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The fractal nature of narrative, dramaturgical agency and the possibility of interactivity in narrative

Abstract

This study is part of a larger study in progress, which attempts to describe the interactivity inherent in film narrative and the sequentialisations that characterize narrative. My aim is to explore the basic features of the functioning of the film receptive attitude inherent in interactivity. The exploratory method builds on the claim that in the macro and micro structures of narrative the fractal nature of narrative, which carries the potential for interactivity, prevails through two dilemmas. Thus, not only the narrative power lines in the body of the text, which form the basic structure of the dramatic structure, but also its variants, the shadow patterns, become visible. Consequently, the dilemma situations are able to form narrative shadow patterns, inducing a decision agency, which reveal a dramaturgically structurable system of a character's decision situations, thereby creating the possibility of dramaturgical agency.

The starting point for the investigation of dramaturgical agency is the Interactive Digital Narrative (IDN), which is well known in video games. Its functioning is significantly influenced by the interpretation of chance, which creates coherent or incoherent decision patterns in the narrative structure with a paragraphic nature. The study indirectly tries to show, through the concept of chance, that its interpretative significance has a stimulating or enervating impact on the recipient during the reception process.

Keywords: nonlinear narrative structure, IDN, chance, psychological agency, dramaturgical agency, archetypal value, dilemma, motivation/drive, shadow patterns, Tyche.

Introduction

The interactive nature of narrative and its prevalence long preceded the storytelling techniques that characterise post-modernism in human history. One of the first written records that can be listed here is *The Ocean of Story,*[1] which is originally entitled *Katha-sarit-sagara*. Written by Somadeva Bhatta[2] in the 11th century, it shows features of nonlinear storytelling. Examples of such elements include the *frame story,* in which a central plot is linked to several separate stories, with overlaps between them, or the world as we know it is portrayed from the perspective of other characters. A *hierarchical structure* is also a typical narrative solution, where one character tells a story in such a way that another character appears in the new story and tells another story, and so on. (This latter solution recurs, e.g., in the storytelling technique of the *Decameron* or *The Canterbury Tales,* and much later, it will also be the basis for the concept of *metalepsy* as explored and reinterpreted by Genette [2006].) At the same time, it includes backward and forward referral, and a departure from chronology, which evokes the complex narrative structure of dream-like narrative that Freud will deal with. It is worth noting, in the context of Freud, that it is not only the nonlinearity of the dream narrative, but the heuristic processes

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1 Penzer and Tawney 2020.

2 Somadeva, also known as Somadeva Bhatta, is best known as the author of the *Katha-sarit-sagara*. The author, who lived in the 11th century and composed in Sanskrit, was a *shaivite brahmin,* or scholar and court poet, who served in the court of King Ananta (Anantadeva) of Kashmir. He was supported by Ananta and dedicated his works to the Kashmir king's wife, Queen Suryamati (also known as Subhata).

of dream interpretation itself, that call into play the nonlinear narrative structure. (See Freud's case study entitled *Aus der Geschichte einer infantilen Neurose*[3] published in 1918. This is what Freud writes about this process in the context of dream interpretation: "This work, which cannot be called difficult, comes up against limitations when a multidimensional phenomenon has to be brought to the level of description. So I have to be content with showing only the parts, which the reader can assemble into a living whole.")[4]

The nonlinear narrative model of dream interpretation and dreamwork[5] also appears in projects from the 1990s, such as the *Bar Code Hotel* by Perry Hoberman (1995)[6] This is a visual innovation that reused symbols found on consumer goods and incorporated them into a free-standing virtual space through an interactor. In this way, the binding structural elements of the narrative are replaced by acts of decision that are brought to life by the subjective, *unconscious* will of the participant.[7]

If we examine the role of chance in these narrative formations, we see that the receptive presence, struggling with predicativity, with the prediction of consequences, creates narrative planes from the outset. These planes draw a field of interpretation around the central narrative content, thus forming a complex narrative pattern which, due to chance and the limited recognisability of internal regularities, forms an infinite (seemingly infinite) number of permutative outcomes. This theory is partly supported by the research conducted by J. R. Halverson et. al., which examines the circumstances of the emergence of Islamist extremist narratives. In their work entitled *Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism* (Halverson, Goodall and Corman 2011), they call *'master narratives'* those complex narratives created by a compilation technique in which the creator

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3 It is included in this volume in Hungarian: Freud 2011.

4 Freud, Sigmund. 1918. *Aus der Geschichte einer infantilen Neurose,* 47. Online access: https://www.psychanalyse.lu/articles/FreudWolfsmann.pdf (last visited: June 30, 2024) *„Diese sonst nicht schwierige Arbeit findet eine natürliche Grenze, wo es sich darum handelt, ein vieldimensionales Gebilde in die Ebene der Deskription zu bannen. Ich muß mich also damit begnügen, Gliederstücke vorzulegen, die der Leser zum lebenden Ganzen zusammenfügen mag."*

5 Here we can see the explicit use of the dream as a narrative building force, as Freud wrote about in his famous work published in 1900, see Freud 1900.

6 *Bar Code Hotel*. Ars Electronica Archive. Online access: https://webarchive.ars.electronica.art/en/archives/festival_archive/festival_documentations/1994/hoberp2.html (last visited: June 12, 2024). See also: YouTube video, 0:57. Online access: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvVJnhwGb0s (last visited: June 12, 2024).

7 In a sense, we are talking about 'secondary creators' here.

combines certain claims from Islamic culture, history and theology—claims that reinforce the communicator's intentions, claims that are demonstrative and extreme—in order to use the resultant outcome, e.g., for mobilisation.

The notion of chance, which we have seen in the context of nonlinearity, also appears in the case of *interactive digital narrative* (IDN) in video games. IDN is a narrative format that operates specifically on digital media interfaces, giving users a direct opportunity to participate in the creation of the narrative experience. Here, the narrative process and interaction become one—what Koenitz (2023) calls *'interactivisation'*—and the user takes possession of the chance.

The basic inducing element of randomisation in the creation of narrative planes and in the traversal of narrative paths is that the player performs virtual tasks with a particular character to achieve a certain goal, while making decisions at the same time. Despite the fact that this storytelling method is based on a goal-driven narrative scheme, those attempts which later tried to incorporate IDN into a cinematic narrative, preferred associative solutions of randomisation.

Interactive films that have attracted more attention in the past, such as *My One Demand* (2015)[8] or *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* (2018),[9] have basically exploited the dramaturgical organisation of the variability of the details that make up the story, i.e. they have used associative solutions of randomisation, the inclusion of *dramaturgically unexposed chance* in the division of story threads. (This solution was rather similar to the method used for the *Bar Code Hotel*.) The possibility of crossing narrative planes in complex scenes was provided by decision situations, choice situations, the outcome of which was unknown to the recipient. This is demonstrated by the production's map of choices *(Bandersnatch Choices Map*[10]*)*. Research on this topic (Roth and Koenitz 2019) shows that the randomised elements of the choices that structured the reception process did not prove effective. This is because the choice situation that stimulates the reception process is actually about the lack of control in the case of *Bandersnatch*.

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8 *My One Demand,* written and directed by Matt Adams. Blast Theory, 2015.

9 *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch,* written by Charlie Brooker, directed by David Slade. Netflix, 2018.

10 *Bandersnatch Choices Map.* Image. Online access: https://oyster.ignimgs.com/mediawiki/apis.ign.com/black-mirror/d/d8/Bandersnatch_Map_IGN_2.jpg (last visited: October 15, 2024).

In contrast to the Netflix production, the first production to use an interactive narrative, *Kinoautomat,* focused on decision. Made for the 1967 Montreal World's Expo, *Expo '67,* the film[11] was shown for six months as a sixty-minute programme in the Czechoslovak pavilion. The idea came from Radúz Činčera, and the film was written and directed by members of the Czechoslovak New Wave of the 1960s (Radúz Činčera, Pavel Juráček, Jan Roháč, Vladimír Svitáček and Miroslav Horníček). *Kinoautomat* went down in film history as a success (and forty years later, in February 2006, it was shown at the prestigious National Film Theatre in London and in fifteen other countries around the world), suggesting that the involvement of the recipient is more strongly supported by the dilemmas presented in the decision situations, such as the goal-driven, causal editing. At the same time, its narrative solutions reinforce the classical Aristotelian interpretation of the role of chance (see: *Tyche*), in which control plays an important role.

The psychological agency

The *psychological agency* can be seen as a precursor of the dramaturgical agency, *which* has become of decisive importance through narrative psychology in the analysis of life story texts. In terms of its essential definition, theories of the nature of identity describe agency as the ability to represent the self as a result of external or internal pressure on the *self,* as a functional process of relating to control. Thus, Yamaguchi (2003) defines *control (1)* as a psychological formation of *personal efficacy (2)* and *autonomy (3)*. In this constellation, control by the *self* can be said to be successful if efficacy leads to self-representation (i.e., *self-power*), which in turn enhances the individual's sense of autonomy (see Bandura 1977).

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11 The film, entitled *Kinoautomat* stars Mr. Novak as the protagonist, who is faced with a piquant moral dilemma. At the beginning of the story, a young, decorative lady wrapped in a towel, just out of the shower, knocks on his door and tells him that she has locked herself out of her apartment. She asks him to let her into his home. Novak is just waiting for his wife with a surprise, as it is her birthday that day. Mrs. Novak could be home in a matter of minutes, which in this case would create an awkward situation. However, he cannot let the charming lady down. What can be done?—When the film reached this point, a moderator stopped the screening and encouraged the audience to decide how the story should continue by pressing a red and a green button. If green, the beauty in distress finds refuge with Novak; if red, she is trapped outside the door. The decision with the most votes was used to continue the film. Nine similar decision situations divided the production for the audience to choose from.

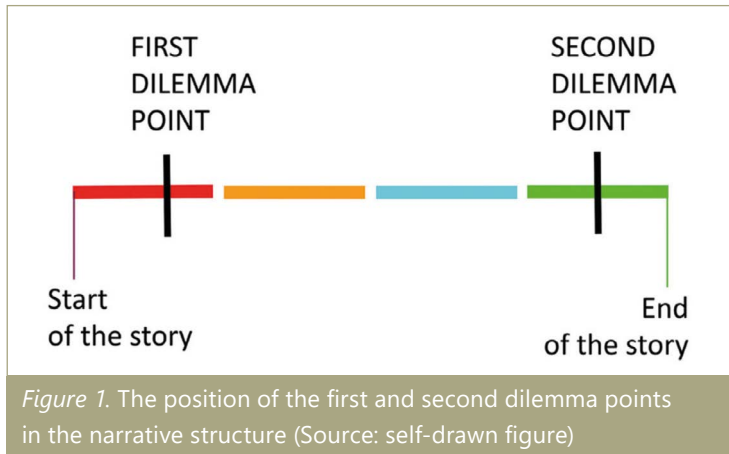# The importance of control and decision-making processes

Neurophysiology studies have shown that in decision-driven processes, cortical areas respond differently depending on whether the individual is acting on their own volition or because of an external force. PET (positron emission tomography) scans have shown (Chaminade and Decety 2002) that there is a link between lateralised activity in the inferior parietal lobes and the *experience* of agency. In other words, in adults, *left parietal lobe* activity increases when the subject acts under the influence of an external force. Conversely, when making a decision on one's own, without the influence of an external force, the *right parietal area is more active.*

The concept of *external* and *internal control* was introduced into psychology by Rotter (1954; 1966; 1982). These two elements determine the nature of control, so we can speak of *external* and *internal control.* In the latter, the individual identifies themselves as the cause of events, i.e. they live in the knowledge that they are in control of their own destiny. For the individual, the priority of external control invites the dominance of environmental forces, i.e. in this case the person often experiences inertia. Here the range of environmental factors includes things such as the will of others, but also the transcendent, such as fate or chance.

The dilemma

What distinguishes a narrative dramatic story from a non-narrative structure is that at least the central characters are present in a goal-driven way, or that these characters can be defined as source elements of goal-drivenness (see Bordwell 1985; Chatman 1978). This characteristic creates a well-understood dramaturgical model formula in which the process, which can be understood *as a dramaturgical agency,* is organised along horizontal and vertical elements. Horizontal elements are those events on the event horizon which, in their succession and interdependence, mark out the logical course of events. In the Anglo-Saxon literature, these points are called the *plot.* The vertical elements are in fact capable of representing the nature of the value intensity (see below: *archetypal value, horizon of consciousness*) associated with each *plot,* as well as the specific features of the genre.

From the point of view of the protagonist, the dramaturgical agency has two distinctive structural points. These two points are the two decision situations (first and second dilemma points) which carry the perception of the change of the central character. In terms of their positions, they are located at the third of the first quarter of the story and at the halfway point of the last quarter.

Figure 1. The position of the first and second dilemma points in the narrative structure (Source: self-drawn figure)

Typically, the first dilemma point is a situation embedded in a rational context, where the constraint of external circumstances prevails, while the second dilemma point is dictated by the dominance of irrational factors.

Let's look at an example for this. In the case of *Pulp Fiction – The Gold Watch*,[12] the first and second dilemmas are linked to two important encounters between Butch (Bruce Willis) and Marsellus Wallace (Ving Rhames), which counterpoint each other. In the first dilemma point, Marsellus Wallace, the omnipotent gangster boss, offers Butch, the boxer, money if he will participate in a betting scam (i.e. if he will deliberately lose a boxing match in which Marsellus has a financial interest). Butch pretends to accept the offer, because he needs the money, but in fact refuses Marsellus' offer[13] (in a sense, he *is disloyal to* him) and wins the fight, contrary to the agreement. For the second dilemma point,

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12 Hungarian title: *Ponyvaregény.* Directed by Quentin Tarantino, Miramax Films, 1994.

13 „*Pride only hurts, It never helps.*" Online access: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1q2PitIM9w (last visited: June 12, 2024).

this relationship changes.[14] In the final act of the story, Marsellus and Butch are captured by two perverted men, Maynard (Duane Whitaker) and Zed (Peter Greene), but Butch manages to escape. Throughout the story, it becomes clear that Marsellus is Butch's greatest enemy and adversary, making it seem obvious that Butch's goal is to see Marsellus fall. This fall is fulfilled by the fact that we know that Marsellus is being raped by Zed. Butch's motivational goal (i.e. to leave the city) could therefore be achieved, but he decides to turn around and save Marsellus. The moment when Butch makes a decision (i.e. returns to the scene of the abuse) is the second dilemma point of the story. Here we witness the change that takes place in Butch: the disloyal, betraying character becomes a saviour.

The double risk

Butch's return to rescue Marsellus illustrates that the second dilemma point is an *irrational act*. That is, there is no justification for Butch to take a risk and jeopardise his motivational purpose. Moreover, a defining, goal-oriented element of his character is the fall of Marsellus. Butch still makes the decision to go back and free his enemy from captivity. It is his own choice, not forced by circumstances (indeed, quite the opposite). For this reason, this structural position can also be understood as an *assumption of double risk*. Because the protagonist at this point takes a moral and existential risk. He compromises his motivational goal (existential risk) and faces moral accountability.

The archetypal value

The archetypal value is a non-conscious orientational value element which is linked to the character, determines its behaviour and has a mobilising power, and which guides and influences the mental and attitudinal functioning of the personality in a centralised way. We can also approach the *value* of archetypal value from the ethical perspective, and here the phenomenological concept of value (especially Nicolai Hartmann, see Hartmann 2013) provides a noteworthy description of the concept.

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14 "Pulp Fiction: Rescuing Marsellus Wallace."
Online access: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D54wsAR5CAI&t=33s (last visited: June 12, 2024).

Orientations have two dominant clusters, external *(motivation)* and internal *(drive)*. Motivation describes the relationship to the existential, sensory world *(external constraint)*. In this sense, a motivation, or more precisely a motivational goal, is the acquisition of a desired job or professional position, a successful exam, but also a love date, or even a strong cup of black coffee. *Drive (internal incentive),* on the contrary, calls in an internal, mental or spiritual sense, a motivational content, which has a buoyancy in the psychological sense. In this sense, the *intrinsic (internal motivation)* of the *drive* is crucial. (The term is used in a different way from the *biological drive* in behaviourist psychology.)

A number of archetypal values exist, according to archetypes.[15]

The dramaturgical position of a character is determined by three archetypal elements. These three elements are in fact the result of narrative framing. The first of these is the *baseline archetype* of the character, called the basic archetype, which defines the character's identity. Due to the dramatic or narrative context, each character has an *external* and *internal goal* or determination (see *motivational* and *drive* goal), which are also described by an archetypal characteristic.

If we now return to Butch's story, we see that his baseline archetype is the Warrior (the archetype equivalent to the hero archetype), whose *Archetypal Baseline Value* (ABV) is *self-esteem*. The value that defines the drive (*Drive Value – DV*) is *loyalty*, *attachment* and camaraderie, while the motivation is defined by freedom (*Motivation Value – MV: Explorer*). To restate what has been said so far within the narrative context, we can say that Butch, a boxer (see: fighter) preparing for one last big fight, wants to escape with the help of the money he has earned through betrayal (motivation archetype: adventurer / MV: *freedom*) in order to escape the rules dictated by Marsellus, but in a critical situation he prefers to rescue the gangster boss in trouble (drive archetype / DV: *loyalty*).

In the context of archetypal values, it is thus clear that the dramatic character becomes complex by virtue of the fact that *three incorporates archetypal values are incorporated*. In the case of Butch, the baseline archetype is the *warrior* who,

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15 Without being exhaustive or typologically classified, these might include: *belonging, wisdom, loyalty, camaraderie, caring, curiosity, security, honesty, compassion, perseverance, sincerity, impartiality/indifference, diligence, commitment to a cause, self-esteem, love of life, patience, passion/love, freedom, understanding/ empathy, perfectionism, sense of duty, moderation,* etc. The characterising nature of the values listed is essentially determined by the fact that they do not have a negative content, but rather a positive or neutral status (e.g. self-esteem, perfectionism). Their character and classification can be defined archetypally.

as an adventurer, longs for freedom and can only achieve his goal by becoming capable of self-sacrifice (becoming *caring*) through demonstrating loyalty.

The horizon of consciousness and archetypal values

Within the framework provided by the narrative, the change of the central character *(the protagonist)* is linked to the dramaturgical agency that is imposed on the character in the dilemma or decision situations as a dramaturgical pressure. The constraint of the decision situation becomes a dilemma for the protagonist because of the goals and the values embodied in the goals. In other words, we are not really talking about a decision constraint between goals, but between *values*, moreover, *archetypal values*. Thus, each *dramaturgical agent* can be conceived as a dilemma that results from the archetypal value-determination of the protagonist or central character. The problem is much more complex than can be briefly summarised, but it is important to note that the reality as perceived and experienced by the protagonist, and the relationship of the protagonist in relation to it. The fundamental characteristic of this relation is that it represents a borderline between the visible and the invisible, the conscious and the unknown/unconscious world for the protagonist. It is also important that *the unknown world* refers to a reality that is not conscious to the protagonist. It is the events below and above the boundary line that create the sense of the world in which the central character is drawn, hence the name *horizon of consciousness*. At the start of the story, the element above the horizon of consciousness is the motivation, while below the horizon of consciousness, the *drive* is present *as something unknown* for the protagonist. The story itself is nothing but a struggle between motivation and drive. To put it another way:
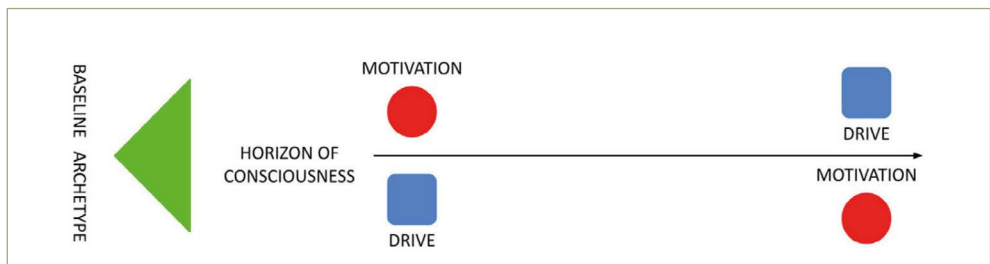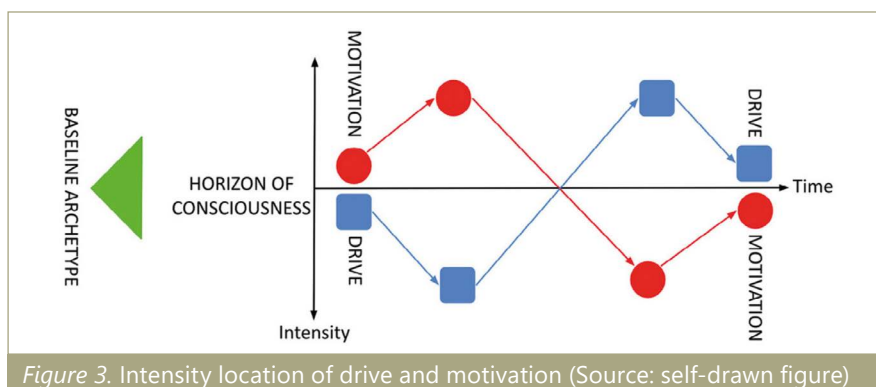

Figure 2. The location of drive and motivation in relation to the horizon of consciousness (Source: self-drawn figure)

the condition for the drive to surface is that the motivation must be forced below the horizon of consciousness by the protagonist—this is achieved at the end of the story.

In this sense, this process is a *constitutive, complementary process,* whereby consciousness is able to criticise and recreate external and internal perceptions, to make the *unknown known,* through a process of self-recognition, contemplation and interpretation. (Kant writes about this in the context of imagination, when he mentions the importance of contemplation, which *reflects*.)

Figure 3. Intensity location of drive and motivation (Source: self-drawn figure)

The confrontation of drive and motivation in terms of value is in fact what Aristotle called the *hamartia*, the error/distraction of character. In Aristotle's terms, a tragic character is one *"who does not excel by virtue of their righteousness and honesty, nor are they turned to misfortune by their inferiority or wickedness, but by some error (hamartia)"* (Arisztotelész 1997, 55).

The *Drive Goal* (DG) and the *Motivation Goal* (MG) are thus the objectification of the drive value and the motivation value. Their single-mindedness is also an attribute of the ambition to stabilise the unstable state of the protagonist's baseline archetype.

Catharsis and recognition in the decision situation

Once this process of recognition reaches the revelatory state of confrontation, where the value of the internal impulse (DV) rises above the horizon of consciousness and enters into a reactive relationship with the external compulsion (MV vs. DV), *katharsis (κάθαρσις)* is born. In Aristotle's interpretation, this is

operated by *compassion (eleos/ἔλεος)* and *fear (phobos/φόβος)*, which together lead to purification. And part of this purification is recognition (see *anagnorisis*) —as Aristotle writes in the *Poetics,* persons pass from not knowing to knowing.

The consequence of the emergence of recognition is the *Double Risk* (DR) mentioned earlier. The recognition of this forms the distinctive decision situation that gives rise to the second dilemma point. The second dilemma point is very expressively described by Aristotle's concept of the unexpected turn *(peripeteia)* and the *ekplēktikon*. The meaning of the latter is 'surprising', but the primary, verbal meaning is *ekplēce* ('to knock out').

Shadow patterns

Therefore, following on from the summary of what has been said above, the dramaturgical agency thus offers the possibility that the protagonist finds themselves confronted with a critique of values. As a consequence, the *recognition,* the *anagnorisis,* is born, so that the protagonist is put in a position of decision, and they have to choose between at least two possible actions or behaviours.

Below, we consider the *recognised* choice options for the first and second dilemma points and the possible emergence of *shadow patterns.* Here, we start from the thesis that for both dilemma points, the value representations represented by the protagonist's drive and motivation, as recognised by the protagonist, are the determining factors and are confronted. Moreover, an important element of the decision is that the outcome can be *true (coherent)* and *false (incoherent).* That is, the protagonist can represent or pretend to undertake the decision. (A good example is the case of Butch, who at the first dilemma point shows that he accepts Marsellus' offer, but in fact just the opposite happens.)

The fractal nature of the narrative structure

Choice points

The choice points in this model are most prominent at the first and second dilemma points. Here, the hero can produce a *true (coherent)* or *false (incoherent)* choice between DV (drive-value) and MV (motivation value)—and accordingly,

the story ramifications can be generated in this way.[16] Thus, a basic story, representing the protagonist's story thread, can contain eight other variants beyond the basic one.

In addition, we must take into account the dramaturgical circumstance that a basic story includes, in addition to the story thread of the protagonist, the story threads of the *antagonist,* the *impact character*, and the story threads of the *impact protagonist (relationship)* and the *main character.* These offer, where appropriate, paragraphic elements in a similar way to what we saw in the base case. In addition, another essential feature of the subject of the study is that the fractal nature of the structure[17] is characterised by the structural analogy present also in the *macro structure* in the *micro structure* and its functioning. Accordingly, macro structural features (elements of horizontal and vertical structure) are found in the micro structural elements. In other words, the fractal nature of the narrative structure is also due to the fact that the forces that drive the overall narrative structure are also present at the sequential levels, thus creating a seriality.

Chance as a dramaturgical element

For the viewer of the aforementioned *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* (2018), the outcome significance of the decision and choice situations is not goal-driven (cf. *Choice map*[18] – *Bandersnatch:* What happens if the protagonist eats Kellogg's Frosties for breakfast instead of Quaker Sugar Puffs?). Their significance is due to the associative nature of the randomisation. In terms of the reception process, this meant that, although interactivity itself was achieved through binary decisions, the outcome of these decisions was not stimulating in terms of the outcome.

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16 For t he agency of the primary shadow pattern, see:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1a4uXim62vyAr0XTEhs6-95IsXK6wcwM9/view?usp=sharing (last visited: October 27, 2024).

17 John Yorke also writes about the presence of fractals in script structures: *"All these units are constructed in three parts: fractal versions of the three-act whole. Just as a story will contain a set-up, an inciting incident, a crisis, a climax and a resolution, so will acts and so will scenes. The most obvious manifestation of tripartite form is in beginning, middle and end; set-up, confrontation and resolution"* (York 2014, 90).

18 *Choice map – Bandersnatch.* Online access: https://oyster.ignimgs.com/mediawiki/apis.ign.com/black-mirror/a/a0/Bandersnatch_Flowchart1.jpg?width=2240 (last visited: October 27, 2024).

If we apply chance in the classical Aristotelian sense, we arrive at the concept of the *Tyche*. Aristotle mentions this in the *Poetics*. It is worth knowing about the word that with the meaning *τύχη* 'luck', *τυχαίος* 'chance' it invites fateful-ness into the interpretative framework. At the point where *τυχαίος* ('chance') confronts (the protagonist) and forces him to react (Arisztotelész 1963, 9), the protagonist is confronted with his greatest fears. In Butch's story, this is the moment when, having retrieved the gold watch, he says with self-satisfaction: *"That's how you're gonna beat 'em, Butch. They keep underestimatin' ya."* Soon afterwards, at the pedestrian crossing, he finds himself face to face with the character he least wants to run into: Marsellus Wallace.[19] By chance? Yes, but in exactly the sense that Aristotle wrote about. This is the type of the appearance of the *Tyche* that leads the character towards confrontation and recognition *(anagnorisis)*.

A different form of articulation is represented by the chance occurring at the end of the narrative.

It differs from the earlier one in that the protagonist here entrusts himself to the *Tyche,* and in this composition the *Tyche* acts in conjunction with the fate. In Butch's case, this is embodied in the question he asks Marsellus at the end of the rescue mission: *"What now? ...I meant what now between me and you."* At this point, there are four possible outcomes of *chance*. (In fact, Butch accepts these outcomes—latently—with his earlier question.) The first possibility is that Marsellus forgives him and lets him go; the second is that he does not forgive him but gives him time to escape (and later takes revenge); the third possibility is that he forgives him but does not allow him to escape with the money; finally, he does not forgive him and does not allow him to escape, but takes revenge. If we use alphabetic symbols to model the formula for the decision process, the *Termination Reaction* (TR) of the party opposing the protagonist (*antagonist – A*) and the outcome of the confrontation[20] from the *Protagonist's Outcome of Confrontation Perspective* (POCP) with a prefix, where the drive goal and the motivation goal (DG, MG) can end in success (as indicated by the + prefix) or failure (as indicated by the – prefix), we obtain the following process model in terms of *Narrative Outcome* (NO):

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19 "Pulp Fiction Clip – Butch and Marsellus at Crosswalk." Online access: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DCTCZcFkPs (last visited: June 12, 2024).

20 The clash between the protagonist and the antagonist is an event preceding the solution, which is not the same as the solution of the story.

$$TR^A, POCP \rightarrow DG, MG \Rightarrow NO$$

Summary variants of possible outcomes:

$$\sum_{TRA} \left[\lim_{+\rightarrow-} \overset{POCP}{]} \right] \rightarrow \sum_{MG} \left[\lim_{+\rightarrow-} \overset{DG}{]} \right] = NO \left[DG, MG \lim_{+\rightarrow-} \right]$$

$$\sum_{TRA} \left[\lim_{-\rightarrow+} \overset{POCP}{]} \right] \rightarrow \sum_{MG} \left[\lim_{-\rightarrow+} \overset{DG}{]} \right] = NO \left[DG, MG \lim_{-\rightarrow+} \right]$$

But:

$$\sum_{TRA} \left[\lim_{-\rightarrow-} \overset{POCP}{]} \right] \rightarrow \sum_{MG} \left[\lim_{-\rightarrow-} \overset{DG}{]} \right] = NO \left[DG, MG \lim_{-\rightarrow-} \right]$$

That is, the combined effect of a TR^A, POCP influences the outcome of DG, MG, which can produce the four outcome variables of NO. Namely: *happy end* (HE), *dark* (D), *bittersweet* (BS), *tragic* (T).

In other words, *we can basically define narrative outcome* in *four different ways, which* can be characterised by the outcome of the confrontation (POCP), the final reaction of the antagonist (TR^A – chance occurring for the second time), with the prefix of the protagonist's goals (DG and MG) and their combination.

1. In the case of a successful story, the DG and MG of the protagonist have a positive sign, this is the *happy end* (HE);
2. for a story ending in failure, the DG can be negative and the MG positive, this is called *bittersweet* (BS);
3. either DG is positive and MG is negative, this is the *dark* ending (D);
4. finally, the DG can be negative and the MG negative, this is called a *tragic* ending (T).

Before we fix a possible model of the formula, let us clarify the operation of some important concepts and dramaturgical processes. The first essential element for a narrative outcome (NO) is the (*Point of View* – POV) system. Here it should be recorded that the protagonist's point of view is in the dominant role. From this point of view, the decision of the antagonist following the struggle is the *chance* activating element of the dramaturgical consequences. The next element in

question is the consequential content of each formula element. One example is, e.g., the *Protagonist's Outcome of Confrontation Perspective* (POCP). This dramaturgical event is the moment when the protagonist, facing their strongest fear, fights the battle that is the decisive condition for the achievement of their goal.

For at this dramaturgical point, the confrontation on *the physical plane,* the outcome of the POCP, can end in either annihilation or staying alive. In this context, let us examine what happens if the struggle ends in *physical* failure. Can the ending be positive? In *Gladiator* (2000; directed by Ridley Scott), the protagonist Maximus dies at the end of the story. His death, however, is the fulfilment of his motivational goal, which is to be reunited with his family members who were killed at the beginning of the story. (Maximus' drive goal, or DG, is to become a leader of the community, while his motivational goal, or MG, is to be reunited with his family.)

The *Termination Reaction* (TR) is therefore a potential possibility in the development of dramaturgical agency. Here, too, the question is whether a negative TR can result in a positive MG. To use the example given so far: if Marsellus does not forgive Butch, can Butch still successfully leave town (with the money and the girlfriend). The theoretical answer to this question could of course be permissive. That is, it could happen that, although Marsellus *does not forgive,* so Butch, e.g., fights him too, defeats him, and can escape as a result. Or Marsellus also *does not forgive* Butch, but gives him time to escape (and later takes revenge).

Based on this, the possible evolution of *shadow patterns* and the indicated agencies may depend on how DG or MG is implemented. In terms of sequencing, the process occurs by touching on the following patterns.

The elements of the formula:
- POCP: The result of the struggle from the protagonist's point of view (+ if successful; – if unsuccessful).
- TR^A: Final reaction of the antagonist (+ if successful; – if unsuccessful).
- DG: DG associated with the protagonist (+ if successful; – if unsuccessful).
- MG: MG associated with the protagonist (+ if successful; – if unsuccessful).
- NO: The outcome of the story, where different values can indicate different types of endings (e.g: HE, BS, D, T).

Determining the narrative outcome

The outcome of the story depends on how the combination of POCP and TRA influences the DG and MG values. These two values will determine which outcome type the story will be classified into.

Formula combination based on POCP and TR^A

Tragic ending agency formula:

if −1POCP→−1MG and −1TRA→−1DG then the NOΣ− −

This is described by the following formula:

$$\sum_{TRA}^{POCP} [\lim_{-\to-}] \to \sum_{DG}^{MG} [\lim_{-\to-}] = NO\,[MG, DG\,\lim_{-\to-}]$$

Dark ending agency formula

if ±1POCP→−1MG and +1TRA→+1DG then the a NOΣ−+

This is described by the following formula:

$$\sum_{TRA}^{POCP} [\lim_{\pm\to-}] \to \sum_{DG}^{MG} [\lim_{-\to+-}] = NO\,[MG, DG\,\lim_{-\to+}]$$

Bittersweet ending agency formula:

if +1POCP→+1MG and ±1TRA→−1DG then the NOΣ+−

This is described by the following formula:

$$\sum_{TRA}^{POCP} [\lim_{+\to-}] \to \sum_{DG}^{MG} [\lim_{+\to-}] = NO\,[MG, DG\,\lim_{+\to-}]$$

Happy end agency formula:

if +1POCP→+1MG and +1TRA→+1DG then the NOΣ++

This is described by the following formula:

$$\sum_{TRA}^{POCP} [\ \lim_{+\to+}\ ] \to \sum_{DG}^{MG} [\ \lim_{+\to+}\ ]\ =\ NO\ [MG, DG\ \lim_{+\to+}\ ]$$

Mathematical modelling of decision situations related to dilemma point 1

List of elements of the formula and their corresponding abbreviations

1. Pref(X) denotes the protagonist's preference for goal X.
2. X value 1 if true; X value 0 if not.
3. $MV^{deficit}_{X}$ the deficit of the motivation value belonging to goal X, where MV^0_X is the base motivation value.
4. CC is the constraint.
5. WOCh is the path of change.
6. FtFA is the confrontation act.
7. DR is the double risk.
8. MV is the motivation value.
9. DG is the drive goal
10. MV is the motivation goal.

Decision situation 1. (DH1) / coherent branch

1. Protagonist prefers MG, rejects DG:
   Pref(MG) > Pref(DG)

2. MG is fulfilled:
   MG = 1

3. DG is not fulfilled:
   DG = 0

4. At the first dilemma point, the deficit of DV associated with DG prevails, MV dominates:

$DG = \emptyset;\ DV^{deficit}_{DG} = DV^0_{DG} \Rightarrow DP_1 = MV^1 / DV^0 \Rightarrow MV = 1$

5. The resting state of the baseline archetype does not occur:

$Stability_{archetype} = 0$

6. A constraint condition (CC) occurs:

CC_{DG}

7. The protagonist is confronted with a deficit associated with DG:

$Confrontation^{deficit}_{\{DG\}}$

8. The path to change (WOCh) begins:

$WOCh_{DG}$

9. The story focus:

Story focus = Restore DV_{DG}

10. Recognition begins by taking the double risk (DR):

DR

$DH1,\ \text{if } Pref(MG) > Pref(DG);\ DG = \emptyset \to 1 \Rightarrow DV^{deficit}_{DG} = DV^0_{DG} \Rightarrow Stability_{archetype} = \emptyset$
$\Rightarrow DV^{deficit}_{DG} = DV^0_{DG} \Rightarrow DP_1 = MV^1 / DV^0 \Rightarrow MV = 1 \Rightarrow CC_{DG} \Rightarrow Confrontation^{deficit}_{\{DG\}}$
$\Rightarrow WOCh_{DG}\ 0 \to 1 \Rightarrow \text{Story focus} = \text{Restore } MV_{DG}\ 0 \to 1 \Rightarrow DR$

Decision situation 2 (DH2) / coherent branch

1. Protagonist prefers DG, forgoes MG:

$Pref(DG) > Pref(MG)$

2. DG is fulfilled:

$DG = 1$

3. MG is not fulfilled:

$MG = 0$

4. At the first dilemma point, the deficit of MV for MG prevails, DV dominates:

$MG = \emptyset;\ MV^{deficit}_{MG} = MV^0_{MG} \Rightarrow DP_1 = DV^1 / MV^0 \Rightarrow DV = 1$

5. The resting state of the baseline archetype does not occur:
   $Stability_{archetype} = 0$

6. A constraint condition (CC) occurs:
   CC_{MG}

7. The protagonist is confronted with the deficit associated with MG:
   $Confrontation^{deficit}_{\{MG\}}$

8. The path to change (WOCh) begins:
   $WOCh_{MG}$

9. The story focus:
   Story focus = $Restore\ MV_{MG}$

10. Recognition begins by taking the double risk (DR):
    DR
    DH2, if Pref(DG) > Pref(MG); MG = Ø →1 ⇒ $MV^{deficit}MG = MV^0MG$ ⇒
    $Stability archetype = Ø ⇒ MV^{deficit}MG = MV^0MG ⇒ DP_1 = DV^1 / MV^0 ⇒ DV$
    = 1 ⇒ CCMG ⇒ $Confrontation^{deficit}\{MG\}$ ⇒ WOChDG 0 →1 ⇒ Story focus =
    Restore MVMG 0 →1 ⇒ DR

Decision situation 3 (DH3) / incoherent branch

1. Apparently the protagonist prefers DG, secretly MG:
   Apparent Pref(DG) > Apparent Pref(MG)
   Secret Pref(MG) > Secret Pref(DG)

2. DG is apparently fulfilled:
   $DG \approx 1$

3. The path to MG is apparently shortened:
   Apparent Path to MG shortened

4. At the first dilemma point, the deficit of DV associated with DG prevails,
   still DV apparently dominates:
   $DG \approx 1; DV^{deficit}_{DG} = DV{\sim}^1_{DG} ⇒ DP_1 = MV^1 / DV{\sim}^1 ⇒ DG \approx 1$

5. The resting state of the baseline archetype apparently occurs:
   $Stability_{archetype} \approx 1$

6. Constraint condition (CC) is omitted:
   $CC_{DG} = \varnothing$

7. The protagonist does not embark on the path to change (WOCh):
   $WOCh_{DG} = 0$

8. The story focus:
   Story focus = Restore $DV_{DG} \sim 1 \rightarrow 1$

9. Confrontation act (FtFA):
   The protagonist faces his own lie:
   FtFA

10. The final element of the correction process:
    $Correction^{deficit}{}_{\{DG\}} \sim 1 \rightarrow 1$

11. Recognition is achieved by assuming double risk (DR):
    $DR = MV^0{}_{MG} / DV^{\sim 1 \rightarrow 1}{}_{DG} \Rightarrow DV^1{}_{DG} = 1$

    DH3, if Apparent Pref(DG) > Apparent Pref(MG) Secret Pref(MG) > Secret Pref(DG)

    $DG \approx 1 \Rightarrow$ Apparent Path to MG shortened $MV^{deficit}{}_{DG} = MV^1{}_{MG} \times DV^{deficit}{}_{DG}$ $= DV^{\sim 1}{}_{DG} \Rightarrow DP_1 = MV^1 / DV^{\sim 1} \Rightarrow DG \approx 1 \Rightarrow Stability_{archetype} \approx 1 \Rightarrow CC_{DG}$ $= \varnothing \Rightarrow WOCh_{DG} = \varnothing \Rightarrow$ Story focus = Restore $DV_{DG} \sim 1 \rightarrow 1 \Rightarrow$ FtFA $\Rightarrow$ $Correction^{deficit}{}_{\{DG\}} \sim 1 \rightarrow 1 \Rightarrow DR = MV^0{}_{MG} / DV^{\sim 1} \rightarrow 1_{DG} \Rightarrow DV^1{}_{DG} = 1$

If the graph were used to help describe the agency, the *peaks* would correspond to the decision situations:
- DH1, if Pref(MG) > Pref(DG)
- DH2, if Pref(DG) > Pref(MG)
- DH3, if Apparent Pref(DG) > Apparent Pref(MG) ~ Secret Pref(MG) > Secret Pref(DG)

And the *edges* show the outcome of the decisions.

$DH_{1\Sigma}$

DH1, ha Pref(MG) > Pref(DG); DG = Ø → 1
⇒ $DV^{deficit}_{DG} = DV^0_{DG}$ ⇒ Stability$_{archetype}$ = Ø ⇒
$DV^{deficit}_{DG} = DV^0_{DG}$ ⇒ DP$_1$ = MV^1 / DV^0 ⇒
MV = 1 ⇒ CC$_{DG}$ ⇒ Confrontation$^{deficit}_{\{DG\}}$ ⇒
WOCh$_{DG}$ 0 →1 ⇒ Story focus = Restore
MV$_{DG}$ 0 → 1 ⇒ DR

DH2, ha Pref(DG) > Pref(MG); MG = Ø
→1 ⇒ $MV^{deficit}_{MG} = MV^0_{MG}$ ⇒ Stability$_{archetype}$
= Ø ⇒ $MV^{deficit}_{MG} = MV^0_{MG}$ ⇒ DP$_1$ = DV^1 /
MV^0 ⇒ DV = 1 ⇒ CC$_{MG}$ ⇒
Confrontation$^{deficit}_{\{MG\}}$ ⇒ WOCh$_{DG}$ 0 →1 ⇒
Story focus = Restore MV$_{MG}$ 0 → 1 ⇒ DR

DG ≈ 1 ⇒ Apparent Path to MG shortened
$MV^{deficit}_{DG} = MV^1_{MG}$; $DV^{deficit}_{DG} = DV^{~1}_{DG}$ ⇒ DP$_1$ =
MV^1/ DV$^{~1}$ ⇒ DG ≈ 1 ⇒ Stability$_{archetype}$ ≈ 1 ⇒
CC$_{DG}$ = Ø ⇒ WOCh$_{DG}$ = Ø ⇒ Story focus =
Restore DV$_{DG}$ ~1 → 1 ⇒ FtFA ⇒
Correction$^{deficit}_{\{DG\}}$ ~1 → 1 ⇒ DR = MV$^0_{MG}$ /
$DV^{~1-1}_{DG}$ ⇒ DV$^1_{DG}$ = 1

Mathematical modelling of decision situations associated with the second dilemma point

A crucial difference with respect to the first dilemma point is that in the case of the second dilemma point, the protagonist makes a decision not under the influence of external circumstances but under the influence of internal recognition. Moreover, this decision is the act of the moment, i.e. the recognition takes place as a kind of enlightenment in the hero (see *anagnorisis, ekplēkētikon*).

The trigger for the third act is a crisis situation that confronts the protagonist with the experience of destruction, annihilation, who, as a result of the existential and moral collapse he has experienced, instinctively begins to flee (for Kierkegaard and Heidegger's discussion of anxiety and fear, see Kierkegaard 1843; Heidegger 1927). The result of this flight is the trap, which is fulfilled by the captivity. The protagonist can escape from it if and only if he struggles and faces his fears. Then comes the moment of *anagnorisis,* the result of which is the *decision:* he recognises the source of the fear, the need to confront it, in relation

to the motivational and drive values. However, precisely because of the objectified internal appearance of fears, this decision entails a double risk, i.e. the protagonist is subjected to *Value Press – VP*. This means that he becomes aware that he could be morally and existentially destroyed.

This dramaturgical process can be described by a mathematical formula:

Be:

CS — the occurrence of a crisis situation at the beginning of the third act, which triggers the process.

IoF — the *Intensity of Fear* that the protagonist experiences

SoF — the *Source of Fear* that the protagonist carries within himself.

E_M — the extent of moral collapse.

E_E — the extent of existential collapse.

AE — *Attempt to Escape,* which is the protagonist's reaction to fear.

CAP — *Captivity*, which results from the protagonist's attempt to escape.

COM — *Combat* in the process of facing fears.

DR — double risk, closely associated with the Value Pressure (VR); this is the – moment of *anagnorisis* when the hero realises the true source of his fears and is confronted with the possibility of losing everything he holds dear.

DP_1 and DP_2 – the two dilemma points (DP), where DP_1 is the motivational goal and DP_2 is the choice of the drive goal (classical case).

NO — the outcome of the hero's decision, where the $NO_{1-2-3-4}$ narrative outcomes can be realised (see above).

The process expressed with formula

- Crisis situation (CS) → Intensity of the hero's fear (IoF) + Moral collapse (E_M) + Existential collapse (E_E):
  $$CS \Rightarrow IoF + E_M + E_E$$

- Attempted escape (AE) spurred by the intensity of fear (IoF), leading to captivity (CAP) rather than outcome (CAP):
  $$AE(IoF) \Rightarrow CAP$$

- Escape from captivity with struggle (COM) but without renouncing the source of fear (SoF_0):
  $$COM_{CAP} \Rightarrow SoF_0$$

- The moment of *anagnorisis* (DR), the realisation of the source of fears is born: $DR \Rightarrow SoF_1$

- Dilemma points: DP_1, where the protagonist chooses the motivational goal (D_1^{MG}), and D_2, where the drive goal (D_2^{DG}):
$DP_1 \Rightarrow DP_1^{MG}$
$DP_2 \Rightarrow DP_2^{DG}$

- The outcome of the decision is (NO), which can be NO_1, NO_2, NO_3 or NO_4: $NO \Rightarrow \{NO_1\} / \{NO_2 / NO_3 / NO_4\}$

Here we can apply the formula already formulated.

NO_1 – Happy end ending agency formula:
if +1POCP→+1MG and +1TRA→+1DG, then the NOΣ++

This is described by the following formula:

$$\sum_{TRA}^{POCP} [\lim_{+\to+}] \to \sum_{DG}^{MG} [\lim_{+\to+}] = NO [MG, DG \lim_{+\to+}]$$

NO_2 – Tragic ending agency formula:
if −1POCP→−1MG and −1TRA→−1DG, then the NOΣ−−

This is described by the following formula:

$$\sum_{TRA}^{POCP} [\lim_{-\to-}] \to \sum_{DG}^{MG} [\lim_{-\to-}] = NO [MG, DG \lim_{-\to-}]$$

NO_3 – Dark ending agency formula:
if ±1POCP→−1MG and +1TRA→+1DG, then the NOΣ−+

This is described by the following formula:

$$\sum_{TRA}^{POCP} [\lim_{\pm\to-}] \to \sum_{DG}^{MG} [\lim_{-\to+-}] = NO [MG, DG \lim_{-\to+}]$$

***NO_4* – Bittersweet ending agency formula:**
if +1POCP→+1MG and ±1TRA→−1DG, then the $NO\Sigma_{+-}$

This is described by the following formula:

$$\sum_{TRA}^{POCP} [\ \lim_{+\to-}\ ] \to \sum_{DG}^{MG} [\ \lim_{+\to-}\ ] \ = NO\ [MG, DG\ \lim_{+\to-}\ ]$$

If we extract from the above process the DP_2 element—which is identical to the second dilemma point—and assume that the dramaturgical agency is able to exert its strongest effect at this point, we can also describe the formulation of sequentialisation, and thus the development of shadow patterns.

In the second dilemma point in the narrative structure, the *double risk* (see the *value-pressure*, VP, created by the *anagnorisis*) results in the protagonist having to choose between the motivational goal and the drive goal.

This constraint is not a matter of course, since it is possible that the *anagnorisis* does not occur in the hero. Thus, if the protagonist does not recognise the double risk (DR), no decision situation is created, and thus the attempt to close the story does not take place; the storytelling thereby liquidates the story itself as a narrative structure (by its incompleteness it ends the structural functioning of the story). This outcome leads to a state of *Constant Escape* (CA).

If the motivational goal is chosen again, it accumulates the state that produced his fear, i.e. he remains permanently in the state that triggered the fundamental dramatic conflict, and the solution becomes the state of *Constant Escape*. CA leads to a *Pseudo-Lockout* (PLO) in terms of the narrative outcome of the story (NO), i.e. it may give the illusion that the motivational goal has been met (pseudo-motivational goal = MG_n), but this does not necessarily occur. In this case:

- fixing of *the act of confronting fears,* the DR (double risk) *may be omitted;*
- or it may *not be omitted and the protagonist is confronted with the existence of DR (double risk),*
- or the confrontation occurs, but *the risk is not taken* and *he flees again.*

Thus, the double risk (DR) created by the *value press* (VP) generates four possible cases and further subversions:

1. The protagonist does not recognise the DR, so no decision situation is created, the attempt to close the story does not take place; the storytelling thus liquidates the story itself as a narrative structure (by its incompleteness it makes the story's structure endless).

$$VP \Rightarrow DR_0 \Rightarrow \sum_{DG}^{MG} \sim \Rightarrow NO_0 \sim CA$$

2. The protagonist recognises the DR, but is unable to choose the drive goal over the motivational goal, continues to flee, the narrative outcome (NO) of the story results in a pseudo-lockout (PLO).

$$VP \Rightarrow DR_1 \Rightarrow \sum_{DG}^{MG} \Rightarrow MG_{\Pi/0} > DG_0 \Rightarrow NO^{\Pi}_1 \sim PLO \sim CA$$

3.1.1. The protagonist recognises DR and apparently chooses the drive goal over the motivational goal. The result may be that he continues to flee, so that the narrative outcome (NO) of the story results in a pseudo-lockout (PLO).

$$VP \Rightarrow DR_1 \Rightarrow \sum_{DG}^{MG} \Rightarrow DG_{\Pi/1} > MG_0 \Rightarrow NO^{\Pi}_1 \sim PLO \sim CA$$

3.1.2. The protagonist recognises DR and here again apparently chooses the drive goal over the motivational goal. The result here, however, is that this apparentness is broken down by the *act of confrontation* (FtFA), and no lasting state remains. Thus, the narrative outcome of the story (NO) results in a real *lockout* (RLO).

$$VP \Rightarrow DR_1 \Rightarrow \sum_{DG}^{MG} \Rightarrow DG_{\Pi/1} > MG_0 \Rightarrow FtFA \Rightarrow NO_{1\text{-}2\text{-}3\text{-}4} \sim RLO$$

3.2. The protagonist recognises the DR, but is unable to choose the drive goal over the motivational goal, continues to flee, the narrative outcome (NO) of the story results in a pseudo-lockout (PLO).

$$\mathrm{VP} \Rightarrow \mathrm{DR}_1 \Rightarrow \sum_{DG}^{MG} \Rightarrow \mathrm{MG}_{\Pi/0} > \mathrm{DG}_0 \Rightarrow \mathrm{NO}^{\Pi}{}_1 \sim PLO \sim \mathrm{CA}$$

4. The protagonist recognides DR and is able to choose the drive goal over the motivational goal, so the narrative outcome (NO) can occur in four versions.

$$\mathrm{VP} \Rightarrow \mathrm{DR}_1 \Rightarrow \sum_{DG}^{MG} \Rightarrow \mathrm{DG}_1 > \mathrm{MG}_0 \Rightarrow \mathrm{NO}_{1\text{-}2\text{-}3\text{-}4}$$

Significance of the pseudo-lockout

Here it is worth briefly summarising the interpretative framework for the pseudo-lockout of the narrative structure. It is a construction that gives a closed sense to the narrative structure, presenting the apparentness of the story's resolution, and eliminating or annulling, disabling or overriding the challenge of the decision constraint offered by the motivational and drive goals that bring about the protagonist's change. In this way, it fails to resolve the central conflict of the story and, while on the surface it fulfils the receptive expectations, on a deep structural level (i.e. along the value contexts that define the character's world) it leaves them unfulfilled. In other words, in the case of the pseudo-lockout, the problems that are essential to the story and that fundamentally affect the fate of the protagonist remain valid. In the meaning of this approach it is a question under what conditions the pseudo-lockout has a right to exist.

Of course, if there is no real lockout, it will have the impact of a dramaturgical error. That is, the recipient is confronted with the feeling—which they cannot necessarily realise—that the story has ended, but that its message and meaning do not evoke a sense of emotional and intellectual satisfaction (see, e.g., John Dewey's pleasure principle: Dewey 1916, or Richard Lazarus' theory of the frustration of not understanding: Lazarus and Folkman 1984). However, if creative consciousness drives the use of pseudo-lockout, this kind of dissatisfaction,

brought about by the creator's intention, can also result in a delayed closing of the story. Its significance, therefore, lies in the fact that it prolongs the conclusion of the last major unit of the structure, the third act, and fulfils the receptive expectation at a later time (if the delay is indeed a conscious creative intention).

As a consequence, the overall formula is altered as a result of the consciously created presence of the intention to delay, which can be described as follows:

$$1.\ VP \Rightarrow 1.\ DR_1 \Rightarrow \sum_{DG}^{MG} \Rightarrow MG_{\Pi/1} > DG_0 \Rightarrow NO^{\Pi}_1 \Rightarrow [CS \Rightarrow IoF + E_M + E_E \Rightarrow AE(IoF) \Rightarrow$$

$$CAP \Rightarrow COM_{CAP} \Rightarrow SoF_0 < SoF_1] \Rightarrow 2.\ VP \Rightarrow 2.\ DR_1 \Rightarrow \sum_{DG}^{MG} \Rightarrow DG_1 > MG_0 \Rightarrow NO_{1\text{-}2\text{-}3\text{-}4}$$

It should be noted here that there is a fundamental difference between the *pseudo-lockout* and the *cliffhanger*.[21] One important difference is its position within the structure: while the PLO appears as a consequence of the second dilemma point before the confrontation and resolution, the *cliffhanger* is closely linked to the positional appearance of the resolution, moreover, in many cases closes the story as the last scene, or possibly the last image, of the film.

The other important difference is that the *cliffhanger* may contain a second dilemma point that is actually closed, but the solution does not contain the basic position of the drive and the motivation. The open ending *(cliffhanger)* reveals a tension with respect to either the drive state or the motivation state (the resting position of the state is not clear). For the interpretative complexity of the drive state or the motivation state to be established and for the cliffhanger to occur, meaning complexity must prevail. That is, the unfulfillment of the goals associated with the drive or motivation state, or the sense of this unfulfillment, must close the story.[22] It is an essential structural element that this uncertainty

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21 Here we examine the case where the protagonist is confronted with a value press or double risk. Its absence does not create a pseudo-lockout, but reinforces a state of constant flight.

22 A classic example is Peter Collinson's direction *The Italian Job* (1969), in which Troy Kennedy Martin's screenwriting ingenuity closes the film. Here, the characters in the film flee on a bus with the loot they have acquired. As the driver, Big William (Harry Baird), swerves dangerously up a steep mountainside, the vehicle drifts and the bus comes to a stop, balanced on the edge of a huge ravine. At one end of the teetering bus are the thieves, once celebrating their success, now terrified, and at the other is the huge loot—and in between is the protagonist, Charlie Croker (Michael Caine), trying to figure out how to get the loot without killing everyone. The answer is not given and the film ends at this point.

can be created by the structure through the fixation motif representing the drive or motivation (see Cobb's totem in Nolan's film *Inception*[23]).

Summary

The interactivity that can be associated with the reception process of the film in narrative, goal-driven structures is strongly determined by two dilemmas. The fractal nature of the narrative is able to create *shadow patterns* as a function of these dilemmas. The dilemmas can create decision agency, which can be embodied in narrative shadow patterns, thus providing the possibility of *dramaturgical agency*. We can interpret the functioning of the sequentialisations that emerge in this way along the lines of Aristotle's notion of the *Tyche,* according to which *chance* is not merely a form of randomisation, but a determinant of the receptive involvement, which can generate *coherent* or *incoherent* patterns of decision. The mechanism by which these patterns emerge has a stimulating effect on the recipient. The intensity of the stimulation is a function of the elaboration of the decision situations and of the dramaturgical force of the value press, which is associated with the dilemma points and is generated by archetypal values.

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23 Warner Bros. Pictures, 2010.

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