

EXAMPLE DIARY ENTRY

Tuesday, 1 February 2011

Amadeus directed by Milos Forman, (1984)

Milos Forman's adaptation of the Peter Schaffer play presents the court composer, Antonio Salieri (F. Murray Abraham) as the one who plotted the downfall, if not also the murder, of the precociously talented and, according to the film, lecherous, infantile and ill-mannered Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Tom Hulce). Although the plot is fictitious, Gregory Allen Robbins contends that the film 'reveals deep truths about the human condition' revolving around human inequality and the way this drives pride to become envy and ultimately the desire to destroy.¹ For Robbins, the film is an allegory of the story of Cain and Abel, that 'the Lord had regard for Abel [Mozart] and his offering, but for Cain [Salieri] and his offering he had no regard' (Gen. 4:4-5, NRSV). The film certainly offers a meditation on pride, jealousy, anger and disappointment all of which can lead to the most extreme of actions. God is the absent figure, prayed to, but distant and apparently fulfilling the opposite of Salieri's request, leading to the composer's apostasy. Nevertheless, religion's presence is more implicit than explicit, more moral than doctrinal, as befits a story which unfolds as the lead character makes his confession to a priest. The story is expertly told, interspersed with stunning imagery and beautiful sound, all of which succeeds in beguiling the audience into extremes of emotion, especially as the haunting strains of the '*Lacrimosa Dies Irae*' (On this day full of tears) from the *Requiem* accompany the perfunctory disposal of Mozart's corpse in an unmarked grave beyond the Viennese city walls, while the rain pours down almost as a sign of divine pathos in the absence of any corresponding human mourning.

299 words

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Comment [1]: Note the heading.

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Comment [2]: The main aspects of the plot have been outlined succinctly.

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Comment [3]: There has been some engagement with reading. Note that this should be referenced fully.

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Comment [4]: The last few lines again offer a summary which reflects on a religious aspect of the film. You might like to say something here about the *effectiveness* of the film as a medium for transmitting theological or religious motifs.

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Comment [5]: Include a word count. This should not include the title or the footnotes.

¹ Gregory Allen Robbins, 'Mozart and Salieri, Cain and Abel: A Cinematic Transformation of Genesis 4', *The Journal of Religion and Film*, 1.1 <http://cid.unomaha.edu/~wwwjrf/robbins.htm>.