewhere,⁶ the film's beginning and the film's ending are bound together by two Polaroid photographs: the first one shows the time going back as it progressively fades from color to white, the second one conveys color to the whole sequence, as it progressively develops, passing from white to color. It is worth noting that the second photograph is also a reminder for the first one and for the beginning of the film, following a stylistic schema which can be recognized, and which consists in a sort of circularity between the beginning and the end of the film.

The "matching shots"

The unusual and elaborate disposition of the sequences in the film demands several points of control, to confirm the temporal or causal relationships. For this reason, each color sequence presents *matching shots*, both at the beginning and at the end. These shots are shared between the preceding and the following color sequences, using a precise disposition. At the beginning of each color sequence there is a matching shot for the following one, which will be shown after a black and white scene. At the end there is a matching shot for the previous one, shown before the preceding black and white scene.

$$\begin{array}{c}
MS_{(n+1)} \\
(\text{following sequence}) \\
+ \\
\text{SEQUENCE} \\
+ \\
MS_{(n)} \\
(\text{previous sequence})
\end{array}$$

The repetition of already seen details helps us to create a connection between the related color sequences that flow backwards and are interrupted by black and white scenes. In this perspective, the matching shots are *mnemonic devices*. Their presence encourage the viewer to make a comparison between the scenes, and to make the operation of mental rotation which consists in putting the events of the two sequences in the right chronological order, in order to verify the temporal and the causal relationships. The scheme for the film's beginning is shown here.

$$[C_1.ms1 + BW_1 + ms2.C_2.ms1 + BW_2 + ms3.C_3.ms2\dots]$$

The relationship existing between the sequences is found only at the end of each color sequence. As an example, we can take (ms2), at the end of sequence (C3): it is a matching shot because we recognize the beginning of sequence (C2), already seen. Thus, at the beginning of each new color sequence a tension is created: the viewer tries to anticipate the relationship existing between the new events and the events already seen.

Episodic memory and retrograde narration

It is important to consider the complexity of this construction, that is at the same time sequential, as the film goes on, and retrograde, as the events move backwards. The de-familiarizing effect is provoked by the necessity of this mental work: we have

to arrange the events from the end to the beginning, whereas our episodic memory normally works in a quite different way. As Endel Tulving affirms, episodic memory works following the temporal order:

Information in episodic memory of necessity must be recorded into the store directly.⁷

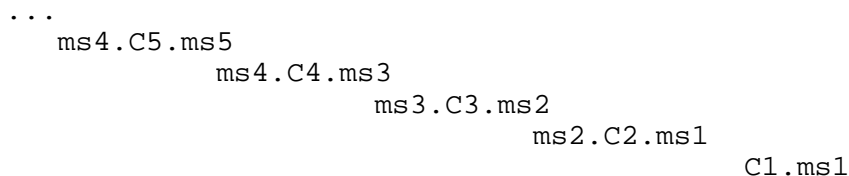
This can help to explain why it is difficult to remember *Memento* in the chronological order.

For instance, for a person to remember that he experienced an event E_2 after another event E_1 , he must have originally experienced those two events in this temporal order.⁸

The episodic memory system encoding strictly keeps the temporal connections between events and only a willing mental operation can dispose them in a different order.

In addition, with the retrograde disposition, we lack the possibility of anticipating events, because they have already happened. We can only investigate the causes at the origin of the effects we have witnessed. The effect of "a missing past" is due to the fact that we are going back and each time we need a new premise for the events we are seeing. The operation of mental rotation is not simple. We can do it at a point in time, but not for the whole range of the story. Each time we need a mental representation of the *fabula*, beginning from the end, and we have to consider a great number of elements.

A sketch of the required structure is shown in the following scheme.



It is impossible to keep more than a few (five to nine) elements in the short term memory. While the film continues to present new elements to be processed, we cannot keep the ordered *fabula* structure in mind, because our working memory cannot process the entire film. While normally the chronological order of the film invites us to make progressive mental representations, following the ordinary processes of the episodic memory, the backward structure hinders the construction of a nested mental representation: thus we lack a general summary, as well as a logical and sequential structure of the events already shown. For this reason, we tend to keep a local map of the events, mainly those that are under the focus of attention. For other reasons this fact can also be true of the ordinary film, but it particularly happens with *Memento*. As we fail to use a global representation, and we feel a sense of "missing past", we need to be reminded of things: we need mnemonic devices that remind us of former or subsequent stages of events.

A mnemonic system

A film like *Memento* holds several orientating elements, allowing the viewer to understand what he or she is watching. Due to its particular form, the film presents, in fact, a mnemonic system: a structured set of memory aids. We have already considered the matching shots, which help to create mnemonic connections between two sequences, and which help with putting in order the events depicted. As any element of the film can become a mnemonic device, we can appreciate this mnemonic system if we consider the network of both internal references and matching elements. Mnemonic connections are different from temporal or causal

connections: they are free from a rigid direction as well as from strict chronological binds. They can be used as a differentiated set of memory functions.

When an element of the film becomes a memory device, its main function is to shift the focus of the viewer's attention to some significant detail: a comparison is made and a working hypothesis is outlined. Let's consider for instance the initial and the final parts of *Cast Away* (by Robert Zemeckis, 2000). In the first sequence the entrance to the sculptor's house (when the lorry goes in) shows two names: Dick and Bettina. At the end of the film Chuck Noland (Tom Hanks) goes there to deliver the FedEx package he conserved for Bettina. As he is near the entrance we follow his eye line and we notice the absence of Dick's name: a quick comparison with the former shot allows us to infer that the marriage is broken, and that Bettina cut Dick's name off.

All films employ memory devices, but when we watch *Memento* we do need memory devices. Other films work by accumulation, through a linear, progressive presentation of narrative information.

Memento shows a systematic use of diegetic breaks, and we can find a linear narration only in the final sequence, even if many other short shots of Leonard's wife are shown. Mnemonic devices are necessary because *Memento* works in many different ways: its circular narrative schema presents cumulative information, fragmented information, anticipating elements, and so forth.

We call these elements mnemonic devices with great significance: memory here is a key function of cognition; cognitive schemata are drawn and then promptly revised when necessary. In a similar sense, the same used in the field of cognitive studies, the masters of the *Memoria artificialis* consider as mnemonic devices all the elements able to establish a certain relationship, a certain *ratio*. Our attention capabilities, as well as cognition, inference making, comprehension, imagination and judgment skills are activated by the associations we find, or which we think we

can establish between different aspects of the film. We can notice in films different kinds of these relationships between elements: we label them as memory devices because their presence triggers any type of memory operation by the viewer.

On the side of the viewer: mnemonic operations

Mnemonic connections are core elements of the narrative coherence. From the cognitive perspective they are a set of cues which enable the viewer to keep track of the course of events, and to build mental representations of the depicted situations. In so doing, it is necessary that viewers can recognize, or recall, things already seen. More generally, the unfolding narration is reliant upon information previously planted in the viewer's mind, otherwise the story could not progress. What is important to emphasize is the fact that what we call the film, as it is viewed, is in fact a complex and structured set of mental representations which could not work without the recurrent action of the memory systems.

Memory devices can be used in many different ways. But in any case they create a relationship between the actual part of the film and another part of the film. Broadly speaking, these elements can cue two main operations, which parallel the two main functions of the human memory: encoding and retrieval of data. In the first case a relationship can be established between the memory device and subsequent parts of the film: we can name this principle "anticipation". In the second case the memory device is related to former parts of the film: we can name this principle "recall".

In general, this type of relationship consists in the exhibition of given elements in the initial part of the film, and their return in subsequent parts. As a particular case of repetition,

the anticipation-recall routine is not simply a matter of redundancy of film information. A lot of elements and aspects are repeated in films, from points of view and camera movements, to locales, actors, actions, props: they contribute, as we have already said, to the film's narrative coherence. But when it is necessary to create connections between different parts of a film, repetition becomes a mnemonic device: the same elements shown several times cue the viewer to confront them and to find some common feature which can be important for the story. The simplest use of a memory device implies the presence of at least two occurrences of the same element, or the presentation of a second element with a noticeable likeness with respect to the first one. A plain application of this principle is in *Bullets over Broadway* (by Woody Allen, 1995). Cheech (Chazz Palminteri) goes to the docks twice: the first time we see him we also witness the shooting of a man, who falls dead into the water. The second time we see Cheech in the same place he is with Olive (Jennifer Tilly). When we see him entering the docks in a shot which is a replica of the former one, we already expect a similar conclusion: he is about to kill Olive, his boss' girlfriend. While the anticipated shot had its autonomous narrative function, the repeated shot functions as a mnemonic hook, a retrieval cue triggering an immediate recall, and an immediate prevision concerning the subsequent events. Anticipation can become a subtle strategy, because the overt presentation of certain elements make them foregrounded, orienting the viewer's attention focus and triggering expectations. A great number of films in the James Bond series show the anticipation-recall routine: in the first part of the film James Bond visits the laboratory, where he is informed about the latest sophisticated gadgets he will use. During the rest of the film the secret agent will find them highly useful. When the film, following narrative needs, shows a gadget for the second

time, it usually happens because it acquires narrative relevance. Expectations in these cases are emotionally charged, because the use of the gadget can solve difficult situations. This happens for instance with the Aston Martin Db5, in *Goldfinger* and *Thunderball*.

Repetition as a compositional principle

Establishing systematic relationships between different parts of the film can become a compositional principle, that gives rise to specific cognitive responses from the viewer. Broadly speaking, when mnemonic devices are used, the repeated elements acquire salience and invite the viewer to make comparisons. In *Celebrity* (by Woody Allen, 1998) Robin (Judy Davies) meets her ex husband Lee (Kenneth Branagh) twice, in a movie theater. Her reactions are very different from the first to the second time, and the comparison we make is revealing: at the end of the film she is a quite different woman, whose life, with her second marriage has become highly satisfying.

More specifically, a stunning example of the use of repetition as a principle of composition is *Mulholland Drive* (by David Lynch, 2001). There are a lot of repeated elements in the film, from the locales, to the same actress in reversal of roles: all of them contribute to the film's fascinating ambiguity. Repetition is a way to appeal to the viewer's memory, and it is a dominant feature of the film. Its use becomes evident if we compare two scenes shot outside Winkie's restaurant. When we see the first one, directly after the man who is telling a friend about his dream, we notice two things: the entrance's sign with the arrow and the public phone. We are shown the same details in the second scene, when Betty calls the Police, asking for information about the accident in Mulholland Drive. Since each repeated element

becomes prominent, we are invited to wonder if there is a connection between the two scenes. But no certain relationship is found, and repetition becomes in this case a compositional device which contributes to obscurity and ambiguity.

At the end of the film, when Diane (Naomi Watts) hires the killer inside the restaurant, the man of the dream seen in the initial part of the film is near the desk: she sees him, and he looks at her. Again we are wondering about a possible relationship between the characters, or between their stories. In addition, when we see the dark man for the second time, the homeless man who in a former scene frightened the man of the dream, has with him the same blue box which was taken at the Silencio Club, and which opened the second story: another possible connection, another ambiguous relationship.

Repetition in *Mulholland Drive* is a compositional device because it appears at several levels, and it affects the narrative structure as well as the viewer's comprehension of the story. The same objects can appear in different contexts. For example, a strange, maybe ironic, affinity ties the characters who utter the same line. "This is the girl" is said by one of the Castigliani brothers, and it refers to the blond actress Camilla Rhodes (Melissa Georges). Then it is repeated by the cowboy speaking to the director in the corral. The director reluctantly states the line when he sees the blond Camilla, because he is obliged to work with her. The same words are uttered again by Diane (Naomi Watts) when she hires the killer, showing him the photograph of Rita (Laura Harring) also portrayed as Camilla Rhodes.

Another example of repetition of the same lines is in two similar scenes set on Mulholland drive, in the limousine which carries Rita and then Diane. As the driver stops the women utter the same lines: "What are you doing? We don't stop here". In the first scene Rita is about to be killed while in the second, for Diane, there is a surprise prepared by her friend Camilla (Laura

Harring). The same elements can be shared by different scenes, activating the viewer's memory and the search of possible connections. We can draw different hypotheses which can remain without verification. But we don't fail to recognize two situations which are bound by a dream-like similarity.

Repetition for aesthetic ends

To conclude this article let me consider two other examples. One of these cases of repetition affects the viewer's memory for aesthetic ends. The final sequence of *Annie Hall* (by Woody Allen, 1977) associates several images from previously shown scenes. As in a sort of composite flashback, each image triggers the viewer's memory, and shifts the attention to the whole sequence it evokes. While simultaneously playing on the soundtrack Diane Keaton performs the song that she sang at a night club, when she met Tony Lacey (Paul Simon). This final sequence can only be completely significant if the viewer is able to remember parts of the film previously seen: by reminding us of the highlights of the love story, it provokes a bitter and romantic mood. At the end of the film these repeated shots function as a summary: their appeal to the memory of the viewer has an emotional salience, a bitter sweet poignancy that was not present in the original scenes. This construction principle is similar to the anticipation-recall routine, but in a reverse mode: here shots already shown are repeated to give them a synthetic significance, which they did not have in the original scenes.

In a similar way a short scene can evoke a major part of a film. In the last section of *Cast Away* the main character (Tom Hanks) is alone after the welcome home party. He walks across the room, looking at the party table, full of food. Then he finds a lighter, he lights it up and stares at it, he switches it off and

then he relights it and stares at it again. No word is uttered, no music is heard, but the scene is deeply moving. The flame of the lighter and the gaze of the character remind us of his conquest of the fire when he was on the island: a part of the film lasting six minutes long, showing the continuous efforts he made to light a flame rubbing two pieces of wood.

The absence of a flashback provokes an actual memory shift between the viewer and the character. We guess that Chuck is thinking about the fire because he looks at the flame, realizing how easy it is to turn it on. In fact we are recalling the scene, and we are attributing it to the memories of the character.

This is another possible effect of repetition, which is a key feature in films, because it triggers mnemonic operations. It emphasizes the fundamental role of the viewer in the process of film vision. His or her memory has a central role, not only for knowledge about the external world, but above all for the contextual knowledge which is established and which is implied during film vision. The viewer must possess a complete "local memory" of what the film is showing, the film can orient the viewer's attention to notice certain details, and can address his memory to perform multiple operations: from simple recall to complex comparison between ambiguous and challenging events. It is a necessary condition for the film to "find a place" in the mind of the viewer. The study of the local memory produced during film vision can tell us how movies are intentionally made to match with our mental systems, and how the role of the viewer is necessary to give sense to the screening of the images and sounds which compose the film. The film, as it is seen by the viewers, is a blend of physical stimuli and mental representations: being able to describe, and perhaps to explain, some aspects of these representations can be an interesting and rewarding study program.

Notes

- 1 Cicero, *De Oratore*, II, 353.
- 2 Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 1990.
- 3 David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, London, Routledge, 1988, p. 37.
- 4 Edward Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, London, Routledge, 1992, p. 13.
- 5 Torben Grodal, *Moving Pictures. A New Theory of Film, Genres, Feelings and Cognition*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997, p. 60.
- 6 Stefano Ghislotti, "Backwards: Memory and Fabula Construction in Memento by Christopher Nolan", in *Film Anthology*, 2003 (www.unibg.it/fa). The original version was in Italian: Stefano Ghislotti, *Riflessi interiori. Il film nella mente dello spettatore*, Bergamo, Sestante, 2003, pp. 169-195.
- 7 Endel Tulving, "Episodic and Semantic Memory", in Endel Tulving and Wayne Donaldson (eds.), *Organization of Memory*, New York, Academic Press, 1972, p. 389.
- 8 Endel Tulving, "Episodic and Semantic Memory", p. 389.