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ENNIO: A DOCUMENTARY REPRESENTATION OF THE COMPOSER'S LIFE AND WORK

Abstract. *This article analyzes the documentary film Ennio, directed by Giuseppe Tornatore and dedicated to the creative work of the Italian composer, conductor, and arranger Ennio Morricone. The article examines the distinctive features of the film at the intersection of biographical, portrait, and musical-film genres, as well as the methods used to reveal the composer's personality on screen and the interaction between interviews, archival materials, editing, musical dramaturgy, and visual composition. The study also analyzes the role of Morricone's creative legacy in the development of world cinema, his individual approach to shaping cinematic images through musical means, and the artistic solutions employed by director Giuseppe Tornatore in presenting the composer's creative process on screen.*

Keywords: *film studies, documentary film, film music, musical dramaturgy, film portrait, editing, interview, audiovisual image, composer, soundtrack.*

ENNIO: BASTAKORNING HAYOTI VA IJODINING HUJJATLI TASVIRI

Annotatsiya. *Mazkur maqolada italiyalik bastakor, dirijyor va aranjirovkachi Ennio Morrikone ijodiga bag'ishlangan Giuseppe Tornatore rejissyorligidagi Ennio hujjatli filmi tahlil qilinadi. Maqolada biografik, portret va musiqiy-film janrlari kesishmasidagi o'ziga xos xususiyatlari, kompozitor shaxsiyatini ekran orqali ochib berish usullari, intervyu, arxiv materiallari, montaj, musiqiy dramaturgiya va vizual kompozitsiyaning o'zaro munosabati o'rganiladi. Shuningdek, Morrikone ijodining*

jahon kinosi taraqqiyotidagi o'rni, uning kino obrazlarini musiqiy vositalar orqali shakllantirishdagi individual uslubi hamda rejissyor Giuseppe Tornatorening kompozitor ijodiy laboratoriyasini ekranlashtirishdagi badiiy yechimlari tahlil qilinadi.

Kalit so'zlar: *kinoshunoslik, hujjatli film, kino musiqasi, musiqiy dramaturgiya, film portret, montaj, intervyu, audiovizual obraz, kompozitor, soundtrack.*

ЭННИО: ДОКУМЕНТАЛЬНОЕ ОТРАЖЕНИЕ ЖИЗНИ И ТВОРЧЕСТВА КОМПОЗИТОРА

Аннотация. *В данной статье анализируется документальный фильм «Ennio» режиссёра Джузеппе Торнаторе, посвящённый творчеству итальянского композитора, дирижёра и аранжировщика Эннио Морриконе. В статье рассматриваются особенности фильма, находящегося на пересечении биографического, портретного и музыкально-кинематографического жанров, исследуются способы экранного раскрытия личности композитора, а также взаимодействие интервью, архивных материалов, монтажа, музыкальной драматургии и визуальной композиции. Кроме того, анализируется роль творчества Морриконе в развитии мирового кинематографа, его индивидуальный стиль формирования экранных образов посредством музыкальных средств, а также художественные решения режиссёра Джузеппе Торнаторе при экранной интерпретации творческой лаборатории композитора.*

Ключевые слова: *киноведение, документальный фильм, музыка кино, музыкальная драматургия, фильм-портрет, монтаж, интервью, аудиовизуальный образ, композитор, саундтрек.*

Biographical and documentary films devoted to the lives of artists, scientists, and other creative figures form a well-established tradition in European cinema. Such works not only illuminate an individual's life path but also interpret, by

cinematic means, that person's creative legacy, worldview, and place in the development of the arts. A documentary does not simply record reality: through the selection of material, its arrangement, and editing, the filmmaker constructs a particular interpretation of reality [5]. For this reason, in documentaries devoted to an artist's personality, the relationship between biographical fact and screen representation becomes the central research problem. Giuseppe Tornatore's documentary *Ennio* (2021) [6] is of particular interest for the study of this problem. The film is devoted to the life and work of Ennio Morricone (1928–2020), one of the most prominent figures in world film music. The film is significant in that its author is not a neutral observer: Tornatore collaborated with Morricone for nearly thirty years, beginning with *Cinema Paradiso* (*Nuovo Cinema Paradiso*, 1988). The film also reveals an inner conflict in the composer's career – the tension between his work as an academic composer and as a film composer. Morricone himself discussed this issue at length [1].

The generic nature of *Ennio* can be explained through the concept of the portrait film. Such a film does not confine itself to recounting the subject's external biography but seeks to reveal his creative thinking through audiovisual means. The dramaturgical center of the film is Morricone's personality: the director presents his protagonist not merely as a famous composer but as a person of complex creative thought. The film's biographical narrative is structured mainly on a chronological principle. The film interprets Morricone's early wish to pursue a different profession, and his father's decision – himself a trumpet player – to steer him toward musical education, as a factor that shaped his subsequent career. The composer studied trumpet and composition at the Santa Cecilia Conservatory in Rome and developed his compositional thinking in the class of Goffredo Petrassi. Having received an academic training, Morricone long regarded writing for film as a secondary occupation. He was also engaged in avant-garde experimentation, including participation in the improvisation group *Nuova Consonanza* [1]. This experience is reflected in the unusual timbres and experimental solutions of his film scores. Thus,

the film presents Morricone's work not merely as a component of the cinematic image but as a complex relationship between academic composition and film music. Interviews occupy a leading place in the film's structure. Combining interviews with archival material is a common documentary technique. In *Ennio*, the protagonist's image is constructed on two levels. The first is Morricone's own voice: his memories, his commentary on his work, and his process of self-reflection. The second consists of the views of directors, musicians, and other artists about him. The interviews do more than convey information: they reveal the composer's creative views, the principles of his collaboration with directors, and the process of scoring particular films. However, treating the second level as an "objective external assessment" calls for caution. The external voices belong mainly to the composer's colleagues and admirers, and they therefore serve a function of recognition rather than critical evaluation. The archival footage – photographs, film excerpts, concert and studio recordings – connects different periods of the composer's life and presents his creative evolution in chronological sequence. In this way, archival material functions not as mere illustration but as a means of visually expressing memory and history.

Editing plays a particularly important role in Tornatore's directorial style. The film opens with everyday footage of Morricone doing physical exercises in his study. In certain episodes, the composer's daily life and working process are intercut with colleagues' remarks describing him as a "genius". The depiction of the environment in which the composer works also contributes to the construction of his image. The abundance of papers, scores, and notes in his room can be read as a visual metaphor for the creative process: the contrast between outward disorder and an inner creative system signifies the complexity of the composer's personality. Musical themes familiar to the viewer are heard anew in the film, as they become linked to the protagonist's creative views and life experience. When an archival interview with the composer, a film episode, and the comments of a contemporary musician are

combined in a single montage sequence, the same musical material acquires new meaning in different historical contexts.

The defining feature of Morricone's work is his use of music not as an external embellishment of a film but as an active element of its dramaturgical system. In the classical Hollywood model, music is largely subordinate to the narrative, intensifies emotion, and does not draw the viewer's attention to itself [3]. In Morricone's work, the functional range of music expands: it reveals character, shapes the sense of space and time, deepens conflict, and expresses psychological states not directly shown in the image. The film shows that, before composing, Morricone studied the screenplay and the director's artistic concept [1]. It is therefore difficult to study his music in isolation from the film's dramaturgy. His collaboration with Sergio Leone is the most striking example of this approach [2]. In *Once Upon a Time in the West* (*C'era una volta il West*, 1968), each of the main characters is assigned a leitmotif of their own [4]. The music does not merely follow the characters' actions but anticipates their inner states. In Brian De Palma's *The Untouchables* (1987), music serves to heighten the intensity of the conflict and to reinforce danger and dramatic tension. The timbral qualities of different instruments amplify the opposition between characters at the audiovisual level. Roland Joffé's *The Mission* (1986) occupies a special place in Morricone's oeuvre. As the documentary shows, the composer initially declined to write the score but later changed his mind. The musical solution combines several layers: the oboe theme that the protagonist plays on screen, the European sacred choral tradition, and indigenous folk music [1]. The collision of these layers expresses the conflict of faiths and cultures at the level of sound. In this respect, *The Mission* demonstrates that film music can be not an "accompaniment" to the image but a force of equal dramaturgical weight.

A vivid example of the Morricone – Tornatore collaboration is *Cinema Paradiso* (1988). In this film, music unites the protagonist's childhood memories, his experiences in the movie theater, and his adult life into a coherent poetic space. In the final episode – the scene in which the frames cut by the censor are screened

– there is no dialogue, and the emotional impact is carried entirely by the music. Here the director's poetics of visual memory merges with the composer's poetics of musical memory. It should also be noted that the film's love theme was written in collaboration with the composer's son, Andrea Morricone. The score for Quentin Tarantino's *The Hateful Eight* (2015) draws on the traditional musical codes of the Western, yet its main function is to create a dark atmosphere, a sense of danger, and psychological tension. For this score, Morricone received the Academy Award for Best Original Score in 2016. It was his only competitive Oscar: he had previously been nominated five times and had received an Honorary Award in 2007.

Thus, Tornatore does not limit himself to talking about Morricone; he also shows the viewer how Morricone's music works on screen. However, there are limits to characterizing the film as a full-fledged "music-and-film study": the relationship between music and image is conveyed mainly through interview commentary and film excerpts, whereas a systematic analysis of the score and its musical structure is absent. The long-standing partnership between Tornatore and Morricone determines the interpretive character of the film. This closeness enabled the director to gain the composer's trust and to record his candid memories and personal reflections. At the same time, it shaped the film's tone: *Ennio* is closer to a homage than to a critical portrait. The composer's creative failures, controversial decisions, and critical views of his work are almost entirely absent from the film. This is typical of the portrait film genre, yet it yields an important methodological conclusion for the researcher: when *Ennio* is used as a source, the information it presents must be checked against the composer's own reflections and against research on the history of film music. The final part of the film focuses on the significance of Morricone's legacy for later generations of musicians. The comments of contemporary artists working in various genres show that his music has not remained merely a part of film history. This is also the film's concluding idea: the composer's legacy is not a completed historical phenomenon but a process that continues through the work of subsequent generations.

In conclusion, *Ennio* is a work of the portrait film genre whose artistic value lies in a directorial approach aimed at revealing the composer's creative thinking rather than presenting a factual account of his life. The interplay of interviews, archival material, film excerpts, and editing creates a multilayered portrait of Morricone's personality. The protagonist's image is constructed on two levels: his own voice and the views of his colleagues. The examples of *Once Upon a Time in the West*, *The Untouchables*, *The Mission*, *Cinema Paradiso*, and *The Hateful Eight* show that Morricone expanded the traditional functions of film music and integrated it organically into the film's system of images and dramaturgical structure. The long-standing creative closeness between director and composer provided the film with unique material but also tilted its interpretation toward homage. For this reason, the film should be approached critically as a source and examined alongside other research. Overall, *Ennio* can be regarded as an important source for the study of film music history, of the screen representation of an artist's personality in documentary film, and of the relationship between music and image.

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