

## BACHELORARBEIT

Cinematographical techniques for depicting solitude in the film

*The Man of the Crowd*

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## Chapter 1 – Introduction

*„We are all so much together, but we are all dying of loneliness.“ (Albert Schweitzer)*

The themes of urban loneliness and isolation have been explored in many films throughout the years. Some notable examples are Michelangelo Antonioni's *THE PASSENGER* (1975), Martin Scorsese's *TAXI DRIVER* (1976), Wong Kar-wai's *IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE* (2000), Sofia Coppola's *LOST IN TRANSLATION* (2003) or, more recently, Spike Jonze's *HER* (2013).

Despite the different ages, locations, nationalities and styles of the directors, their common denominator is the inner and outer world of the characters: the protagonists reside in big cities with large populations, they are part of a crowd in their daily activities, and still they find themselves emotionally alone. In expressing their feelings, they resort to verbal or body language. But can emotions be transmitted in other ways, without verbalising them? In the absence of these two forms of language on the side of the characters, how could the viewers empathize with them?

This is the case in the Brazilian film *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* (orig. *O HOMEM DAS MULTIDÕES*) (2013) by Marcelo Gomes and Cao Guimarães, which is the object of this paper. This film is part of *THE TRILOGY ON SOLITUDE* initiated by Cao Guimarães in 2004 with *THE SOUL OF THE BONE*, followed by *DRIFTER* in 2006. As the title denotes, the experience of loneliness lies at the heart of these three films, constituting a prism through which reality is felt and perceived. The fiction film *THE SOUL OF THE BONE* tells the story of a hermit isolated in time and space, while the documentary *DRIFTER* follows the lives of constantly 'displaced' people. The recurring themes of loneliness and social alienation pervade *THE MAN OF THE CROWD*, inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's homonymous short story, about a man's need to be part of a crowd, but without relating to the people. The two directors loosely adapted this story for the screen and set the drama of solitude in the modern urban society. Thus, the fiction film *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* follows two coworkers, Juvenal and Margo, leading solitary lives in the heart of the Brazilian metropolis Belo Horizonte. But their inanimated existences are shaken from the moment Margo initiates contact by asking Juvenal to be witness at her civil ceremony. This marks the beginning of a clumsy, yet emotional interaction of two lonely people. It is noteworthy that at no point in the narrative do the two protagonists verbally express their feeling of loneliness, to themselves or to each other. Translating the physical and emotional loneliness into a cinematic experience sets a creative

challenge. Nevertheless, this can be achieved with specific cinematographical techniques.

The aim of this paper is thus to show how a combination of various cinematographical techniques can express certain emotions. The choice of the film *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* was motivated by its obvious originality in terms of form, which permits the exploration of this thesis.

## **Chapter 2 – Method**

In arguing that the aesthetics is what renders this film unique, I take the neoformalist approach formulated by Kristin Thompson (Thompson 1981) and further developed with David Bordwell. (Bordwell/Thompson 2012) The perceptual-cognitive model of this neoformalist film theory focuses on the technical aspects of a film, its constructions and effects on the viewers. (Bordwell/Thompson 2012). Thompson defines the „material elements of cinema“ as „those components that are equivalent to words in literature; that is, they may be combined to serve practical or non-practical functions“. (Thompson 1981:26) These elements include the mise-en-scène, sound, camera, frame, editing and visual effects. (Thompson 1981:26).

In this paper I will focus on six techniques which depict the most vivid emotion in the film, namely solitude:

- format
- framing (narrow and in corners)
- affect images
- length of takes
- reflections
- extreme over-the-shoulder shots.

These are the most prominent and relevant for the interpretation of the film. A chapter is dedicated to each technique, in the order mentioned above, in which I will explain how different visual images communicate meaning. The goal is to show that a narrative in film is made up not only by the characters' actions, but also by technical elements which add up meaning to the plot. Consequently, the ultimate effect of the film results from the interplay between the storyline and cinematographical techniques. In conclusion, I will show that in the case of *THE MAN OF THE CROWD*, the cinematography is at least just as expressive as the story.

## Chapter 3 – Film analysis

### 3.1. Format

„Even before the image appears, the frame is invested with meaning.“ (Monaco 2009:213)

One of the most significant and immediately recognizable formal features of *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* is the aspect ratio: the square format of 3x3, with rounded corners, which reminds of the cinemascope films. As the director of photography Ivo Lopes Araújo justifies, „in order to create the impression of a faceless human mob, we decided to work in a less panoramic format and ended up radicalizing this option when we chose the square format (3 x 3 or 1 x 1). We wanted to see only our character among all those people.“<sup>1</sup> This aspect ratio allows minimum space for multiple characters. Indeed, the claustrophobic effect is present from the very first scenes. It gives the impression of a closed, limited universe, in which the characters have little freedom to move, like lions in a cage, walking to and fro but never really able to go past the (self-)imposed borders.

According to Cirlot's *Dictionary of Symbols*, „the square, as the expression of quaternity, is a symbol of the combination and regulation of four different elements. [...] Psychologically, its form gives the impression of firmness and stability, and this explains its frequent use in symbols of organization and construction“ (Cirlot 2013:307). These interpretations apply perfectly to the personality types of Margo and Juvenal, whose solitary lives are dominated by the characteristics mentioned above. Furthermore, the square can also be transposed into the four walls of a room, which is the space where both protagonists spend almost their entire time.

### 3.2. Framing

„The framing of a film shot contains, limits, and directs the point of view within the borders of the rectangular frame“ (Corrigan/White 2004:78). Through camera movements, the composition of the image is reframed and the borders of the frame are repositioned, resulting in a new shot. James Monaco notes that „because we read the shot, we are actively involved with it. [...] All the codes that operate within the frame, without regard to the chronological axis of film, are shared with the other pictorial arts“ (Monaco 2009:205). These codes refer to the rules of composition, universally recognized. Historically, such guidelines for composing visual images that have an appealing effect on the human eye have first been designed for

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ohomemdasmultidoes.com.br/en/testimonial-of-the-director-of-photography-ivo-lopes-araujo/>

painting. Later, they have been extrapolated to the other visual arts, such as still photography and film. The basic and most important rule of composition is the so-called **rule of thirds**, which is

*„a flexible compositional 'rule' taught as part of painting and photographic practice which may be extended to the framing of shots in filmmaking. Its aim is to indicate where significant elements may be placed in the frame in order to attract the viewer's attention, and also to produce a well composed–visually coherent and harmonious–image. [...] The rule of thirds ordains that the frame be divided into thirds both vertically and horizontally: if lines were drawn to mark these thirds they would look like the grid used to play noughts and crosses, but with flatter rectangular spaces. The intersections of the four gridlines represent the filmed closeups.“ (Kuhn/Westwell 2012:355)*

However, deviations from this rule are possible. They do not necessarily reflect ignorance, if the artist aims at achieving a special effect. Furthermore, „framing correlates with the camera's distance from its subject“ (Corrigan/White 2004:78). From here, „two aspects of the framed image are most important: the limitations that the frame imposes, and the composition of the image within the frame (and without necessary regard to it)“ (Monaco 2009:206). That means that framing works with mise-en-scène to determine the overall composition of the image. Monaco notes several meanings of composition:

*„the bottom is more important than the top, left comes before right, the bottom is stable, the top unstable; diagonals from bottom left to top right go up from stability to instability. Horizontals will also be given more weight than verticals: confronted with horizontal and vertical lines of equal length, we tend to read the horizontal as longer, a phenomenon emphasized by the dimensions of the frame.“ (Monaco 2009:213)*

Moreover, framing is „the most obvious way to show a character's emotional state. [...] Conventions have been developed over the century that cinematography has existed to show a variety of emotional effects“ (Corrigan 2004:79). James Monaco explains further that „the way in which a person is framed in that shot has a specific meaning, (for example, if the camera holds a person in the frame but that person is at one extreme or other of the frame, this could suggest a sense of imprisonment)“ (Monaco 2009:214). I would like to highlight this

last aspect, because it is widely used in *THE MAN OF THE CROWD*. In several scenes, the two protagonists are either framed in a narrow space in the overall image, or in one of the lower corners of the image. Based on the explanation of James Monaco, they are thus „imprisoned“. I find this explanation valid because it resonated with the general theme of the film and the emotional state of both characters. Below I will analyze three shots from the compositional point of view, with the aim of showing and explaining the sense of imprisonment or limitation transmitted through means of framing.

### **3.2.1 Narrow framing**

Juvenal is the first one to be framed in a narrow space, from the very beginning of the film. The (medium) long shot at 2'34" (Figure 1) shows him standing on a balcony. The first observation is that the rule of thirds is broken: the camera is placed at midlength between two balconies, facing a building that takes up two thirds of the image. The massive background is completed with a narrow „free“ portion, on the far right margin, which is the side of the balcony where Juvenal is standing. The positioning is not random, but has a major significance. On one hand, the heavy structure (the opposite balcony and the building in the background) presses Juvenal to the margins. On the other hand, the fact that the sky is only visible above his balcony may suggest the possibility of an escape from this tight space, an liberation.

The same composition is applied regarding Margo, in the scene starting at 50'33" (Figure 2). Here, the camera films in mirror and captures a full body shot of her as she is getting ready to go for work, as well as a part of another room. As in the previous example, the image is split in two planes, with the massive structure (in this case, a wall and a wardrobe) filling up two thirds of the frame, „pushing“ Margo to the right margin. This kind of framing gives a claustrophobic feeling and may imply that Margo is confined (in)voluntarily in her home.

### **3.2.2. Framing in corners**

In several instances, Margo and Juvenal are framed in the corner of the image, individually, with the same effect as in the examples discussed above. However, framing the characters in a bottom corner is also employed in scenes which involve both of them. For example, in the scene from 1h03'36" to 1h05'27" (Figure 3). Margo and Juvenal are having lunch together. The table is positioned in the bottom right corner of the frame. In this case, the composition could mean 1) that they share the sensation of imprisonment or of being at the margins of the environment, or that 2) this feeling persists even when they are together or in the company of



other people.

To conclude, the image composition is invested with meaning. Positioning the objects/persons in certain points/parts of the frame, influences the message of the scene/shot. In order to give the impression of limitation or imprisonment, the object of reference is usually framed either at the extreme margin, or in the lower corner of the frame. As I have shown above, these two compositions are used regularly in *THE MAN OF THE CROWD*, as part of the cinematographical techniques meant to express the state of being of Margo and Juvenal.

### **3.3. Affect images**

Deleuze notes that a scene (the moving image) is composed of three types image: action, perception and affect image. In the first case, the camera follows the action and the movements of the characters, principally in medium shots. In the second, perception images make use of the subjective point of view (subjective camera) to recreate the perspective of a character, framing in a long shot. Finally, the affect image represents the emotions of the characters, typically by taking close shots of their facial expressions or body language. (Faulstich 2008:85)

Although all three images are compounded in a scene, one of them is usually dominant throughout the film. This depends on the intention of the film, to express mainly either action or emotion. I will show that in *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* the affect images are dominant.

In total there are 24 affect images, of which 11 of Juvenal and 13 of Margo. As mentioned above, the function of the close shot is to show the emotions of a character. Faulstich considers it the „genuine means of expression of the film“. Further, he notes that the close shot detaches the object from its spatial context, isolates it, redirects the viewer's attention from the outer events towards the inner processes; it requires absolute intimacy and economy of the facial expression; in the close shot, the inner drama of the most profound emotional moments reveals itself: the microdynamics.<sup>2</sup>

Below I will analyze two of the most poignant affect images in this film, one of Margo and one of Juvenal.

A remarkable close shot of Juvenal is to be seen at 56'11" (Figure 13). This shot taken from

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<sup>2</sup> Personal translation. Original: „[...] löst ihren Gegenstand aus dem räumlichen Zusammenhang der Szene heraus, isoliert ihn, lenkt die Aufmerksamkeit des Zuschauers weg vom äußeren Geschehen auf die inneren Vorgänge. Fordert äußerste Natürlichkeit und Sparsamkeit des mimischen Ausdrucks. In der Großaufnahme offenbare sich das innere Drama verborgener, feinsten seelischer Momente: die Mikrokinematik.“ (Faulstich 2008:83)

profile captures Juvenal resting his forehead on a tennis ball on the table in his apartment. „I am tired“, he says twice in this scene. However, even without expressing it, exhaustion is obvious from his facial expression and can easily be read on his face, thanks to the proximity of the camera.

Regarding Margo, her facial expressions are captured in close-shots several times throughout the film. A wonderful example appears at 1h06'13", when she is watching Juvenal on a supervising camera at work, with teardrops in her eyes. (Figure 14)

It is also noteworthy that the film is shot from the normal perspective, which influences the viewers' perception of the persons on screen.

*„From a psychological perspective, with a horizontal camera angle—when the camera is at zero degrees and front on to the character being filmed—it is easier for the audience to enter the character's perspective. From this angle the audience can immerse themselves in that person and perceive information from the first-person perspective, identifying with the character. “ (Berry/Lu 2005:141-142)*

From here, two observations can be made. In the first place, the fact that THE MAN OF THE CROWD is rich in close shots means that the accent is put on emotion, on „inner“, not „outer“ action. Secondly, most of the close shots are displayed for several seconds, as a way of insisting on the feelings of the protagonists. Combined, the frequency and the length of the affect images works upon the viewers' perception of the film, by giving them time to figure out the feelings of Margo and Juvenal, in order to empathize with them.

### **3.4. Length of takes**

The length of takes is relevant for understanding the film, since it sets the rhythm of the action. Short takes are achieved through more cuts and are employed for dynamic actions, to set a fast pace. In contrast, a long take is a continuous shot which lasts longer than the usual pace of films. (Pramaggiore/Wallis 2005:165) Pramaggiore and Wallis note that

*„[s]cholars have studied the average shot length in films and discovered that the average shot in contemporary films is shorter than the average shot in older films. [...] But recent studies have shown that, with the advent of new digital editing devices, shots are increasingly becoming shorter. According to film scholar Michael Brandt, 'films cut traditionally [have] an average shot length of 5.15 seconds, compared to*

*4.75 seconds for the electronically cut films,' a difference of almost 10%.“  
(Pramaggiore/Wallis 2005:165)*

As a comparison, the average shot length (ASL) in *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* is 28.43 seconds (see Appendix 1)<sup>3</sup>. This significant difference indicates various effects on the viewers. The intentional decision of the director/editor to have unusually long takes is motivated by the emotions reactions he/she aims to trigger in the viewers. “[L]ong takes tend to slow down the pace of a scene, while short takes quicken pace and intensity. [...] Action scenes tend to rely on very short takes to convey excitement, while romantic scenes in the same movie unfold in longer takes at a more relaxed pace.” (Pramaggiore/Wallis 2005:165) Since the theme of *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* is solitude, associated with immobility or slowness, the long takes are a rational choice for conveying this idea.

However, what makes the length of takes relevant for the analysis of portrayal of loneliness is not necessarily the duration of the scenes, but the actions they represent, or rather the lack thereof. Throughout the film nothing really „happens“, in the sense of dynamic actions or dialogues. The tension accumulates in silence, the characters act unhurriedly and the the story progresses at a slow pace. Even the climax (Margo's wedding) is represented in a succinct, slow manner.

The long takes can be divided in two categories: action images and affect images. As it can be seen on the graph, in this film there are more affect scenes than action scenes, but the few action images are significantly longer. In the following sections, I will analyze four representative examples of long action scenes and long affect scenes.

### **3.4.1. Long action scenes**

By long action images I refer to scenes that show dynamic movements and last more than 20 seconds. The longest take in *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* lasts 321 seconds (5 minutes and 21 seconds) and occurs in the first half of the film, from 39'56" until 45'17" (Figure 4). It shows the two protagonists in Juvenal's apartment, after having bought a suit to wear at Margo's wedding. Both are visibly uncomfortable and barely exchange a few words, unable to engage even in a small talk. The awkward silence lasts for 58 seconds. The camera is placed at eye-level by a wall, at midlength of the room, facing the balcony. In static position, it captures a medium long shot of the room, then pans from left to right and left again. In this way, it offers

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<sup>3</sup> Method: The total length of the film (76.78 minutes = 4607 seconds) was divided by the numberr of scenes. and the number of scenes (162).

a panoramic view of the room and it follows the movements of Juvenal and Margo, before they sit down on the couch. Technically, „a pan moves the frame from side to side without changing the position or axis of the camera. In other words, the camera rotates, as if a character were turning his or her head.“ (Corrigan/White 2004:91). Figuratively, the pan can be compared to the up-and-down pacing of a person in moments of nervousity or stress. In this case, panning reflects the unexpressed/inner malaise of Juvenal and Margo, who act „like lions in a cage“.

The third longest scene lasts from 29'02" to 33'25" and sums 163 seconds (Figure 5). I consider this a crucial scene in the film, because it is a turning point in the narrative. This is the scene in which Margo asks Juvenal to be the witness at her ceremony, while they are having lunch together at a shopping mall. Surprised at her proposal, but unsurprisingly, Juvenal declines, on the grounds that this role is not for him. From this point, the relation between Margo and Juvenal contours. Her proposal triggers a change in the routines of both characters, as it forces them to get out of their shells and interact with the world around. From the technical point of view, the dynamics and implications of their conversation are skillfully captured, firstly by prolonging the scene, and secondly by employing a tracking shot. I will first explain the latter aspect, as it dictates the length of the scene. „A tracking shot changes the position of the point of view by moving forward or backward or around the subject, usually on tracks that have been constructed in advance“ (Corrigan/White 2004:91). So the camera on wheels physically moves towards the subject, usually going from a medium close-up to a tighter close-up smoothly. This scene begins with a medium shot of Juvenal, sitting at a table. Slowly, the camera starts moving counter-clockwise around him, passes behind him and captures an over-the-shoulder shot of Margo. Up to this point, Margo has been telling Juvenal about her forthcoming wedding, and as she is framed in a medium shot, she makes the proposal. In this moment, the camera hold on for a couple of seconds, then starts rotating clockwise, so it changes the direction and distances itself from the subject. „Because these assorted movements and their various combinations have such an important effect on the relationship between the subject and the camera (and therefore the viewer), camera movement has great significance as a determinant of the meaning of film“ (Monaco 2009:108).

The camera's speed of movement has a connotative meaning as well. „The movement is normally quite fluid [...] and the tracking can be either fast or slow. Depending on the speed, this shot has different connotations, eg: like a dream or trance if excessively slow; bewildering and frightening if excessively frenetic“ (Hayward 2013:395). The first case

applies to the scenes of *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* which, extended for minutes, create a dreamy, introspective atmosphere around the characters. The length of this scene is also meant to insist on the action being displayed.

From the examples above and the graph in the appendix it is noticeable that the longest scenes are taken in Juvenal's apartment (with the exception of the second example discussed above), a fact not without meaning. It gives the impression that home is the place where Juvenal spends most of his time. However, it can also mean that the time spent there passes more slowly than outside the house, it is a time of introspection and moreover, richer in interactions (the longest scenes in the apartment include both Margo and Juvenal).

### **3.4.2. Long affect scenes**

As I have shown in the previous chapter, the film abounds in affect images, in the detriment of action and perception images. By affect scenes I refer to the scenes which show Margo and/or Juvenal sitting or standing for more than 10 seconds. They are most of the time straight-faced and seem to be in a lethargic or contemplative state. The length of takes reflects and emphasizes their mood. It can be said that these scenes are a kind of video portraits displayed with the aim of giving time to the viewers to get in the atmosphere of the film characters. For example, the scene beginning at 1h07'18" shows a medium shot of Margo at the hairdresser, staring blankly (Figure 6). From this point of view, it seems as if she were looking the viewer in the eyes. Because her facial expression is hold on screen for 12 seconds, it becomes intimidating and uncomfortable. Only from the following scene it becomes clear that she is actually looking at a screen.

Another illustrative example is to be seen at 1h08'16" (Figure 7). A medium shot from profile captures Margo and her father sitting face-to-face, looking each other in the eyes for 32 seconds. In this time, the expressions on their faces are visibly changing, and a faint smile comes on their faces.

To sum up, the length of takes is an indicator of the atmosphere and emotional state of the characters in a film. *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* is composed of unusually long scenes, in reference to the average length of take of Hollywood films. Consequently, this sets a very slow pace of action, which harmonizes with the theme of solitude. The result is a slow, yet engaging film about a certain state of being.

### 3.5. Reflections

Another major technique employed in this film, and perhaps the most original, is the cinematographic use of reflections from windows and filming through windows. In this way, one shot displays both the character (his/her emotions/reactions/actions) and the environment/context in the background. Thus, this technique serves primarily a practical function, in that it allows to englobe a wide visual field, despite the restraint frame. Nevertheless, the technique of reflections can be understood on a metaphorical level.

The first explanation for the use of reflections is offered by Ivo Lopes Araújo, the director of photography of THE MAN OF THE CROWD. He justifies this choice with the intention of establishing a relation between Juvenal and the city at night:

*„How to work the waiting and the emptiness? How to create the presence of the distant city, asleep? This relationship of distance and presence of the city inside Juvenal’s house was very well drawn by Marcos Pedroso (art director) when he chose a place full of glass windows, which allowed us to have the visual presence of the city even in the most intimate moments of our character.“<sup>4</sup>*

Below I propose three more interpretations of reflections as keys to understanding/deciphering the minds and souls of the two protagonists.

– To begin with, windows, glasses and mirrors serve as **fragile objects**, that can easily break, if not handled carefully or if even light physical force is inflicted upon them. In this case, it can be said that the windows reflect (both literally and figuratively speaking) the fragility and vulnerability of Margo and Juvenal.

– Secondly, the window serves as a **protective wall** from the outside world. Margo and Juvenal build their glass walls on grounds of self-defense. This kind of „glass wall“ allows them to see through, so to be connected only visually to the outside world, but does not enable them to interact with it. But the wall extends and becomes their shelter, like a glass shell that they carry around. Thus, they become „people who live in glass houses“, an idiom that describes best the clearly introvert personalities of Margo and Juvenal. For example, the shot at 1h24'56" (Figure 8) brings together and at the same time separates Margo and Juvenal in the same frame, by means of reflection on a window. The camera is placed behind the

4 Ivo Lopes Araújo, Director of Photography <http://www.ohomemdasmultidoes.com.br/en/testimonial-of-the-director-of-photography-ivo-lopes-araujo/>

window of Juvenal's bedroom, capturing the image of Margo standing in the kitchen, as well as the reflection of Juvenal, who is the bedroom, on the window. This particular shot represents artistically the invisible, protective wall that the two characters try to keep between them and the rest of the world.

– Perhaps the most immediate interpretation of the reflection technique is that it suggests **two levels of reality**. On one hand, the outer world, the people, the crowd, on the other hand, the inner world of Margo and Juvenal, their personality, with their feelings and emotions. Even though these two levels can be overlaid, they don't merge, remaining two disparate „realities“. This aspect is more accentuated concerning Margo. In several scenes, her image is captured not only reflected on windows, but also reflected on the laptop screen. Being surrounded by, and surrounding herself with screens (at work and at home), she encloses herself in a reflected, false reality. She sees the reflection of the world, but does not live in it. Windows, like any other screen around her, offer her a virtual reality. An illustrative scene beginning at 27'02" shows Margo walking in the city and stopping at some point to take pictures with her mobile phone (27'39"). At 27'14" she is filmed through a shop window (Figure 9). This is an illustrative shot for explaining the different levels of reality in film, because the image is structured on three layers: 1) the objects in the shop, inside the window pane, 2) the physical background, the image of the street with people, including Margo, and 3) the reflected image on the window, of the world behind the camera.

In conclusion, the technique of reflections employed in *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* has both practical, and symbolical uses. Furthermore, it adds up to the originality of the film. It is a skillful option for depicting fragility, self-defense and different levels of reality.

### **3.6. Extreme over-the-shoulder shots**

As a technique of framing, an over-the-shoulder shot is a shot of a person or an object taken from the perspective (or camera angle) of the shoulder of another person, so the back of the shoulder and head of the person serve as (one of) the frames of the person/object that the camera is pointing at. Usually, over-the-shoulder shots are employed in dialogues between two characters, as part of the shot-reverse-shot technique.

In extreme over-the-shoulder shots, the shoulder and head (or the bust) of one person takes up the majority of the frame, leaving a narrow space for the image of the person/object that the camera is pointing at, so that the person/object is enclosed or cramped at the margins of the frame. Figuratively, this way of framing evokes imprisonment, constraint, limitation,

stiffness. Throughout the film *THE MAN OF THE CROWD*, this method is employed several times with the intention of expressing the feelings mentioned above. In the following, I will analyze two shots which I consider most representative for the use of this technique.

Firstly, Margo expresses verbally her hostility and fear of crowds at 38'55" when she says to Juvenal: „It's really crowded in here. It freaks me out.“ However, her emotions are visible later in the film, in the scene where she does not get in the subway because it is too crowded. (51'57"–52'35") The camera operator is inside the subway, placed in front of the doors, filming people getting in and out at one station. Above the shoulders and between the heads of the passengers, the camera focuses on Margo, as she is standing outside in front of the open subway doors. In this shot, she is „bordered“ by the lines of the subway doors, as well as by the people passing her by. Clearly, her facial expression and body language denote anxiety. But the choice of an over-the-shoulder shot and framing emphasizes her feelings, illustrating her angst of being among people (Figure 10).

Concerning Juvenal, his loneliness takes a different form than Margo's. Unlike her, he actually enjoys being in crowded places and mingling with people, yet not interacting with them. It is noticeable that Juvenal is presented in two different stances in relation to crowds: either as part of it, or as an outsider. Below I will exemplify both instances.

For the first case, Juvenal is shown, from the beginning of the film, on different occasions, among people: walking on a busy street, standing on a bench in a crowded market, or going up and down the moving stairs. All these instances are taken in long shots, which „place[s] considerable distance between the camera and the scene, object, or person, allowing the latter to remain recognizable, but to now be defined by the large space and background it is a part of.“ (Corrigan/White 2004:86) Indeed, the point is to represent Juvenal as a drop in a homogeneous mass. Most representative is the long shot at 9'36" (Figure 11), in which a group of people, including Juvenal, is watching a street artist. The spectators fill up the frame, but the intention was „to see only our character among all those people. So we restricted the frame laterally, as well as the field of depth, by using filters to open the diaphragm and telephoto lens.“<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the filmmakers opted for a shallow focus, in which „only a narrow range of the field is focused, but here too the choice of a depth of field indicates what is significant in an image.“ (Corrigan/White 2004/89) As a result of skillfully combining these technical settings, Juvenal is distinguishable among all the other people, while still being anchored in the crowd.

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5 Ivo Lopes Araújo <http://www.ohomemdasmultidoes.com.br/en/testimonial-of-the-director-of-photography-ivo-lopes-araujo/>



Secondly, Juvenal is represented as an outsider. He finds himself in this position at Margo's wedding, when the guests around him embrace and kiss each other, while he is standing alone (Figure 12). This scene (1h15'16"-1h16'17") is filmed in a medium shot and it is noteworthy that „melodramatic or romantic films about personal relationships often feature a predominance of medium close-ups and medium shots to capture the emotional expressions of the characters“ (Corrigan/White 2004:87). Moreover, the camera films over the shoulders of people moving around and passing in front of the camera, at times even blocking completely the point of view. Because he does not know anyone, Juvenal is just observing the people, reserved. The movement in front the camera gives the impression that Juvenal is covered by the others. In this outsider posture, he resembles Margo, as discussed in the example above. So far I have analyzed the technical aspects of the over-the-shoulder shot. Now I will discuss the psychological implications of this technique on the viewers, namely how it manipulates their perception of the film characters. According to Chris Berry and Feii Lu:

*„[...]if the character is in the frame of the point-of-view shot [...] the audience will find it harder to project themselves into the scene and empathize. Instead of taking up the position of the character, they are more likely to develop sympathy for the character.“ (Berry/Lu 2005:142)*

And indeed, feelings of compassion or sympathy are likely to arise, because when the over-the-shoulder shot is employed, the viewers identify themselves with the people in the crowd, out of focus, over whose shoulders they catch a glimpse of the solitary Juvenal and Margo. To sum up, the technique of the over-the-shoulder shot is employed for both protagonists throughout the narrative, so they are both invested with similar feelings: anxiety, isolation, being trapped or limited in actions. Whereas Margo is always shown as an outsider, Juvenal both blends in and stands out from the crowd. Moreover, this technique influences the relation established between the viewers and the film characters. The explanations accompanied by examples above prove that the extreme over-the-shoulder shot is employed constantly in THE MAN OF THE CROWD, not as much for technical reasons, but rather for its aesthetic and psychological implications.

## Chapter 4 – Conclusion

This paper has sought to outline how emotions such as loneliness, solitude and anxiety are visually expressed through cinematographical techniques. By taking the neoformalist approach, I have selected six techniques which convey and enhance these emotions: format, framing, length of takes, reflections, extreme over-the-shoulder shots and affect images. Each of these methods is employed with a concrete intention, to suggest a certain feeling or establish a relationship between the characters. From the analysis of these aspects it has resulted that even the most complex and subtle feelings can be expressed using exclusively visual means. Thus, „[f]ilm [...] is a tool that can be applied to time in the same ways that the telescope and the microscope are applied to space, revealing natural phenomena that are invisible to the human eye“ (Monaco 2009:105). This proves that the language of cinema is at least as expressive as the verbal language, if not even more.

From this film analysis it can be said that the filmmakers of *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* are proficient in the visual language, in that they manage to portay emotions, as well as abstract concepts (time, waiting, emptiness, soul) and concretizing them on screen.

In conclusion, the conglomeration of formal aspects, skillfully employed by Guimarães and Gomes, together with the artistic team, is what renders *THE MAN OF THE CROWD* unique.

## Appendix

Scene nr.	Minute in film	Length of take (in seconds)	Juvenal	Margo	Affect image (close shot)	Extreme over-the-shoulder shot	Filming in/through a glass surface
1 (starts at 1'23")	2.17	53	x		x		
2	2.34	16	x				
3	3.21	46	x				
4	3.40	18	x				
5	5.15	95	x				
6	5.38	23	x		x		
7	5.47	9					
8	6.50	57	x		x		
9	7.07	17	x				
10	8.36	89	x				
11	9.31	55	x				
12	10.02	31	x			x	
13	10.33	31	x			x	
14	11.19	46	x				
15	11.53	32	x				
16	12.35	43	x				
17	12.54	19	x				
18	13.23	29	x				
19	14.06	43	x				
20	14.29	23	x				
21	15.08	39	x				
22	15.26	18	x				
23	15.55	29	x				
24	17.26	91	x				
25	18.09	43	x				
26	18.33	24	x		x		
27	18.58	25	x				
28	19.23	25	x				
29	19.53	30	x				
30	20.06	13		x			
31	20.20	14	x		x		
32	21.43	83		x	x		
33	21.59	16	x		x		

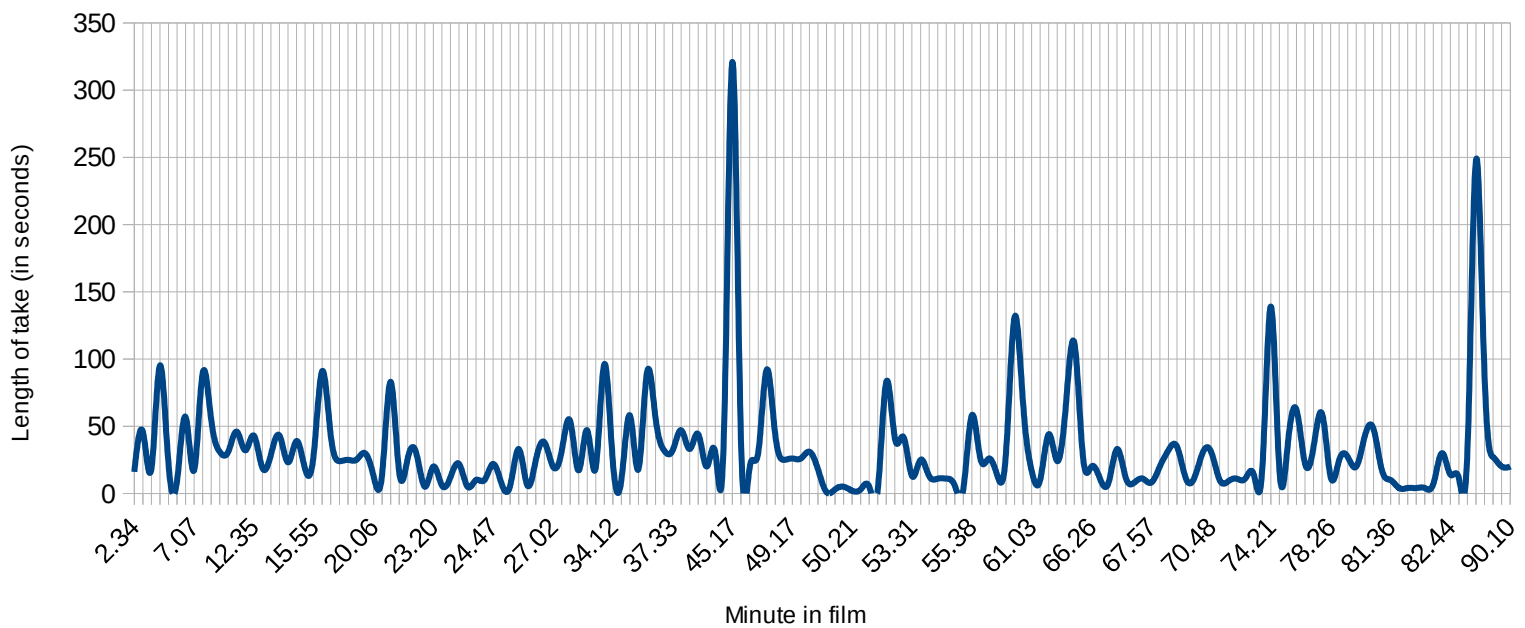
34	22.25	26		x			
35	22.55	30		x			
36	23.00	5		x			
37	23.20	20					
38	23.26	6		x			
39	23.38	12					
40	24.00	22		x			
41	24.05	5					
42	24.15	10					
43	24.25	10		x			
44	24.47	22					
45	24.54	7		x			
46	25.00	6		x			
47	25.33	33		x	x		
48	25.39	6					
49	26.04	25		x			
50	26.42	38					
51	27.02	20					
52	27.33	31		x			
53	27.57	54		x			
54	28.10	17		x	x		
55	28.18	47		x	x		
56	29.02	19		x			
57	33.24	96		x	x		
58	34.12	24	x				
59	34.29	10	x				
60	35.05	58	x				
61	36.00	18	x				
62	36.24	90	x				
63	36.46	56	x				
64	37.14	32	x				
65	37.33	32	x				
66	38.26	47	x				
67	38.36	33		x			
68	39.03	44	x	x			
69	39.20	20	x	x			
70	39.36	30	x		x		
71	39.56	44	x	x			
72	45.17	321	x	x			
73	46.08	40					

74	46.52	19	x				
75	48.15	30	x				
76	48.32	92	x				
77	48.46	44	x				
78	48.55	25	x				
79	49.17	26		x			
80	49.44	26		x			
81	49.52	31		x	x		
82	50.10	18		x			
83	50.11	1		x			
84	50.14	3		x			
85	50.19	5		x			
86	50.21	2		x			
87	50.24	3		x	x		
88	50.29	5		x			
89	50.32	3		x	x		
90	51.55	83		x			
91	52.36	41		x		x	
92	53.18	42	x				
93	53.31	13	x				
94	53.56	25	x				
95	54.09	13					
96	54.20	11	x				
97	54.31	11	x				
98	54.37	6	x				
99	54.40	3	x				
100	55.38	58	x				
101	56.04	26	x				
102	56.30	26	x		x		
103	56.43	13	x				x
104	57.17	30	x				
105	59.29	131	x	x			
106	60.46	67	x				
107	61.03	17					
108	61.13	10	x		x		
109	61.57	44	x				
110	62.21	24	x				
111	63.36	65	x	x			
112	65.28	112	x	x			
113	66.06	28		x			

114	66.26	20		x	x		
115	66.37	11		x	x		x
116	66.45	8		x	x		x
117	67.18	33		x			
118	67.30	12		x			
119	67.38	8		x			
120	67.49	11					
121	67.57	8		x			
122	68.17	20		x			
123	68.49	32		x			
124	69.24	35					
125	69.36	12	x				
126	69.47	11	x				
127	70.17	30	x		x		
128	70.48	31	x	x	x		
129	70.58	10					
130	71.07	9					
131	71.18	11					
132	71.29	11	x		x		
133	71.43	14	x				
134	72.02	19	x				
135	74.21	139	x				
136	74.38	17	x		x		
137	75.16	38	x				
138	76.18	62	x			x	
139	76.40	22	x	x			
140	77.15	35	x				
141	78.14	59	x				
142	78.26	12	x				
143	78.51	25					
144	79.18	27	x				
145	79.38	20					
146	80.21	43	x				
147	81.09	48	x				
148	81.26	17	x				
149	81.36	10					
150	81.40	4					
151	81.45	4					
152	81.49	4					
153	81.53	4					

154	82.00	7					
155	82.30	30	x	x			
156	82.44	14	x	x			x
157	82.55	11	x	x			
158	83.29	34					
159	87.37	248	x	x			x
160	89.03	87		x			
161	89.30	27	x				
162	89.50	20	x	x			
163	90.10	20	x				
<b>Total running time:</b> 5327 seconds (of 93'17" = 5597 seconds)							
<b>Average length of take:</b> 32,41 seconds							

Annotated timeline



Observations on the timetable and chart:

- The film compounds a total number of 163 scenes.
- Only 26 scenes do not show the two protagonists, but either other persons or environment.
- Margo and Juvenal appear together in 14 scenes.
- Juvenal appears in 94 scenes.
- Margo appears in 57 scenes.

- There are 24 affect images/close shots, of which 13 of Juvenal and 9 of Margo.  
→ **From the previous three points it can be deduced that Juvenal plays a more important role in the story than does Margo.**
- There are two particularly long scenes, counting 321, respectively 248 seconds, and other three scenes of over 100 seconds.
- The longest scene is at the mid of the film, whereas the second longest scene is at the very end. Moreover, it is noticeable that the 3 scenes of over 100 seconds are in the second half of the film, so after the 321-seconds scene.
- On the chart the two longest scenes are visible and look like an interruption in the rhythm of the film. Only by taking a look at the chart, it is noticeable that two major events take place at the marked points, which disturb considerably the otherwise constant rhythm of the film.



## 2. Screenshots



*Figure 1*



*Figure 2*



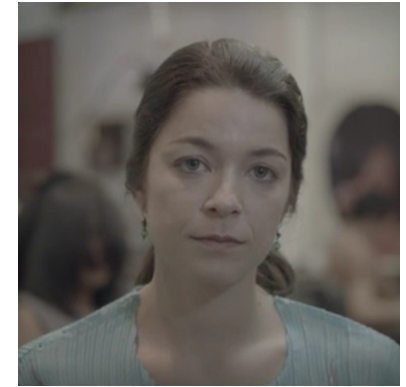
*Figure 3*



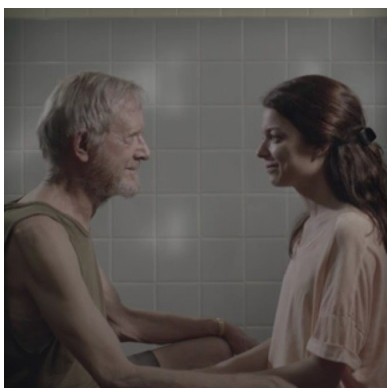
*Figure 4*



*Figure 5*



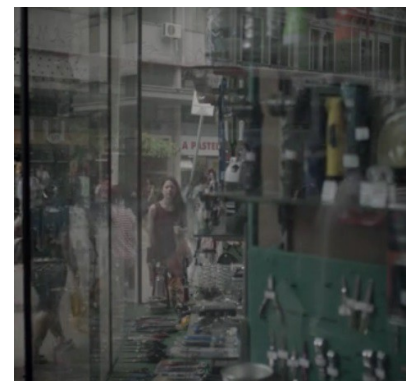
*Figure 6*



*Figure 7*



*Figure 8*



*Figure 9*



*Figure 1*



*Figure 2*



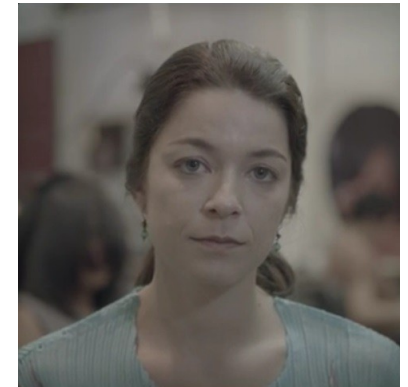
*Figure 3*



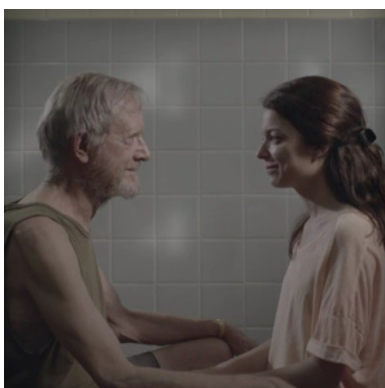
*Figure 4*



*Figure 5*



*Figure 6*



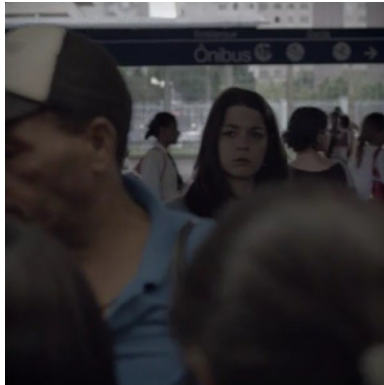
*Figure 7*



*Figure 8*



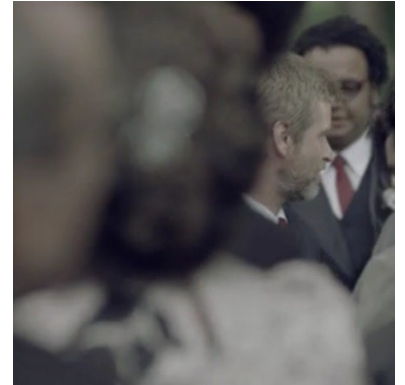
*Figure 9*



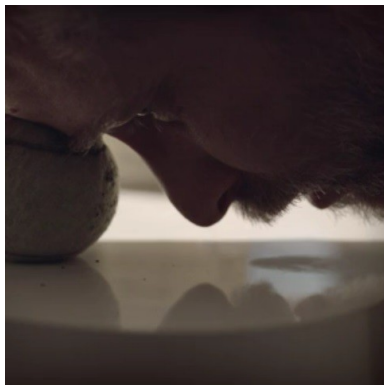
*Figure 10*



*Figure 11*



*Figure 12*



*Figure 13*



*Figure 14*

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