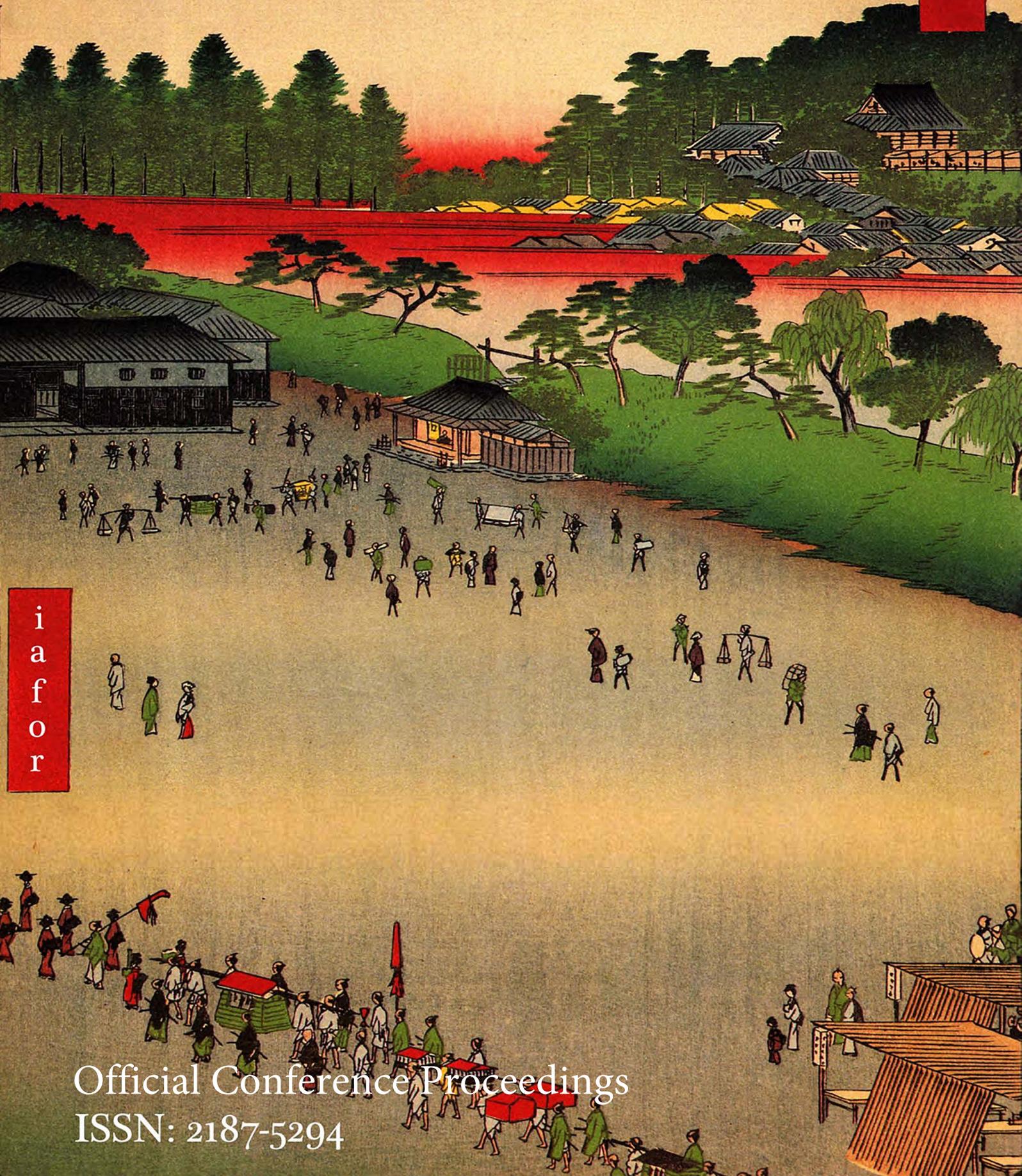


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A Content Analysis of Elements of Attractiveness in Children's Movies

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0020

Islamic Azad University, Iran

The Asian Conference on Film and Documentary 2012

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Abstracts

The current survey aims to conduct a content analysis of Iranian and **Hollywood** children's movies on the basis of their elements of attractiveness. Corpus of the survey includes the entire children movies produced in Iran and Hollywood (as the symbol of American movie industry) since 1979. The assessment tool of this survey is the categorizing system of content analysis that is based on scientific theories relevant to attractiveness and its elements. Subsequent to defining attractiveness and studying its individual elements, each element was selected as one category of content analysis system; while some categories had their own subcategories.

The findings of the survey showed that the elements of fantasy and story are the essential elements of the most-watched children's movies that differentiate them from the least watched children's movies. In terms of frequency, the elements of dialog, story and perspective are the top priorities in Iranian and Hollywood Children's movies.

Key words: Content Analysis, Attractiveness, Elements of Attractiveness, Children's movies, Iranian Children's Cinema.

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1. Introduction

In the world today, media has found its way to every person's life and is tied with everyday life. Wide range of activities, i.e. entertainment, education, trade or social affairs are in close contact with media. As the most important contemporary visual means of media, film and cinema play a key role in some areas such as everyday life, social interactions, internal and external group communications and even the issues relevant to attitudes of individuals towards life. Film shapes, changes, modifies or ruins the ideas, attitudes, viewpoints and philosophy of people's lives (Benisi, 2005, p. 46). Children are continuously exposed to this medium of mass media and as their characters are in the process of evolution, compared to adults they are more affected by inculcation patterns and values of film (Akbarloo, 2005, p.33).

Movies with various genres include a wide spectrum of viewers from different age groups, sex, nationality, etc. Children's cinema is among the most welcomed movie genres in the world. Children's movies are produced for the age group of 5 to 12 in line with their mental capacity. These are among the most specialized, sensitive and probably the most difficult movie genres which necessitate filmmakers' familiarity with the complicated and unknown world of children (Akbarloo, 2005, p.17). There is no doubt that producing eye catching programmes for today's children is a hard task as they differ from past generation to a great extent. They are familiar with the vast concepts and tools of information technology. They have played with video games and navigated internet. The children's selection process revolves around the key principle of "Attractiveness". Children watch anything enticing and entertaining, irrespective of its pattern, message or the social structure that sets up. Taking into account those elements that make a movie attractive for children, help them to grow in an appropriate mental, moral, behavioral and cultural atmosphere. The concepts, patterns and recognized standards of a society can be conveyed through a pleasant movie that properly adopts the elements of attractiveness. Otherwise, children will be encouraged to watch those appealing films that do not have anything in common with their mental and cultural views. They seek a cinema which depicts their own world and helps them solve their problems. In other words, attractiveness plays a key role in encouraging a child to watch a movie (Froozan, 2009, p.3).

In each movie, there are some elements that guide the viewer to its general idea. Great importance has been attached to children's understanding of the film's concept as well as the film's attention to the issues of children. The elements like music, story, face and words of the actresses and actors have specific impacts on children's movies.

Most surveys have been conducted in the area of children's animations rather than children's movies. In a case study, Hubka, Hovdestad and Tonmyr (2009) examined portrayal of child abuse in Walt Disney animations. The results of the study revealed many cases of child abuse. The current survey is an attempt to examine the elements of attractiveness in children's movies, as no survey has been conducted on this overlooked aspect yet.

Research Question

1. What are the most important elements (parameters) of attractiveness in the most - watched children's movies?

2. Methodology

The current research is exploratory and qualitative in nature and the data is analyzed on the basis of content analysis method.

2.1. The corpus of the study:

The corpus of the study includes the entire children's movies produced in Iran and Hollywood (as the symbol of the American movie industry) from 1979 onwards.

2.2. Sampling method:

A) Selection of main units: sampling method of this research is target-based. Firstly the most-watched and the least-watched Iranian children's movies were identified by referring to the Bureau of Cinema Studies and Planning, Deputy Directorate of Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. The most-watched and the least-watched identified children movies were *Kolah Ghermezi va Pesar Khaleh* (1994) and *Man va Negin Dat com* (2006) respectively. Secondly, Box Office Mojo, the most valid online film magazine that reports on films selling status in the US was of assistance in identifying the films with the highest and lowest number of viewers, i.e. *E.T* (1981) and *Shiloh2* (1999) respectively.

B) Selection of semantic units: In this research two semantic units of sequence and the entire film were chosen. "Sequence can be considered as a complete part of the film which starts with a gradual lightening of the picture and ends to a gradual darkness. If we liken film to a novel, sequence will be equivalent to its chapter" (Davaie, 1985, p.74). There are 236 sequences in the four movies of the research corpus. As it was not practical to study an element like story in every individual sequence, the semantic unit of "entire film" was added to "sequence".

2.3. Tool :

The tool of this survey is categorizing system of content analysis which is based on attractiveness and its elements. "Attractiveness is the appealing force embedded in goods, creatures or concepts that draws looks and thoughts" (Mostofi, 2004, p.31). In line with this definition, in this research attractiveness means what draws the attention of children to the concept of the film. The research proceeds with studying every individual element. Later each element was selected as one category of its content analysis system, while some categories had their own subcategories.

The first category is the element of 'Fantasy' (imagination). "Characters, improbable or even impossible events, form the main elements of a fantasy film" (Kingsburg, translated by Ghasemian, 2000, p.277). The second category is the element of 'Perspective' that is the angle from which the author looks at the story, its events and heroes/ heroines. This category helps the author to narrate the story (Akbarloo, 2005, p.19). This element has two subcategories of "looking at adults' world from children's perspective" and "looking at children's world from adults' perspective". The third category is the element of 'Dialog', which is defined as "the discussion between two or some characters in a film or a play." (Beaver, F. translated by Ashtari, B. 1990, p.86). This element includes three subcategories of "using short sentences and simple phrases", "avoid using the terms common among adults" and "avoid using common similes, idioms and metaphors used by adults". 'Satire' is the fourth element. In this research, satire is synonymously used with its general meaning, i.e. laugh. The fifth category is 'Music' of the film (score). In the Dictionary of Film Terms,

score is defined by Ahmadzade (2009) as follows: “A kind of music that is heard as a part of the film’s voice” (p. 86). “Avoid using music”, “music without song” and “music with song” include three subcategories of the element of music. The sixth category is application of ‘Colors’. The attractiveness of this element was assessed by using warm and bright colors in designing the costumes of the characters. The seventh category is ‘Sexploitation’ which is the combination of sex and exploitation. Sexploitation is defined as the intentional use of sexual materials or signs to promote a product, i.e. commercials or a film. (Danesi, 2009, p. 267). The eighth category is the ‘Story’ which is defined as “the specific composition seen in narrating the events either real or imaginary in which the characters grow. The main elements of this composition relate to each other in a specific way and move in the path laid by the author” (Mosaheb, 2001, p. 2054). According to Shoari Nezhad (2004) in the two phases of “free imagination” and seeking “adventure and heroism” children are in need of stories that include adventurous, detective and imaginary contents.

Sequence is the semantic unit for the first seven categories of this classification system and the semantic unit of the eighth category (story) is the entire film.

3. The findings:

1. What are the most important elements (parameters) of attractiveness in the most - watched children’s movies?

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of the most-watched Iranian (A) and Hollywood (B) children’s movies according to sequence and in terms of elements of attractiveness

Elements	Children’s movies	Frequency	Percentage
Fantasy	A	45	77.6
	B	34	60.7
Looking at adults’ world from children’s perspective	A	30	51.7
	B	17	30.4
Looking at children’s world from adults’ perspective	A	23	39.7
	B	6	10.7
Dialog (using short sentences)	A	58	100
	B	56	100
Dialog (avoid using adults’ terms)	A	58	100
	B	56	100
Dialog (avoid using simile and metaphor)	A	58	100
	B	56	100
Satire	A	36	62.1
	B	3	5.4

Music (without music)	A	37	63.8
	B	22	39.3
Music(without song)	A	20	34.5
	B	36	64.3
Music (with song)	A	4	6.9
	B	0	0
Color	A	0	0
	B	3	5.4
Sexploitation	A	0	0
	B	2	3.2

According to table 1, dialog plays a key role in enhancing the attractiveness of the most-watched children's movies and fantasy stands second. Music has attracted the attention of filmmakers from both Iran and Hollywood more than color. Sexploitation is the least important element used to improve the attractiveness of the most-watched children's movies.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of the evaluators' views on children's movies (the whole four films) according to the entire film and in terms of the element of story

Story		Free imagination		Adventurous phase	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Iranian children's movies	The most-watched	1	100	1	100
	The least-watched	1	100	1	100
Hollywood Children's movies	The most-watched	1	100	1	100
	The least-watched	0	0	0	0

According to table 2, the stories of the total number of the Iranian children's movies are proportional to the development stages of children. It was also observed that the contents of just half of Hollywood children's movies are appropriate for children.

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*What's Goin' on at the Back Streets? Reconstruction of Patriarchal and Authoritarian
Mentality in Contemporary Turkish Films*

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0028

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The Asian Conference on Film and Documentary 2012

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Abstracts

This essay analyses how patriarchal and authoritarian mentality is reconstructed in contemporary Turkish Films. To understand this I've chosen seven films where streets are given meaning to the story and men are at the centre of the plot. The films analyzed in this study build representations that reconstruct the patriarchal and authoritarian mentality in an unmitigated way. The main characters that act as policemen, taxi drivers, unemployed, carpenters, private security guards, car parkers, pigeoners and imams lead a life of low or middle class. All of them are heterosexual, (Sunni) Muslim and Turkish.

Key Words: Patriarchy, Authoritarian, Contemporary Turkish Film, Gender.

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Introduction

Film as social practice, is a medium in which patriarchal and authoritarian mentality is reconstructed. In order to understand how this mentality is reconstructed in contemporary Turkish cinema, I've chosen some films of crime and criminality where streets are given meaning to the story and men are at the centre of the plot. As Süalp (2004) and Guttin (2010) argue, space is the area of power struggle, battle field of arranger and disciplinarian. Streets firstly belong to men, and have the same gender relations as the family and the state (Connel 1998: 183), while in some contemporary Turkish films ships, brothels, headquarters, caves, hotel rooms, casinos, and streets are new spaces (Ulusay 2004: 160).

In this study I'm trying to expose how patriarchal and authoritarian mentality is reconstructed in films just as **Kurtlar Vadisi-Filistin** (Zübeyr Şaşmaz/2011), **Av Mevsimi** (Yavuz Turgul/2010), **New York'da Beş Minare** (Mahsun Kırmızıgül/2010), **Çakal** (Erhan Kozan/2010), **Ejder Kapanı** (Uğur Yücel/2010), **Kara Köpekler Havlarken** (Mehmet Bahadır Er, Maryna Gorbach/2009), **Bornova Bornova** (İnan Temelkuran/2009). To achieve this I will first of all draw a map of patriarchal and authoritarian mentality, otherwise formulation of the questions to the films in my research universe and their interpretation won't be appropriate.

Patriarchal and Authoritarian Mentality

The relative domination of authoritarian mentality in the West and patriarchal mentality in the East can be mentioned within the area extending from Western Europe to India. It is seen that every society at every part of this geography integrates these two mentalities in its own way and differentiates them through creating ideological structures that will maintain itself (Lloyd 1993).

When we look at the Anatolian geography, considering also the period in which cinema came into our life, the most evident characteristic of patriarchal discourse firstly in Ottoman Empire and then in the Republic of Turkey is its dependence on an imagination of an eternal and everlasting true system and thus considering change as legitimate only if it is led by this system. System is a heterogeneous and homogenous structure in which every element occupies the place it "deserves". All kinds of change which draw away from the required system refer to corruption and degeneration. No entity can replace another one. In this structure, there is no place for the "imaginative power" generating from the imagination of the person. There are "balances" which are believed to exist among elements of the system and are defended. In perceptions which associate patriarchy with creation, every act devoted to the violation of the balance is deemed as an intervention, a sin. Popular films analyzed in this paper- as texts immanent in Turkish society- read patriarchy from within Turkish and Sunni Islam. Any kind of change is approved only if it reinforces this situation; otherwise it is categorically false and harmful. Justice, on the other hand, implies not the resolution of conflict among individuals and groups but the protection of the ethnicity-religion in question with its private property forever. So much so that it can not break away from the discourse of "justice is the basis of property" and the Republic "will live for all eternity" (Mahçupyan

1998). And films can not break away as well. Thus hierarchical order is maintained in these films and every individual and social group are invited to establish a harmonious unity through integrating with each other and with the state (Bruzzi 2005).

Heterogeneous and hierarchical structure implies a balanced unity composed of elements which are adjusted to each other around a vertical axis. The maintenance of harmony and balance needs the existence of an authority; the legitimacy of authority depends on the maintenance of this order. The most distinctive aspect of authoritarian mentality is the predication of the relation between action and legitimacy on the success of the action, and one of the areas of its domination is the logic of the establishment of the rule while another is necessarily the nature of the relation between state and society. In other words, the absolute obedience to the state... Action is given an ontological priority. The questions as to what are the laws of the universe, which attitude and behaviors should be considered as right are understood after the action. While the purpose of coming to power is determined within the relations of interest, everyone around the power live in a state of doubt, contrivance is the most natural means of politics. Allocating the power among different individuals and groups is a sign of impotence, hence it is legitimate for the most powerful to unify other powers under its auspices. In any case, power should be centralized. In relation to this, an important communication system is created for the purpose of flow of "information" from periphery to center. Rulers have been separated from the ruled and this has become the ideal state-society relation. State is the arbitrator among individuals and groups and it also audits them. Even though the ruler and the ruled are separated from each other with a definite hierarchy, these two categories should have homogenous structures as much as possible.

Guidance of patriarchal mentality is based on religion, hence it is abstract. Guiders are managing to reach unknowable divine information; in other words they do not have a measure in their hands. However, authoritarian mentality, through defining basic knowledge on the basis of matter and rendering knowledge reachable, gives a criterion to the person so that s/he can test himself/herself. Therefore, it is inevitable for the patriarchal mentality to merge with the authoritativeness. Patriarchy implies a heterogeneous social structure based on a multiple hierarchy while authoritativeness implies a homogenous structure based on a single hierarchy. These two mentalities turn into a harmonious unity within the state-society duality and "sovereignty unconditionally belongs to the nation" legitimizes this through reading it other way around. Authoritarian mentality furnishes state and society with homogenous characteristics in themselves with respect to each other, hence society has surrendered to the illusion of considering itself within the state through being accepted to the state agencies (Sennett 1993). Patriarchal mentality has legitimized the inner differentiation of ruler-ruled groups, has rationalized the existence of communities, and has paved the way for every kind of differentiation unless the state-society division is violated. Community based prestige transmitted from father to son began to be transmitted from father to daughter this way with the Republic.

While authoritarian statist mentality is associated with Turkish tradition, the one which has actualized the patriarchy has become the Sunni/Hanafi Islam which is the most inclined to

sanctify the state. Therefore patriarchal and authoritarian mentalities have undergone not tension, but integration. Although this situation brought stability and peace for a while, it firstly delayed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and then it kept Turkey from undergoing a real “modern” mental transformation. Modernity is defined with implemented reforms, hence it is not a process, and it is reduced to a framework drawn by reforms. Deviation from reforms is punished with severity; politics is defined as making the society embrace reforms. Authoritarian mentality is reinforced this way. And it is reinforced with films once again.

Contemporary Turkish Films: How Patriarchal and Authoritarian Mentalities Reconstructed?

The aim of this essay is to expose how patriarchal and authoritarian mentalities are reconstructed in contemporary Turkish Film. For each film, I'll present a summary of the film first, and then analyse how this mentality is reconstructed at the back street settings of these filmic worlds.

KURLAR VADİSİ-FİLİSTİN (Valley of Wolves-Palestine): Polat Alemdar and his friends go to Palestine when the ship carrying help to Gaza is invaded by Israel. The goal is to kick down the Isralean commander Moshe who plans the invasion. Thanks to the first contacts with Palestinians, Alemdar and his friends who are close to their target are to encounter a surprise. The ruthlessness and technological potentials of Moshe obstruct their plan. Moshe devastates the villages, kills women and children and imprisons everyone who helps Polat and his friends. However, Moshe cannot protect himself through his technological potential and ruthlessness (<http://www.kv-filistin.com/kurlar-vadisi-filistin-konusu.html>).

If tyrant has injustice then sufferer has the streets: In the film, the streets of Palestine appear first when Alemdar and his friend go to meet Palestinians. To get rid of the ruthlessness of Israeli soldiers, Ms. Simon, the American tourist guide, Polat and his friends escape. The Palestinian streets are narrow, in turmoil, crowded, neglected and dirty. People who belong to different religions, street vendors, children, women, men, old people and tourists all witness this excape. The stores, markets, electricians, copper sellers and vegetable sellers are all littered around. Some people die, some are injured. The Israeli soldiers torture the children playing on the streets and forcibly take them into their jeeps. While they escape through the narrow streets, it is understood that Simon is an American Jewish. Thereupon, it is said that the woman is an agent and she should be left on the street. However, Alemdar protects the woman.

The street appears for the second time in a rich neighbourhood. On an expensive jeep, Moshe is on his way to meet the secret administrators of Israeli government. His goal is to introduce the most recently produced bullets that he describes as a “work of art.” In order to prove the high quality of the bullets, he shoots a jeep and kills the driver. It is understood through the photos and prayer beads on the rear-view window that the driver is a Muslim who has two children. The bullet has achieved real success. These events take place with the

accompaniment of a sad music. At the same time, Moshe's jeep arrives and his assistant informs him about the arrival of Polat Alemdar. He says that Alemdar has come in order to kill Moshe. Moshe bosses orders and gets on his jeep. The Turkish hunt starts on the streets.

Where as cruel Israel state is rich and affluent, oppressed people are poor and deprived. But this situation is not structured on the basis of class contradiction. Israel as a Jewish state and its supporters are rich, everybody except them is oppressed and poor.

Thirdly, the street is viewed at night when Simon wants to leave from Abdullah's home in which he hides out. Before leaving home, it is emphasized once again that there is a Jew in front of the door. Streets are dark and uncanny, camera makes feel fear through close ups, Simon tries to find his way in the unsecured streets which remind a labyrinth in the dark of the night. There are old peoples, women and children in a state of fear and desperateness. Streets are narrow and neglected. The voice of a Palestinian girl who reads a heroic poem is heard, guard walks in the street in a state of fear and astonishment. Suddenly an irruption occurs and guard starts to escape to a way from which he came. He returns to home from which he left. He encounters with Israel soldiers and Palestinian police. When assistant of Moshe says that he has come because of the terrorists in the region, police says that not Israel police but they are responsible for this. Moshe comes. He responds to police who says that streets belong to Phalestine: "I decide when and where belongs to whom." A battle occurs. At the same time Alemdar and his friends also go out. He promises not to leave the street before killing Moshe. Streets are the places of battle between cruel Israel army under the leadership of cruel Moshe and Phalestine police and people supported by Polat Alemdar and his friends. Ruthless Israel soldiers who spread fear in the dark of the night invade homes, capture, kill, and injure all the women-children-young-old people. They spread terror. Moshe is cheerful because power is at himself in the streets, he lights up mounting a soldierly jeep. Now complication dominates the streets. Alemdar and his friends fulfil their duties; they organize resistance in the streets against the cruel. People participate in the resistance throwing the stones and being a suicide bomber. Battle ends but Moshe doesn't die but is injured. Alemdar and his friends check the street after the battle and question why technological base of Israel is in the Palestinian side. They reveal the fact that Israel does its dirty works intentionally because when an envent occurs they can not responsible from it so that it is not in their side. As they talk about this issue in devastated streets, they capture a jeep which belongs to Israel army. Wearing soldiers' clothes, they go into military base. They make a kind of big and inexpugnable army which consists in three Turks and a Palestinian. They destroy the military base but go without finding Moshe.

Moshe learns that Abdullah is a collaborator after he questions his face found in the camera records in the invasion to military base in the identity records in the computer. Therefore Moshe and his supporters invade Palestinian Abdullah's home in which Alemdar and his friends hide out and they forcibly make women and children go out of home. Israeli soldiers use violence to women group which consist in Abdullah's wife, mother, sister and Simon and children. Simon wears muslim Palestinian clothes and shouts that they can not use violence to women. Then Moshe says "what kind of Jew you are". Therefore Jews consist in two: the

one who should be cruel to Muslim and human to Muslim. Movie is on the side of the human one. Moshe asks where the Abdullah is. When he is not responded, he destroys their house with bulldozer. Abdullah's son, Ahmet, who became disabled in a battle is in the house. Camera views the happenings through fast movements, barbarity occurs fastly. Ahmet stays under the house which destroys and dies. His grandmother tries to reach his grandson in the ruins but there is nothing to do. He begs "Don't cry my Ahmed, there is God beside you." When Moshe says "How desperate you are dying in this land, you will make dirty the lands promised to us", Alemdar says "I do not know where is promised to you but I promise you its under." Streets belong to the oppressed. The oppressed is a Muslim man (and Turk).

In the first street scene, Abdullah is in his destroyed house. Children, babies, old-young women and men are miserables. A Palestinian woman gives food to Simon. Because Simon is not her enemy, the enemy is only who oppress Muslims. Polat and his friends give the guns which they take from military base to fighters. A battle occurs between Israeli soldiers prepared by superior guns and Palestinian people who have primitive guns. This is the war of latest tank car and guns against stone and stick. The soldiers under Moshe attack without pity, streets become hell. Views are very good; they are like a Hollywood film and scenes which we know from TV news for years. However, the camera is not on the side of powerful as in these kinds of news, but on the side of oppressed. Alemdar and his friends fight without fear. With the support of music, struggle against powerful Israel army becomes heroic. Streets turn into ruin, it is as if an earthquake has taken place. Alemdar shoots Moshe, Moshe takes hostage the guard at the last instance, but he can not escape, he is shot from his head. The victors of the streets are Alemdar and his friends, that is, Muslim Turk men. All buildings are destroyed, there is nothing left.

In the third cinema version of the Tv series named Kurtlar Vadisi after Kurtlar Vadisi Iraq and Kurtlar Vadisi Gladio, Kurtlar Vadisi- Palestine, leading role named Polat Alemdar becomes an influential role model in the Turkish society, most men imitates his clothes and attitudes. Necati Şaşmaz, who played Alemdar, also plays in the advertisements of UKRA, the building society which is the sponsor of the film. The movie ends with the scenes of Palestinian streets which should be constructed again.

AV MEVSİMİ (Hunting Season): The Inspector Ferman (Şener Şen) who deserved his nickname Hunter thanks to his experience in homicide cases and İdris (Cem Yılmaz), notorious as a mad man are two policemen close to each other just like a father and son. Hasan (Okan Yalabık), an idyllic disciple graduated from anthropology, joins them. The three men are charged with the duty of finding the murderer of the young woman Pamuk. This duty forces them to come across the drug trafficker Asit, one of the richest men in Turkey, Battal Çolakzade (Çetin Tekindor), the murdered woman's brothers Abbas and Vakkas and various other men. The murder changes the lives of Ferman who has devoted his life to his wife Müzeyyen and struggle for her illness, İdris who passionately loves his ex-wife Asiye

(Melisa Sözen) and Hasan who is a new graduate and stranger to this world. (<http://www.avmevsimifilm.com/#/yapim/sinopsis>).

Istanbul's 'dead-end' streets are ruled by white Turks: A street appears in the film for the first time when the camera is used to monitor the restaurant where people are having a farewell dinner for their retired colleague. The camera tilting toward the restaurant for a while returns to the street leaving behind İdris who entertains his friends singing a Laz song. In the last frame, the camera is on the street and picture frames and the portrait of Atatürk on the walls draw attention while İdris, sitting on a chair, sings and drinks with his colleagues.

The background is always the streets. This can be seen in the previous films, as well. While they go to interrogate the gay barman in his house, there is a street behind the apartment door. And while they are interrogating him in his house, life flows outside on the streets.

Secondly, it is dark and the three men wait for Asit, Pamuk's boyfriend in front of the bar where the gay barman works. He is to let them know Asit's arrival. They have to wait patiently for this. Obsessed with anthropology, İdris constantly chats with Hasan at the back. He asks him what anthropology is. Hasan tries to explain with an example of "flipping someone off" that compares the USA to Turkey. The camera is outside, on the windscreen of the car. Hasan and İdris sit in the front while Ferman is at the back. Hasan's mobile rings, he asks for permission and gets out of the car. Now, he is on the street. The person who calls is his fiancée, Yasemin. The camera gets out and is turned toward Hasan. When it views back the car, Ferman talks to İdris. The gay man calls and they leave the car to go to the bar. Hasan is told to stay out, watch the door and follow if anyone escapes.

Afterwards, Asit escapes from the bar and gets on his car. Ferman, İdris and Hasan follow them in their civil car with a police siren on the top of it. We witness a forceful chase through the narrow and back doors of Istanbul. İdris who is driving the car is busy talking to Hasan on anthropology although Ferman is sitting just next to him. During the chase through the narrow streets, a car coming from the opposite direction leads to congestion. İdris starts quarrelling with the driver and İdris screams in total madness. He gets off the car, shows his identity card and asks: "Can't you hear the siren?" The man gets a fright and makes way. They lose trace of Asit. While slowly looking for him, they pass the streets of Istanbul throughout mobile food vendors, people on the streets and prostitutes. The camera seeks together with them. Because Ferman is a "hunter," he notices the parked car from far away. They park their own car and get off wearing their steel vests. They are in a dangerous neighbourhood. They go past Asit's car. The street is very narrow and so is the camera's angle, which fans the excitement. They see Asit in front of a door talking to someone. Ferman prefers to ask for support; however, İdris claims that they should not wait. They break into the house taking shelter behind the rice vendor. The disciple is to stand outside again. Yasemin calls. She wants to postpone the meeting on Sunday to Monday, yet Hasan has no time to think over this. Inside, the conflict goes on. Asit runs away. However, he is caught by Hasan who waits outside. All of a sudden, he is shot by a friend of Asit. İdris shoots the shooter. Hasan thinks he is dead, but he escapes death thanks to his steel vest. Asit

is arrested. The streets are under the possession of the police. The Turkish police captures and knows his rights by heart. Hasan witnesses the death of the drug dealer shot by Hasan. This is his first experience in that sense. The support forces have just arrived.

On another street scene, the three men park the car on the street where Pamuk's family lives. On the streets, boys play football while girls play hopscotch and jump rope. They unload wood from a pick-up truck. This is a low-middle class street full of neglected, fair-face brick buildings.

Thirdly, we see Asiye, İdris's ex-wife on the street. He is still in pursuit of her. Asiye sees the courteous man leaving the apartment at night. İdris's piercing gaze is focused by the camera.

In the next street scene, the three men leave the house of Battal Çolakzade, one of the richest men in Turkey. The poor girl's family work in this house. They go toward the office by car. In the daytime shooting, the camera is located on the windscreen of the car. They are on a street in a rich neighbourhood. They pass through ultra luxurious estates and villas. These houses in the middle of nowhere are surrounded and secured by high walls. The person they talk about in the car is the little girl İdris saw in that huge house. The poor girl was sleeping helplessly connected to machines. İdris claims that Battal is uncanny.

For the fifth time, İdris is seen driving and talking to Asiye on the phone. He hopefully asks Asiye to meet face to face. After their meeting, we see İdris walking furiously and fast on the street. This is street full of cafes and he walks crashing into people. Asiye refuses to reunite with İdris. İdris goes into a bar to drink. He is a pathetic loser.

In the following street scene, Ferman and Hasan are in the car. İdris has died. Hasan repeats his quotation from Shakespeare, "a murder will be unravelled although it is covered by all the earth." Ferman replies "would you like to read a murder novel in which the murderer is not arrested?" The film is directed to itself and the murderer is to be caught soon or late. They visit Pamuk's family. After the visit, they drive around the streets and note that they have taken blood samples from Pamuk, her family and all the workers of Çolakzade. They go to the previous doctor's house. There is again a street background behind the apartment.

Pamuk has been sacrificed for Battal's daughter suffering from kidney failure. A murder has been solved and streets have been left. The merciless and rich Kurdish Landlord has been overcome by the merciful bureaucrat Turkish policeman, "hunter" Ferman.

NEW YORK'TA BEŞ MİNARE (Five Minarets in New York): The leader of an organization which is wanted with a red notice, the criminal with a code name Deccal, is arrested in America. The two most successful names of the organization, Acar and Firat go to America in order to take the guilty. After this seems to be easy but nothing is as it seems. Whereas the story happened in the triangle of Istanbul, New York and Bitlis questions our Turkey in present day, it also underlies the America after 11 September and world's paranoia with Islam. (<http://www.sinemalar.com/film/47521/new-yorkta-bes-minare>).

Streets have the global meaning of slander: In the first street scene of the film, we see that a red station wagon goes in the street. There are five people in the car, the driver, bearded police with a cassock-Acar- and three veiled women. Camera goes into car; after it views from outside. It is a sunny summer day. The veiled women and men with cassocks show that it is a conservative place. Station wagon goes near the grocers, cars on the both side of the road and fruit sellers. After camera's bird eye view, the car parks. Driver gets off from the car. Someone behind a high wall pries them. It is as if there is restlessness in the street. The one who pries goes inside and shout as "police!" The camera is near the two men with cassocks who pry the street from home, it sees the driver and three veiled women who get off the car. At this instance, driver commends that operation starts. Camera again goes to street, veiled women get off car, suddenly tanks and armed forces invade the street. Islamic terrorist group starts first fire and shoot the car with a bazooka. Three women is actually three men from armed forces. They join the battle at once. They shoot with their uzis. A violent battle starts, the shops are bombed. Some people die. Helicopter comes. Police is in the street with his most secured and powerful forces. They invade the building on target. Camera also goes to building.

For the second and third times, the camera screens the streets of New York from a helicopter. The huge buildings, the richness and luxuriousness of the USA, skyscrapers, attracting terraces are parts that portray life in New York.

In the next scene, a village in South East Anatolia is screened. Firat calls his grandfather from an abandoned building across the Bosphorous Bridge to let him know that he is going to the USA. He is in a terrace viewing the Bosphorous and his grandfather is on the street in the village. When their talking is over, the camera begins to screen New York with all its magnificence and allurements. Although they sit at the back of a luxurious car, Acar and Firat are on the streets of New York. Acar tells that he previously came here for his education. The camera is outside and inside the car. It follows the car throughout the New York streets. It stops in front of the FBI and the Turkish policeman enters the building.

In the fifth scene, two Turks and Hacıgümüş-Deccal arrested by FBI go into the New York streets by an armoured car. The American policemen following the armoured car crash into a bicycle and have to stop. They call 911. However, this is a conspiracy and after they show their cars to the man they collided with, this man riding the bicycle calls someone by telephone. The camera screens Acar, Firat and Hacıgümüş behind the armoured car. Hacıgümüş prays in whisper and this makes Turkish policemen angry. Just at this instant, the armoured car collides into another car and the car is tossed by the impetus of the collision. It turns upside down. The armed and masked men getting off the cars surrounding the street take Hacıgümüş from the armoured car and go away.

In the next street scene, FBI and Turkish policemen are on a street where there is a Turkish small market in New York. They go into the market to look for Hacıgümüş. The FBI and Turkish policemen leave the market to go to the Turkish Embassy.

In the seventh street, Acar and Fırat who watch the Turkish market participate into the film space. It is dark in the evening. Timur talks to Hacıgümüş on the phone and leaves the market. He mentions the two Turkish policemen, takes a taxi and leaves. Acar and Fırat start to follow them by a taxi. The camera goes around the glittering streets of New York. The colourful advertisement billboards, cosmopolitan crowds of people, luxurious cars and hundreds of cars cover the New York streets. The taxi in the front stops, Timur and his girlfriend get off and enter into the apartment. Acar and Fırat follow them.

In the next scene, Acar and Fırat get off the taxi. They go past the grocery's and arrive at an abandoned factory where there are street gangs. It is cold and rainy.

The FBI agents, David and Jim are on their car in a calm and sunny New York morning. David tells Jim that his sister Brian sleeps under the ruins of that tower. Brian does not even have a tomb. To Jim, it is wrong to consider that all Muslims are terrorists. David admits that he has gone too far. They get off their parked car and go to a house to interrogate Jasmin, Hacıgümüş's daughter.

Jasmin's house is listened. An armoured car is parked opposite the house and the speeches in the house are listened. Next morning, Jasmin and her boyfriend, Thomas go past the street. They run toward freedom. The morning sun is full of hope. They are going to get married that day.

In the 11th scene, David and Jim talk on the phone in the listening car. David drives a car on the street and Jim is in the parked car in front of the church. They talk about Turkish policemen. They have the wedding ceremony of Thomas and Jasmin in the church. The listening car watches those who leave the church.

The car Timur drives is parked on the street. Timur, Hacıgümüş's wife Maria and Timur's girlfriend arrive in the building where Hacı hides himself. Timur understands that they are followed. FBI follows them. All of a sudden, the street is full of New York policemen. A harsh chase is started. The two Turkish policemen and Hacı go up the terrace and we see the New York streets from above once more.

In the 13th street scene, Fırat is in Ortaköy, Istanbul. He talks on the phone to his grandfather who walks on the street. His grandfather says that he is looking forward to seeing him. The street is deserted and a few people go past the old man. The moonlight enlightens the street. The mosque in south east and the Ortaköy mosque are in a sort of a dialogue.

In the next street scene, Hacı, Maria and Fırat are on the streets of Bitlis. They go past coffee houses, local stores, restaurants and copper sellers by car. They go into a narrow street. Children play on the street. They run after the car to catch it. The camera follows them. The children walking on the street walk among the women who carry their babies. Hacı shot Fırat's father many years ago. Through many lies, Fırat brings Hacı to the place where he killed his father. The assumption that the Deccal who is sought is actually Hacı is a total lie. The revenge feud goes on for years.

In the last street scene, they are back in 1973. Hacı's elder brother who leaves the mosque takes Hacı with him and they lay an ambush for İsmail, Fırat's father. We witness a murder on the narrow streets. The person who kills İsmail is not Hacı, but İsmail. Hacı undertakes the murder because his brother forces him to do so.

ÇAKAL (The Jackal): Akın (İsmail Hacıoğlu)'s life changes upon the death of his mother living in the suburbs of Istanbul. While he plans to make a new life for himself through the money he steals from Master Nuran (Cüneyt Türel) working in a carpenter shop, his girlfriend Deniz (Damla Sönmez) finds this plan silly and leaves him. Thus, Akın accepts his friend, İdris's (Çetin Altay) offer. This offer provides him a new beginning. He is to errand boy for the mafia group of Fahrettin (Uğur Polat) and Celahir (Erkan Can). Akın who has nothing to lose attracts the attention of big bugs due to his reckless and fearless behaviours. While Akın wins his boss's favour thanks to some small receipts, he makes a new enemy called Mecit (Naci Taşdoğan). While all these happen around him, the only thing Akın wants is to buy an aquarium in the Hayat Billard Hall, where he himself works. (<http://www.cakalfilmi.com/>)

Streets are what on your mind is: Akın is chosen for a duty of murder in a rival place while he tries to settle his new life. Akın undertakes this duty just like he did previously. When Akın finds out that this rival place belongs to Mecit, it becomes more meaningful for him to carry out the duty since he has an account to settle with Mecit. However, this fight is the beginning of an end for Akın.

The street first appears when Akın meets with his "dirty" friends and smokes weed upon the death of her mother. He questions his existence with an inner voice on his way back to home.

Next morning, we see a perspective view of the street. In the opposite direction, a Turkish flag waves. The balcony of the building is full of antennas. There are parked cars on the left and right sides of the road. It is a hazy morning in Istanbul.

Akın steals Master Nuran's money and strolls around the streets. The streets are crowded and suffocating. He tries to settle accounts with his inner voice. He is not a thief. He has swallowed saw dust since his childhood. He goes to a buffet, buys something to drink. It is cold and hazy.

In the fourth street scene, Akın meets his girlfriend Deniz by the seaside and asks her to leave Istanbul. Deniz does not accept this. Akın gets furious and screams out. When Deniz gets scared and leaves him there, he makes fun of her saying "bitch, you have slim jeans on your ass and a headscarf on your head." Leaving the crowd and human traffic behind, Akın meets the drug dealer on the corner of the street. With an inner voice, he questions himself, his life, friends and family. The film takes place within the physical and social places set by Akın in his mind. With his friends living on streets, they go to see İdris in the Hayat Billard Hall.

Akın starts to work in the billard house owned by Fahrettin. In the next street scene, we see him walking showily in his black suit and white shirts together with İdris.

For the sixth time, the street appears following Akın's friends from a bird's eye view. At the junction, each of the three friends goes into three different streets. The night awaits surprises and something dangerous is about to happen. Akın is in the beer house, he is quite drunk. He has his usual inner self-criticisms.

Akın's request to build an aquarium in the billard hall is accepted. When he leaves the aquarium seller, he comes across his father. Now, his father has a long beard and wears a cap. We watch their battle of words from a close perspective. Akın asks "You seem to have wrapped yourself. Will you have your own tomb soon?" His father replies "I am not a thief like you." In return, Akın says he will pay back Master Nuran's money, but he will not be a father to him no matter what he does." He shoulders his father and disappears into the opposite direction.

As a gunman of Fahrettin, Akın kills Mecit on the street in the autopark. In his last breath, Mecit kills Akın. İdris who involved Akın in this danger kills his wounded friend in a forest under the command of Fahrettin. Just before he dies, Akın recalls their first walking on the street in their black suits. However, İdris does not kill him. He comes back to the billard hall and kills Fahrettin and Celahir. Akın waits in the car wounded. İdris accomplishes his duty and gets back to the car. He looks behind at his wounded friend, Akın. The camera moves in the direction of İdris's gaze. Akın asks "where are we going? We need to take the aquarium with us."

EJDER KAPANI (Dragon Trap): In the film which questions the concept of justice in pursuit of a murderer of child sexual abusers, two experienced detectives 'Çerkez' Abbas (Uğur Yücel) and 'Akrep' Celal (Kenan İmirzalıoğlu) look for a serial killer. The victims of the murderer are pedophiles that are released thanks to amnesty. The clues point at Ensar (Nejat İşler) who has just returned from the army. Ensar who did his military service in the South East is a death machine. While he does his military service, his sister, 12 years old, is raped. When he returns, he learns that the young girl hanged herself. He starts to commit murderws in the town. The interrogation is carried out by Abbas, Celal and trainee police officer Ezo (Berrak Tüzünataç). The only dream of Abbas who undertakes his last duty before his retirement is to go far away with his beloved, Cavidan (Ceyda Düvenci). (<http://www.ejderkapani.com/>).

Circassian catches south eastern dragon at Istanbul streets: The film is so much like Av Mevsimi. Three friends solve the case. There is again a police officer about to get retired. One of the three men is again mad, the trainee is female. The difference between Abbas and Ferman is that Abbas has a girlfriend, not a family. He is not a bureaucrat wearing a tie like Ferman. He is a crazy policeman of nights.

The street first appears with Abbas waiting in his car in the back streets of Istanbul for his girlfriend who is a pavilion singer. A drug dealer crosses their path. The back streets are unsafe. They are full of danger and filth. Cavidan just hardly throws herself into Abbas's car. Abbas furiously gets out of the car. He invites the three men bothering his woman and the fight starts. We witness a Tarantone or Richie style fight that can be seen in independent American films. Such filmographic attractions mobican be encountered in the film in different ways. When Abbas blacks one of the men's cheeks, the image is frozen for a second. The blood hangs in the air. One of the other men is thrown into air with a single fist of Abbas. He is frozen there and falls onto a mobile trolley. The camera is extremely mobile and active. It pulls the viewer into the action. The cobblestone streets witness a unique fight scene. Abbas has taken cavidan's revenge and got rid of his anger.

In the next street scene, Abbas and Celal go to Celal's house with their umbrellas in the rain at night. The camera is at the top and follows both men in parallel line with the roofs in the narrow and wet street. Once more, Abbas is seen leaving Celal's house to go to his hotel room with his umbrella.

For the third time, streets appear on the screen with chase after Selçuk Demirci, the murderer who is claimed to have killed rapers and pedophiles released thanks to amnesty. It is dark and rain strikes on the ground like a whip. The camera follows the murderer in the back streets full of closed markets. Abbas is in pursuit of selçuk. However, Selçuk is killed and his murderer cannot be found.

Streets become a ground for the film for the fourth time when the special team invades Ensar's house. Ensar whose sister has been raped in the suburbs is the biggest murderer Abbas and his colleagues chase after. At night, the suburb streets are narrower, dirtier and more dangerous.

In the news bulletin, Abbas watches the interviews with people on the streets about the murderer of pedophiles. For the fifth time, streets are screened on an intertextual level. The murderer targeting at the rapists and pedophiles do what passes through everyone's mind but no one dares to do. People thank him. Abbas is called and the policemen dive into the back streets again. The murderer kills one more pedophile. They see the murderer in the house of the murdered man and chase after him. This is a Tarantino like chase between gloomy streets. Abbas captures the murderer in the yard of a mosque and informs his team via a transmitter. However, he gets so tired at the end of the chase that he has a heart stroke and is taken to the hospital by an ambulance.

Abbas disentangles the knot. The murderer is Celal. We see the streets for the sixth time when Abbas drives a car greedily. He turns the traffic upside down with his police car and the camera goes mad together with him. He drives toward Celal's house at maximum speed. Ezo is with Celal. However, Celal escapes. Abbas chases after him. He has an accident and the car turns upside down. Fearlessly, he stands up, gets a taxi and goes on to follow him. Abbas is as determined to catch the murderer as Celal is to kill pedophiles. They pass through the streets, bridges and subways of Istanbul. He catches Celal in an abandoned factory.

The murderer of the rapists and pedophiles released from the prison thanks to amnesty is Kurd Celal. He carries out the murders like the dragon in South East. He is fair and just in his accounts because his sister was raped when she was just a child. Celal just leaves behind some clues in order to be arrested by Çerkez Abbas. Abbas reads this as a story in which a father captures his son.

The only solution for the son, (Kurd) Cemal is to commit suicide. The lonely father, Abbas dives into the streets of Istanbul. The azan is recited. The camera following Abbas whirls around him crazily. Abbas goes to the mosque.

KARA KÖPEKLER HAVLARKEN (Black Dogs Barking): Güvercinci Selim (Cemal Toktaş) and Çaçı Celal (Volga Sorgu), the two showy youngsters of the neighbourhood live in a neighbourhood where lower-class people live. They operate the parking lot of a man called Master (Erkan Can) who lives in the upper-middle class neighbourhood just on the other side of the road. Selim makes marriage plans with Ayşe (Ayfer Dönmez), his beloved. His and Çaçı's biggest dream is to have a parking lot of their own. They accept Mehmet's offer to purchase the security tender of a shopping mall. Mehmet (Murat Daltaban) is a fellow of theirs from the tavern of pigeons. When the security manager Sait (Ergun Kuyucu) learns about their plan, Selim and Çaçı's lives change too fast for them to resist in a few days. (<http://www.karakopeklerhavlarken.com/>).

What if streets talk and say they are not safe: In the film, we first see the streets when Selim goes into his house after he feeds his pigeons. The chapmen, poor kids riding bikes and playing football, women wearing a head scarf, ruinous buildings and brick houses underpin that it is a lower-class neighbourhood. The roads are neglected and the electricity poles are dangerous. A funeral coaches goes past a child who is trying to fly a kite. The coffin is covered by Turkish flag. The camera observes the streets through the streets passed by the coffin. The coffin is buried in the graveyard. Celal comes to the graveyard by his car, he is late to the burial. Selim takes his fiancée, Ayşe and they turn back to the poor streets. However, the poor streets and skyscrapers are side by side and intertwined. It is a chaotic scenery. He drops Ayşe at the kindergarten school where she works. Before she says goodbye, Ayşe reminds Selim that it is the last day to pay the mortgage pay. Selim tells her not to worry and that the payment is ready. Selim is in front of the garden door, on the street. He leaves and Ayşe returns to the school. The camera dives into the street behind Selim. He meets Celal. They make jokes with friends. Selim leaves Celal on the street. Celal gives advice to Selim who goes to a job interview. Selim gets on the car and goes to the shopping mall.

In the next street scene, Selim and Celal go to the pigeon club to see Mehmet. Just as they enter the club on a narrow street, they get stuck in the middle of a farewell convoy for soldiers. The cars with Turkish flags scream "ours is the biggest soldier" and loudly toot their horns.

In the third street scene, Celal waits for Selim in the back street of the kindergarten. Selim gives the money to Ayşe. He also presents a solitaire ring to her. He meets Celal who waits for him on the street. They quickly go to see the Master for whom they run the parking lot. The summer sun is the source of hope. However, the garden they use as a garden is an indication of the complicated days upcoming. They finally arrive and the master punishes one of his workers by squeezing his hand between the doors of the car since he is angry with him. The master is angry because he has taken opiate drugs. They talk about work and the fight at the club. The master tells him to be careful and not to argue with anyone. The camera is mobile at the eye level; this creates a feeling that it is one of them. The camera is directed toward those working on the streets, the bully, quarrelsome, Muslim, heterosexual Turkish men. The master gets on the car. He has a bodyguard and a driver. He sits behind and there are men who open the door for him. The camera focuses on the Turkish flag sticker on the car. Selim leaves Celal on the street and steps on the gas.

While they want to join the tender for the security of the shopping mall, Sait who is still responsible for the security threatens them. Throughout all these proceedings, the background is always the streets where danger, threat and masculinity are reproduced. While they argue with each other, they buy bird feed and get on their car parked beside the feed shop on the street. The car is an orange Doğan. It is written on it “my orange angel.” The car is sort of the room of the street house where they live. The upper voice is that of Selim’s who sings an arabesque song on the boys playing on the street. “Think, life resembles a dream just for once. I know those hard times I experienced very well. Realities cannot be hidden. On the last days of my life, I still love life.” The upper voice comes from the roof where there are pigeons. We go into the roof through cut-off fiction. The streets and the roofs are the only places of living for Selim. The chief calls Selim and Celal into the street, their friend Taylan is to join the army.

In the next scene, we witness a male entertainment when they see off the prospective soldier. There is a Turkish flag on the back of Taylan. The camera strolls among them. It is just like one of these men. They dance with a flourish of trumpets. They throw up and hold back Taylan. On the other side, Celal examines a luxurious car. Another sign of masculinity is passion for cars. The convoy starts the farewell; the cars are covered by Turkish flags. The frenzy and noise of “ours is the biggest soldier” dominate the streets of Istanbul. Then, all the men play streetball. The entertainment goes on at its full speed. They are complained to the police. The police come and interfere. While Celal wants to get rid of the gun in his back, it gets fired. They escape from the police through the narrow streets framed by the walls protecting the villas in the rich neighbourhood. However, the police have arrested the Chief. They get a taxi. Meanwhile, Ayşe, Selim’s girlfriend is lost. They visit the Chief at night so that he can help them to find Ayşe. They find the Chief in the roof of a squatter building. Ayşe has been abducted by the security mafia, Sait. They die since they are attacked by Sait’s doberman dogs. One of Sait’s workers who Celal beats in the club dies, as well.

This film ends with a funeral prayer in the mosque. There are three coffins in the mosque. Two pigeons fly in the sky for Celal and Selim. The film starting with the burial scene ends

with the funeral prayer in the courtyard of the mosque. In the last scene, a pigeon is being eaten by a sea gull.

The tender has been won by Mehmet who cooperates with Sait.

BORNOVA BORNOVA: Salih and Hakan (Fahri) who spend their days in front of the local store saying “wish life smiled at us one day” are like brothers. Hakan has recently returned from the army and his career plans to become a footballer has died on the vine, so he is unqualified, unemployed and idle. He waits to be a taxi driver. Salih, the neighbourhood psychopath, is the only person who listens to him and gives him advices. Salih who has a good and educated family has got involved in many illegal affairs. Everyone around is afraid of him. A high school student, Özlem who Hakan is “mad about” but cannot talk to is also afraid of Salih. Murat who is a doctoral student and writes erotic fantasies to make a living is Salih’s childhood friend. He tells Hakan an about something erotic between Salih and Özlem. Hakan is disappointed. Since he is confused, he walks toward Özlem’s house in order to learn everything. Özlem gets frightened when she sees him. However, nothing is as it has been told. The course of events unfolds hereafter. (<http://www.bornovabornovafilmi.com/Sinopsis>).

Not Izmir’s but Bornova’s’ girls are really dangerous and are lords of the streets: The film opens with two boys riding a bicycle fast through the street. The camera shoots the exciting amusement of the children closely. We see a mature man, smoking and pushing his motorbike, gazes at the street passed by those guys.

On the back from the graveyard, İhsan drops Hakan at the beginning of the street. The film has started.

In the third street scene, we see Salih and Hakan repairing a motorbike in front of the local store at the corner of the street. Hakan sees Özlem among the parked minibuses, private cars and taxis. He tells about it to Salih excitedly. They get into an argument on women. Salih chases the girl and snipes her. Hakan is excited to death. He passionately loves Özlem, though from a distance. He is mad about her. Yet, he does not have any money. His only hope is to be a taxi driver. Salih works on the motor but fails. The camera monitors them from far away. It follows what goes on on the street. Customers go into and out of the local store and cars pass through the street. It is a hot summer day. The camera approaches Hakan and Salih. Sitting on the walls of the garden surrounding the building, they talk about the football match. Hakan has not been accepted to the Altay stadium. Salih asks him to question why he has not been admitted although he played in the team for five years. Hakan has been too seriously injured to play football again. To Salih, he has confronted by various deceptions, which brought his career to an end. Yet, he has not claimed his own rights. It is medically not possible for him to recover, as well. He is a good hearted man, which is the reason why he has gone through so many problems. However, this should not go on like this. He needs a strike, as well. He tells about what happned to him the previous day. He was buying sunflower from a vendor, but he fought with someone who refusedd this. Just at that moment,

the policeman comes to ask what goes on. Salih slides over saying that they are just friends. He does this in order not to get disrupted, but it is already disrupted. Salih and the others play with what has remained. They start to talk about the girl Hakan likes, again. Salih tries to ride his broken motorbike. They push it. Hakan gets off the wall to go to the local store.

In the store, Hakan and his two friends start to talk about Salih who is one of the “stupid” bullies in the neighbourhood. While they are talking about one of Salih’s cases, a bubble of images appears and Salih is seen swinging a knife on his motorbike.

In another street scene, Hakan reads newspaper on the wall beside the store. Murat comes. He asks about Salih. Salih has left nothing behind for Murat. Hakan does not interfere in such affairs. He is happy that Hakan is going to be a taxi driver. Yet, it is a difficult job. Still, Hakan is going to do this job, otherwise they will not let them get married. Then, Murat asks for Özlem. He adds that he should not listen to Salih about such love affairs. Hakan defends Salih. However, Murat knows Salih better. He is his childhood friend and they have many common memories. Murat sits next to Hakan and tells about these memories. Murat who writes erotic fantasies to make a living is Salih’s childhood friend. He tells Hakan about something between Salih and Özlem, which he later uses as an erotic fantasy. This happens in Özlem’s house, above the tireman. Hakan gets so sad and furious. He leaves. He seeks refuge on roads, parks, streets and bazaars.

In the sixth street scene, we see Özlem walking furiously although his boyfriend is just behind her. The boy tries to tease her, but Özlem does not hear anything since she is so angry. The subjective camera follows both and underlines the tension moving together with them. Salih bullies this boy in a billard hall, which leads to a fight between him and Özlem. To Özlem, boys from the Anatolian high school draw close to the girls in Bornova only to amuse themselves. She furiously kicks the boy’s sexual organ and walks away.

In the next street scene, Hakan is monitored strolling around the streets. Özlem tells her about the reality. Salih tries to rape her, but he cannot manage due to his lack of sexual impotence. This is not like the fantasy romanced by Murat. Yet, he threatens Özlem to use drug. Now, Özlem asks Hakan to kill Salih. Thereupon, Hakan is again on the streets, in abandoned hoses, on fields and in parks. He is struggling against an internal feud.

In the seventh scene, Murat and Salih sit on the wall and chat and drink beer. They talk about sweet nothings and themselves. Salih tells about a fantasy that Murat can use. The camera shoots on the waist line. Salih lives off his parents’ money. He has been jailed for as many years as he has lived. However, he notes that someone must carry out the illegal affairs of the rich. The only thing he wants is to be protected when he goes through bad patches. His goal is to Holland or German. There, life is much more beautiful as far as his friends have told. Everybody wears leather jacket, there. They play for high stakes. They do not sell drugs to three or five students. There, you are a Turk and different while here you are nothing. Meanwhile, Hakan approaches from behind. He joins them. It is twilight and gets dark in the evening. Salih makes fun of Hakan as a prospective taxi driver. Murat notes that it is a virtue to be able to work. Salih gives Hakan a knife. He gives it adding that driving a taxi is

dangerous. He mentions an event that took place two years ago. While driving a taxi two years ago, he is assaulted by two drunkards. These guys who create social unrest on the streets get on his car and ask for day rate. They set off and Salih does not want to get into hot waters. He catches one of the drunkard's eyes with which he gets angry. Then, Salih speeds up. A quarrel takes place in the car. The drunkard and his friends speak in Kurdish. Salih knows how to defend himself with his knife. He cuts the drunkard on the back of his neck and chases him. Perhaps, he is dead. The knife he uses that knife is this knife that he gives Fahri. He gives it in case anything dangerous takes place. Just as Murat decides to leave, Fahri says that he has a fantasy and he wants to tell about it to them. Murat refuses, but Salih wonders and insists that he listens to Fahri's fantasy together with him. His fantasy is about a woman, 45 years old, who seduces him under the colour of asking for help in the market. The woman has a sexual intercourse with her son, yet the son cannot endure and escapes. Murat notes that this is so Oedipal. The woman is Salih's mother, aunt Gülseren. Salih attacks Fahri. Fahri kills Salih with his knife. Fahri disappears into the darkness of the street. With his crippled leg, he runs towards the camera and smiles.

Conclusion

The films analyzed in this study build representations that reconstruct the patriarchal and authoritarian mentality in an unmitigated way. The main characters that act as policemen, taxi drivers, unemployed, carpenters, private security guards, car parkers, pigeoners and imams lead a life of low or middle class. All of them are heterosexual, (Sunni) Muslim and Turkish. While the streets are a realm of pursuit, infliction of violence, confrontation and punishment, being a Turk is always appreciated. This mentality is unraveled in all films at the same time. Authority as a bond between not equal to each other is clearly fictionalized in the films *Av Mevsimi* and *Bornova Bornova*. The social structure in which Muslim Turks are bonded to each other with blood ties manifests itself within patriarchy. This situation is more clearly built in such films as *Çakal*, *Ejder Kapanı*, *Kara Köpekler Havlarken*, *Kurtlar Vadisi-Filistin* and *New York'ta Beş Minare*.

The patriarchal and authoritarian mentality in the films are in an interaction with the codes of gender. Trust, the superior power to judge others, the ability to discipline and the capacity to inflict fear are intrinsic to the authoritarian characters in films. The target of having authority turns patriarchal hegemony into images of power. For example, the policeman İdris acting in *Av Mevsimi* always shows his identity card when it is not understood that he is a policeman during a chase. In *Bornova Bornova*, the power provided by the Turkish identity abroad is underlined. In *Ejder Kapanı*, the police officer (Kurd) Celal tries to settle his account with the government due to its unfairness against the powerless; however, this is stressed out to be a childish attempt in the film. His superior, (Circassian) Abbas reads this as father-son story. At the end of the film, while Celal commits suicide, Abbas goes to the mosque. In the film *Kara Köpekler Havlarken*, the passion for cars is coded as an image of power for patriarchy. The image of power is associated with richness and welfare and thus negated when Israel is a

matter of fact as a Jewish state. The streets are Muslims' as people who are exposed to violence (Kurtlar Vadisi-Filistin). In New York'ta Beş Minare, the most distracting cinematography is that the camera moves so fast in New York, relatively more slowly in Istanbul and with a flash-back in Bitlis.

The back and narrow streets of Istanbul, mobile vendors, prostitutes, the abandoned buildings of Izmir, fields, parks, men who question their existence, imams, the danger, filth and narrowness of the suburbs, male children playing balls and riding bikes, female children playing hopscotch, farewell ceremonies for soldiers, the crowded and neglected streets of Palestine, the rich and well-kept streets of New York, the murders committed mercilessly reproduce the patriarchal and authoritarian mentality again and again. This is the projection of dominant culture in Turkey today.

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Representation of Lake Urmia Crisis in Iranian Documentaries

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Introduction

Environmental issues, despite their increasing importance as one of the major factors of sustainable development and their serious threats in Iran, do not seem to be a significant part of the society's concerns.

Although, various and frequent crisis with non-compensable damages have occurred all over the country, only rare instances have been able to become a public demand and to take the authorities responsible.

In this context and according to the importance of citizens' environmental awareness and its role in people's conceptions of the environment, environmental sensibility and taking actions along with environmental values, this paper studies the representation of environmental crisis, with an special focus on the Lake Urmia crisis, in Iranian documentaries.

Lake Urmia, as the world's second largest salt water lake, has dried up 6 meters in the past 13 years and can impose vital risks on the area's wildlife and people.

The reactions to Lake Urmia crisis have been different and sometimes contradictory in official and unofficial media. In this research, the performances of these two categories of media in representing the issue are investigated by agenda setting theory, propaganda and apologia concepts in communication. We have used the rhetorical analysis as the method to understand the differences between the two categories.

Environmental Communication

The starting point of this study is the field of environmental communication, which is considered as a significant scope in development communication and has attracted lots of attention from humanists and rhetoricians.

The Environmental Communication Commission of the National Communication Association (NCA) defines this field as studying "the link between communication practices and environmental affairs." The way we come to know, and to know about, the environment and environmental issues (range from climate change, nuclear power and agricultural biotechnology, to media portrayals of 'nature' and 'environment'), are mostly affected by communications. Hence, our beliefs and knowledge about the environment and the ways in which we give meaning, view, perceive, value and relate to it, both as individuals and as cultures or societies, are provided by the media. Therefore, major communications media are the central public arena through which we become aware of environmental issues and the way in which they are addressed, contested and resolved (Hansen, 2011: 8-9).

In addition, the media play a special role in activating perception processes such as *problem and risk perception* and *environmental awareness*, which influence environmental behavior (Artl et al., 2011: 48). Therefore, communicating the environmental issues helps shape public and political perceptions, and thus, advocates the corresponding of responses or actions. The contributions in this special issue demonstrate the importance of understanding how 'the environment' and environmental issues are constructed and contested across various media forms and communication practices, and across diverse social and political actors (Hansen and Doyle, 2011: 6).

Environmental Communication in Developing Countries

Sustainable development, as the dominant paradigm of development at the regional and local levels, is defined as "meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs" by the World Commission on Environment and Development(1987).

Most of development theorists, environmentalists, academics, aid agencies, and nongovernmental organizations concentrate on this idea and make efforts to resolve the environmental crisis around it (Klassen and Greis, 1993: 294),(Castro, 2004: 195). However, as Lee noted, past attempts in studying environmental communication tend to focus on

Western samples, where the 'environment', particularly in the cast of 'climate change', has become one of the key public and political concerns for more than three decades (Lee, 2008: 147), (Hansen, 2011: 8).

However, while "there is now a significant body of research on the communication and publicity practices of sources of environmental messages as well as on environmental journalism and the practices of journalists" (Hansen, 2011:10) in the West, in Iran and other developing countries, little scholarly work has been done on environmental communication and education.

Regarding this lack of theory and practice about environmental mediation, communication and education in developing countries, with their exclusive requisites and characteristics, this investigation focuses on how the environment is communicated visually in Iran.

Environmental Issues in Iran¹

Iran, the 18th largest country in the world, has a population of around 75 million. It is a country of particular geopolitical significance owing to its location in three zones of Asia (West, Central,

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran>

and South). It consists of lots of forests, deserts, salt lakes and plains. Moreover, Iran is one of the globe's most mountainous countries. Thus, there is a large variety in climate, flora and fauna.



Source: Google Map

Iran is also a developing country and as a regional power, holds an important position in international energy security and world economy as a result of its vast reserves of oil and natural gas. Iran is the second largest owner of proven natural gas reserves and the fourth largest owner of oil reserves.

Indeed, there are significant environmental issues in Iran. Some of them are:

- Wildlife extinction:

Iran had lost all its Asiatic Lion and the now extinct Caspian Tigers by the earlier part of the 20th century.

Asiatic Cheetah or Iranian Cheetah is another famous member of Iranian wildlife which now is critically endangered.

- Wetlands' problems:

Iran possesses 63 wetlands, with unparalleled global biodiversity in the region, which meet one or more Ramsar² criteria for international importance.

² The Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources (<http://www.ramsar.org>).

Thus, the government and the UNDP organized a seven years program, National Project of Protecting Wetlands, to create an enabling environment and conditions that provide for recovery and development of wetland areas in Iran.

- Air, land, water and food pollution:

Like any other developing country, inhabitants of Tehran, the capital of the country, and other large cities are faced with poor air quality, waste management issues and drinking water concerns.

Lake Urmia³

This study concentrates on the Lake Urmia as its case. Lake Urmia, the second largest salt lake in the world, is located in the northwestern Iran, near its border with Turkey. There are more than 36 cities and 3,150 villages with more than 5 million inhabitants around the lake. The Lake is a National Park ranked among the largest Iranian Ramsar sites, and a UNESCO declared Biosphere Reserve.

Recent drought and other factors such as construction of Kalantari Bridge (the causeway dividing the lake into half) and some non-specialized dams by the government, and digging lots of illegal wells by indigenous people, jeopardize the future existence of the shallow Lake Urmia. Consequently, the annual amount of water the lake has received decreased significantly in the past 13 years and it has dried up about 6 meters.

Shrinkage of this vast hypersaline lake, measuring roughly 5000 square kilometers in extent, imposes vital risks on the area's wildlife and people. Certainly, more than 13 million people, in East and West Azerbaijan and also Kurdistan provinces, will be affected by this environmental disaster. For instance, salt storms, which threat agricultural farms and cause respiratory diseases, will damage local economy and force indigenous people to immigrate to other areas.



Satellite images of Lake Urmia, in 1998 and 2011, Source: NASA

³ Also known as **Lake Orumiyeh**

The Representation of the Crisis

The mediated reactions to the Lake Urmia crisis have been different and sometimes contradictory. Governmental news agencies, national and local television channels, freelance journalists, active bloggers and foreign (governmentally prohibited) broadcasters provided discrepant interpretations of the incident, considered it in sundry aspects and more than an environmental catastrophe, but as a political or even an ethnical issue.

Many environmental problems are rarely perceived directly by human senses. In particular, the causes and long-term effects of environmental problems lie beyond personal experience. Moreover, media play the role of connecting single observation with a general problem, as the outcome of interpretation process (Artl et al., 2011: 48).

The possibilities of documentary as a mode of environmental communication have yet to be addressed in the study of environmental media. Therefore, in this paper, our focus is on studying the documentaries produced about the case in past 5 years, both inside and outside of the country. We have divided them into two classes: (a) Official documentaries and (b) unofficial ones⁴. By the official category, we mean documentaries which have been produced by the Iranian government or in corporation with it. Conversely, the unofficial category is composed of documentaries which have been produced by the NGOs, individuals or foreign agencies.

The Methodology and Sample

With emphasis on ‘visual analysis’, we applied the rhetorical analysis to understand the differing qualities between the two aforementioned categories and discourses.

The samples have been chosen from totally 10 documentaries produced about the issue in the past 5 years. Two documentaries are chosen from each category:

- *Official* :
 - *Aghlar Gozal* (The Beautiful Lake Is Crying); National Project of Protecting Wetlands (in Persian)
 - *The Last Breath*; National Television of Iran (in Persian)
- *Unofficial* :
 - *Dayanmasin OreE Azerbaijanin* (The Heart of Azerbaijan Shouldn't Stop); Reza Abdi Behrouz (Azeri)
 - *Thirsty Lake*; Anil Institute, Produced in Canada (Azeri with English subtitle)

⁴ To explain the necessity of such a categorization, it is crucial to consider the critical position of the government in developing countries which plays the main role in different arenas, range from economy to education and from industry to culture, cinema and religion. Moreover, the most powerful media are governmental in these countries.

The Analysis Results

To conduct the analysis, we discuss the analogous features of each sort and compare the two discourses to elucidate fundamental differences.

- 1- In official category, there is a major emphasis on the nature agent as the main factor leading to the crisis: they point out up to 73% as the role of scarcity which can be clarified by apologia and propaganda processes. In contrast, in unofficial category, the maximum role of the nature estimated less than 15%.

Instead, they introduce the mismanagement of the government as the major contributing factor of the plight. These nongovernmental products enumerate government's long-term flaws and accuse it to exacerbating the desiccation of Lake Urmia.

Yet, what they represent is not the whole story: they do not mention the governmental efforts to save the lake and neglect all its programs and even its benevolent feeling, which could be explained by agenda-setting theory. In sum, they represent a biased portrayal of the arduousness.

- 2- In official discourse, the dearth of Lake Urmia is not considered as a *crisis* or at least a man-made crisis. It is an unpleasant event which has occurred mainly by the force of the nature. To such a degree, in this point of view, the audience is faced with a kind of *determinism*.

On the other hand, unofficial discourse deliberates the problem as a synthetic crisis and to some extent, it tries to make a claim and promote public demand on the issue. In fact, in unofficial discourse *creating sympathy* is a bold feature: the producer invites viewers to sympathize with people and nature and thus, take actions.

- 3- Official discourse slights the sequences completely of the crisis: It is an *end* to some pleasant memories and there is just a feeling of *regret* about what has happened. Contrarily, in the second set the audience is faced with a *fear* of the aftermaths. Therefore, this discourse considers the crisis as an *outset*.

Official Discourse	Unofficial Discourse
Determinism (not a <i>crisis</i>)	Creating sympathy, making a claim and inviting to take actions
Feeling of <i>regret</i>	<i>Fear</i> of the risks
The event as an <i>end</i>	The crisis as an <i>outset</i>

To put the issue into perspective, neither the official documentaries nor the unofficial ones represent a fair perfect image of the reality about the environmental issue. Conversely, they lead to a confusing context for the audience, disregarding their responsibilities as an environmental media to enhance public awareness. Squarely, in such an environmental crisis, public opinion should be apprehensive about the future, with no *fear*, and should know the real causes, with not just *regrets*, but to cast a light on future experiences.

The Conclusion

The study provided insights on environmental communication in Iran. In the reviewed case, there was no sign of developing an environmental communication strategy for the Lake Urmia area and generally, for the country.

Therefore, there is a substantial need to provide an executive multi-aspect environmental communication, mediation and education strategy in Iran.

Regarding to the principal function of media in environmental crisis, producers, journalists and NGO participants should be educated to play their role effectually. They construct the notion of nature, environment, climate change and the human task of protection.

Therefore, there is a need for rethinking about the role of the media in environmental crisis, considering a developing country as the context, with all their exclusive requisites and characteristics.

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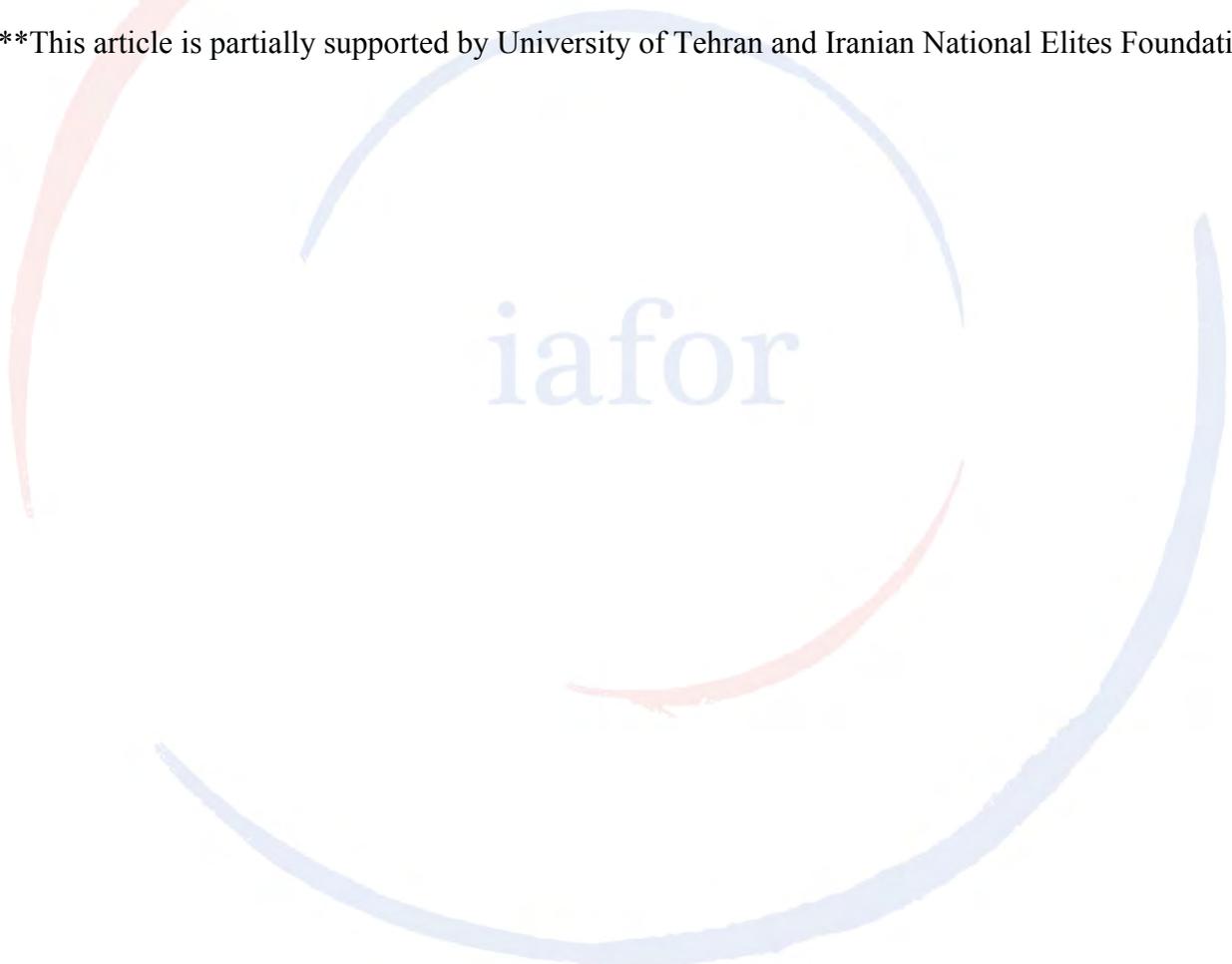
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Lao Film Developing Approach to Industrial System

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Abstracts

The Lao film industry is now in its budding stage and gradually on its way to play a bigger role in the country's entertainment business. "Good Morning, LuangPrabang"—a collaboration and joint-investment between Laos and Thailand in 2008. Considered the first commercial movie in 33 years, its success marked the turning point for the Lao film industry. Nonetheless, the industry has so far progressed with no clear directions. Research shows that in order for a strong and steady growth, the industry needs to improve the following areas. 1) Input: Human resources, more emphasis should be put into film studies as opposed to the almost solely on-the-job learning today. Equipment, Equipment used is usually rented from Lao companies. Laos still lacks its modern technology equipment rental services. Funding, the industry has limited budgets for movie production. Funding is mostly from the private sector. Fundraising from the private and public sectors should be encouraged. 2) Process: Production, The movie production procedure is clearly planned out but, unfortunately, not followed. If fixed, work efficiency will greatly improve. Marketing, Too little market research has been conducted, especially in regard to viewers' needs and broadcast channels. 3) Output: Traditionally, Lao films tell about everyday life anecdotes and stories that offer nothing new. Different plots can give the audience more depth and new experiences. 4) Outcome: There are as few as three cinemas in Laos nationwide. Developing more distribution channels can bring in more revenue and rescue the industry. Nonetheless, copyright laws are not strictly enforced, leading to a large number of movie piracies. Even though Lao films are not highly profitable, the trend is looking up thanks to growing broadcast and distribution channels. National and international film festivals as well as nominations in film contests can lift the industry to another level and bring prestige and pride to the industry.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the world of globalization, the media is powerful and plays a significant role in spreading information. In terms of communication, movies are a highly powerful media source because they utilize realistic images and audios to convey ideas that have the potential to easily convince an audience. However, the great leap forward that communication technology has made has decreased the role of movies. Other types of entertaining media provide a diversity of access and convenience; as a result, people tend not to go to cinemas where they have to pay for tickets. At the same time, the technological progressions in communication have also resulted in violations to movie copyrights and have led to illegal crimes of selling copies of pirated movies. In fact, seeing a movie at a cinema is a way to support the entertainment industry and let the viewer appreciate the arts better than by watching movies on household DVD players.

In the past, according to world film history, movies have played many different roles including promoting political service, act as propaganda, and act as a reflection of the society and culture. However, in the present time, an important characteristic of movies is how they play important roles in the entertainment industry. In the Southeast Asian world, movies have traveled here for a decade. It might be said that movies are the result of western colonization. Moreover, Southeast Asian movies have become a reflection of each nation's society and culture, as well as an integration of major cultures by adapting them into Southeast Asian cultures.

This also happened to Lao movies. In the beginning, according to the country's communistic rule, the role of Lao movies was to communicate some of the state's ideologies to its people. But nowadays, it could be said that Lao movies have entered into the beginning stages of transitioning into the industrial system and the roles that Lao movies play have expanded widely and continuously to the entertainment industrial system, without any clear concept of development. If Lao movie production could be turned into an entertainment industrial business, it would require significant human labor with large numbers of employment, and it would help to generate income and money flow within Lao's domestic and international industries.

Due to the lack of continuous total system improvement and the unpopularity of making movies in the country, the status of the Lao movie industry in the beginning stage still requires several factors and necessities that would help it become a fully industrialized system. In addition, Lao people prefer to watch foreign movies and buy illegal movies that could be easily found at cheap prices.

The trend of economic and industrial development is what the ASEAN Economic Community is focusing on since it would help them increase levels of competition, gain power in negotiations, and create opportunities particularly with trade and investment with other communities in the world. Information technology is one of 11 priority sectors that ASEAN Economic Community considers of importance. Movies are considered as one type of information technology that have a high potential to be developed and progressed. Movies are also considered cultural products with unique identities and differences according to the culture and historical background of each nation. The initiative of developing Lao movies into the creative industry by using cultural sources as a selling point has become consistent with the ASEAN Charter of promoting its identity through the fostering of greater awareness of the diverse culture and heritage of the region (Chairat Trakarnratsinti, 2009). The ASEAN Charter is the first constitution for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

since it was organized 40 years ago. This is also the first time that the legality of ASEAN was made.

Thus, it is essential to have an understanding of how to guide Lao movie development into the industrial system since movies are a significant form of economic revenue. Moreover, it is necessary to study this matter because Lao movies also have the opportunity to grow more than in the past when the country was ruled under a socialist system and the medias' freedom was not provided. The single-party political rule, especially when that party follows the Marx-Lenin Doctrine, has resulted in the limitation of the mass media because it must follow the party's requests and be responsible to society. The mass media has been reorganized by holding to the Soviet media principles since the country's rule changed in 1975. However, in the present state, the freedom of the media has been improved in order to join the ASEAN Economic Community. There have also been new generations of people who are interested in making movies and have earnestly invested in the beginning transition of the film industry; one such example is the creation of the Lao Art Media Limited Company.

The research for development of Lao movies into the entertainment industrial system could lead to added economic value and increase the country's employment rate and generate more income for people. Understandably, there will be obstacles and problems, as well as areas for improvement, during the transition of Lao filmmaking into the entertainment industry. Therefore, the research for development is an initiative for systematically solving the above problems that have to be fixed as soon as possible before Lao PDR is dominated by globalization. The results from the study would allow the people who are involved in the Lao film industry to see the advantages and importance of developing this industry. In turn, they would help in with the movie development industry and create a mechanism for preventing failures and then use the nation's cultural capital to create creative economic revenue so that Lao PDR can grow to be high quality and sustainable.

2. LITERATURE REVIEWS

There is a minority of academic studies done on Lao films and mostly the existing ones are historical studies. The key research done on Lao films was conducted by Thongpan Sompawong (1999) and it was about the development of mass media in Lao People's Democratic Republic during 1950-1997. According to the study, Lao film's evolution consisted of 3 periods:

In the first period (1950-1975), there were only 8 movies produced in Laos. Two of them were entertainment films, and the rest were documentaries, newsreels, or political cinemas that portrayed the fight for independence and the seizing of administrative power. The majority of these films were produced in the Lao language. All of these films were made with the purpose of being projected in cinemas and mobile cinemas. Most of the films in Laos were acting as propaganda and were used as a tool to improve the people's culture.

In the second period (1976-1985), the employees who worked within the film circles had come together as one group, and it was the beginning of a huge change that turned into the abolishment of the Lao Kingdom film production unit. Cinemas became lifeless and stopped showing movies. Some of them were having trouble because they were losing profit since they had to make sure every film was suitably following the new government's regulations.

In the third period (1986-1997), or the New Thinking Policy period, the Lao government realized that films could be used as significant instruments in terms of advertising and public relations. They realized that they could use films or movies for the purpose of training and educating about the people's way of life and the country. They expected to use movies to present good things to the public as they used to be able to assemble masses of people to join the movement during the national liberation. In addition, due to the fact that they realized how the power of movies could help to convince an audience, the government then used films to advertise and promote Lao influences on other countries.

It is likely that no academic group has ever researched the information presented in this paper, *The Guide to Develop Lao Films into the Entertainment Industrial System*, given that Lao movies have just started to grow in the entertainment business.

Also, the Lao movie industry was still considered to be in the beginning period of development when the commercial film named "Sabaidee Luang Prabang, which premiered in 2008, created cooperation between Thailand and Laos.

In this research, I have created a framework of analysis by integrating the concepts of Patamawadee Jaruworn (2011), who noted that the film industry structure consisted of 3 main parts including production, distribution and exhibition, and the results of a study done by Jeeraboon Thasanabanjong (2002) on Thai film standards which showed that the industry is divided into 4 elements, as follows:

1. Input; including of personnel, finance, and material
2. Process Factors; including the production process, the support process, the market process, the project management process, and the financial management process.
3. Output
4. Outcome

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To study the approach to develop Lao films into the entertainment industrial system

4. METHODOLOGY

Lao Film Developing Approach to Industrial System is both qualitative and quantitative research. Data was collected through multiple method integration. The research methodology was designed as follows:

4.1 *Participants*

The sample groups selected for this study were comprised of 3 parts:

- 1) Individuals: 1.1 Key informants: academics, politicians who were related to Lao films, 1.2 Practitioners: group of people who were in the Lao filmmaking, and 1.3 Related group: Lao movie supporters, the audience
- 2) Document
- 3) The movies showed in Laos in the whole entertainment industrial system

4.2 Research Tools and Materials

The methods/tools used in data collection were comprised of structured in-depth interviews. The questions were clearly organized into categories. The non-participant observation approach was used to record the results from sample observations; for example, the filmmaking process and the behaviors of cinema service users.

4.3 Data Collection

The data collected was mainly consistent with the research objective. The following steps were used in order to get the participants to answer the research questions accurately:

1. Asking for participation from the target group who were basically involved with the topic in Lao PDR, as well as all similar parties who were able to provide information in this research.
2. Making official contact with the target groups by using formal request letters when requesting and making appointments for data collection
3. Going to the target area in order to collect the data and using the methods/tools approved by experts
4. After collecting, the data analysis shall be made in order to get the results and verify the accuracy of the data and information. If there is a case of incompleteness, the researcher shall redo the data collection.

4.4 Data Analysis

In this qualitative research, all data was analyzed following this conceptual framework:

1. Basic Data Analysis: Classify the analyzed data according to the data suitability, which is the basic fact of phenomenon explanation.
2. Theoretical Analysis: Analyzing the collected data following the framework, but focusing on the theory related to films, development, and entertainment industry.
3. Comparative Data Analysis: Using comparative methods to compare the data in each phenomenon. For example, while the researcher observed events, he/she classified the data collected into certain types of events. In order to identify any relationships or involvement, the comparative data analysis shall be conducted.

5. RESULT

The results revealed approaches of developing Lao films into industrial system in the following ways:

1. Input

1.1 Personnel: The majority groups of people who produce films are not educated about films/movies directly from academic institutions because there has not been an ongoing filmmaking curriculum in the Lao education system. However, there exists a major or field of study named Mass Media Communication that is similar to filmmaking but has only been in existence for less than 5 years. Therefore, Lao filmmakers learn from directly practicing with Lao film producers who studied in other countries or from foreign filmmaking groups such as Thai filmmaking groups who have jointly produced films with Laos. Besides, there have been numbers of filmmaking cooperation with foreign countries,

such as the United States of America and Japan, which have helped to educate those people who are interested in making films.

Thus, the guide to develop Lao personnel to be skillful in filmmaking, even though the country's education on filmmaking is not strong, is by promoting and developing the human resources Laos has by following these steps:

Lao filmmakers should rely on the participation of foreign film producers, for instance, Thailand, which has a similar language. The Lao state should be open to opportunities or encourage foreign countries to invest in film production, which could help improve the filmmaking skills of Lao filmmakers. By offering facilitates or privileges, Laos could persuade skillful filmmakers to open up the Lao movie industry and, thus, the Lao film human resources could be well practiced.

1.2 Budget: The budget in Lao filmmaking is low, so film production is made with limitations and is quite flexible due to the suitability. Mostly the budget is comprised of investments made by private companies or, in case of possible shared market, might be a joint cooperation/investment between Lao companies and foreign companies, including Thai companies.

Therefore, the approach for budget development in Lao films is that the Lao film industry must have the support from both the state and private sectors so that it could produce quality products and gain more attention. A major possibility is joint cooperation in filmmaking with private Thai companies because then the films will be shown in both Laos and Thailand.

1.3 Tools: at present, in Lao film production there are only private companies that have been making movies continuously and who have a complete set of basic filmmaking tools to use in small production work. However, if in the future the Lao film industry has grown and can produce diverse genres of film or does bigger productions, it might be necessary to have high technology filmmaking tools. In terms of filmmaking tools, I have seen that Laos is quite ready to develop and use better filmmaking tools when the time comes.

2. Process

2.1 Filmmaking process

According to general film production standards, Lao filmmaking process is comprised of 3 steps: pre-production, production, and post-production. However, the key observation in the filmmaking process shows that currently the entire decision-making process of filmmaking is held by a small group of people. This system needs to be improved. Having different opinions present would help to improve the product. However, currently the majority of film workers typically work by following orders from above, and thus this has caused a lack of conceptual diversity. The reason why there is a lack of diversity is because film production directors and producers are the same group of people. Film workers are employed to work and learn from the group of people mentioned above, so they cannot express their creative opinions. So if the human resource component of filmmaking can improve their skills, it would impact film production improvement as well.

2.2 Support Process

2.2.1 Marketing Process

These days, the marketing process in the Lao film industry is comprised of analysis, marketing, and operation. However, none of these are working systematically and deeply. In particular, there is a weak analysis of what movies the audience wants to see and the target's behavior that could be used in analyzing the marketing plans. At the same time, the marketing strategies that film producers use are still the outdated ones that have never been evaluated on their success. Nowadays, there have been new communication technologies invented to help with marketing quite well. In terms of marketing process, I think that the development approaches should use evaluation research principles in every process, and then, through multiple method integration, use these results in the marketing analysis, the marketing plan for determining the film production's direction, and the systematic marketing plan and process to make films suitable for the audience.

2.2.2 Project Administration Process

It was found that the Lao film producers still adopted an administration structure similar to the way a family works. Due to the inconsistent production, there was a high turnover rate among the employees. So the company's owner or administrator would have to mainly be managing everything. Nevertheless, it was found that their style of working or work hours was scheduled for brief periods of time and that the schedule was not strictly followed. The working style could be flexible and changed according to the suitability. Additionally, due to the fact that human resources were limited, the selection of working teams and dividing work could not be fully made. Mostly, the production control ends up having to control every process of the project administration. In addition, the results indicated that the Lao film production companies should learn about working systematically and adopt the administration principle in order to work more effectively. Additionally, employees should be able to work on their parts with full capacity so that every part can work productively. Furthermore, the entertainment industry should be developed and become stable, and then the systematic administration would help develop a sustainable organization.

2.2.3 Financial Administration Process

In Lao filmmaking, the expense budget used in film production is clearly categorized and the accounting system is made in order to be able to check revenues and expenses. Due to the fact that the budget in investment is not that high, the financial administration has to be frugal. Nevertheless, a project administration that could not follow the plan would rather impact the financial management as well. The findings showed that if the project administration operates based on the plans proposed in this study, financial errors or mistake could be reduced.

3. Output

The number of Lao films made and shown in the country's cinemas is still low. The movie plots are not universal because they usually reflect the internal trends of Laos. When Lao films are showing in cinemas, the ticket price is 15000 kip or 60 baht. This price is higher than foreign movie ticket fees, which are about 10000 kip or only 40 baht. In addition, the cinemas in Laos cannot provide enough space for the movies to be shown and to make

enough profit or even to cover the expenses because there are 3 cinemas throughout the country, one in Vientiane, Suvannakhet and one in Pakse. At the same time, there are a lot of pirated movies being sold at lower prices than the cost of seeing them at the cinema.

The key factor of Lao film development approach is that, besides creating movie plots based on the country's context, they should produce storylines that are more interesting and are universal, which would help expand their film market into other countries, such as in Thailand. Moreover, the use of cultural capital in making films would also help create a clearer identity of Lao movies. In the meantime, the government should be stricter in enforcing the Copyright Law in order to prevent the loss of intellectual property.

4. Outcome

These days, the film production system for only showing films in cinemas cannot cover all the expense of the film industry and will keep it from surviving. Therefore, there must be distribution channels for films so that they can continue to generate revenue. Even though it is only once in a while that a Lao movie is released, Lao people will be quite proud and glad to support their movies. I have found the way to achieve development was that the group of people who are in the Lao film industry should enhance Lao movies by submitting their films to film contests or festivals. People who work with or have knowledge about Lao movies should also set up a system for giving awards out in order to help support quality film production because, at present, there are no categories for film awards in Laos at all.

6. CONCLUSION

To develop Lao films into the entertainment industrial system, there needs to be serious support and cooperation from all parties such as state agencies and private film production companies, as well as the Lao people, since this development is a large-scale movement. If these parties do not cooperatively drive and push the development forward together, the opportunity to improve Lao films and incorporate them into the entertainment industrial system will be difficult to accomplish. This research has pointed out what should be improved. Some of the proposed changes might have to wait for the right time in order to be improved since they are related to the state's administrative rule. However, many of the points shown in this research could be put into practice immediately.

Furthermore, this research was conducted regarding the beginning period of the Lao film industry system. Thus, I have some suggestions for the development, both academic and professional.

- 1) Laos should join the ASEAN Economic Community in 2018. Opening the country could bring big change to the economy, politics, society, culture and technology sectors. Thus, Lao films would definitely be impacted from such phenomena. Additionally, this could be a remarkable area to study further.
- 2) If the results from this study are practiced and followed concretely, it would help investigate the development approach that results from this research and would help enhance the knowledge on this topic, both academically and professionally.

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Painting Lives with Light: the Kahlo and the Pollock Biopics

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Introduction

The biopic has long been derided as a propagandist and pedagogical genre, conservative if not reactionary in its nostalgic turning to what is gone, frequently falsifying history for the sake of drama, and often little more than a star vehicle. Leo Lowenthal summed this up succinctly when he characterised magazine biographies as ‘history from the assembly line in form and content, standardised for easy consumption [...] a kind of pseudo-education for the masses, one that reduce[s] history to organised gossip’ (cited in (Custen 67)). The same has been said of biopics. Nevertheless, the biopic remains central to nearly all national cinemas, for it offers fascinating ways of engaging versions of the past for its meaning and impact on the present and the future, versions that deal with issues of personal and collective identity. Moreover, the kinds of lives that are offered for appreciation at any one time, ‘like the earlier lives of Saints’ as George Custen put it, provide valuable insights into the values of a community, what is considered worthy of admiration at any given time and why.

In the research mentioned above, Lowenthal also remarked upon a change between the focus on what he termed ‘idols of production’ as subjects of biographies—that is, military, industry and other conventional ruling elites, nearly always male—to ‘idols of consumption’, or people that became famous on account of their wealth and extravagant lifestyle (cited in Custen 67). He thus characterised the change as a switch from a focus on ‘power through the making of the world’ into ‘power through ownership of its coveted items’, with consumerism replacing community as a way of life (Custen 67). Custen identified a similar trend on biopics.

By the turn of the 21st century, perhaps on account of the major social changes involved in the wide spread of digital media, there were several films that discussed issues of visual representation, and among these a spate of biopics on painters, sometimes by major film directors.¹ The life and work of Artemisia Gentileschi was brought to the screen by French director Anges Mertlet in 1997, while Peter Greenaway took on several projects to celebrate Rembrandt, including a highly original picture on his life in 2008, and Raul Ruiz filmed the somewhat less acclaimed but still interesting *Klimt*, on the latter years of the life of the painter, in 2006. In addition, biopics on Amedeo Modigliani (Davies 2004), Georgia O’Keefe (Hinkley 2009 for TV), and, of course, Frida Kahlo (Taymor 2002) and Jackson Pollock (Harris 2000) were all taken to the screen over the same period.² Due to their subject matter, biopics on painters have the opportunity to highlight questions on the social

¹ Steven Jacobs found the invention of technicolour apparently did arise some interest in representing lives of painters, notably John Huston’s *Mulin Rouge* on Toulouse – Lautrec and Vincent Minnelli’s *Lust for Life*, on Van Gogh. p.52

² Jacobs cites 70 biopics on painters made between 1909 and 2005 (pp180-18), noting most of these are devoted to artists working on the 16th, 17th, 19th and 20th centuries. He also notes the biopic on painters is primarily a European and post-classical genre, flourishing between 1950-60. A few painters have been the subject of more than one biopic. There are 2 on Kahlo—the other one entitled *Frida, Naturaleza Viva* (1983), by Mexican filmmaker Paul Leduc—but only one on Pollock.

role of art, and to foreground some of the concerns that are common to cinema and painting. Greenaway has usefully summarised these as follows: the translation of three dimensions into two, and of metaphor into image; the efficiency of compositional construction; the comparison of the particular with the general; the translation of narrative into a single, all inclusive image; the depiction and representation of movement; and the use of manufactured illusion in the service of the suspension of disbelief. He has further noted the language used to describe painting is often the language used to debate cinema, and vice-versa' (Greenaway 4).

This paper briefly compares how these crucial issues are explored in films on two of the most important painters of the twentieth century mentioned above: Kahlo (1907-1955), and Pollock (1912-1956). At first sight, they would appear to be binary opposites, not only as regards gender and ethnicity, but also as regards technique and subject matter. Pollock developed one of the most radical abstract styles in the history of modern art, namely detaching line from colour, thus redefining received ideas of drawing and painting. Although abstract expressionism is not universally popular, and its connection as a propaganda tool promoted by the CIA has become clear, it cannot be denied that Pollock's work was in a sense iconoclastic and powerful, and it speaks directly to the digital media as it shares much in common with algorithm-driven digital art.³ Kahlo, on the contrary, has become famous for painting, above all, portraits and self-portraits,⁴ still-lives and some non-generic scenes that European critics have labelled surrealist. Drawing from the European painting canon as well as from pre-Hispanic painting from the Mayas and the Aztecs, and from Latin American genres such as the *retablo* (devotional painting based on the Catholic iconography), Kahlo is also famous for hybridity and mixing. Moreover, she was a committed member of the Mexican Communist Party and a political activist, who took part in various demonstrations, hosted Leon Trotsky in her Coyoacan home in Mexico City and had a brief affair with him, becoming a staunch Stalin supporter following Trotsky's assassination.

Nevertheless, there is much that Kahlo and Pollock do share. Both artists were working during the same period, that is, the late 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s, during and after the Second World War, in a highly ideological world in which art was regarded as 'committed', or in other words, frequently used for ideological purposes. Both were acquainted with psychoanalysis, Pollock of the Jungian kind. Both had eventful marriages to gifted artists, Diego Rivera and Lee Krasner respectively, who supported their careers and helped them thrive. In addition, Pollock knew the work of Mexican muralists, including José Clemente Orozco, and indeed Diego Rivera, whom

³ Indeed, an application for the i-pad was developed that gives netzines the opportunity to experience the creation of a Pollock-style painting, 'dripping' variable amounts of colourful inks on a white screen resembling a canvass. See <http://www.jacksonpollock.org>

⁴ While these have often been interpreted as a search for the self, what Jacobs has noted of Rembrandt's self portraits is also applicable to Kahlo's: they were often sold—or given away to friends—and probably served as forms of self-publicity (p. 48).

he observed painting murals at the New Workers' School in the 1930s. In fact, Pollock was introduced to drip and other unorthodox painting techniques in 1936 at the Experimental Workshop of David Alfaro Siqueiros, another Mexican muralist. And what Greenaway said of Pollock is certainly applicable to Kahlo: with their work 'European ascendancy in cultural superiority is finally, decisively and definitively overtaken by the New World with a statement that is critical of all that the European tradition considered valuable' (Greenaway 92). By focusing on non-representational and non-figurative painting in the case of Pollock, and by introducing indigenous subjects, particularly women, and non-Western painting techniques, i.e. centering the margins, in the case of Kahlo.

The Biopics

The biopic is an important genre as one of the ways a cultural myth is shaped and circulated, that is, as a means to introduce characters into the historical narrative of a country and its national identity. The biopic 'narrates, exhibits, and celebrates the life of a subject in order to demonstrate, investigate or question his or her importance in the world' (Bingham 10). It may then be significant that Jackson Pollock and Frida Kahlo entered the popular cultural mythologies of the US and Mexico respectively in this way early in the 21st century.

However, it is also true that there are a variety of reasons why the life of a particular painter is made into a biopic. A key one is the interests of the star, as the artist becomes embodied by, and probably from then on largely identified with, the actor playing him or her. Both Salma Hayek and Ed Harris played major roles bringing *Frida* and *Pollock* into fruition, as they saw these as fitting, and indeed bringing forward, their careers. Harris claimed he took the role following his uncanny likeness to Pollock, while Hayek argued feeling a long-time devotion to Kahlo's work and a fascination for her life. It took them both nearly ten years to have the films made, and both took painting lessons as part of the preparation for their roles. The interests of the art market must also be reckoned. The Kahlo biopic came at a time when her work was fetching astonishing prices for a Latin American artist at major auctions, and the painting entitled *No5, 1948* by Pollock allegedly fetched \$140 million USD in 2006. (Vogel) In addition, the reputation of the artist, preferences of the filmmakers and producers, interests of the national and indeed transnational cinemas and TV networks, copyright issues and the availability of a literary precedent are all important reasons why a biopic on a particular artist is made (Jacobs 42).

The latter definitely played a role in these cases too. Both biopics follow the pattern of 'essential moments' to construct a narrative driven by cause and effect as set in their biographies, *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga* (1989) written by Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, and *Frida* by Hayden Herrera (1983). Thus for Pollock the essential moments are his arrival at Greenwich with his brothers, his meeting Lee Krasner and later marrying her and her managing his career, his meeting patron and collector Peggy Guggenheim and the critic that arguably made his reputation, Clement Greenberg. Fame follows, when he starts the drip painting series, and then demise through neurosis and alcoholism, culminating with the suicidal crash in which a friend of his lover Ruth Kligman who was travelling with them, called Edith Metzger, also died. For Kahlo the narrative is structured around her early

involvement in student socialist circles, the fateful accident she suffered at age 18 that left her unable to walk for a year and in need of 32 surgeries throughout her life, her turbulent marriage to Diego Rivera, their life for a short period in the United States, Trotsky's arrival at their house in Coyoacan and the various health problems that besieged her until her death. Her solo exhibition in Mexico City in 1953, shortly before her death, also features, in fact making it seem more of an achievement than it actually was.

And how do these films navigate the conventions of the genre? It is to this that we now turn. It has been argued that key to interpreting a biopic is the way it accounts for the biographee's talent, what role social structures play in either nurturing or smothering it, and whether institutions such as the family, the church, the school and so on provide support in times of the crises that arise as a result of exerting the talent. The more conservative films present the talent as a natural gift, while progressive ones imply it is a skill, learned through dedication and hard work. Likewise, conservative films, understood as helping to prepare 'average people' to accept their place in the social structure 'by valorising lives they could hope to emulate' (Custen 68), frame the story as a tale of success in the face of adversity, the talent or unusual gift a source of both pain as well as pleasure. Alternatively, when the famous person is an artist, his or her life may also focus on hardship and alienation, following the conception of the artist that became prevalent since the Romantic period, as a tormented social misfit, an outsider, a mad genius and an outcast. Too high a price is paid for being different, it is implied, such as loneliness or even tragedy.

As regards accounting for their talent, both *Pollock* and *Frida* make it clear it was there from birth, and developed largely by self-teaching, even if it is circumstances that ultimately make it flourish. In the case of Pollock, the neurosis he apparently also suffers from birth prompts him to attend psychoanalytic therapies that encourage him to paint as part of the healing process, while for Kahlo it was suffering an accident that left her unable to walk for a year, and unable to study medicine as was initially her will, that was crucial. Being able to respond constructively to misfortune is thus a feature in both artists as depicted here, and the view of art that prevails highlights its therapeutic features—what it does for the artists—above the aesthetic ones—the pleasure its enjoyment brings to others. (In Pollock, in fact, the enjoyment depicted is almost always financial: it is those *collecting* his paintings, rather than simply contemplating them, that truly rejoice). *Pollock* however does conform to received images of the bohemian artist, tortured and at times even insane, ruining family dinners, friendships and working relations. *Frida* on the contrary moves away from this cliché. As Taymor explained: most films on artists are 'drown in angst, grotesque behaviour, and impossible suppositions on how and why the artist creates' (Blumental et al. 2007: 244). She wanted instead to render a portrayal in which Kahlo would come across as a subject with agency and as a creator, for Frida, Taymor argues, created herself (Blumental et al. 2007: 244). Her film does succeed putting this point across, as we continuously see Kahlo overcoming problems and obstacles that even lead her to climb up the pyramid of the Sun in Teotihuacan, an impossible task for someone with a limp.

The family is important in both films, which in a way use the formation of the heterosexual couple to tell a story of romance with an art world background. Antagonistic relations between the artists and members of their families are also drawn from to construct subplots from time to time, Pollock with some of his brothers, or friends, and Kahlo with her mother and her sister Cristina when she has an affair with Kahlo's husband, Rivera.

Last is the very important issue of the way the biopics present the paintings. Seeking to animate the works by editing and camera movements and linking the pieces of art to the life of the artist have long been used as devices to create a narrative dynamic (Jacobs 39). Producing flatness on screen, managing light and chiaroscuro and emphasising the continuity between the artworks and the world in which they were created is common to many painters' biopics. Stylised sets and dazzling colour in an attempt to shape a story world that resembles the artist's paintings also became the norm, in what Steven Jacobs sees as an obligatory component of the films' marketing but also 'an interesting artistic challenge for directors' (Jacobs 53).

Taymor's *Frida* meets the challenge remarkably well. The film is experimental as regards its use of digital animation, including the presentation of five *tableaux vivants* ('Frida and Diego Rivera' 1931; 'Self Portrait with Cropped Hair' 1940; 'The Two Fridas' 1939; 'The Broken Column' 1944; and 'The Dream/The Bed' 1940) that merge the 'real' world with the world of the painting by digital means.



There is also a scroll, evoking Russian constructivist poster art emblematic of the period—and a collage technique used by Kahlo in 'My Dress Hangs There'—which interrupt the narrative and call attention to the film's status as representation. *Pollock*, on the other hand, closely follows the conventions for realism. The paintings are simply filmed in long shots from the point of view of a hypothetical viewer or one of his friends, patrons or relatives. They are either piled up on the floor or hanging on walls where they live. Very little advantage is taken from close up or other techniques that could have 'animated' or brought time into the paintings, and none at all of montage. The only opportunities the film takes to foreground the paintings are two scenes which have the role of 'the break through' in the screenplay, and that is when we see the painter at work. Almost possessed when this happens, he works frantically from start to end, non-stop until an image which he argues was very specifically

imagined from the start and not at all left to chance or ‘accident’ is created. The first such scene makes the viewer ‘witness’ the creation of the mural Pollock painted for Peggy Guggenheim’s apartment in New York.



The second, the creation of *Summer time*, the drip painting with which he was photographed for *Life Magazine* in 1949 now owned by Tate modern.



Colour was the second important missed opportunity for *Pollock*. As Gilles Deleuze persuasively argued, colour, on account of the highly affective response it is able to arouse, has the power to de-stabilize a visual narrative, unbinding time from our linear, and post-industrial revolution way of experiencing it, allowing for a more subjective perception of it, and in a sense, an emancipatory perception (Deleuze 2009). Conveying this would have been crucial for an abstract expressionist painter such as Pollock. As I have argued elsewhere (De La Garza), by contrast, in some scenes of *Frida*, although Taymor never gives colour total ‘freedom’ in the Deleuzian sense, she does give it a prominent role, fitting her subject. The colour scheme, digitally enhanced, closely follows that of her paintings from the period being staged, darker for the early ones, much brighter colours later on. This ‘chromatic paradigm’, one of the ways in which film and painting intersect, ‘is worth mentioning because films which explore colour inevitably raise questions about the relation of film, painting, creativity and femininity’ (Dalle Vacche 183). ‘Only objects placed out of focus register first and foremost as colours [...] Since industry practice habitually applies soft focus to women the identification of colour and femininity is reinforced’ (Coates 2010: 25). Further, the dichotomy between colour and black and white is one of the binary oppositions on which Orientalist discourse has traditionally rested. In Western art criticism, ‘the purging of colour is usually accomplished in one of two ways. In the first, colour is made out to be the property of some foreign body—usually the feminine, the oriental, the primitive, the infantile [...] in the second, colour is

relegated to the realm of the superficial' (Batchelor 2006: 64). While this gesture can be interpreted as a process of self-exoticizing, and understood as part of its tourism promotion efforts, the film nonetheless succeeds in linking colour, femininity and the marginal to creation.

A final point worth mentioning is the way the biopics link their subjects to film. *Frida* employs the film-within-the-film device when we see Kahlo attending a screening of *King Kong* in New York, which Taymor uses to allegorize Diego Rivera's ascent, and subsequent fall, in the city. This was done, Taymor explained, as she found in Kahlo's biography that she enjoyed cinema and frequently attended, particularly horror films. The painter is thus presented as a fellow audience member to those at the theatre, in the act of watching. Pollock on the other hand is introduced as the subject rather than viewer, of the film Hans Namuth made while Pollock was working in 1950. Namuth attempted to capture the whole creative process as Clouzot would later do with Picasso (1955). It is while performing for the camera that Pollock came to feel a phony, the whole process artificial and, at heart, profoundly fake. It is as a result of his encounter with his own image of himself performing while painting—for his was a highly personal style of paint, involving the whole body in a type of dance over massively large canvasses on the ground—that his entire universe decisively collapsed. This recalls Plato's contention that the stage, 'which is simultaneously a locus of public activity and the exhibition space for "fantasies", disturbs the clear partition of identities, activities and spaces' (Rancière 13) bringing us to question whether a performance is 'true' movement or merely 'simulacra'. It is nonetheless ironic that turning his studio into a stage should have turned Pollock's act of painting from the utmost expression of freedom, as it is often understood by critics—'It asserted a freedom, a daring that marks a caesura in the cultural history of the United States. There is before and after Pollock (Jones)—into the experience of farce. And all the more so because Plato did regard painting as one of 'the surface of mute things' (Rancière 14) that do suggest forms of community.

Conclusion

While Pollock's work might be interpreted as more radical than Kahlo's, and arguably both artists lived thoroughly interesting, intense, eventful lives during historically important periods that lent themselves well to the creation of enthralling films, when it comes to their biopics it is *Frida* that is by far the more pictorially engaged, experimental, and, in a way, progressive of the two. Some have noted its release at a time in which the Latino community was being assimilated in the US, and see the film as playing a role in the propaganda wars for their moving into the mainstream (King 142). Nevertheless, focusing on a woman when only a third of biopics are on women, and a Mexican, bisexual, frequently disabled woman painter at that, was in itself remarkable. Moreover, the decision to render her life through the 'success against the odds' template is also welcome, as most biopics on women 'are structured so differently from male biopics as to constitute their own genre [...] trapping [women] for decades in a cycle of failure, victimization and the downward trajectory' (Bingham 2010: 23-24). *Frida* is thus an original biopic as regards its subject matter and treatment of it, and also as regards the various ways it puts state of the art technology to the service of conveying what the Kahlo pictorial universe is like for the global audiences interested in cross-over films that clearly are its target. Further,

inasmuch as digital technologies provide a wider range of controls to filmmakers comparable to the control of painters, it would not be an exaggeration to say Taymor 'painted' her own Frida. For 'the assumed trajectory of digital technology [...] has always been the perfecting of photographic realism. Yet the debate about the aesthetic capacity of, and use of, DI underscores its alternative aspect: its expressive dimension' (Choi 2011: 138).

But *Pollock* did have its admirers nevertheless. To art critic Jonathan Jones there is a 'sense of motion in this film, and in Pollock's wide, epic paintings, that animates the best American cinema' (Jones), while American critic Roger Ebert said: *Pollock* is confident, insightful work—one of the year's best films [...] No fancy visual gimmicks, just the look and feel of this world' (Ebert).

At the end of the day, what is clear is that although cinema may not be best described as 'painting history with light' (adapted from Woodrow Wilson's original contention that it was writing history with light), the connection between cinema, history and painting is nonetheless a powerful one, and there are various reasons why they are best studied together.

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The logo for 'iafor' is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, light blue circular arc that is partially obscured by a larger, semi-transparent red circular arc that overlaps it from the left and top. The background is white.

On What Was, and What Remains: Palestinian Cinema and the Film Archive

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University of Rochester, USA

The Asian Conference on Film and Documentary 2012

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*Here, on the slopes before sunset and
At the gun-mouth of time
Near orchards deprived
Of their shadows
We do what prisoners do:
We nurture hope
- Mahmoud Darwish*

The first motion picture frames that were taken in Palestine can be credited to Auguste and Louis Lumière's cameramen, that were stationed in many countries after the introduction of film to the world. Although the date is not well documented, most sources list 1896 as the earliest filming date. The scenes that were filmed featured quotidian details; trains entering the station, people waiting on platforms, landscape of Jerusalem and so on.¹ These early movies were all silent ones, and were frequently played in movie houses scattered around major Palestinian cities. Edison cameras also toured the Middle East region as early as 1903, releasing films such as *Arabian Jewish Dances* and *Jerusalem's Busiest Street*. In 1908 Pathé released a film titled *Jerusalem*, which was part of a world tour.² A simple internet search for *Palestine* and *early film* yields numerous results. One website, titled *Travel Film Archive*, has twenty-three films taken in Palestine from the early 1920s silent era to the mid 1940s. The themes of the films are quite diverse as they include religious tours, folk dances, architectural exploration and travelogues.³

It is unclear whether any non-war related films were taken during the First World War, and even if any were taken, none of them survive. However there were British and Australian cameramen stationed in Palestine between 1914 and 1917 that did take some footage of the war. Although most Palestinian films that are well known were made during the 1970s for reasons I shall discuss below, it is quite the misconception that only European (mostly of whom are Jewish) men exclusively carried out any filmmaking during those early years of cinema. In 1935, Ibrahim Hassan Sirhan filmed a twenty minute long silent movie that documents Saudi Arabia's King Saud's visit to Palestine. Sirhan followed the king from Lod to Jaffa, and from Jaffa to Tel Aviv.⁴ The film was screened at the Nabi Rubin festivals, and Sirhan played an accompanying soundtrack with the film, and it is said nobody noticed it was silent. This event marks the starting point of Palestinian cinema, whose history is divided into four periods that are correlated with major stages of national Palestinian struggle.

Sirhan bought his manual camera for 50 liras in Tel Aviv. He was self taught, and relied on books and instructional manuals for filming, developing and editing techniques. It was also reported that he assembled his editing table himself. Sirhan

¹ Hillel Tryster and Steven Spielberg Jewish Film Archive., *Israel before Israel : silent cinema in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem: Steven Spielberg Jewish Film Archive of the Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Central Zionist Archives, 1995), 6.

² Ibid., 7.

³ Reid Rossman, "Travel Film Archive," <http://www.travelfilmarchive.com/>.

⁴ Nurith Gertz and George Khleifi, *Palestinian cinema: Landscape, Trauma and Memory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 11.

worked with Jamal al-Asphar, who was the cinematographer for King's Saud film and together, the two men are considered to be the founders of Palestinian cinema. They went on to produce a forty-five minute film called *Realized Dreams* that was about Palestinian orphans but also aimed to prove that Palestinians were capable of producing movies, as there was a lot of rivalry from non-Palestinian filmmakers in the area. Their next documentary was about a member of the Arab Supreme Council, which they received 300 Palestinian liras for.⁵

Sirhan, together with Ahmad al-Kilani – a Palestinian who studied film in Cairo – founded a production studio called Studio Palestine in 1945. The studio produced several feature length films that were screened in Palestine and neighboring Arab countries. There were quite a few other prominent figures that played an important role in shaping Palestinian cinema such as Mohammad Kayali and Abde-er-Razak Alja'uni who also produced several films in Palestine during the same period.⁶

In 1917, when Palestine was under the British mandate, the Balfour declaration was written - which was a paragraph long letter from the United Kingdom's foreign secretary Arthur Balfour to the leader of the British Jewish community Baron Rothschild – and it stated that Palestine was to be the national home for the Jewish people. This declaration was put to full effect in 1948 and as a result, more than 700,000 Palestinians were forced into exile. Palestinians were compelled to leave their homes, and many had to go to refugee camps. Palestinians refer to the events of 1948 as the *Nakba*, which literally means catastrophe in Arabic. It marked an important life changing point for all Palestinians. The events of the *Nakba* and its aftermath are not well documented in any tangible form. There are several explanations as to why this may be. First of all, the majority of Palestinians back then were farmers and peasants, and were connected to their land in an organic and intimate manner for generations. Heavily dependent on oral traditions as apposed to the written word, they did not see a need or a reason to document their history in writing, they belonged to the land and it belonged to them, and that was the end of the story from their perspective. Secondly, most of the Palestinians suffered some sort of posttraumatic stress symptom from the *Nakba*, such as denial, guilt, shame and difficulty of coming to terms with the fact that they as natives were simply forced to leave and that made it especially hard for them to come to terms with the loss of their homeland. Practically no Palestinian films were produced between 1948 and 1967, therefore it is dubbed at the epoch of silence, and historians view it as the second era of Palestinian cinema.

The third period of Palestinian cinema broke the era of silence in 1968, on the heels of yet another significant and devastating event for the Palestinians; the 1967 Arab – Israeli war, during which Israel defeated the Arab forces, and occupied the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria.⁷ Several Palestinian institutions, such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) that were formed during the years preceding the 1967 war, strengthened greatly after it as a direct result. The PLO was based in Jordan from 1969 to 1971, and because most Palestinian cinema was created in exile,

⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁶ Ibid., 14.

⁷ Ibid., 12.

many Palestinian filmmakers resided in Amman and Beirut, thus the PLO's arrival provided a makeshift sanctuary for them.⁸

In 1967, Sulafa Mirsal a young Palestinian who studied photography in Cairo, set up a small photography unit in her kitchen. Her equipment was primitive and her techniques were basic, and she mostly worked with images of Palestinian casualties. Her work was transferred to Amman, Jordan where the PLO offices were located and the Department of Photography was established. Mustafa Abu-Ali and Hani Johariya, both Palestinian filmmakers who were living in Amman, joined Mirsal. The two of them worked for Jordanian television, and regularly borrowed cameras and film from the station to document protests, public gatherings and cultural events related to the Palestinians. The first movie produced in the third period; *Say No to the Peaceful Solution* (1968) was a collaboration between Abu-Ali, Johariya and Salah Abu Hannoud. The film documented the demonstrations of the civilians who objected to the "peace solution" suggested by US Secretary of State William Rogers, as they believed it neglected the interests of the Palestinian people.⁹

When the PLO were forced to leave Amman, Jordan to Beirut, Lebanon due to conflict with the Jordanian monarchy that resulted in the events of Black September in 1970, the film group, led by Abu-Ali, went with them. During this period, more than sixty documentary films about the Palestinian struggle were made, under the harshest of conditions. Equipment constantly had to be borrowed, the PLO was very reluctant to fund anything as they weren't invested in the idea of documentation, and there was a constant shortage of crews. Footage from their archive was used to complete films, and once filmed, the material was sent outside of Lebanon for development, as laboratories no longer functioned after the Lebanese civil war. Once received and edited, the films had to be sent out once more for printing. The process took months, and resulted in fifteen or twenty minute long films at best, yet the filmmakers continually pressed the leaders for any kind of support they could afford.¹⁰

It was during that time when Abu-Ali along with several other Palestinian filmmakers, decided to set up a Palestinian Film Unit/Archive. Their main intention behind was to create a history of their Palestinian identity, especially since many pro-Israel politicians had renewed the early '*Palestinians don't exist*' wave of thought. They also wanted to unite the efforts of Palestinian filmmakers worldwide, and that by setting up an official front they would give Palestinian cinema better recognition and status. The archive included over one hundred films, dating from pre-1948 up till the early 1980s, as well as all the films directed by the group.

Since materials from past films were constantly being used as footage in newer films, a systematic and easily accessed way to store the films was needed. Khadija Abu-Ali, who was in charge of screening, received archival training to respond to the growing need of accessing the films. As with everything else, their budget was minimal and the films they had were stored in boxes marked with the film type and date of filming.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 21.

¹⁰ Hamid Dabashi, *Dreams of a Nation: On Palestinian Cinema* (London; New York: Verso, 2006), 24.

There were no computers and thousands of meters of celluloid were categorized manually. The archive was initially set up in the Film Institute in West Beirut.¹¹

It contained a vast amount of documentation of battles, bombings, sieges – which miraculously survived considering the circumstances they were taken in – as well as political and social events and interviews with political leaders, intellectuals and academics, most of whom have passed away now. The archive also contained films and documentaries of life in refugee camps, and lives of Palestinians in the diasporas. Additionally, newly made films were constantly being added to the archive.

Life for Palestinians in Beirut came to an abrupt halt in 1982, when Israel invaded Lebanon. The Israeli siege signaled not only the devastation of Palestinian life but also obliterated the Palestinian cultural presence there, and marked the end of the third period of Palestinian cinema. Alongside the casualties that are estimated at more than 30,000, and the complete destruction of civilian infrastructure of areas in Lebanon, the disappearance of the archive was one of the biggest losses of the war.

The literature concerning the lost archive is sparse. Besides the odd article, the two books concerning Palestinian cinema; *Dreams of A nation: On Palestinian Cinema*¹² and *Palestinian Cinema: Landscape, Trauma and Memory*¹³ only touch on it briefly. Thus it was quite the interesting surprise to find out that two films have been made about the lost archive. The first and more recent is a short eight-minute experimental *film essay* by Sarah Wood titled *For Cultural Purposes Only* (2009).¹⁴ The film starts with a flickering image of what looks like a film certificate. It states the name of her film, but we see several shots each with a different price marked on them, the last one marked at fifty pounds. Black and white film footage from what seems to be 1930s Palestine is displayed on the screen next, with the word cinema, first in French then in English juxtaposed over the moving image. There are great amounts of people walking about, and several camels. A black blank screen appears next, and we begin to see a sentence slowly being typed in white: *What would it feel like to never see an image of the place that you came from?* More black and white footage follows, but this time of a small child sliding playfully on top of a tent, and the word cinema in Arabic placed on top of him. Wood then takes us through a series of “remembered” Palestinian films that were mostly made in the 1970s, and lost with the archive. The details of each film such as title, name of director, year made and the person whose memory retained that lost film are displayed on an image of a folder. Wood narrates the memory, and what we see on the screen is the hand of an illustrator reconstructing the film with pen and paper. Sometimes the directors themselves are the ones providing the memory of the film, and sometimes parts of the film footage is still available, and Wood uses it with the illustrations. Towards the end of Wood’s project, the illustrator starts erasing, very slowly, a drawn image of an archive. He wipes out the cabinets, the reels, and the room, till we are left with a white image. Wood also makes use of quotes throughout her film, as well as one-word title cards such as “memory” and “lost”. She also uses an interesting animation that shows the loss of Palestinian land to Jewish land, from pre 1948 to the present day, interjected with film

¹¹ Gertz and Khleifi, *Palestinian cinema: Landscape, Trauma and Memory*, 28.

¹² Dabashi, *Dreams of a Nation: On Palestinian Cinema*.

¹³ Gertz and Khleifi, *Palestinian cinema: Landscape, Trauma and Memory*.

¹⁴ Sarah Wood, "For Cultural Purposes Only," (Animate Projects 2009).

footage of Palestinians kids in refugee camps.

For Cultural Purposes is perhaps one of the most nostalgic films I have seen, because all of these memories are about films that don't exist anymore. Wood wonderfully explores the concept of how cinema fuels memory, and what the effect of cinema is on culture and heritage. More importantly, it strongly displays the dependence of the Palestinian narrative on memory and a strong urge to return to a Palestine that once was. The interviewees relate to Wood through their recollection of the films that are now lost key events in Palestinian life such the Nakba and the Sabra and Shatila refugee massacre in which hundreds of children and women were mercilessly slaughtered. Watching the reconstruction made of quick drawings makes the viewer acutely aware that in a world so dependent on moving image as fact, spoken memories count for little to nothing. They could be fabricated, and they could be true, and without hard evidence - such as a recorded image - who can tell the difference? The loss of the film archive is not just a loss of film, but also a loss of a major support to the Palestinian cause.

The second film concerning the lost film archive is a lengthier documentary titled *Kings and Extras: Digging for a Palestinian Image* (2004).¹⁵ Directed by Palestinian Azza El Hassan, the film chronicles El Hassan's journey from Jordan to Palestinian territories, Syria and Lebanon on a quest to try and find clues about the whereabouts of the missing archive. El Hassan begins her search in Jaramana refugee camp, located in Damascus, Syria where Iranian filmmakers shot a film about the Palestinian war using the Palestinian refugees as actors. All that remains of the filming location is a few burnt care tires and ash coated car remains. Similarly to the archive, all Palestinian evidence of their involvement in the film has vanished, except for the memories of a few elderly people who remember passing by the film set.

El Hassan is continually and equally confronted with new clues and dead ends. She interviews numerous people, and receives all sorts of accounts as to what might have happened to the archive. She and her filming crew even stalk the apartment which the archive was said to have been stored in for a while during the Israeli siege, waiting for the owners to show up, and when she eventually asks them they tell her that they haven't heard of this story whatsoever. Towards the end she is led to the graveyard that is yet another assumed *resting* space for the archive, but no one is prepared to start digging.

Hiba Joharia, who is El Hassan's childhood friend, provides the most intriguing insight on the importance of the film archive. Joharia is the daughter of Hani Joharia, who was a member of the PLO film unit and was one of those responsible for creating the archive. He was killed in Lebanon while filming the Palestinian resistance in combat. The feeling of compounded loss of both the Palestinian people and Hani Joharia's legacy is palpable when narrated from the perspective of his daughter and especially when Hiba Joharia and El Hassan examine the very camera that her father was using when he was killed from the shrapnel of a bomb that landed half a meter away from him. Naturally, the camera is barely recognizable. She urges El Hassan to look for the archive, saying; "even if you don't find them (the archives), it's good to look and to make your own film telling the world we've lost something we once had

¹⁵ Azza El Hassan, "Kings and Extras: Digging for a Palestinian Image," (Germany/Palestine: Deckert Distribution, 2004).

and we'd love to find it again. Then maybe someone you don't meet during your search will see the film and tell us something about the archive."¹⁶

Throughout her search, El Hassan indirectly communicates the everyday life of Palestinian people (mostly refugees) through their personal narratives. Their sense of dislocation is exemplified in one man's frustration about his inability as a refugee to work or buy land. "We're not only ghosts, it's as if we're living in another century. We're on the margins of society. We're not living," he says.

El Hassan's attempt to find the lost archive is understandably perceived by some as a useless attempt, especially since the Palestinians are still living under what many call an apartheid rule. Cinema is naturally considered to be less important than the actual lives of people, which is an understandable sentiment, to say the least. One Palestinian woman bluntly tells El Hassan "If you want drama go to the checkpoint. Go and watch men being tied up."

There are many myths surrounding the disappearance of the archive and its possible whereabouts today. The most common one is that Israel's military or spies - given Israel's history of silencing the Palestinian narrative - intentionally destroyed the archive during the siege. Khadija Abu-Ali claims that she personally approached Yasser Arafat - chairman of the PLO - and his top aide; Khalil el-Wazir to ask them to protect the archive. They promised they would, but a few days before leaving Beirut, they informed her that they couldn't transport the archive out of Beirut in the current situation. However el-Wazir told Khadija that they contacted the French embassy whose officials agreed to help secure the archive, but Khadija and the group were eventually left to their own devices. They rented a basement and paid two years rent in advance. In an interview, Mustafa Abu-Ali stresses that one of their main concerns was finding a safe and cool place to avoid the degradation of film. Beirut is extremely hot and humid during the summer time, thus the films would very easily degrade. The basement that they eventually found and was in a relatively safe street but wasn't equipped with an air conditioner, so they had to buy an air conditioning unit and install it in the basement. These details are important, not only because a few people went to great length to protect the heritage of nation, but they also did that during a time of great danger, bombs were literally raining on them. The idea of transporting the archive to somewhere outside of Beirut proved too difficult, and thus they had to settle for what they believe would be the safest option, before leaving Beirut themselves, as most people did. Obviously, abandoning the archive was not an option. Omar a-Rashidi - a cinematographer who worked in the institute - and two clerks from the institute's staff were asked to guard the archive, but due to escalating violence in the area a-Rashidi was compelled to leave Beirut, leaving the archive in the hands of the two clerks, who were worried about the its safety, eventually turned to the Palestinian Red Crescent for help. The Red Crescent stored the archive in their hospital at Akka for a short, undoubtedly in unfit conditions, but had to relocate it fearing for the hospital's fate, because it was likely that many would go to great lengths to destroy it. Some believe that the hospital staff buried the archive in a nearby Palestinian graveyard, which had unidentified gravestones. Other speculations suggest that Hizballah managed to seize the archive and transport it to Iran, and there are also rumors that a pro-Syrian group stole the archive and sold it to Israel.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Whatever might have happened to the archive, Khadija Abu-Ali is not optimistic about the fate of her life's work, and she rightfully fears that the memories of several generations have disappeared without a trace.¹⁷

As with most Palestinian history, the 1980s and 1990s were particularly tumultuous. The economic crisis, increased Jewish settlements on razed and stolen lands and even the *Intifada* (uprising) left the Palestinians in a vulnerable state. Poverty, unemployment, and crumbling infrastructure were and still are the priority of the Palestinian authority. Cinema was once again pushed to the margins of the Palestinians concern. Yet it did not come to a complete halt. Michel Khleifi effectively started the fourth period of Palestinian cinema – that is presently ongoing – when he returned from Belgium to his birth town of Nazareth in Galilee in 1980. He produced his first documentary - created in a fiction-like narrative – about two Palestinian women, one of whom was forced to work in an Israeli textile factory after her land was expropriated and who was also Khleifi's maternal aunt. Although Khleifi's name was the most prominent during the 1980s, many others started making films during that period as well, many of whom are considered to be major Palestinian directors today such as Elia Suleiman, Rashid Masharawi and Nizar Hassan.¹⁸ However, the difficulties that the filmmakers faced since the *Nakba* have not much changed. Edward Said, in a 1984 article, called attention to the fact that Palestinians did not have the *Permission to Narrate*.¹⁹ Most media outlets were inaccessible to them, especially in Israel, as cultural and artistic events were banned because they were deemed as acts of incitements. Even displaying the colours of the Palestinian flag was considered an offence worthy of an indefinite arrest. Painters, singers, actors and especially filmmakers were constantly arrested, expelled from the country and even assassinated.

During the Israeli siege of Beirut, Israeli soldiers targeted symbols of Palestinian culture, such as flags and statements of resistance that were graffitied on walls, and they continue to do so in occupied Palestinian territories. Starting with the 1970s and onwards, Israel has successfully targeted and assassinated Palestine's greatest artists, intellectuals and leaders, not only in Palestine but also around the world. Novelist Ghassan Kanafani was murdered with his 16-year-old niece in Beirut, writer Wael Zuaiter in Rome, intellectual Mahmoud al Hemshari in Paris, feminist leader Nada Yashruti in Beirut, and cartoonist Naji Al-Ali in London, to name only a few.²⁰ Palestinian cultural centers are also common targets for Israel. The Khalil Sakikini Cultural Center in Ramallah, that often hosts literary events and film screenings was destroyed in 2002, irreparable damage was caused to the artwork in the building, offices were ransacked and equipment destroyed, and most alarmingly, the hard drives of all the computers were stolen. Similar incidents have also occurred at The Land Registry Office, Central Bureau of Statistics, various human rights organizations, as well as numerous radio and television stations and film theatres such as the Kasaba Theatre Cinematheque. Sadly, targeting a nation's cultural heritage is a common ethnic cleansing tactic. It is easier to obliterate a nation when they have no

¹⁷ Gertz and Khleifi, *Palestinian cinema: Landscape, Trauma and Memory*, 30; Rossman, "Travel Film Archive".

¹⁸ Gertz and Khleifi, *Palestinian cinema: Landscape, Trauma and Memory*, 32.

¹⁹ Edward W. Said et al., *The Edward Said Reader* (USA: Vintage Books, 2000).

²⁰ Dabashi, *Dreams of a Nation: On Palestinian Cinema*, 26.

collective memory or culture.

Annemarie Jacir, a Palestinian filmmaker who curated *Dreams of Nation* film festival in 2002 in New York City speaks of the difficulty and duress of acquiring material for the festival: “curating the film festival from New York hinged on having someone in Palestine who could physically gather the tapes – since Palestinians in various parts of the West Bank and Gaza are under different levels of military curfew and are often not allowed to leave their homes, let alone venture to a post office to mail videotapes. This made even the mundane details of receiving copies of films for the festival a major difficulty, often requiring sophisticated planning and execution by parties both inside and outside of Palestine”.²¹ On several occasions the films never showed up, and upon investigation Jacir would be informed that the films were held under Israeli authority for security purposes. Thankfully, they were usually copies and not originals. Despite the delays and the frustrations, the festival was a great success, and that is a reflection of both the Palestinian people’s attitude and cinema towards their struggle; *sumood*, which is Arabic for perseverance. However, the amount of effort it took to make the festival a success proves that not only the conditions in which Palestinian films were made and preserved were very difficult, but achieving visibility to the appropriate audience, and benefiting from this visibility, wasn’t achieved by any easy means either.

Palestinian cinema is intricately tied to the Palestinian’s displacement and the desire to return to a pre – 1948 Palestine and must be understood in terms of this context. They must also be understood as a means of survival and a demand to be recognized both individually and collectively, not as a luxury or leisure-time pursuit that addresses complex philosophical questions. The oft-cited early Zionist phrase “We are a people without a land going to a land without a people”²² embodies the denial of Palestinians’ existence, and as a result, Palestinian cinema stands against invisibility and making visible what had been forcibly made invisible. It also stands against the western stereotype of Palestinians in the media; the masked, *kufiyya* wearing, stone throwing violent entity, by providing a counter narrative and a counter identity for Palestinians. Although the Palestinians are now a dispersed people, and the films originate from different places (the West Bank, Gaza, the Arab world, Europe and the United States), they represent a national identity. The Palestinian people and their identity, frequently suppressed in today’s media, are given a chance to rediscover their voices in film. Items like keys, title deeds, family photographs, newspaper clippings, school certificates, and marriage licenses are the foundation of Palestinian memory, and hence a decisive part of Palestinian cinema, along with landscape and trauma.

The archive is perhaps an ultimate representation of the Palestinian struggle, and Palestinian cinema itself; made under the harshest of circumstances for a chance to appear in mainstream narrative but ultimately silenced. The documentaries, similar to Palestinian cinema are also deeply rooted in nostalgia, but twice removed from the memories of a utopian Palestine. In a direct correlation to the Palestinian crisis, many Palestinians similarly cling to what was in the archive and what it contained, as they cling to what was of Palestine before Israel. Jacques Derrida names the compulsion to

²¹ Ibid., 27.

²² Ibid.

collect and store in the wake of an ever-receding memory and ultimate death as the “archive fever”.²³ He also contends that there would be no “archive fever” without the imminent death of the “archive drive”, which is precisely why the Palestinian’s obsession with memory and past events is a case in point. The compulsion, he argues does not stem from a need of mere accumulation of the past, but rather providing grounds for a future based on it. What perhaps is the most important thing to note is that these films did exist, not the fact they were destroyed or lost. Made by Palestinians about the Palestinians themselves, they document the ongoing struggle of identity and displacement that is experienced by every Palestinian. To solely focus on their loss is in a way to deny their existence, in a very similar fashion to how the Palestinian’s existence is denied.

In a world where images hold such importance and more importantly; permanence, it is crucial for the Palestinian cause to have an uncontested history rooted in film and image. That is not to say that the Palestinians will cease to exist because some Zionists and right wing republicans declare they don’t, but it is *easier* to make such claims when there isn’t a solid library of documentation that proves their existence for centuries before. Recently, president Obama was accused of not being a true citizen because the White House refused to publish an image of his birth certificate online. Images have become equivalent to evidence since their inception; and it is likely they will continue to be regarded in the same manner for many centuries to come. The plight of the Jews in the Second World War reached millions across the globe largely due to their diligence of taking photographs during the holocaust, and making these photographs widely accessible after the war. The need for preserving and disseminating the Palestinian image is not only for the sake of history and memory, but also for the sake of the Palestinian cause, as the two are intricately bound together.

²³ Jacques Derrida and Eric Prenowitz, "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression," *Diacritics* 25, no. 2 (1995).

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The Cinematic Texts of Edgar Allan Poe: From the Written Word to Digital Art

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0179

The Sino-British College, China

The Asian Conference on Film and Documentary 2012

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A large, faint watermark of the iafor logo is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, serif font, surrounded by two concentric, hand-drawn style arcs. The outer arc is light blue and the inner arc is light red. The watermark is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the text above it.

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Introduction

Debates on the encounters between literature and cinema have for a long time focused on the different ways in which each convey interiority and subjectivity, the argument being that literature is better suited for these purposes since film inevitably shows, thus it is better suited to convey external action (Kroeber 2006). The argument is presented in such a way that the cinematic and the literary are made to oppose each other, supposedly bringing about diametrically different aesthetic experiences of subjectivity and consciousness, and contrasting perceptions of reality outside oneself, with a focus on the way space, time and perception are rendered on film and in literature (See for instance (Gil-Curiel 2013)).

In this piece however my key tenet is that art is either a total artwork or not art at all. By total artwork I am here referring to the idea often attributed to Richard Wagner, but that can in fact be traced back to Friedrich Nietzsche, that literature, theatre, music and painting would all be brought together by a kind of art that would encompass all of them, referring, at that time, to opera. This idea was later retaken by Ricciotto Canudo and other early film theorists, arguing that such an artwork would in fact be cinema. For in cinema, the argument ran, theatre, music, literature, painting, dance and even architecture ‘all found (...) an efficient way of understanding themselves and of co-operating with each other creatively’ (Ruíz 2007, 9), helping each other, as it were, to bring out the best in each one of them. For most of the 20th century, however, these ideas were much marginalised as film studies struggled to establish itself as a discipline in its own right, and as universities sliced up knowledge into separate fields in accordance with dominant epistemologies of the day. Nevertheless, recently the view that knowledge is in fact inherently interdisciplinary and the convergence that digital media have brought about have thrown the intermediality of cinema into sharp relief, allowing other forms of thinking about the nature of art and the relation between cinema and literature and the other arts and media. My contention is thus that there was always cinema in certain works of literature, and literature in many films, and that indeed, all pieces of art that deserve that name implicitly contain all the other arts.

In the paragraphs that follow I shall first explain what I mean by ‘total art’ and then point to the cinematic features in three pieces by Edgar Allan Poe that Jean Epstein drew from to create his *La Chute de la maison Usher* (1928) (*The Fall of the House of Usher*). I then move on to the literary features of Epstein’s film, to show the way literature and film—and in some cases, music and painting as well—are interwoven in a complex kind of work that we might call ‘a total artwork’ of sorts.

The Total Artwork

In Classical times it was believed that art imitated nature but that each art was a separate and distinctive activity. By the 19th century, apparently, the belief that the arts contained certain correspondences began to take hold, as all the arts have certain features in common and in some ways resemble each other. This belief was encouraged by experimentation with synaesthesia. Wagner famously proposed the *Gesamtkunstwerk* should be understood as a work of art which combines music, drama, poetry, mime, painting in décor, and so forth, to create a coherent and meaningful whole. Ideally, he added, all should proceed from a single creative hand. More recently, ‘an aesthetic ambition to borderlessness’ (Finger and Follett 2011, 3) has been proposed as a way to define what the total artwork is about.

Several examples spring to mind. Peter Greenaway's project to turn nine classical paintings into a kind of cinema by writing dialogue for their characters and projecting various illumination schemes on them is a notable one, for, as he contends, 'cinema is nothing if it is not to be considered as the manipulation of light'. (Greenaway 2010, 4) And he further notes: 'the language used to describe painting is often the language used to debate cinema, and vice versa' (Greenaway 2010, 4). Veronese's *Wedding at Cana* is part of Greenaway's hybrid project.

The musical project a 'Theatre of Voices' is another example. It is an ensemble founded by baritone Paul Hiller in 1990, which focuses on early and new music. The vocal concept, as the name of the project suggests, is eclectic, involving theatre. And beyond the purely artistic realm, the practice has made considerable inroads in the cultural industries, such as fashion. The late fashion designer Alexander McQueen became famous for innovative shows that drew their inspiration from cinema and literature, indeed staging versions of Poe's 'The Fall of the House of Usher' in which the clothes were turned into the main protagonists. Beyond the West too, we can also mention the *Chinese Symphonic Picture: Riverside Scene at Qingming Festival*, amalgamating the aesthetics of music, painting and cinema; and also, we can consider the 'Visual Music' of Chinese composer Tan Dun. Today however I shall focus on much earlier instances of such border crossings, namely the cinematic features in the literary tales of Edgar Allan Poe, and the literary features of the film *The Fall of the House of Usher*, made after his tale by Jean Epstein in 1928.

The Cinematic in Poe

The first way in which cinematic features are evident in many of the tales of Edgar Allan Poe is of course the theme of light. My analyses here refer to three tales: 'The Oval Portrait' (1842), 'Ligeia' (1838), and 'The Fall of the House of Usher' (1839), all of which were drawn from by Epstein in his making of his homonymous film. And all of these have features that we may call 'impressionist' after the movement in painting—and later also in cinema¹—whose main aim was to render the effects of light on objects rather than the objects themselves. Just as impressionist painters were particularly concerned with the transitory effects of light, and interested in depicting the fleeting impression from a subjective point of view, so is Poe in these three tales. Like the painters, and the filmmakers after them, Poe was not interested in a precise representation, but rather on enabling the perception of the spectator, that is, subjectivity, to be the cornerstone of his philosophy.

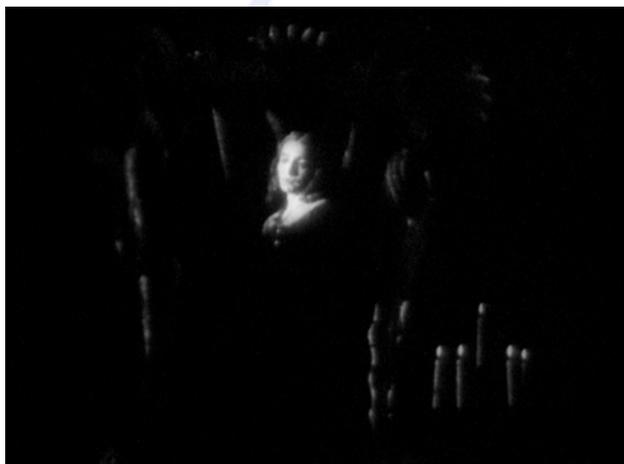
In 'The Oval Portrait' the anonymous traveller that is the protagonist takes temporary refuge in a small apartment in a remote turret of an abandoned castle. The room is richly decorated, although antique and in a decayed condition. The most remarkable feature though, is 'an unusually great number of very spirited modern paintings in frames of rich golden arabesque' (Poe 1982, 290). As he could not sleep, he decided to contemplate those pictures, while alternately reading from a 'small volume which had been found upon the pillow, and which purported to criticise and describe them' (Poe 1982, 290). At midnight, he finds a remarkable picture of a beautiful lady. Once

¹ If impressionism flourished across painting and cinema, so did surrealism, and surrealist painter and director Luis Buñuel was in fact Epstein's screenwriter for 'The Fall of the House of Usher.'

the narrator has displaced the candelabrum to have more light for his reading, he discovers the oval portrait to which the title alludes.² Light here plays a crucial role, as a pictorial and cinematic component. Thanks to the movement of light, the reader, from a different perspective, is able to discover the painting with the narrator. Interestingly, he moves the candelabrum as a means to keep reading, but instead of finding the page, what he finds is a painting: 'I thus saw in vivid light a picture all unnoticed before' (Poe 1982, 290). Later, it is revealed it is the portrait of the painter's wife, who, as the Madeline Usher of Epstein's film, died the instant his portrait of her is finished.³ Vagueness, suggestiveness, and the use of light, all features of impressionism, are crucial to the encounter with this portrait:

It was a mere head and shoulders, done in what is technically termed *vignette* manner; much in the style of the favourite heads of Sully. The arms, the bosom, and even the ends of the radiant hair melted imperceptibly into the vague yet deep shadow which formed the background of the whole. (Poe 1982, 291)

This is in fact an image carefully brought to the screen by Epstein.



(Still 1: Portrait)

In Poe's tale, Roderick, the master of the House of Usher, invites his friend—the anonymous narrator—to spend some time with him in his property. Roderick has been suffering from a deplorable state of anxiety and he needs his help. Presently, his friend will know that Lady Madeline—Roderick's twin sister and beloved—suffers from a strange disease that eventually kills her. Then the body is entombed in a vault

² After the narrator discovers the portrait of the girl, this action of 'gazing' becomes the key verbal function. Another key author of the supernatural, Théophile Gautier, who had initially been trained as a painter, uses the same discursive procedure. In Gautier—like in Poe—this function of contemplating visual art allows the viewer/spectator into 'a transcendental knowledge' (Gil-Curiel, 129).

³ Malcolm Turvey has interpreted this immobilisation of the painter's wife as an attempt on the part of Epstein to capture what Henri Bergson called 'the instant', that is, perception as a series of static, discrete states, which the human mind then combines together, and on this account is regarded as 'inherently cinematic' (Turvey 2011, 98-101).

before being buried. Soon afterwards, however, during a stormy night, both friends will realise that she is still alive.

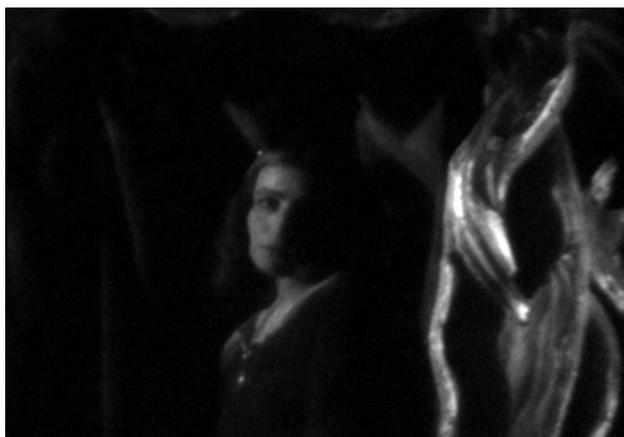
Roderick Usher happens to be a painter, as well as a musician. Regarding painting, 'vagueness' and 'pure abstraction' are the key features cited as the ones that make Roderick's pictorial gloomy pieces, comparable to 'the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli' (Poe 1982, 237). Roderick's paintings become the idea itself: 'If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher.'



(Still 2: Vagueness)

Besides, the 'spirit of abstraction' of his paintings is so 'vivid' and intense, that words are not able to give an accurate idea of their mysterious and powerful influence onto the viewer (Poe 1982, 236-237). This is the case, as well, with one of his 'phantasmagoric conceptions', a 'small picture [that] presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device,' the chamber, it will later become apparent, where Lady Madeline—his sister and beloved—will be buried alive. The narrator's vivid and powerful pictorial descriptions by means of ekphrasis materialise, so to speak, the paintings. However, considering that the picture's referent is nonexistent, the image described literarily becomes itself a pure subjective object, as it happens in a cinematic image of a picture.

The second way in which Poe's works are cinematic has to do with the way they convey the movement of a painted image, thus prefiguring cinema. The oval portrait discussed above is a remarkable work of art, not only because of its intrinsic qualities, but because through a 'momentary entertainment' the head seems to be 'a living person', a picture 'in an absolute *life-likeness* of expression' (Poe 1982, 291). Thus painting leads to a 'living image', alike to a cinematic image. In fact, when the painter had finished his portrait, frightened by the disturbing image, he exclaimed: 'This is indeed *Life* itself!' (Poe 1982, 292).



(Still 3: Portrait 2)

Another such instance takes place in ‘Ligeia’. In this tale, the narrator’s wife, Ligeia, dies prematurely because of a sudden and mysterious illness. During her agony she becomes obsessed with the idea of reincarnation. Soon after she dies, the widower, devastated, marries again but very soon the new wife, Lady Rowena Trevanion, of Tremaine, in turn also becomes ill and she too dies. When her funeral is being prepared, as the widower keeps vigil on the body overnight, alone, he realises that little by little his dead wife seems to revive, repeatedly showing signs of life. Finally, at dawn, the body comes back to life, but it is not his second wife but Ligeia herself.

The strongly cinematic scene takes place at the bridal chamber of an abbey the widower purchased when he married for the second time, and being a literary image, it is worth quoting it at length:

The lofty walls, gigantic in height (...) were hung from summit to foot, in vast folds, with a heavy and massive-looking tapestry [...]. The material was the richest cloth of gold. It was spotted all over, at irregular intervals, with arabesque figures, about a foot in diameter, and wrought upon the cloth in patterns of the most jetty black. But these figures partook of the true character of the arabesque only when regarded from a single point of view. By a contrivance now common, and traceable to a very remote period of antiquity, they were made changeable in aspect. To one entering the room, they bore the appearance of simple monstrosities; but upon a farther advance, this appearance gradually departed; and, step by step, as the visitor moved his station in the chamber, he saw himself surrounded by an endless succession of the ghastly forms (...). The phantasmagoric effect was vastly heightened by the artificial introduction of a strong continual current of wind behind the draperies—*giving a hideous and uneasy animation to the whole.*’ (Poe 1982, 661, my emphasis)

In other words, the static figures of the tapestry give the impression of movement according to the visitor’s own movement in the chamber, as a kind of multiple anamorphosis. As the tapestry seems to become animated not in a linear succession of images, but rather as a pixillated screen whose shapes shift according to light, it is my contention that this literary image would seem to prefigure even digital art.

The third and very important last way in which Poe's works are cinematic that I shall discuss here is the way music features in them. While the role of music as a key component of cinema, not subordinate to the image but in fact on an equal standing with it is relatively new, dating from the work of theorists such as Michel Chion (1994), who pointed out that the cinematic image is never viewed on its own but always with its sound, or Claudia Gorbman (1987), who further investigated the crucial role of music in the diegesis, these contentions are now firmly established. In fact, the master of the House of Usher improvises some long sad dirges, as for instance a bizarre adaptation of 'the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber' (Poe 1982, 236); also his improvisations on the guitar, the only sound that his ear can tolerate, some *impromptus*, in which improvised notes and 'rhymed' words constitute his 'wild fantasias', and the reader practically gets to hear them while they are described (Poe 1982, 237). This way, music interweaving with verse leads to the rhapsody 'The Haunted Palace', whose function—music and poetry within literature—is to poeticise the narrative.



(Still 4: Improvisations)

Indeed, it is no coincidence that in his essay 'Edgar Poe e il cinema', Bernardino Zapponi, screenwriter for Federico Fellini, describes the work of Poe in musical terms. His key insight is the notion that Poe's short stories are not as much suspense tales as they are works of sustained pitch. Of Poe's work Zapponi says: 'suspense, which could be attractive to filmmakers, is, however, more apparent than real. The march toward death does not build to a crescendo, but is a single sustained note which disturbs us deeply though its persistence' (Stubbs 2006, 208). I would concur, and its main tonality, I would add, is tragic.⁴

The Literary in Epstein Cinematic version of Poe's work

We shall now turn to the literary features in Jean Epstein's work on Poe. Epstein had a remarkable influence on the evolution of French cinema, and his work, often drawing from German expressionism, has already received much well deserved

⁴ Music score in the digitally mastered version of Epstein's *La Chute de la maison Usher* (2001), selected by Roland de Candé and Renée Lichtig, includes a remarkable choice of adaptations of medieval music from the albums: 'Les musiciens de Provence'; 'Musique au temps des Croisades'; 'Musique de Troubadour' and 'Harpe Médiévale.'

attention (Turvey 2011). My contribution here relies on the concept of ‘cinema of poetry’ as theorised by another major film director, critic and theoretician, Pier Paolo Pasolini in 1965. For I contend that Epstein’s *Usher* is in Pasolini’s sense an instance of poetic cinema, and that herein lies its literary connection with Poe’s work.

There is much poetry in Poe’s prose, in more than one sense. Even his narrative is frequently searching for a poetic effect, as when, for instance, the narrator says in ‘Ligeia’:

(...) in truth, the character of my beloved, her rare learning, her singular yet placid cast of beauty, and the *thrilling* and the *enthraling* eloquence of her *low musical language*, made their way into my heart by paces so *steadily* and *stealthily* progressive that they have been *unnoticed* and *unknown*. (Poe 1982, 654, my emphasis)

Poe’s characters are often poets, as is Ligeia, author of ‘The Conqueror Worm’, included in the tale, and Roderick Usher, who wrote the rhapsody ‘The Haunted Palace’, also a poem, and a symbol of pure abstraction⁵. Moreover, in Poe, music, image and language are frequently related, by means of poetry. It may still be a commonplace to think of cinema as a primarily visual art, as mentioned above. However, those images can also have a rhythm, colour and texture, even sound, and there is of course the verbal language. All these construct meanings that convey a huge range of feelings and emotions, exactly as poetry does. To Walter Pater, ‘Poetry aspires to the condition of music’ (Drabble 2000, 769-770). This theory of pure poetry dates from the middle of the 19th century. Edgar Allan Poe was hinting at it in the *Poetic Principle* (1850; 889-907), and Charles Baudelaire, who was much influenced by Poe, referred to it in his *Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe* (Baudelaire [1857] 1976). Thereafter, the idea that pure poetry was a form of music gradually developed. Thus, the theories of pure poetry are closely associated with symbolism and symbolic poets.

But what exactly is meant by a cinema of poetry? Pasolini contended there is an entire world in humanity that expresses itself mainly by means of images, and that world is, he thought, the world of dreams. Because cinema’s language is mainly visual, it too partakes from the world of dreams. And despite its deployment in the service of ‘prose narrative’, that is, genre films, cinema retains, always, because of its predication on imaging, some vestige of its original oneiric, poetic nature. But there is more to the poetry of cinema than its pictorial, oneiric origins. Pasolini put it thus: ‘If I (...) make the comparison between a Hollywood commercial [film] and a film by Godard or *Les créatures* by Varda, I see there is a technical and linguistic difference.’⁶

⁵ Many of Poe’s poems, including ‘The Raven’ ‘Annabel Lee’ ‘The City of the Sea’. ‘The Conqueror Worm’ and ‘The Haunted Palace’, have been adapted into films. Considering the key tonality of the Tragic that characterises his whole work, cinematic adaptations of Poe’s texts are somehow invariably subjective, conveying melancholic, distressing and poetic atmospheres.

⁶ When Pasolini refers to ‘Cinema of poetry’, he refers specifically to works of cinema defined as ‘art cinema.’ (Michelangelo Antonioni, Bernardo Bertolucci, Jean-Luc Godard, Glauber Rocha, etc.) (Rhodes 2010, 149-150).

Instead of a distinction between the commercial cinema and the art cinema, I would like to propose a distinction between the cinema of prose and the cinema of poetry. The distinction is not one of value—it is a technical one' (quoted in Rhodes 2010, 155). For

(...) whereas the writer has at their disposal the words that already exist in a dictionary, the filmmaker is deprived of such a lexicon [...] There is no dictionary of images. There is no pigeonholed image, ready to be used. The director's activity cannot be linguistic; it must, instead, be stylistic. (Quoted in Rhodes 2010, 148)

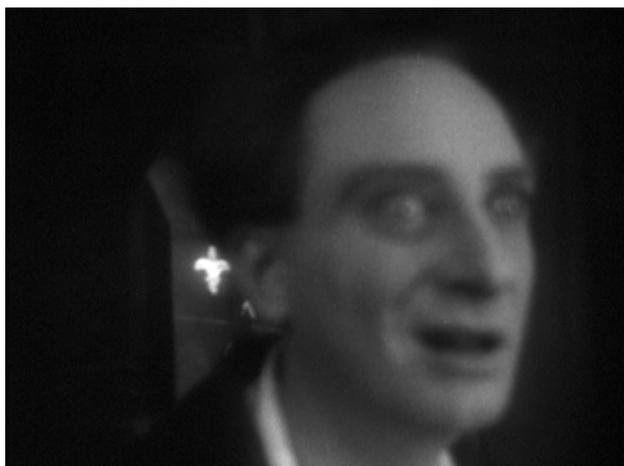
To Pasolini then art cinema, on the basis of the successful deployment of an individual style—and what could there be more subjective than style—is poetic in the sense of setting the image free from its more obvious meanings, in the same way that poetry sets, as it were, language free from its denotative meanings, enabling connotations to link into metaphor, allegory, and ultimately, total freedom of the image, emancipation. Thus, 'whereas art cinema has often been dismissed as by turns decadent, apolitical, or middle-brow, Pasolini's theory of the "cinema of poetry" asks us to consider the art cinema as a privileged medium of political filmmaking' (Rhodes 2010, 144).

My contention is thus that Epstein renders an oneiric, poetic version of the whole of Poe's universe in his work entitled 'The Fall of the House of Usher.' First of all, as I mentioned above, Epstein liberally draws from several works, aiming for a general feel or atmosphere rather than a mere adaptation of the 'Usher' tale as such.



(Still 5: Atmosphere)

Second, he deploys techniques that enable the visual realisation of suggestiveness and evocativeness from Poe's prose and poetry. Poetry, literature, music, panting, theatre and cinema all share these techniques, and all have a place in Epstein's film, which is built around images out of focus, backlight, *sfumato*, chiaroscuro, twilight and half-light, superimposition, slow motion, and a gloomy mise-en-scène which connotes the tragic.



(Still 6: Roderick)

But above all, it is the symbolic quality of Epstein's 'objects', his cinematic and musical images, that make the poetic in the sense of imprinting to them a style that is clearly personal and that seeks to free the images from their literal, denotative meanings into connotation and dream. In 'Ligeia', the narrator finds Ligeia or her image in 'the commonest objects of the universe'. The narrator refers to that feeling as follows:

(...) when Ligeia's beauty passed into my spirit (...) I recognized it [that sentiment] (...) sometimes in the survey of a rapidly-growing vine—in the contemplation of a moth, a butterfly, a chrysalis, a stream of running water. I have felt it in the ocean; in the fallen of a meteor. I have felt it in the glances of unusual aged people. (Poe 1982, 656)

And also that transcendental analogy takes place through music and literature: '(...) by certain sounds from string instruments, and not infrequently by passages from books' (Poe 1982, 656).



(Still 7: Guitar)

In 1928, Epstein himself described filmmaking in the following terms:

[Cinematic] technique today can lie entirely in the relation between images... It is simple to write a Poe film, as Poe himself wrote: "There exist, without any doubt, combinations of very simple, natural objects which have in them the power to move us." But which objects? Above all, not macabre ones. Horror, in Poe, is due more to the living than to the dead, and death itself is a kind of enchantment, and life also a spell. Life and death have the same substance, the same frailty. Just as the spell of life is suddenly broken, so death becomes undone. (Epstein 1928)

Epstein's phrase: 'write a Poe film...' all but suggests my contention that the cinematic has always been latent in Poe's oeuvre. Indeed, to what extent is the text and the film in Poe just pure visual experience, subjective experience, oneiric experience, since time, space and causality are broken down? Zaponni contended that Poe is generally present in his tales as the informing psyche. It is thus in this sense that I contend Epstein rendered a literary—because of poetic—and artistic—because it contains music and painting in its poetry—version of Poe. Every little detail in Epstein's work is profoundly symbolic, not unlike the symbolism that as a movement took hold simultaneously in the other arts.

Let me finish with a quotation from filmmaker Raúl Ruíz, who has been long concerned with poetry and painting in cinema.

What is a symbol?

It is to say one thing and mean another.

Why not say it right out?

For the simple reason that certain phenomena tend to dissolve when we approach them without ceremony. [E. Wind, quoted by (Ruíz 2005, 6)]

Indeed. And through his symbolic cinema of poetry, Epstein certainly managed to approach Poe's universe in such a way that it did not dissolve. Its always already cinematic aspects finally became cinema, on the screen. In sum, in Poe's tales, cinematic features related to visual art, perspective and light prefigure not only cinema but also digital art. And Epstein's adaptation of Poe's narrative incorporating poetry, music and painting from the literary text, is an extraordinary example of this artistic interbreeding.

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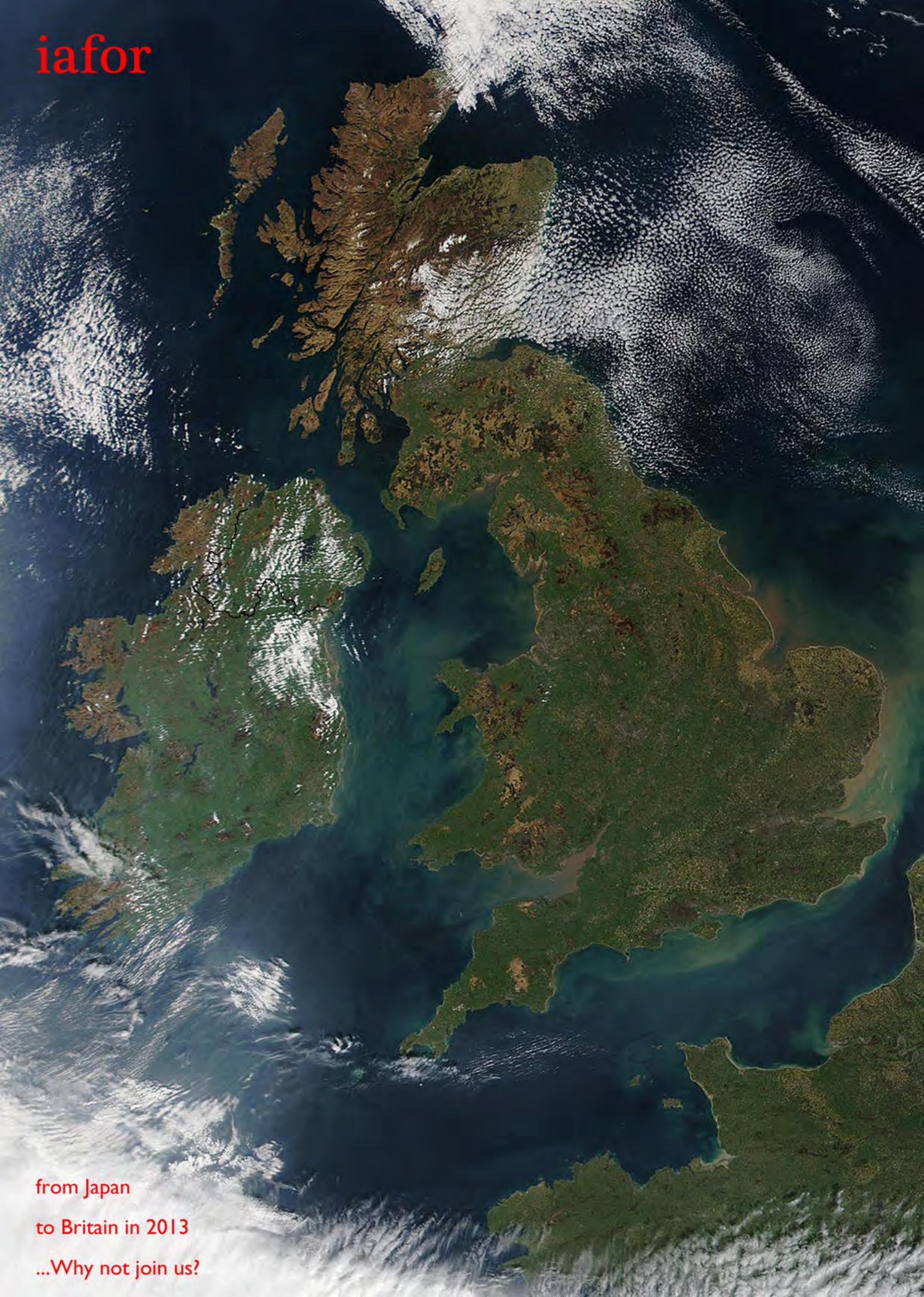
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A satellite-style photograph of Europe and the Mediterranean region. The landmasses are shown in shades of green and brown, indicating vegetation and terrain. The surrounding oceans are a deep blue, and there are white clouds scattered across the scene. The perspective is from a high angle, looking down at the continent.

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