Analytical Essay: Film Criticism

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Tomasulo, F. P. (1982). "Bicycle Thieves": A Re-Reading. Cinema Journal, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2-13.

The film presents the neorealist view of the post-war Rome. Here there are two thieves one at the beginning and the other at the end of the movie. This movie comprehensively studies the in-depth realities that sustain within, the insensitive cycle of poverty. The main character Antonio is presented as a poor man who is striving to get a job in the lackluster Italian economy.

He eventually finds good job offer to hang film posters, which also pays well but requires a bicycle. Desperate for the job Antonio lies he has a bicycle (Tomasulo, 1982). Back at home he and his wife sell linens out of desperate need to raise money to buy the bicycle; which is later stolen. The movie revolves around the arduous struggle and hopelessness for to look for the stolen bike with the help of his son Bruno and friend Baiocco. Bruno is seen witnessing all the humility and the indifference his father faces at the hands of the society (Sica, 1949). The loss of dignity and pessimism take over Antonio when he finally decides to steal someone else’s bike and gets caught.

The film is an extensive approach to depict neorealism in the society. It depicts the raw edges and the sharp knives that cut deep into the existence of those under the spell of poverty. Antonio is forced by the crucial circumstances to abandon his morals (Tomasulo, 1982). The film highlights the inadequacy of structural institutions be it the religion which fails to provide for the poor or the government regulatory institutions that are influential and use their authority to undermine the poor and sustain a subservience within the social strata. The movie illuminates the unfortunate existence of the powerless individuals affected by the unemployment in the diminishing economy.

# References

Sica, V. D. (Director). (1949). Bicycle Thieves [Motion Picture]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHxSsALvX6g

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