

Using at least 3 examples, consider how storytellers have utilised film to explore at least one of the following: sublime, weird & eerie, transformation conflict, the self, silence, leitmotifs, symbolism, archetypes.

The Platform: (2019)

The story of *The Platform* is set in a facility called by the prisoners as 'The Hole' where food is divided among 300 floors, each with 2 people which is brought down by a floating platform. The plot revolves around a man (Goreng) who is stuck in the facility for 6 months with each month having him moved to a different floor, whether it's higher or lower never being shown until the month actually begins.

The Platform plays a lot on the themes of; weird and eerie, transformation conflict and symbolism. Mostly shown through the progression of Goreng's character, he starts off as a cautious yet light-hearted prisoner of The Hole, at first he's hesitant to adhere to the rules of the facility, eat to survive, he actually tries to reason with those above and below him, but his roommate Trimagasi advises against it, for he has already submitted to the system and refuses to accept any sort of change.

As the film progresses, The Hole's system starts to take its toll on Goreng's mind, paired with the constant pressure from Trimagasi to submit, leading to his eventual murdering of Trimagasi after he is almost eaten alive by him. Being transferred to a lower floor at that point, food is almost non-existent, leading to Goreng feeding off Trimagasi's flesh to survive. After this point, he doesn't have any sort of moral high ground that he clung so desperately to. He is part of the system now, and he cannot come back from it all. After this point, we also see a fragment of Trimagasi appear to mock Goreng, almost like him eating the flesh had made him 'part' of Goreng, this is supported by the use of the word 'obviously', a term that Trimagsi had somewhat claimed for himself and would become hostile whenever Goreng used it, once again showing his once eagerness to cling to any sort of power in The Hole.

Halfway through the film Goreng is introduced to a new roommate Imoguri and her dog Ramesses II on a higher level in The Hole. It's at this point in the film we see the complete u-turn in Goreng's character compared to the start of the film, and how the roles between himself and Imoguri have become seemingly reversed. With Imoguri's taking on the passive and respectful role that Goreng once held, where he now has the cold and careless attitude that Trimagasi had. Goreng inheriting this behavior matched with the visions of Trimgasi could lead us to believe that he has become a part of Goreng, and the acts of murder and cannibalism that he has committed has made him no better than the man he once despised for doing such acts. The Hole has corrupted him, and he's well aware. But he doesn't care, he's only focused on his own survival. That's all that matters now. It's the

The Platform acts as a perfect film that reflects the meaning of human nature, and how when faced with the threat of death, the extent that some will go to to stay alive as well as how some will cling to power, even if it doesn't offer them anything in the long run. We are selfish creatures at heart, we try to convince ourselves that we are something more, but when met face to face with death, our inner beasts are unleashed. It's just a matter of how long it takes...

The Terminator: (1984)

We as humans often hide behind the rules society makes for us, from the law itself to common decency. But what happens when all that is stripped away and you find yourself being hunted by a remorseless killer armed to the teeth, supposedly indestructible and worse, isn't even human. You as much as any person, would be scared for your life. There's nowhere to hide. Nowhere to run. Little to no chance of stopping it, with the only likely outcome being death. This is the remarkable work of James Cameron's *The Terminator*.

One of James Cameron's more iconic films, the 1980's classic *The Terminator* tells the story of a woman's desperate attempts to escape an unstoppable machine sent from the future to 'terminate' her, thus killing her unborn son that would later lead the resistance against Skynet. While the film itself may just be seen as an action thriller on the surface, simply based off of its premise. The camerawork, practical effects and acting all gave *The Terminator* an eerie yet suitable element of horror thus making it much more suspenseful and even begs the question; could this really happen? Those kinds of deep questions are what makes this film stand out, though some may view the statement as 'a product of the times', the fear of technology still reigns in today's modern society as well, especially with new advancements happening fairly regularly, even down to the newest phone.

A lot of the eeriness of the film comes down to one core message **"What if technology pushes back?"** executed with its masterful use of practical effects and directing. First down to the way Arnold Schwarzenegger acts as the main antagonist, the Terminator. Even though the cyborg holds a human skin, it still moves and talks like a machine would, letting nothing get in its way, even things that we as would typically steer clear of creating conflict with; whether it a gun store owner, a bouncer, even an entire police station. The Terminator moves through them all without a hint of emotion or remorse, stopping at nothing to complete its goal of killing Sarah Connor. Even the secondary protagonist Kyle Reese admits that he's not sure if he can destroy it, already setting that sense of uncertainty in the audience, how can they defeat something unstoppable? Can they outrun it? How long can they keep running? Questions like those always keep the audience on their feet, and thus creating an ominous presence whenever the Terminator enters the scene, it has no concept of what we deem acceptable, subtlety, or consequence. Only its target.

Another key factor I find with *The Terminator's* eerie nature as I mentioned is its fixation on technological advancement. While the T-800 is the film's antagonist, it's only part of something bigger, Skynet. Originally designed to keep the human race safe from harm, it became self-aware and destroyed nearly all of the human race. Some may see it as a product of the times, where the threat of nuclear war was a common fear in the 1980's and in a sense pushed the idea of "Could this really happen?", but truthfully has that really changed? Especially nowadays where advanced intelligence has become part of our everyday lives, helping our society whether it's domestic, medical or military. *The Terminator's* concept of machines rising up against mankind makes it a timeless, enjoyable film and a harsh reminder of what happens when we push technology too far.

Revenge of The Sith: (2005)

Released in 2005, George Lucas's last instalment in the prequels trilogy saw the final transformation of the chosen one Anakin Skywalker into evil Sith Darth Vader. Mainly expressed through the masterful visual directing showing symbolism and transformation conflict, half of the scenes in the film that show his inner conflict are almost done entirely through good camerawork and visuals. One key factor in the film's symbolism is shown through the weather on the Republic planet Coruscant where Anakin spends almost half the film on.

When we first arrive on the planet and Anakin reunites with his wife, the sky is crystal clear and blue, demonstrating Anakin's happiness at the time. Once problems start to arise, primarily when Anakin is tasked to spy on the chancellor, the background becomes a faint yellowish colour with more clouds to demonstrate how his loyalty and overall character is becoming 'clouded' and theoretically torn between two sides. This becomes especially clear in the scene labelled 'Padme's Ruminations' where the sun is setting upon the horizon, at the same time Anakin is faced with a choice to either save the chancellor or stay in the council chambers as instructed. Not a word of dialogue is spoken but the concepts of 'transformation conflict' and 'symbolism' is brought into full swing. The sunset connotes the dying light in Anakin's soul, and how darkness is all that awaits, it already sets the tone that time is running out. Even though the older audiences already know his fate, part of us thinks that perhaps

there is a chance he will not turn. That is the beauty of Revenge of the Sith, it always keeps us on our toes...

Another defining moment in the film comes from the climactic duel between Anakin and Obi-Wan, otherwise, known as the Battle of The Heroes. One key feature in the duel is that until this point, at no point in the other Star Wars films did we see two characters with Jedi lightsabers fighting one another. It had always been the Jedi's blue or green lightsabers vs the Sith's one red lightsaber, so straight away this fight stands out. Anakin has already committed such terrible acts but he still wields the weapon of a Jedi, a symbol of peace and protection... now being used for slaughter..

The duel's symbolism is primarily shown through the fighting style between the forces of light and dark. For the majority of the fight, Obi-Wan is always on the defensive, blocking Anakin's aggressive blows as they fight through the facility, almost never being the one that initiates the attack. While this is canonically linked to his combat form, it also symbolises Obi-Wan's typically passive attitude, always seeking a peaceful solution rather than relying on strength. It also demonstrates his hesitation to harm Anakin, leading us to conclude that he believes that Anakin can be saved, Anakin's style shows the exact opposite, who's aggressive swings and hate-filled grunts shows he's unleashing all his anger into each blow, forcing Obi-Wan further and further back.

I personally would say that Anakin's story in Revenge of The Sith is a sad tale of how power can change and break a man, and constantly trying to control the future makes you more likely to make it come true...