When “Room” is the wor(l)d you speak.

Cinematographic metaphors to explore the narratives we (can) live by.

Starting from Wittgenstein’s quote “The limits of my language means the limits of my world” (Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, 1921) this proposal intends to explore the literal and the metaphorical levels of this statement by reversing its objects, suggesting a new issue, and then going back to the original quote.

The proposal in fact, on one hand wants to investigate on what happens when the limits of one’s world mean the limits of one’s language. What happens when the possibility to access the world are limited to “not enough room” - namely the four walls of a room and its furniture and appliances?

On the other hand, going back to the original format of initial quote, as the second approach to Wittgenstein’s question, I will focus on the “discourses we live by” when they are/become our psychological (and metaphorical) captivity, referring to the psychanalytical room where therapist fosters the patient in her exploration of the (dysfunctional) discourses she lives “in”.

To explore the first issue, relating to three films - “Room” (L. Abrahamson, Ireland, Canada, 2015), “Oldboy” (S. Lee, USA, 2013) and “Tangled” (N. Greno, B. Howard, USA, 2010) – I will analyse the possibilities of living in captivity with objective spatial limits and very limited stimuli – almost none from outside a part from small breaches represented by a skylight, a TV-set and a paintable wall. Through the representations in these fictional narratives I will deepen the psychological remedies and narrative resources, namely: the discourses, the characters relied on in order to survive.

These above cited films will be the narrative references by which to explore three discourse alternatives for keeping alive the self when held in captivity, when the limits of your world affect the limits of your language, and design the discourses you (need to) live by.

I will rely again on the image of “the room” in its therapeutic meaning relating to my personal experience of “unleashing” myself from the constraints of the discourses I lived by through eleven years of individual psychanalysis, and on the reference – again - to one film, “Good Will Hunting” (Van Sant, USA, 1997).

The exploration of the therapeutic room will focus on my autobiographical elements which I saw mirrored and displayed in some highlights of the movie-narrative where binding discourses get dissolved within the physical constraints of the room; this dis/comfort zone will be analysed as a metaphorical new framework for thoughts and language, which can contribute in dismantling and scattering the discourses we live by and in.

The proposal will finally re-compose the reflection - fostered by the movie metaphors - and try to deepen and enhance the ambivalent emotional relationship with the discourses we live by, seen in their opposite meanings of salvific resort - when literally taken, as for the examples from the first three films - and of detention and imprisonment – when metaphorically interpreted, as in the dedicated context of the psychanalytic room.