

Prospects for Revisiting Film Theory
From Unconscious Obscurity to Conscious Expansion

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Introduction

This dissertation aims at understanding the nature of the postmodernist cinematic saturation. Many theorists, like Baudrillard, think that the era after 1970s marks two main methods of filmmaking. The first one tries to find meaning in repetitions as film directors find themselves operating within a vicious circle, while the second one exaggerates in representing reality to the extent that it erodes it (Baudrillard 60). Be that as it may, all the salient genres of the modernist and postmodernist mode are based on Marxism and its legacies such as existentialism and nihilism. Does this postmodernist saturation, therefore, happen because there are no attempts to operate outside this Marxist mode, or does it rather mark an inevitable death of theory as suggested by Aijaz Ahmad (Aijaz 36)?

This thesis is an extension to my MA paper. It goes throughout further dimensions and details to understand well the nature of the postmodernist saturation. It aims, also, at widening the film experience and to transcend the western dominant theories to pave the way for other methods stemmed from other different non-western countries. It is, hereafter, a way to shift the film experience from *agency of obscurity* embodied in one-dimensional classicism, nihilist modernism, and saturated postmodernism to a more conscious experience that goes beyond pluralities, borders, and limitations. It is an initial notion of *expansion* that aims at liberating cinema from its rigid regulations and limitations.

Since cinema is relatively newer than literature, it is still looking for its *parole* that is still in the process of being shaped by previous classical experiences, empirical, avant-garde, and postmodernist modes. Cinema is currently undergoing its first step

towards maturity since its history is recent in comparison with literature or drama. Deleuze tries to classify two main salient trends in the history of cinema. In his *Cinema 1, the Movement Image*, he examines the films influenced by Hollywood. These films provide us with action, active montage, linearity, and heroism. The second classification suggested by Deleuze is described in his *Cinema 2, the Time Image*. In his book, he explains his second classification that is the avant-garde or rather existentialist films based on theories and empiricism. However, today's films can be both empirical and aesthetic. They embrace postmodernist tenets. Many theorists suggest that the postmodernist condition marks a gap between the *structuralist paradigm* (area of theory: Historicity, Psychoanalysis, Structuralism, Positivism, Marxism, etc) that dictates mono-dimensional strategy along with certain avant-gardism, and the *postmodernist paradigm* highlighting multi-dimensional attitudes.

However, generic amalgamation in today's films *does not reflect any enmity* between the two paradigms since they benefit from avant-garde modes and at the same time they highlight catchy methods that aim at reaching the majority of population in the world. This research paper scrutinizes to what extent films mark an interesting new vision based on mixing up avant-garde and esthetic styles with conventional methods of treatment. The findings of this study respond to the dilemma of whether these films create breaks and boundaries with old artistic choices in what we can describe as a crisis (death of theory), or rather benefit from the classical cinema as well as modernist and postmodernist ones to create *open, free*, and new strategies which are more mature and tolerant. The study equally examines to what extent these films transcend the postmodernist discussion about the dichotomy of high and low cultures to create new

meanings out of the amalgamation between what is aesthetic, epistemological, and popular.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the new film experience. It is interesting to know throughout a Moroccan academic study how the recent film situation does not reflect *exhaustion* and hereafter *a death to the theory*. It contributes, however, to shaping a new *theoretical paradigm* based on *freedom* and *liberation* from narrow limitations and grand narratives. As a researcher, I aim at demonstrating that whenever there are living human beings, human minds continue to create and produce as the death of theory suggests a death of human beings in general and a total stagnation. Such a standpoint may push artists to operate within the same Meta-narratives like Marxism and psychoanalysis. Indeed, these two theories have framed and led many artistic trends for approximately two centuries. The result is the creation of many repetitions and modifications instead of bringing about utterly new ideas. While feminism, post colonialism, and raceology, as a case in point, are considered to be postmodernist trends, they are, yet, stuck to the Marxist and psychoanalysis backgrounds. Theoretically, this dissertation argues that it is the death and exhaustion of meta-narratives. It is at the same time the starting point of a new cycle of theories trying to find new ways of interpretations and reflections on human life, struggle, inquiries, and desires.

Throughout this dissertation, I show how many recent films try to get rid of the reductionist meta-narratives that interpret phenomena just from a mono-dimensional perspective. However, mixing all of the past theories can lead to more promising

results. New films start mixing up all the styles and theories to provide more insightful interpretations of human life. If we are aware of this, then we can see the world differently. Hereafter, since people now are exposed to various sources of information due to online technologies, they can interact with different cultures and ideas. This shows how contemporary films can reflect this multidimensional cultural construction. Finally, I keep high hopes and expectations to expand upon the findings of a systematically thorough study to come up with a sound cinematic *manifesto* to share with practitioners worldwide. This is why I am accompanying this dissertation with a filmic experience as I directed a film entitled *Tarantella*¹ to put my findings into practice. This dissertation and the film, therefore, are two faces of the same coin.

As the structure of this dissertation is concerned, it consists of seven chapters. The first chapter is entitled “Marxist Problematization within the Classical Cinematic Style”. It is divided into two main parts; namely, “Contextualizing Classicism”, and “Marxist Cinematic Alternative versus Suture System”. In this chapter, I endeavor to come to grips with classical tendencies that mark the theoretical and generic trajectory of cinema before the Second World War. The first part suggests major tenets of classicism that characterize Hollywood and traditional cinema. The traditional cinema is based on the organic unity that guarantees linearity and continuity. In proportion to Bordwell, Deleuze and others, there are four important schools that stemmed from this classical mode. They are, in particular, the American, the Russian, the French, and the German schools. These schools adopt a fixed, absolutist, and traditional way of representation *vis-à-vis* history, nationalism, and culture since they highlight coherence along with hegemony in both themes and techniques.

¹ *Tarantella*. Rabii el Jawhari, Claquette, 2017. Film.

The second part indicates how cinema tends to be theoretical as Marxist principles are used to characterize it with revolutionist modes. However, the Marxist mode, particularly dialectics, cannot transcend major classicist conventions such as the organic unity and the communicative strategy. Be that as it may, classical Marxists such as Kuleshov, Vertov and Eisenstein try hard at propagandizing revolutionist themes. This is why, these Marxist cineastes adhere to the communicative mode of cinema, though they render many of its elements like montage into rigid principles that are based on dialectics. After the Second World War, all these absolutist trends that use linearity, homogeneity, and coherence have become problematized. *Reality* itself adopts non-fixed definitions, especially with the increasing interest in individuality and nihilist modes. Therefore, the second chapter entitled “Marxism’s Rebirth from the existentialist womb” sheds light on various European non-conventional aesthetics that react against the dominating Hollywood styles. Its first part is “A Modernist Formula with a Built-in Marxism”. This part copes with how modernism comes to oppose the classical trend of cinema. Modernism, in this context, influences not only the themes tackled by films, but also camera movements, montage, and acting that have started to operate within the mode of *plunging in time* as opposed to a continuous representation of time in classicism. However, Marxism re-emerges again within an existentialist structure. It discards scientificity and the rigid dialectics opting for more liberal style though phenomenology and its legacy existentialism first target Marxism and consider it as absolute as religion, nationalism and other absolute theories. The second part is entitled “The Postmodernist Deconstruction and Marxism”. It explains how all the theories generated by classicism and modernism reach a stage of saturation and

exhaustion. As a result, postmodernist films start to repeat the past stories, themes, and aesthetics that mark a crisis in generic aspects.

The third chapter in this dissertation is reserved for explaining the theoretical framework and the research methodology that I see compatible for this study. It is entitled “Theoretical Framework and Methodology”. It consists, also, of two main parts. The first one explains the theories, such as Marxism and existentialism, which I use to understand the mechanism of this cinematic saturation. As for the second part, it clarifies how this dissertation is based on both the textual and the stylistic analyses as two effective methods on which I rely my process of breaking the samples’ components into pieces and reconstruct new ideas aiming at indicating a kind of new prospects awaiting the future of cinematic experience.

Concerning the fourth chapter, it is entitled “Prospects for New Formula”. It is divided, also, into two parts that are: “Multiplicity”, and “Sensation within Disrupted Mode”. The first part of this chapter explores how Bouchareb’s *Enemy Way* transcends the notion of third space and hybridity to construct multiple identities, languages, themes, and techniques. While Bouchareb follows a linear narrative, he sometimes uses *discontinuous* montage to refer to certain inharmonious relationships that are represented from a postcolonial approach. The second part discusses how Kechiche’s *Black Venus* stems its deranging mode from the avant-garde experiences. However, it suggests a classical linearity that links historical events with psychological dimension.

“Screw-shaped Interconnections” is the fifth chapter. It consists of “Rapid and Slow Montage in a Helical Relationship” and “Helical Narratives” as the two parts within this chapter. The first part deals with McQueen’s *12 Years a Slave* to show how slow montage can deliver the idea of *plunging in time* whilst it adopts a continuous narrative. It aims at showing how this film use many modernist and avant-garde techniques amalgamated with postmodernist tendencies such as post-colonialism and feminism though they maintain classical and linear organic unity. The aim, hereafter, is not to react to the past, but rather to gather all the three different modes into one complete configuration that adopts multiplicity and discard absolutist representations. The second part in this chapter tries to construct a multiple view towards history and reality. Within this context, history and reality are neither fragmented nor linear, but rather multiple. It is reversed to Yimou’s *Hero* to show how Yimou does not break ties with history, but he suggests different versions of it. The meaning is revealed throughout a helical relationship amongst these versions to provide more angles, viewpoints, and attitudes. The meaning, therefore, is encoded in the way various versions be them exoteric (existentialist) or esoteric (energetic) are coiled around each other.

The sixth chapter is entitled “Helixist Modes”. It contains two parts, namely, “Interweaved Subgenres” and “Fusafisic Representation”. The first part illuminates how this helical approach can be applied on other filmic elements. Bensaidi in his *Death for Sale* puts different genres in the same helical relationship to escape both conventional and non-conventional styles. Lee, however, in the second part goes further in putting many filmic elements into interrelated strands that are all coiled around each

other. This expansion in putting filmic elements in helical relationships ends up in a mosaic representation that avoids the *center* (centricism) and highlights the multiplicity. On doing so, Lee's *Life of Pi* provides a subtle way of interpreting reality. According to his film, reality is neither absolute as believed by classist Marxism, nor fragmented as thought by existentialist modernism. It is rather situational.

The last chapter is entitled "Helixism as a Method". It contains three parts: "Image as Interdisciplinary", "Narrative in Helixism", and "Numeral Nature of Helixism". In this chapter, I discuss major points of a newly born filmic method on the bases of the previous analyses of the six films. I borrow these concepts and terminology from the DNA system because and after a long research I infer that this system corresponds to the tenets of my proposed *manifesto*, namely diversity, eclecticism, communication, balance, openness, and non-reductive modes. These tenets, for me, blur binary oppositions between women and men, the white and the other, objectivity and subjectivity, collectivity and individuality, the positive and the negative, the continuity and discontinuity, etc. They, also, operate within an *open semiotic approach* since I aim at constructing a communicative cinematic method. On so doing, I create three new terms, namely *helixism*, *paraoptic representation*, and *Fusaifisic image*. This is not for the sake of creation itself, but I feel obliged to describe *new filmic aesthetics* and to detach this newly born experience from classicism, modernism, and postmodernism looking for practical ways to escape the saturation.

The first part of this chapter, I explain how one-dimensionality cannot serve. Engaging different modes, however, can correspond to our multiple worlds. As for the

second part, I indicate how multiple representations can create a *rhythm* out of classical action, modernist inaction, and postmodernist themes (feminism, post colonialism, raceology, etc). The helical relationship between moments of movement and moments of stagnation can end up in new esthetics believing in multiplicity and discarding absolutism. Finally, the third part highlights the numerical dimension of *helixism*. The digital power nowadays is inevitable and inescapable in our world. This is why, I point out that this numerical existence should serve *cinema in the age of helixism*. Cinema, in its turn, should render these interrelations between people and new technologies. I explain how this numeric approach can support the idea of *decentralization* by providing dynamic visual manifestations_ diversity.

Marxist Problematization within the Classical Cinematic Style

Contextualizing Classicism

Classical trends, particularly the pre-war Hollywood films, German expressionism, French impressionism, and Russian dialectic cinema, appertain to *conventional* nuts and bolts. One might divide classical fundamentals into certain attributes and aesthetics to discern their area of operation, ambits, and prospects. The main precept pertaining to the classical mode is its tenacious defense on *organic unity*, the notion that goes back to Aristotle's three unities²: action, time and space (Aristotle 166). The organic unity, within this context, necessitates *cohesive narrative* to guarantee a systematic and ascending development of the filmic events forming organized elements of a given story. This organic *whole* assembles correlating events that depend upon each other in a way that no event can operate outside this *linearity*. It is then a well-organized *structure* that should construct a *communicative* relationship between film directors / senders and their audiences / recipients to create *meaningful* themes (Rohdie 470). On so doing, ready meanings *are given* since the recipient perceives them hand over fist. Bordwell construes that the recipient watching classical films is rather a *passive* viewer that consumes close to hand images (Bordwell, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* 7). This unconditional way of recipient's engagement delays any potential critical activities and renders filmic experience into merely

²For Aristotle, plays should stick to specific time and space along with a main plot that can be supported with subplots to keep the complete whole.

analogous representation to the *supposed to be reality* or the *alleged* idea about *natural law*.

Though *M*³ by Lang tries to go further than classicism, it is based on organic unity. It suggests a linear narrative that respects the organic unity rule. Lang represents his film with a main event and one crucial theme. All the other events are lined up to serve the main plot that is the murder of children. For instance, the children horrible chanting, the poster announcing a wanted serial killer, the parents waiting for their children outside one of the city schools, the loss of Elsie's balloon, police investigations, fingerprints, handwriting analysis, and Hans' trial are all subplots directing the viewer's attention to the wanted serial killer. The theme / meaning, then, is easy to reach, which is the consequences of neglecting children. Lang, in this context, does not insert any kind of shot without linking it to the whole. This makes *M*'s filmic elements explicit and comprehensible. From a classical frame of reference, Lang's *M* depicts a social phenomenon that is over there since reality is believed to be cohesive and linear.

Heroism is another tendency characterizing classical mode of cinema. Since the latter aims at entertaining its audience, it seeks exciting qualities of the main character / hero to shape certain differentia that is able to *impress* the viewer. In *Zorro's Fighting Legion*⁴ by Witney and English, Zorro is represented as an exceptional swordsman who faces a great danger threatening the republic of Mexico over the attack led by Don Del Oro's Yaqui Indian group for a takeover. Heroism in classical cinema might manifest

³M. Fritz Lang, Nero-Film A.G, 1931.Film.

⁴*Zorro's Fighting Legion*. William Witney, John English, Hiram S. Brown Jr, 1939. Film.

differently as it can characterize the whole nation's behavior. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*⁵ relates the notion of heroism to the white American society who fights the savagery of the African Americans. The white bravura is able, therefore, to end up the African American attempt to besiege the white. On adopting heroic representation, classical films contribute to construct kinds of *grand narratives* forcing upon a certain totalitarian representation of knowledge. Rosenstone construes that this portrayal is rather *reductive* since it shapes merely stereotypes and Eurocentricism, especially when *the other* (Indians and African Americans in our examples) is depicted in a negative way (Rosenstone 14). *Epic genre* of classical tendency is very suggestive in this sense as it is imbued with such heroic traits and grand narratives.

Deleuze spells out that *action* is another crucial factor in classical cinema. This suggests *active* characters who are able to initiate efficient acts to change certain situations within a *logical tempo spatial* existence. For classical film directors, it is the *challenge* that creates impressive spectacle. *Nanook of the North*⁶ is a *documentary* by Flaherty that puts forward this challenge embodied in Nanook's attempt to defeat the hard conditions of his *milieu* (Deleuze, Cinema 1 The Movement-Image 143). Classical action, by the same token, can generate laughter, the main aim of the *comedy genre*. It is the way actions are built that causes laughter (Deleuze, Cinema 1 The Movement-Image 161). Chaplin's *The Kid*⁷, for example, represents two kinds of contradicted shots that when they are juxtaposed, laughter is originated. Such use of two contradicted actions can be found when Chaplin uses shots of the kid, throwing stones at windows to break

⁵*The Birth of a Nation*. D. W. Griffith, Epoch Producing, 1915. Film.

⁶*Nanook of the North*. Robert J. Flaherty, Pathé Exchange, 1922. Film.

⁷*The Kid*. Charlie Chaplin, Charlie Chaplin Productions, 1921. Film.

them. The latter shots are followed by Chaplin / a glazier passing by the broken windows and asked by owners to repair them. The laughter occurs directly as the ironical actions are juxtaposed, revealing how Chaplin and his adopted son are working in collusion.

The two different trajectories of actions do not only create humor, but also construct certain intrigued *conflict* to guarantee *entertainment* and *attraction*. Most of the time, this conflict help classical narrative to deal with violence as the latter is the most powerful way to attract the audience (Prince 260). For Deleuze, the two different sorts of actions are developed throughout two different but interrelated trajectories that meet at a certain point to generate a *duel* (Deleuze, Cinema 1 The Movement-Image 30). He supports his explanation by giving the example of the two trajectories, namely the one related to the Ku Klux Klan, the white supremacists in *The Birth of a Nation*, and the other parallel one pertaining to the African Americans, besieging a white girl. Both trajectories *converge* on the gallop scene led by the whites to rescue the besieged girl. The convergence, as it is clear in this film, ends up in an intentionally token duel. What is more, the first trajectory represents positive dimension, whereas the second one stands for barbarism. Attraction, therefore, is generated from a racist and *one-dimensional* point of view. Many *Western* films have made use of this technique since Porter's *The Great Train Robbery*⁸, the first Western film, was shot. This gives birth to the *cross-cutting* way of editing, allowing the interrelation of two simultaneous actions

⁸*The Great Train Robbery*. Edwin S.Porter, Edison Manufacturing Company, 1903. Film.

though they occur in different spaces. This is considered to be original if it is compared to previous *linear* works such as Melies' *fantasy* film, *A Trip to the Moon*⁹.

In *film noir* genre, the duel between the good and the bad shifts to another dimension that details attributes of seduction, mystery, spell, and danger to female characters to shape the image of the *femme fatale* targeting lives of alienated men. Humberstone's *I Wake up Screaming*¹⁰, Wilder's *Double Indemnity*¹¹, Garnett's *The Postman Always Rings Twice*¹², and Montgomery's *Lady in the Lake*¹³ are films representing women from a patriarchal point of view to construct mysterious images about women and their desirable pursuits. This is a different kind of conflict that renders themes such as morals, alienation, sexual drives, sexual freedom and jealousy into crucial *motivations* for developing conventional narratives in a more *attractive* and *sensational* way. Bordwell explains the worth of *motivation* in classical cinema, "Motivation is the process by which a narrative justifies its story material and the plot's presentation of that story material" (Bordwell, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* 18). Mulvey, as a feminist, argues that the pleasure of looking (scopophilia) is motivated by the erotic context suggested by classical films in general. She adds that the look-like spying shots in these films suggest motivating narcissistic contexts (Voyeurism) empowering patriarchal position (Mulvey 423-424-425-427). This is a kind of *one-dimensionality* giving the self a kind of legitimacy, while describing the other, be them blacks or women, as inferior.

⁹*A Trip to the Moon*. George Melies, Star Film Company, 1902. Film.

¹⁰*I Wake up Screaming*. H. Bruce Humberstone, 20th Century Fox, 1941. Film.

¹¹*Double Indemnity*. Billy Wilder, Paramount Pictures, 1944. Film.

¹²*Postman Always Rings Twice*. Tay Garnett, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1946. Film.

¹³*Lady in the Lake*. Robert Montgomery, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Film.

Motivation, moreover, confirms narrative *causality* in classical cinema. Classical course of events is based mainly on the cause and effect relationship to make certain actions affect and therefore generate other actions to guarantee an attractive narrative development. The latter should operate within a system that respects temporal and spatial aspects (Bordwell, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* 11). This marks a kind of *linearity vis-à-vis* the representation of *time* in classical cinema. Time, within classical context, should respect the notion of tenses, namely the past, the present, and the future. Any narrative shift from a tense to another should, accordingly, operate within a continuous, logical and causal factor. This is why the *flashback*¹⁴ technique is considered to be classical since it respects *conventional perception of time*. Other equivalent choices come, also, to operate within this classical mode, “what changes through history are the various devices for representing temporal continuity such as inter-titles, cuts, irises, dissolves, whip-pans, and wipes” (Bordwell, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* 9). On the whole, the technique of referring to events happening before the main proceeding plot, goes back to Griffith’s films while there are some opinions believe that they are used even previously.

Griffith, then as well, has pioneered the *close up* shot that is viewed as one of the main classical aesthetics though many cineastes attach weight to previous similar experiences. One might ask what is the importance of close up shots in classical experiences? As mentioned before, classical film directors aim at communicating with their audiences. Close up shots can be effective in this context since they guarantee a

¹⁴**Flashback:** called by Griffith switchback

way of impressing the audience. The exaggerations that are induced by close ups get without a doubt along with the classical ambition to attract and entertain receivers. Classical film directors, for instance, depict faces of young women in close up shots to highlight their makeup and beauty. Others aim at impressing their viewers by highlighting details pertaining to emotional, strange or unusual faces to attract people and make them feel involved into the intrigued events rather than being in distance when opting for full shots:

Makeup was originally necessary because actors' faces would not register well on early film stocks. Up to the present, it has been used in various ways to enhance the appearance of actors on the screen. Over the course of film history, a wide range of possibilities has emerged. Dreyer's *La Passion de Jeanne d' Arc* was famous for its complete avoidance of makeup (4.44). This film relied on close-ups and tiny facial changes to create an intense religious drama (Bordwell and Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* 122-123).

Classicism, all in all, tags along with linear narrative and communicative aesthetics behind which film directors become hidden and their styles get *invisible* to shape an *unconscious viewer* who is supposed to consume the *given* ideological *meaning*. On so doing, films are believed to be *analogous* to reality in an attempt to construct an *objective* attitude *vis-à-vis existence* (el-Jawhari 52). Bazin is of a like mind on the idea of objectivity since *camera movements*, *frames*, and *montage* are rather tools to depict reality as it is (Bazin, *What is Cinema?* 1 33). For him, aesthetics cannot go further than being a merely window throughout which one can see reality.

For all that, attempts within classicism emerge to react against classical modes, namely objectivity. *French Impressionism*¹⁵ marks one of these rudimentary attempts by designating *subjectivity* as considerable. Bordwell regards this genre as an embryonic stage leading to the birth of *avant-gardist* modes that will flourish after war (Bordwell and Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* 450). Since Impressionism initiates certain new aesthetics serving subjective representation, it puts accent on the psychological state of characters to render *sensation* into a more *conscious* motif. The priority, therefore, is given to *emotions* and inner feelings to shift the interest from external modes to internal ones. This is how Impressionists opt for *rapid cutting* to depict certain *excited* emotional and enthusiastic states. Deleuze, in his turn, refers to this montage mode as *mechanical composition* (Deleuze, *Cinema 1 The Movement-Image* 41) as it becomes more *rhythmic*. Impressionists who try to find frames analogous to feelings use other techniques corresponding to subjective stands such as *details*, *superimpressions* and *P.O.Vs*. In *Dorado*¹⁶ by L'Herbier, the viewer is allowed to see things from the character's point of view as L'Herbier uses a P.O.V shot to show how a drunk sees the world. Other Impressionists use only one source of light to create shadows, referring to inner psychological modes of their characters. However, all these new *conscious* alternatives and aesthetics are of assistance to the classical Aristotle's *whole* encompassing space, logical time, and linear events. For Andrew, French Impressionism rather operates within an *elitist* classicism since it makes its aesthetics attending to organic unity, which is the core of classicism (Andrew 27-28).

¹⁵**French Impressionism:** (1918-1930) this cinematic mode comes to react against the Hollywoodian style after it played first fiddle in France. Expressionists, such as **Gance**, **L'Herbier**, **Dulac**, and **Epstein**, opt for aesthetics and subjective way of representation, trying not only to construct a kind of *Avant-garde* way of filming, but also to shape an identity to French cinema.

¹⁶*Dorado*, Marcel L'Herbier, Gaumont Serie Pax, 1921. Film.

German Expressionism is, similarly, depicted as an innovating style within classicism. Bordwell, however, differentiates between the two genres. While he defines French Impressionism with “cinematography and editing”, he relies German Expressionism to *mise-en-scene* (Bordwell and Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* 448). Expressionism does not only adapt cutting and frames to correspond to inner feelings, but also opt for *exaggeration* in representing its characters, locations, and events to react against classical literality *vis-à-vis realism*. It is, therefore, *an anti-realistic genre* since it copes with themes of insanity and psychoanalytical modes; and renders them into subjective interpretations compensating, or may be distorting, the taken for granted idea of reality:

In *Caligari*, the Expressionist stylization functions to convey the distorted viewpoint of a madman. We see the world as the hero does. This narrative function of the settings becomes explicit at one point, when the hero enters an asylum in his pursuit of Caligari. As he pauses to look around, he stands at the center of a pattern of radiating black-and-white lines that run across the floor and up the walls (Bordwell and Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* 448).

Lang, Wilder, and Murnau are some expressionists who mark their films with this mode. If we take the example of Murnau, he forges the *realistic* function of light by opting for the *chiaroscuro* technique to describe the disintegrated human psychological state (Deleuze, *Cinema 1 The Movement-Image* 50). In his *Nosferatu*¹⁷, he represents his character, the count Orlok, with a double personality to create a sort of duel between his conscious and subconscious. In daylight, the count Orlok adopts noble

¹⁷*Nosferatu*. F. W. Murnau, Film Arts Guild, 1922. Film.

ethics. At night, however, he becomes a monster seeking for human blood. The combination between the lit areas and the dark ones in the same shot, representing Orlok, suggests this duality and stands for the psychological duel of human being. One can clearly remark within this context how the duel is still dominant to maintain the action image – another important classical characteristic. Bazin does not believe in any distortion done by expressionism to reality. He construes that: “It adds nothing to the reality, it does not deform it, it forces it to reveal its structural depth, to bring out the preexisting relations which become constitutive of the drama” (Bazin, *What is Cinema?* 1 27). Bazin, hereafter, bases his stand on the idea that aesthetics can never generate images beyond what is filmed / what is over there.

Classicists, generally, construct their narratives in a linear way to represent reality as one-dimensional, objective, and absolute. To keep going with this classical organic unity, they base their filmic elements, especially the narrative, on causality, action, motivation, duel, chronological time, and explicit themes of bravura to shape a cohesive attitude towards reality; and to provide, furthermore, their viewers with a pure concept of objectivity. These themes are transmitted throughout certain genres, namely film noir, documentary, comedy, fantasy, epic film genre, and western one. Some attempts such as French Impressionism and German Expressionism, however, try to go beyond the two notions of objectivity and absolute reality by manipulating aesthetics to forge the way classicism represents its themes. But, they remain operating within the same mode since their attempts rather reinforces the narrative mode by sticking to organic unity.

Marxist Cinematic Alternative versus Suture System

Marxists regard classical cinema as not ideological free seeing that it legitimizes capitalism and empowers bourgeoisie to dominate the poor. For Silber, these films are meant to construct *communicative building blocks* to link the political and economic system with poor people's perception to merely control and manipulate them (Silber 80). These films, moreover, are considered to be rather *commodities* operating within the mentioned system to attack human values since there is no *theoretical background* framing the classical experience (Hess 89). Comolli and Narboni, in their turn, argue that classical cinema reinforces "bourgeois realism" and "common sense" by shaping the dominant ideology to make it acceptable for people (Comolli and Narboni 26-27). As both construe, the only way to face this capitalist mode is to annex films to theoretical, economic and political consciousness.

Some classical film directors, however, try to adapt Marxist themes to fit their linear narratives. The best example that the researcher can provide is Chaplin's *Modern Times*¹⁸ that reflects the *Marxist theory of alienation*. Marx believes that capitalism deprives people from humanitarian characteristics by coming between them and their ability to determine their lives and human relations. Workers within the capitalist system, as Marxists argue, are considered to be merely parts of the means of production, "The realization of labor is its objectification. In the sphere of political economy, this realization of labor appears as a loss of reality for the worker, objectification as loss of

¹⁸Modern Times. Charlie Chaplin, United Artists, Yanus Films, 1936. Film.

and bondage to the object, and appropriation as estrangement, as *alienation*” (Marx, The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts 39).

Chaplin goes well with the Marxist idea against the way capitalist estranges workers. In his *Modern Times*, Chaplin plays a role of a worker who is being gradually dehumanized because of an accelerating assembly line system in a manufactory. Throughout his experience, many phases of capitalist exploitation ascendingly go on to reveal the way he is alienated. The owner tries even to deprive him from the lunch hour, the only time for workers to get in contact with each other, by testing a non-practical feeding machine. Chaplin creates fun out of his interaction with the violent machine, which is meant to keep workers working while it can feed them automatically. Other ironies correspond to Marxist modes. Ellen, for example, is followed during the whole film by police just because she has stolen to eat. The manufactory’s big machine, by the same token, swallows Chaplin in a funny scene, but a very suggestive one at the level of the Marxist approach.

After all, Comolli and Narboni reflect the inflexible Marxist attitude against the narrative linearity led by classicism. They emphasize that the only way to produce Marxist films is to go back to the 1920s’ Russian film directors, especially Eisenstein, to promote an effective Marxist method. They, accordingly, discern the crucial role of the *dialectical materialism* in the development of such a Marxist mode in cinema (Comolli and Narboni 29). What matters, hereafter, is not to tackle Marxist theories within the classical narrative dimension, but to apply them to basically characterize Marxist aesthetics.

What Marxists like Dayan¹⁹ dislike in classical linearity, is its *suture system* that guarantees *explicit filmic discourse*. Though Chaplin's *Modern Times* communicates Marxist themes, it does not necessitate any *mental activities*, which is the intension within this context. To figure out the method Marxist cinema should follow, Dayan explains how the suture system is not workable for Marxists. He construes that the

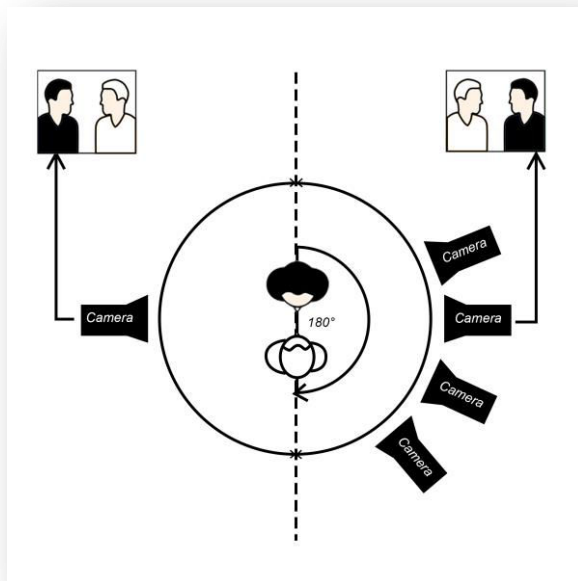


Figure 1

suture system, bringing to mind suture surgery, consolidates the viewer as a signifier amongst the sum of the linear film signifiers by involving her/him in the linear narrative. The viewer reaches this psychological state throughout a process of *identification* with the image. Dayan bases this notion

on Lacan's *The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic Experience* where Lacan explains how the child in a particular age feels identified with his image as seen on the mirror, the fact which generate libidinal interactions. This psychological notion is very suggestive since it explains the child's journey from feeling nothing to recognizing the ego / I. Suture system, equally, reproduces the subject / the viewer to construct her/him within a mode of reconciliation.

To be clearer, classical linearity adopts *reverse shots* technique, for example, to guarantee fluid continuity in narrative. On so doing, the viewer is first provided with a

¹⁹Dayan uses Marxism, semiology, and psychoanalysis in his film analyses.

certain shot (a TV set for example) marking a moment of absence, as s/he does not know who is the viewer of the mentioned shot. At this level, mental activities are stimulated as s/he asks who the viewer is. When the second shot is *assembled / sutured* with the first one, these mental activities are disrupted as s/he is quickly given the answer (the viewer is a young woman for example). Both shots, then, play the roles of question and answer. The viewer's identity, here, is shaped as one of the film's signifiers. Just as Lacan's explains, the viewer reaches a level of reconciliation / identification out of these interactions between absence and presence (Dayan 439).

The suture system functions just like grammar in language because it suggests order, rules, and structure. If these regulations are respected, explicit and linear narrative can be well guaranteed. Cinema, for Dayan, should go beyond this objective and regular mode dictating one-dimensional meaning and imitating linguistic rules, "the system of the suture is to classical cinema what verbal language is to literature" (Dayan 440). Accordingly, suture system insures *cutting on action* to guarantee continuity in montage since the purpose is to make films understandable, linear, coherent, and clear. All the filmic elements such as acting method, light, and narrative, should adhere to this classical style. However, montage / cutting is the most powerful tool that guarantees this coherent linearity. The shots that are pertaining to the same scene in classical cinema are arranged in an organized way to keep the *space geography* very clear to the viewer. The characters who are shown in the right should appear in all the shots of the same scene in the same position and the ones who are represented in the left should be kept all the time in the same position. The same thing should be done for their movements, as the characters who are moving should keep the same direction in all the shots

constructing one cohesive scene, except if the film director wants to show that they go very far. In this case s/he can change the directions to give the impression of the long distance they cover. This coherent way of editing follows a rule of 180° indicating an imaginary line that should be respected. In the case of filming two characters facing each other, the line goes through the two characters creating two semi circles. If the *master shot* chooses one of these two semi circles, the following shots should not skip this chosen semi circle:

In the continuity style the space of a scene is constructed along what is called variously the axis of action, the centerline, or the 180° line. The scene's action a person walking, two people conversing, a car racing along a road-is assumed to take place along a clear-cut vector. This axis of action determines a half-circle, or 180° area, where the camera can be placed to present the action. Consequently, the filmmaker will plan, film, and edit the shots so as to respect this centerline. The camera work and mise-en-scene in each shot will be manipulated to establish and reiterate the 180° space (Bordwell and Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* 231).

For Dayan, the suture system is rather tyrannical, as it does not let the viewer to interpret the film. It rather *attracts* audiences and makes them slaves to the narrative. For others like Comolli and Narboni, Marxist cinema should at least benefit from the dialectic cuttings as opposed to 180° system. Montage, for Marxists in general, should be necessarily *dialectical*, *mental* and *visual* rather than *continuous*, *entertaining* and *narrative*. Before going through dialectical montage to understand its characteristics, one should first have an idea about the dialectic background itself to find out how

Marxist cinema calls in question the classical filmic style, especially when it underlines consciousness, dialectics, material interpretation to the historical class struggle, and the communist project, as opposed to attraction, continuity, idealism, and capitalism. The aim of Marxist cinema therefore is not to entertain but to mobilize peoples' attitudes to oppose capitalism and hereafter contribute in establishing a classless society under the motto of the *communist project*, "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it" (Marx, Selected Works 15).

Marxism is coined, overall, by Marx and Engels, the two comrades who inaugurate political and socioeconomic writings in 19th century, trying to figure out how capitalism operates within a given society to dominate the proletariat. Marxists opt for a *materialist interpretation to history* and *class struggle* as against the *idealistic* and non-materialistic explanation to existence. Engels strongly debates what both Hegel and Duhring have constructed *vis-à-vis* reality since these two idealists argue that this latter is shaped throughout the *mind* and *ideas* that are believed to be immaterial. Since these immaterial ideas are responsible for shaping, determining, and leading lives of people, *reality* accordingly is motivated by *immaterial mechanisms*. The priority, hence, is granted to the mind seeing that Hegel, one of the famous idealists, is of the opinion that thought is not only free but it is also the "absolute truth of consciousness" (Hegel, Science of Logic 46). For Hegel, as a result, thought, notion, intuition, being-for-itself (conscious being), and subjectivity interact in a dialectical way with objectivity, nature, and being in-itself (non-conscious being) to create a sort of *mental reality* (Hegel, Science of Logic 25). Marx, nevertheless, does not believe in Hegel's absoluteness of the thought since he encapsulates that the human brain, which is a *matter*, precedes the

consciousness that might be wrongly viewed as immaterial. This is a kind of abandoning the belief in *reality* as the product of mind or spirit, and highlighting *materialism* as the crucial factor behind the whole existence. Reality is typically material since the world comes before the mind. Reality, also, resides over there. It is external because it occurs outside human being (de George 152-153). However, our perception to it should be controlled by our material and current understanding. This is how *Marxist realism* has been shaped to oppose elite / capitalist realism. Engels argues that:

That is what comes of accepting "consciousness", "thought", quite naturalistically, as something given, something opposed from the outset to being, to nature. If that were so, it must seem extremely strange that consciousness and nature, thinking and being, the laws of thought and the laws of nature, should correspond so closely. But if the further question is raised what thought and consciousness really are and where they come from, it becomes apparent that they are products of the human brain and that man himself is a product of nature, which has developed in and along with its environment; hence it is self-evident that the products of the human brain, being in the last analysis also products of nature, do not contradict the rest of nature's interconnections but are in correspondence with them(Engels 34).

Along these lines, human being, in general, is the product of the material nature, which is a clear *Darwinian-based notion*. Darwinism is not only the cornerstone of the Marxist material interpretation to history but it is also the essential pillar supporting Marxist dialectics since life, mind, human being and existence, for Engels, is a matter of *natural evolution*:

Many hundreds of thousands of years ago, during an epoch, not yet definitely determinable, of that period of the earth's history known to geologists as the Tertiary period, most likely towards the end of it, a particularly highly-developed race of anthropoid apes lived somewhere in the tropical zone probably on a great continent that has now sunk to the bottom of the Indian Ocean. Darwin has given us an approximate description of these ancestors of ours: They were completely covered with hair, they had beards and pointed ears, and they lived in bands in the trees. First, owing to their way of living which meant that the hands had different functions than the feet when climbing, these apes began to lose the habit of using their hands to walk and adopted a more and more erect posture. This was the decisive step in the transition from ape to man(Engels 452).

Consequently, history, religion, politics, and social behaviors are all determined by *material motivations* since the *animalistic background* leads automatically to the *class struggle*(Engels 26). This Marxist notion is based too on Darwin's materialist idea pertaining to *the struggle for existence*, "At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace throughout the world the savage races"(Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* 201). This is how the conflict between classes renders the nature of any kind of system, be it economic, religious, political, or philosophical, into a typically material interest.

Marxists like Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin use *Darwinist materialism* as a crucial tool to turn *Hegelian dialectics* upside down. They develop dialectics from

Hegel's method indicating how the *logic* consists of opposing sides, that each side has arguments against the other. This contradiction contributes effectively in the development of the way we are *reasoning* (Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind* 19-46). Hegel's *Science of Logic* itself suggests the whole system of this dialectics occurring, above all, at the level of the mind where *abstract* ideas are negated within a certain tension to generate different results. The trajectory from the first level marking a kind of nothingness to the third stage constituting a concrete result reveals the notion of *becoming*. Dialectics, by and large, is a method suggesting *three main laws* that are in an on-going process: the *thesis*, the *antithesis*, and the *synthesis*. The thesis is the idea, opinion, assumption, or proposition. The antithesis is the negation of the thesis. The synthesis is a conciliating mode linking thesis with antithesis to shape a new thesis, leading the whole method to repeat itself in an infinite process. For example, before a painter starts painting, s/he has an abstract / imaginary concept about the tree s/he wants to paint. This is the thesis. As s/he handles tubes, canvas, linseed oil, palette, and brushes, and starts painting, the previous abstract idea is modified because the practical side gets into a kind of *tension* with the previous idea. This tension stage is called the antithesis. When this painter finishes her/his painting, s/he realizes that it does not resemble the first abstract image. The result, therefore, is different, and referred to as synthesis.

Engels, nevertheless, criticizes the way Hegel relates dialectics to thought, logic, and idealistic essence. Marx, also, prefers to lay dialectics on the line of *nature* and *material existence* as if he wants to establish a rigorous scientific method on the Darwinian materialistic bases (Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* 47). Engels, in his

turn, defines dialectics as “the science of interconnections” (Marx and Engels, Collected Works 356) within the matter itself. For him, dialectics can be understood throughout three laws: *the law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa*, *the law of the interpenetration of opposites*, and *the law of the negation of the negation* (Marx and Engels, Collected Works 356). With reference to the first law, the qualitative changes occur due to quantitative reasons, suggesting that the priority is given to the matter, “(...) qualitative changes can only occur by the quantitative addition or subtraction of matter or motion (so-called energy)” (Marx and Engels, Collected Works 356). *Energy* that might be viewed as immaterial, for Engels, is nothing but a result of material interactions. He gives the example of oxygen amongst many other examples to make his materialist idea emphatic. For him, oxygen consists of nitrogen or sulphur:

“each of which produces a substance qualitatively from any of the other! (...) (nitrogen monoxide N_2O) is from nitric anhydride (nitrogen pentoxide, N_2O_5) ! The first is a gas, the second at ordinary temperatures a solid crystalline substance. And yet the whole difference in composition is that the second contains five times as much oxygen as the first, and between the two of them are three more oxides of nitrogen (NO , N_2O_3 , NO_2), each of which is qualitatively different from the first two and from each other” (Marx and Engels, Collected Works 359).

It is clear within this context that Engels wants to demonstrate how material interactions amongst concrete elements determine the existing reality of everything. The cause behind this existence, therefore, is neither the Hegelian abstract ideas nor consciousness. Life itself is generated from concrete chemical combinations or rather mutations as

believed by Darwinists. The whole existence, equally, emerges due to this material causation.

In regard to the second law, Engels construes that nature consists of dynamic opposing components that are responsible for creating life. For example, chaos and order are two opposing elements, yet they are interrelated and not separate since one cannot know what does order mean without having in mind what does chaos signify. This is why *the law of the interpenetration of opposites* is referred to as *the unity of opposites*. It is, also, a sort of being and not being in the same time, or rather a process of *becoming*, which is created out of a journey from nothingness to being (Marx and Engels, Collected Works 364-365-366). As for *the law of the negation of the negation*, it explains how being or any kind of change is based on contradictions. For example, capitalism is a *negation* of peoples' interests, but this negation itself gives the floor to the Marxist project as a *new negation* targeting capitalism. This economic reality, then, is changed throughout the process of the negation of the negation. What is more, the whole dialectical method explains how *matter* is totally engaged in our existence. It operates, hereafter, within a continuous process of change (Engels 84-492-502). The Marxist method suggests, ultimately, the need to criticize and reshape thoughts, following dialectic laws to revolt and re-establish a new political mode (Marx and Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party 35). It is, for Marxists, the theory that can explain everything:

(...) from the simple cell onwards the theory of evolution demonstrates how each advance up to the most complicated plant on the one side, and up to man on the other, is effectively by the

continual conflict between heredity and adaptation (...) adaptation
(...) continually destroys what has been inherited(Engels 492).

Dialectics, for Marxists, is able to explain everything including history that is based on class struggle. On materialistic bases, classes fight each other throughout the whole history to change societies and to protect the workers' economic rights. Class struggle, in like manner, stands for the dialectical relationship between capitalism and communism since it results in the developing societies (Marx, Capital, Critique of Political Economy 542). Moreover, the pursuit to establish a communist society should be a Marxist worldwide project. To achieve the purpose of change, Marxists have to believe in revolution as a manifestation of the inevitable and dialectical class struggle:

(...) every revolutionary uprising, however remote from the class struggle its object might appear, must of necessity fail until the revolutionary working class shall have conquered; _ that every social reform must remain a Utopia until the proletarian revolution and the feudalistic counter-revolution have been pitted against each other in a world-wide war(Marx and Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party 7).

Dialectics manifests, likewise, in the Marxist notion of the *base and superstructure* determining how societies operates *vis-à-vis* modes of production. Marxism divides a given society into two types following two main theories, namely the base and superstructure (R. Williams 457). The superstructure embodies ideology, social beliefs, religion, media, culture, law, and philosophy; that is all what is not involved in production. As for the base, it reflects relations of production such as the

relationship between the employer and the employee. It involves, also, means of production such as tools, raw materials, and machines. The base in general can be referred to as “productive forces”(R. Williams 456). The relationship between the base and the superstructure is not fixed but it is in an on-going process of reciprocity just like what dialectics accounts for. The base determines the superstructure and the superstructure maintains the base and the whole process moves up in an infinite dialectical and spiral trajectory. For Williams, this makes the relationship between the base and the superstructure complex (R. Williams 455).

In cinema, Marxists try to experiment dialectics as an opposing style to the Hollywood one. After the Bolshevik revolution, Russian film directors such as Kuleshov, Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Vertov make attempts to originate a *Marxist film theory* that highlights *structuralism* and *Marxist realism* as opposed to classical realism. However, they continue, just like classists, dealing with cinema from a *linguistic* perspective since films, for them, should be read and understood rather than considered to be merely opaque and elitist. The way they link cinema to language goes even further. A shot, for them, plays the same role of a word in a given language. It cannot convey any meaning unless it is assembled with other words:

(...) why should the cinema follow the forms of theater and painting rather than the methodology of language, which allows wholly new concepts of ideas to arise from the combination of two concrete denotations of two concrete objects? Language is much closer to film than painting is(Eisenstein, Film Form 60).

In a *rudimentary* stage, Kuleshov pays attention to the importance of *montage* after studying well how Griffith effectively benefits from it (Kuleshov 62). He realizes that *meanings* and *nuances* can be generated from the *juxtaposition* of two images just like the assemblage of words in a given language since one image or one word is unable to tell anything. Kuleshov makes an experiment to prove the effective role of assembling images / montage. He juxtaposes a shot of the emotionless face of a man with another shot of a girl in a coffin. Next,

he juxtaposes the same shot of the face with a plate of soup and then he changes the shot of the plate with a shot of a woman lying down on a sofa. The meaning, eventually, changes from one assemblage to the other though the shot of the man does not change. The first assemblage indicates grief. The second one gives the impression of hunger, and the last one shows the man feeling lust



Figure 2

(Kuleshov 176). What this experiment, that is called *Kuleshov Effect*, aims to declare is that film directors can do without *tempo-spatial linearity*, which is based on the suture system, while trying to construct their meanings. The way Kuleshov deals with montage can effectively transcend space and time continuity to opt for a *constructive* montage

emphasizing ideas rather than narrative linearity. He gives an example of this constructive montage from his *Engineer Price's Project* where he avoids space constraints by opting for shooting characters of the same scene in different places. He, besides, shoots different body parts of other people. As he juxtaposes all the shots, the different places look like one coherent space as well as the body parts give the impression that they are belonging to the main characters (Kuleshov 63-64).

Now one should pay attention to the constructive montage *vis-à-vis* the suture system. In fact, it seems that they have common characteristics, but a subtle observation may reveal the ambiguity. The first one aims at providing the viewer with ready meanings throughout highly rhythmic cuttings, multiple angles, the representation of explicit space, and linear time, that enslaves montage, to make that viewer identified with / attracted to the political mainstream, while the second opts for a slow montage, a few angles, and the construction of space, actors, and action. Constructive montage, therefore, suggests *coded*, and *dialectical* image requiring mental *decoding* activities (Kuleshov 13). Kuleshov effect, also, paves the way for other Marxist film directors to question the importance of the classical acting methods going hand in hand with the suture system and shaping not only narrative heroes, but also social stars. If the montage has this magic power, what is then the use of promoting acting methods? “If we simply choose a person, having no relationship to the theater, and make him do what we need, we shall see that his work on the screen appears better than the work of a theater actor and will give us more realistic material” (Kuleshov 68). Eisenstein in his turn settles upon *typage* as an anti-acting technique highlighting montage over heroic representation of characters (Eisenstein, *Film Form* 8). This is how Marxist Russian film directors deal

with *non-professional actors* whom they choose for their specific facial characteristics rather than on how much they know about acting. On the whole, the suture system tries to highlight narrative by subordinating montage to narrative continuity, while dialectical montage tries to draw viewers' attention to image by intensifying the idea that meaning is generated from the collision / dialectical relationship between two images.

However, Kuleshov and his student Pudovkin do not apply Marxist dialectics in montage in an effective way since they opt for *linkage* and *brick by brick montage* rather than conveying dialectical modes by *colliding* two images. For Pudovkin, dialectics only helps him liberating his style from literary or dramatic tutelage by believing in the power of constructive montage, "The novelist expresses his key-stones in written descriptions, the dramatist by rough dialogue, but the scenarist must think in plastic (externally expressive) images" (Pudovkin 42). He argues that it is the relationship between two shots that creates meaning and the way these *shots are constructed* that supports the narrative and not any other literary mechanisms. He emphasizes also that juxtaposition should follow certain *relational mode of editing*, which are all stemmed from constructive montage.

Pudovkin's relational editing, nevertheless, aims at escaping a banal assemblage of shots to establish a serious method that "controls the 'psychological guidance' of the spectator" (Pudovkin 75). On so doing, he suggests five types of relational editing: Contrast, Parallelism, Symbolism, Simultaneity, and Leit-motif. Contrast editing juxtaposes two contradictory shots. For example, contrasting a shot that represents starving with another shot that stands for gluttony. It is, then, the relationship between

the two shots that forces “the spectator to compare the two actions (...)one strengthening the other” (Pudovkin 76). Parallelism, as explained by Pudovkin, juxtaposes “two thematically unconnected incidents” (Pudovkin 76) to develop them in parallel. As for the symbolic type, Pudovkin explains, “it introduces an abstract concept into the consciousness of the spectator without use of a title” (Pudovkin 76-77). Symbolism, as Pudovkin points out, can be found in the final scene of Eisenstein’s *Strike*²⁰, depicting the slaughter of a bull to signify how workers are treated by the capitalist system. The way this scene is juxtaposed with other shots of attacking workers generates a suggestive concept against capitalism. Concerning simultaneity, it is built from the development of two interrelated different trajectories. For Deleuze, this can be described as the *convergence* between two interweaved actions (Deleuze, Cinema 1 The Movement-Image 31). Being influenced by Griffith, Pudovkin explains how “the end of the present-day section of *Intolerance*²¹ (...) is thus constructed” out of two developing actions (Pudovkin 77). Finally, leit-motif (also *reiteration of theme*) highlights the main theme of the film by inserting telling shots. Pudovkin construes that:

In an anti-religious scenario that aimed at exposing the cruelty and hypocrisy of the Church in employ of the Tsarist regime the same shot was several times repeated: a church-bell slowly ringing and, superimposed on it, the title: "The sound of bells sends into the world a message of patience and love. This piece appeared whenever the scenarist desired to emphasize the stupidity of patience, or the hypocrisy of the love thus preached (Pudovkin 78).

²⁰*Strike*. Sergei Eisenstein, First State Film Factory, 1925. Film.

²¹*Intolerance*. D.W. Griffith, Triangle Film Corporation, 1916. Film.

Vertov goes even further as he calls into question the continuity / suture system suggested by scenarios / scripts. He accentuates the work of the camera as it has the capacity to depict reality much better than scenarios can do. Cinematography, for him, should end to leave the floor for *cinema vérité*, the real art of cinema (Vertov 7). Vertov clings to the *documentary style of filming* rather than opting for scenarios and professional actors that may be considered to be as necessary for played films. He introduces his documentary method that is known as Kino-eye (also cine-eye) as the only way to escape the traditional way based on literary elements. He reiterates the importance of constructing shots to shape an *optic understanding of cinema* away from dealing with it from a literary / continuous perspective reinforced by scenarios. However, his absolute belief in constructive montage that does without acting methods, and suture system draws reactions against him. Brik and Shklovsky, for example, construe that unplayed films require scenarios even more than played ones. The lack of scenario, for them, harms the theme of *socialism* that can be more present and effective if a provoking scenario operates within the whole filmic process. Brik and Shklovsky add that Vertov's *The Eleventh Year* lacks motivation only because Vertov neglects working on an attractive scenario (Brik and Shklovsky 15-16).

Brik and Shklovsky also run counter to Eisenstein for being too much interested in the methodological sense, "From the Lef²² standpoint such a method does not exist and indeed cannot exist" (Brik and Shklovsky 17). For them, the way he clings to methodology makes his films rather "unremarkable". In his *October*, as they point out,

²²**Lef/Constructivism:** (1920s) an artistic movement known as the "Left Front of the Arts". In cinema, it opposes suture system. Kuleshov, Pudovkin, Vertov, and Eisenstein are constructivists since they opt for geometric styles rather than narrative ones.

there is a lack of *reconstruction* to history. This implies Eisenstein's daring mode of neglecting the scenario seeing that the majority of critics continue viewing *linkage* of filmic elements as important, otherwise cinema will provide insignificant films that merely falsify history and construct grotesque shows (Brik and Shklovsky 19). Brik and Shklovsky give the example of the sequence of Gods followed by the statue of Napoleon along with the shot of Kornilov, the general in the Russian army. They construe that these shots are *reductive* because they suggest only one similarity which is divinity. Other important perspectives are neglected though they are more meaningful (Brik and Shklovsky 20). Even so, for other marxists such as Eisenstein, the way these shots are constructed renders Marxist dialectics into *intellectual montage*. Constructing shots should take into consideration the notion of *conflict* as a crucial principle inasmuch as cinema should refer to the contradictions of reality and in the same time it should urge the spectator's consciousness to recognize dialectical facts of opposing modes in life. For example, nature and industry are two opposing things as Marx believes (Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy 47). Nature manifests in the organic aspect, which is all the time passive, while industry reveals itself throughout the rational aspect, which is an active mode. Hereafter, the dialectical relationship between nature and industry leads to the creation of Art (Eisenstein, Film Form 46). Reality can be seen as natural and passive. This is the *thesis*. As the active role of the camera interferes, one can speak about the *antithesis*. The result, therefore, forms the *synthesis* or rather *the law of the negation of the negation* as modified by Marx and Engels (Marx and Engels, Collected Works 356). The shots of Gods, consequently, get into a dialectical relationship with the ones of the general to create the meaning of bumptious custody and power.

Eisenstein settles upon the dialectical montage that goes a step further than the constructive one by *giving the priority to collision over linkage*; that is opting for a typically Marxist method. He emphasizes that, “(...) montage is an idea that arises from the collision of independent shots – shots even opposite to one another (...)” (Eisenstein, Film Form 49). What is more, the conflict that is generated from the tension between shots or within the shot itself occurs at several levels. It can present itself akin to motive, space, or characters, as well as can manifest either among these elements or within the same element. The meaning, therefore, is generated from the dialectical relationship between two shots or within contradicted elements within the same shot, but one element or one coherent shot cannot suggest any significant dimensions.

Eisenstein suggests *10 types of conflict within the shot itself*. First, he suggests *Graphic conflict*. In *Battleship Potemkin*, the shot of the boy who falls on the Odessa steps designs two crossing directions. The first direction pertains to the boy’s body that shapes a graphic conflict with the steps’ lines as if the body crosses the lines of the steps. Second, he explains that *conflict of planes* collides positions. For example, in the same film, a woman, carrying the body of the child, is described in a low position, while the soldiers are pointing their guns at her from a high position. This helps showing the guns over the woman and the other attacked people to connote tyranny and injustice. Third, he collides two contradictory shapes in *conflict of volumes*. For example, in his *The General Line*, the shot of the two women in ‘the Service of Agricultural Restocking and Loan for Machines’ emphasizes the contradiction between a large shape of one woman and a slimmer one. Fourth, Eisenstein uses *spatial conflict* in the same film. A shot representing the state farm suggests one space with competing dimensions of two

buildings. Fifth, he collides light with darkness in what he calls *light conflict*. In many of his films one can find shots representing lit objects along with dark ones to create contrasts. Night shots of workers running with rifles in Winter palace is a good example that one can find in Eisenstein's October. Sixth, he applies the *tempo conflict* manifested in the duration of an action within the frame exactly like some shots of the Odessa stairs that suggest the action of soldiers' attack along with people's escape. Seventh, Eisenstein construes that the *conflict between the matter and viewpoint* creates a kind of distortion through camera angle. In his October, the camera angle pertaining to the shot of a statue generate a kind of dynamic visual result. Eighth, the *conflict between matter and spatial nature* ends up in another kind of distortion. Camera lenses are responsible for this distortion. Ninth, the *conflict between an event and its temporal nature* can be done, as Eisenstein explains, by using slow motion and stop motion. Finally, Eisenstein proposes the *conflict between the whole optical complex and a quite different sphere* (Eisenstein, Film Form 54-55-56). On listing these conflicts, Eisenstein aims to shape a kind of *syntax* that can be detached from literature, and 180° of suture system, but related to *dialectics, language and emotions* to construct communicative purposes with the spectator.

Eisenstein shifts this conflict from within the same shot to apply it between separate shots. It is, for him, the kind of tension created out of this collision that generates the dialectical meaning. As stated in his *Film Form*, he lists five main types of juxtaposition. First, he introduces the *Metric Montage* that sets two shots side by side according to their measures regardless their contents. The mathematical measures of the shots, which are "synonymous", determine this sort of montage and the tension can be

enhanced by repetition and acceleration (Eisenstein, Film Form 72). *October's* sequence of the soldier shooting people consists of rapid cuts allowing a metric swapping of the shot of the soldier with the other shot of the weapon. Both shots are also interchanged with another shot of people trying to escape. The whole sequence aims at *attracting the spectator since Marxism is a communicative ideology*. Second, there is the *Rhythmic Montage* that differs from the former by giving importance to the content. Within the context of the rhythmic montage, the *action* determines the length of the shot in such away that it keeps *a kind of* visual continuity, forming a typically *movement image* style (Deleuze, Cinema 1 The Movement-Image 40). The Odessa steps sequence in Eisenstein's *Potemkin* suggests a clear example of the rhythmic montage, "in this the rhythmic drum of the soldiers' feet as they descend the steps violates all *metrical demands*" (Eisenstein, Film Form 74). Third, the *Tonal Montage* takes into consideration the *movement / action / content* even more than the rhythmic one does as long as *emotional reasons* determine this kind of montage. For instance, the sequence of the baby carriage in *Potemkin* creates tragic and emotional tension and the death of people in the same sequence causes sensation as well. Fourth, there is the *Over-tonal Montage* that is developed from the tonal one to boost the degree of conflict and to generate more visual tension and sensation. This can be a good application of the ongoing Marxist dialectics that renders the synthesis into a new thesis. The Odessa steps, as an example, generate an ongoing process of victimizing the attacked people, which is over-tonal in nature. Finally, Eisenstein suggests the *Intellectual Montage* that is created out of colliding two independent shots to construct / convey an *idea*, following the dialectical law. In Eisenstein's *Strike*, the shots of slaughtering a bull is juxtaposed with the shots of attacking people to deliver the idea of political oppression targeting helpless

people. As another example from *Potemkin*, the juxtaposition of a sleeping stone lion (thesis) with another roaring stone lion (antithesis) constructs the idea of the awakening of people (synthesis).

The Russian method of montage, all in all, bears resemblance to the way *structuralist Marxism* reshapes *humanist Marxism* by trying to cope with Marxism from a *rigorous* point of view, seeing that Marxism should be viewed as a *science* rather than merely an ideology. For Althusser, capitalism is empowered due to the structure of economy and not because of individual attempts (Althusser 23-30). This encourages structural Marxists to put the Marxist theory into action and practice, the notion that is known as the *Praxis* (Bernstein 13), to effectively face the dominant economic structure. Eisenstein, in like manner, sees that cinema should transcend individuality embodied in heroism and personal narrative for a more *structural cinema* that is based on the dialectical manifestation of existence colliding capitalists with proletarians. This is, for him, the only way to create an effective Marxist cinema that aims to change the world by representing the *objective* and *collective* concern regardless *individual* interests. Eisenstein's structural cinema stems its mode not only from *socialist realism* that is based on the *Marxist interpretation to reality*, but also from *structuralism* in general. The meaning as Eisenstein believes is created out of a system that is structural. The various elements within a given system interact to generate the meaning since one element is unable to suggest any signification. For structuralists, any text (image, literary work, music, etc.) should be viewed as a *sign* that consists of a *signified* and a *signifier* (De Saussure 79-80). While the signified is the arbitrary and conceptual form, the signifier stands for the visual and concrete image. The meaning hereafter that is

constructed in its nature exists only when there is a relationship between the signified and the signifier, providing a manifold representation of a sign. What gives the sign a transcendental dimension is the manifestation of the relationship between its denotation, which is apparent, and connotation, which is hidden. This structuralist notion about the construction of meaning accords with Eisenstein's dialectical montage since both theories agree on the fact that *meaning is generated out of a structure and relational factors*.

The meaning as believed by Eisenstein is to that end a matter of material interpretation or rather a structural visual conflict that is detached from Hegelian idealism, but firmly linked to dialectical explanation to human experience and history. This is a clear belief in the Marxist inevitability *vis-à-vis* history and class struggle. He construes that:

(...) human expression is a conflict between conditioned and unconditioned reflexes. (In this I cannot agree with Klages, who a) does not consider human expression dynamically as a process, but statically as a result, (and who, b) attributes everything in motion to the field of the 'soul', and only the element to 'reason' (Eisenstein, Film Form 47).

It is then the material interpretation that matters for Eisenstein. Films should not only declare this interpretation but also adopt it as its interior mechanism. Eisenstein's collision or conflict between shots or within one shot corresponds on one hand to class struggle and advocates on the other hand the *conscious montage* over suture system. Montage is viewed by Russian Marxists as *the essence of cinema* as long as it constructs meanings out of contradictions of reality away from the Griffith's continuity linking 'real' space with 'real' time. Montage should be instead an intellectual tool that goes

beyond this continuity of time and space to establish a dialectical reality that is more ideological than classical reality.

Marxism's Rebirth from the Existentialist Womb

A Modernist Formula with a Built-in Marxism

Eisenstein tries to transcend the suture system by exercising dialectics as a tool to create a new cinematic syntax. His aim is to bring to light a significant visual style that can challenge the narrative continuity characterizing other genres like classical literature. This effort however is faced with Stalin's criticism since socialist leaders do not want arts to adopt *formalist* modes for fear of disrupting the pursuit of delivering the Marxist message, in this view. *Communication* thus is a crucial factor on which Marxist leaders place a bet. Lenin for example spells out the priority of cinema as the most effective communicative tool, "the cinema is the most important of all the arts". Stalin in his turn accuses the mentioned Russian montage of committing the *formalist error* since the aim is to serve *socialist realism* rather than construct a merely *elitist art* but, be that as it may, Marxist cineastes find in Eisenstein's rudimentary attempt the first step leading to more daring and rebellious styles. They stick to Marxism as their doctrinal background, but in the same time they opt for *existentialism* as a potential guardian angel that can guide Marxism to outstrip its predicable stagnation. Sartre declares that Marxism remains abstract unless it interacts with other concepts especially the ones related to *freedom*. It is this alternative for Sartre that can save Marxism from being confined to limited political modes (J. P. Sartre, *Between Existentialism and Marxism* 134).

The relationship between Marxism and existentialism is the point in question seeing that this relationship might be viewed as a kind of a Marxist renewal with

existentialist mechanisms. It can be interpreted in a reversible way as well. Be that as it may, Marxism and existentialism are on the same wavelength as they have points in common (J. P. Sartre, *Research for a Method* 174-175), these are of great benefits to Marxist cinema. As a matter of fact, the Marxist stagnation embodied in *absolutism* and *objective interpretation to reality* is a point at issue for all the classical tendencies including the dialectical cinema. The way classical cinema represents reality suggests one-dimensional interpretation of this reality leading the spectator to experience a sort of *identification* with the models, ideologies and values that classical films construct. Eisenstein's dialectical style in like manner supports the idea of the *objective* reality by relying the method on the *structuralist law of dialectics* that is viewed as a strict science. Since Marxism renders itself into this scientific rigor, it becomes problematized. The belief in the objectivity and scientificity of the Marxist interpretation leads dialectical cinema to operate within the notion of *causality* since any opposing elements suggest a kind of *change* and *modification* occurring to natural being after it has been interfered by industrial /societal factors. This causality does not allow Eisenstein to go beyond the classical *organic unity*. He more than that sees that dialectical cinema should take into consideration the *pathos* as a way to attract the spectator:

When *Potemkin* discussed two of its features are commonly remarked: The organic construction of its composition as a whole and the pathos of the film. Sacrificing grace to precision, we can refer to these two qualities as: ORGANIC-NESS and PATHOS. (Eisenstein, *Film Form* 159).

The organic unity and pathos are key attributes of all classical tendencies, that is dialectical cinema cannot escape the accusation of making the spectator feels

psychologically identified with the ideology that is shaped by linear films. On the whole, with the notion of freedom that prevails over one-dimensional ideologies before, during, and after the two World Wars, Marxist cineastes start thinking of transcending these classical modes.

Existentialism, within this context, offers these cineastes the means to liberate their Marxist doctrine from rigidity that may inactivate Marxism in future. While existentialists discard all the objective doctrines and theories such as religion, historicity, positivism, realism, rigorous Marxism and the rest of the classical tendencies, they give Marxism the chance to keep afloat for long time since existentialism shares Marxism its materialistic interpretation to *existence* which is for Marxists and existentialists meaningless in its nature unless *material struggle* operates to shape the missing meaning:

Existentialism, like Marxism, addresses itself to experience in order to discover these concrete syntheses, (...). For us, truth is something which becomes, it has and will have become. It is a totalization which is forever being totalized. Particular facts do not signify anything; they are neither true nor false so long as they are not related, through the mediation of various partial totalities, to the totalization in process (J. P. Sartre, *Research for a Method* 30-31).

This is a kind of viewing meaning and existence as generated from material interactions rather than intelligent factors. It is likewise how the existentialist Schopenhauer views meaning and existence when he indicates that the 'will' is more important than the 'mind' seeing that humans act according to their material will rather than spiritual mind. This opinion assimilates the non-conscious Darwinian natural selection emphasizing the

material reasons that cause existence (Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* 145). Schopenhauer argues that the meaning exists only at the level of the ‘experience’ and ‘empiricist’ mode, which means that the concrete *external* factor is the only reason behind meaning and existence regardless the ideas believing in the role of the non-material *essence* (Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation* 103). Marxist cineastes hereafter continue believing in materialistic interpretation to existence, but abandon objectivity and its legacies such as scientificity and positivism.

Before dealing with the film directors who opt for subjectivity over objectivity, we should have first an idea about how *existentialist subjectivity* has been shaped. The inceptive formula constructing subjectivity aims at modifying the way idealists such as Hegel, Kant and Descartes understand it. Hegel gives too much importance to the *spirit / mind* because he believes it is the center since it undertakes the responsibility of explaining the reality around us (Hegel, *Science of Logic* 46). For Kant, our non-material concept carries the load for representing objects as they appear over there / as they are perceived, the notion he refers to as a *synthetic unity of the manifold* (Kant 246). Hegel and Kant therefore believe that *concepts* as mental products, link between the objects/reality/world and the individual though Kant seems more skeptical when he focuses more on the role of the individual. This, of course, goes back to Descartes’ *cogito*, “I am thinking therefore I exist” (Descartes 29), which simply means if one thinks, s/he is the generator of this thinking which becomes in its turn a common factor rather than a real existence. Reality in this context is determined by *thought and imagination*. It is *mental* and *immaterial* in its nature as well. Idealists therefore argue

that *metaphysical* factors acting as spirit, values, ideas, beliefs, principles, and concepts can construct the meaning of reality.

Phenomenologists for all that believe that reality is not determined by metaphysical spirit/mind. Reality for them is related basically to two main factors functioning as *intention* and *consciousness* (Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* 54-75). Reality as explained by Husserl is engendered out of concrete intentional consciousness since there is no floor for metaphysics to operate within the *phenomenological method*. This latter is based mainly on tangible experience in relation to the individual intentional consciousness. Husserl emphasizes that this approach is more effective than *science* itself (Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy* 145) because science rely its work on merely experience without any interference of the intentional consciousness. This may characterize science with abstraction and non-workable theories. The perception as Husserl construes cannot be effective unless it involves senses, intention, consciousness and experimentation. This is why Husserl opposes the scientific *focus on the object* and its *negligence of the subject*. He, therefore, insists on the consciousness as an important link between the subject (I) and the object, which means there is no object without the subject (Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy* 104). Husserl criticizes also *psychology* for not following the method of the intentional consciousness that is the only way to transcend useless presuppositions (Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy* 96).

It is only throughout human consciousness that one can shape a subjective/personal meaning of this reality (Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy* 90), a kind of *transcendental subjectivity* suggesting that the individual is the doer and actor of the meaning. Unlike the positivist psychology representing facts and real existence, phenomenology suggests transcendental subjectivity that looks for *essential existence* that is neither factual nor real (Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* 5). This comparison between the paradigm of positivism, psychology, and science and the paradigm of phenomenology brings about two contradictory concepts. The first concept is the *actual universality* that stands for objectivity. The second one is the *eidetic universality* that throws spotlight on subjectivity and independent ideas. For Husserl, the second concept is considered to be the *pure essence* (eidos) since it directs subjective intention to determine the object and hereafter to generate a personal conceptual essence *vis-à-vis* this object (Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* 15). Husserl does not believe neither in absolute reality limited within time and space nor in fixed concepts based on *given, made, vague, objectivized, or false* presuppositions or metaphysical dimensions. He, however, believes in things that are *non-real, personal, and intentional* by consciousness. The real things, as he believes, are conditional and given, while the non-real things, they are *unconditional and pure*. This makes Husserl differentiates between the *Noesis*, which is the objective perception to objects (Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* 213-214), and *Noema*, which is the directional and intentional idea about the object (Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* 223). The Noematic concept is

what matters for him since it includes the *changeable, non-real, and subjective essence of reality*. The intentionality marks the state of the consciousness. If the consciousness is immanent as it deals with things as they are given, it cannot cause any effective perception. But if it is transcendent, it directs its activity to objects to look for their subjective essences. This is to perceive them in a proper way. Things that are not perceived are not proven, but things that are perceived, they are proven and therefore conscious.

The way phenomenology constructs a reduction method *vis-à-vis* objectified theories neutralizes and *brackets* all what can derange Husserl's strategy (Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* 115). This *phenomenological bracketing* aims at putting aside all the intuitions, pre judgments and absolutism to highlight the *manifested existence* acting as a phenomenal, concrete, visual, and perceived being. Heidegger however adopts a wider concept in regard to Husserl's bracketing. Though he reacts against the 19th century theories such as positivism, science, historicity, and religion that encapsulate absolutism in certain rationality, reality and logical objectivity, he offers a more open vision than Husserl by characterizing the phenomenological bracketing with a *structural interpretive* mode. Heidegger aims at not only revisiting and redressing Husserl's phenomenology (Moran 194), but he aims also at constructing a more effective range of attitudes towards material existence and its crucial relationship with subjectivity. For Heidegger, Husserl's bracketing as the way it is can merely reduce human's experience as it limits knowledge in poor descriptive activities / "descriptive phenomenology" (Heidegger 30),

whereas by modifying it²³ one can challenge the meaning of the existence. Heidegger accordingly believes that existence can be well understood if it is interpreted and compared to other *existences* - *Da-seins* (being in the worlds). The *Conscious* mentioned by Husserl therefore should not only be effectively linked to *interpretation* but also should seek meanings amongst shared experiences. Interpretation, for Heidegger, is itself a *Da-sein*, which means it should not be dealt with as a “procedure” (Heidegger 58). It is rather a structure of being (Heidegger 59). This is why Heidegger associates the “being” with the “world” as both *being* and *the world* are in a forceful active relationship. One should not think that Heidegger’s “in” in his expression “being in the world” (*Da-sein*) means something inside something else. Heidegger instead introduces the idea of *relational modalities* highlighting structural interactions over straight ahead reasoning:

What does *being – in* mean? Initially, we supplement the expression being – in as with the phrase “in the world”, and we inclined to understand this being – in as “being – in something”. With this term, the kind of being of a being is named which is “in” something else, as water is “in” the glass, the dress is “in” the closet. By this “in” we mean the relation of being that two beings extended “in” space have to each other with regard to their location in that space. Water and glass, dress and closet, are both “in” space “at” a location in the same way(Heidegger 50).

The way Heidegger views being hereafter involves extended relations amongst other beings. It is therefore the structure of these beings around us that operates everyday within the notion of time. Since Heidegger accepts the idea of beings rather than one

²³Husserl considers any probable modification to bracketing to be sort of *biases*.

being he focuses on interpretation (hermeneutics) as a crucial factor to have knowledge of the kind of relationship that concerns these multiple beings (Heidegger 33). Reality, then, cannot be understood throughout description *per se*, but only through a *hermeneutic mode* that can shape our understanding of more than one reality in a generative way. Unlike Husserl, this kind of thinking shows how Heidegger develops subjectivity by characterizing it with hermeneutics to activate it in a more effective way.

Heidegger's interpretation problematizes Husserl's intentional conscious' temporal notion that is based mainly on the "now". He aims at introducing an open notion of time that transcends the Husserl's present to construct the Heidegger's future. For him, unlike the present tense the future tense suggests the ongoing human experience and empowers the change over the actualized "being" (Belghazi 37, 38). The journey of "becoming"²⁴ can never be effective in space and time if it is not annexed to interpretation because by linking the actual subjectivity (descriptive phenomenology) to the existential hermeneutics (interpretive phenomenology) we can construct potential meanings. Da-sein, therefore, as Heidegger believes, involves the "being" in relationship with not only the world, but also with the temporal experiences. It has to be considered within the notion of time. If Da-sein is not understood within this relational mode, Heidegger forewarns the return of the metaphysical construction believing in *eternity* rather than counting on *the existentialist duality of being and nothingness*. Though Heidegger goes further than Husserl's now by emphasizing the future, *time* for him is still one-dimensional since it is limited between a starting point, which is the

²⁴Becoming is a philosophical notion that goes back to ancient Greece. It is coined with Heraclitus (c. 535 – c.475 BC). It means that nothing is stagnant but everything is following an on-going phases of change. Hegel explains, also, that becoming is the changeable state from nothingness to being...

birth (being), and an ending point which is death (nothingness) marking the mortality of human being. Da-sein account of Heidegger's explanation anticipates and decides whom to be in future. It has the power to modify current cultural backgrounds to establish new attitudes and interpretations in future (becoming) though Human being is as temporal as time that s/he will end up in a point of time in future. Da-sein accordingly becomes detached from the "being of the there" with death²⁵ since human being cannot deal with death after experiencing it. In this case objectivity imposes itself as human being constructs concepts about death throughout the others. Heidegger within only this context seems more tolerant with objectivity. He construes that:

When Da-sein reaches its wholeness in death, it simultaneously loses the being of there. The transition to no-longer-being-there lifts Da-sein right out of the possibility of experiencing this transition and of understanding it as something experienced. This kind of thing is denied to actual Da-sein in relation to itself. The death of others, then, is all the more penetrating. In this way, an end of Da-sein becomes "objectivity" accessible. Sa-sein can gain an experience of death, all the more because it is essentially being-with with others. This "objective" givenness of death must then make possible an ontological analysis of the totality of Da-sein. (Heidegger 221)

On believing this way, Heidegger does not like to go further than the future tense that is projected in the present to enable the individual to modify her/his choices, because going further will represent time as absolute and eternal, which is a metaphysical approach for him. Time as he infers is as finite as human being. Da-sein hereafter is a concrete finite being.

²⁵Being for Heidegger is temporal and cannot be conceived except in relationship with time and space (Heidegger 16, 17).

Since Da-sein is limited in space and time and is an inevitable mortal being, “Angst” (fear)²⁶ for Heidegger is generated to act within the whole process. This “falling prey”²⁷ of Da-sein is *inauthentic* because it is influenced by other Da-seins (objectivity) that not only believe in historicity and conventions but also lock out any attempt to innovate (subjectivity). However, *authenticity* can operate if “care”, that is the subjective conscious for Husserl, decides to innovate within the hermeneutic sense. The authentic Da-sein moreover can reveal and shape itself if there is a strong belief in *freedom*. On the whole, Heidegger links authenticity to both interpretation and freedom as a workable formula for him to accept the “Angst” and adapt it. This way the individual can achieve creation and innovation (subjectivity)(Heidegger 164-253). Heidegger’s authenticity goes hand in hand with Sartre’s *good faith*. Inauthenticity in addition becomes a *bad faith* for Sartre. Sartre in like manner believes that consciousness enables the individual to construct an identity determining the self unless this consciousness becomes disabled by objective dimensions embodied in social roles, traditions, common sense or rather the *lie*²⁸ we accept to adopt. These are all obstacles hindering the individual to go beyond what is planned for her/him. The situation of being adhered to these objective modes is described by Sartre as “Bad Faith” (J.-P. Sartre 50) while resisting this bad faith is a kind of “a self recovery” (J.-P. Sartre 70) or rather a good faith. The good faith moreover is *Sartre’s effective project* that can allow the individual to be whoever s/he wants in future away from any social interference.

²⁶Heidegger explains in his *Being and Time* (p: 173) that he gives the “Angst” the characteristics of “fear”, but he is still in the same time looking for the phenomenon of “Angst” as it transcends the phenomenon of the present to deal with the future tense...

²⁷Being victim

²⁸Sartre means by the lie the social ethics and norms or all kinds of objectivity such as religion, realism, and the other absolutist modes.

The conscious human being, therefore, becomes a God herself/himself that creates her/his own life trajectory in case s/he is authentic and in good faith (J.-P. Sartre 128). This Sartrean mode reflects Heidegger's notion of the future that opposes Husserl's present tense. It is in another word the same idea of becoming transcending the present to anticipate and intervene the future. Sartre's project of *good faith* and Heidegger's concept of future go a little bit further than Husserl's actual consciousness. However, they all aim to problematize traditional and moral ethics by supporting subjectivity over objectivity.

Just like Heidegger, Sartre considers the *value* pertaining to the dynamic *freedom* to be the most effective factor that is generated from *good faith*. He construes that the *freedom* of the individual should act to replace various *absolute* modes of objectivity (J.-P. Sartre 38). This freedom, however, can engender *conflict* when an individual's freedom contradicts another individual's freedom:

The mainspring of the conflict of consciousness is the effort of each one to transform his self-certitude into *truth*. And we know that this truth can be attained only in so far as my consciousness becomes as *object* for the Other at the same time as the Other becomes an *object* for my consciousness (J.-P. Sartre 238).

Just like the way Marxism stems its idea of *class struggle* from Darwinism, This existentialist idea of *conflict* grows also out of the *Darwinian's struggle for existence* (Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* 201) which means that materialism is a pillar of strength for both Marxism and existentialism. The notion of freedom can be threatens throughout various ways of conflict, in this view. Love, for example, can manifest, for Sartre, as a bad faith if it *alienates* one's freedom. This can

be expressed also as *inauthentic love* vs. *authentic love*. When an individual loves, s/he wants to appear the way the other beloved wants or desires (Sartre's *being for-others*). This affects one's freedom and raises the issue of the subject/object relationship since the modes of control and conflict become matters in question within this context (J.-P. Sartre 290). As a result, *anxiety* comes to operate within this relationship between subjectivity and alienation.

Sartre emphasizes on the materialist origins of existence even more than both Husserl and Heidegger. He rejects understanding the existence throughout the duality of *appearance* and *essence*. For him, essence has never been hidden behind appearance, but what explains the existence is *the totality* that manifests itself according to materialistic modes (J.-P. Sartre xlvi). He gives in his introduction of *Being and Nothingness* the example of the electric current (energy) that occurs because of interactions amongst *concrete visual things* that have nothing to do with metaphysics. Though one can consider electricity to be of energetic nature, it is for Sartre nothing but a result of material interactions. The matter in this sense engenders electricity that is supposed to be energy. The whole process is therefore materialistic in nature. Sartre believes that every existing thing operates within the *matter* itself, which is *the origin of the existence*. It is a kind of concrete *structure* and the *totality* of physical processes that create the existence. Since the structure and the total interactions of concrete *matter* are the origin, Sartre slightly modifies Husserl's importance to consciousness. He gives the priority to matter. Though Sartre gives the importance of the existence over consciousness, he cannot transcend Husserl's formula of consciousness as he finds himself operating within it. He rather characterizes Husserl's consciousness with more

rigorous materialistic nature. He differentiates between an *intransitive* and *transitive* existence. He calls the first type “being-in-itself” while he names the second type “being-for-itself”. Since there is an *absence of consciousness in the being-in-itself*, a kind of *inaction* and *disability* characterize non-conscious objects (J.-P. Sartre ixv). Sartre describes everything that is not human being to be in-itself. On so doing, he constructs a kind of *reductive* attitude towards *objects* to pave the way for the conscious being as “the revealed-revelation of another type of being, being-for-itself” (J.-P. Sartre ixiii). It is so clear, within this context that Sartre operates within the same notion of Husserlian philosophy of consciousness though he declares his criticism to Husserl and Heidegger. Sartre eventually believes that “Consciousness is the revealed-revelation of existents, and existents appear before consciousness on the foundation of their being” (J.-P. Sartre ixii). Sartrean existentialism on the whole suggests that *existence precedes essence and consciousness*.

All these existentialist modes go back to Nietzsche’s rudimentary ideas constructing *subjectivity*. To oppose objective or collective religious believes, Nietzsche denies the existence of the *soul* (Nietzsche 56) since he believes merely in concrete and visible things operating within the three dimensional mechanism:

Body am I and soul” - so speaks a child. And why should one not speak like children?

But the awakened, the knowing one says: body am I through and through, and nothing besides; and soul is just a word for something on the body (Nietzsche 22).

This Nietzschean concept believing in the priority of the *concrete body* over the *abstract soul* has inspired Sartrean existentialism. Sartre equally suggests that *existence*

precedes essence. The *body* for Nietzsche is the *existence* for Sartre, while the *soul* for Nietzsche is the *essence* for Sartre and the *mind* for Hegel. It is clear at that extent that these both phenomenological and existentialist trends get many of their tenets from Nietzsche's philosophy. Their negative attitudes towards *metaphysics*, *religion*, *positivism*, *science*, *psychoanalysis*, and all the other *objective/collective* modes are stemmed from Nietzsche's notion indicating that *God is dead*. In his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, a literary-style work, Nietzsche represents Zarathustra as a prophet that returns from a cave where he is supposed to be worshipping to declare the death of God. The cave within this context signifies isolation, subjectivity, and solitude as opposed to collectivity, objectivity, and societal relationships. After Zarathustra as Nietzsche narrates has been isolated himself for 10 years, he appears to sarcastically tell people about the death of God. Nietzsche accordingly construes that once mankind starts feel free from collective, religious, and objective beliefs, s/he can go further than just be mankind, a notion developed by Sartre to be later on good faith and freedom. He sarcastically adds: "And recently I heard him say these words: 'God is dead, God died of his pity for humankind'" (Nietzsche 69). For Nietzsche, mankind is a transitional stage between animals and *overman* (*ubermensch*). He believes that: "Mankind is a rope fastened between animal and overman – a rope over an abyss..."(Nietzsche 7). This shows for another time the Darwinian background of Nietzschean philosophy revealing that it is merely a question of *evolution* that transforms mankind throughout materialistic stages. The first stage is typically animalistic, whereas the second stage marks a kind of *becoming* since it gives that humankind humanistic characteristics. As for the third stage, human being can become overman, and even a God of herself/himself. The individual on this basis is emancipated from objective moralities

and values, if s/he can create her/his own values, which is a kind of subjectivity in its ultimate mode:

But a stronger force grows out of your values and a new
overcoming; upon it egg and eggshell break.

All whoever must be a creator in good and evil – truly, he must
first be an annihilator and break values(Nietzsche 90).

Nietzsche is very clear in this context when he cuts ties with conventions and social values to construct personal and subjective ones. It is the same insight assimilating Husserl's bracketing, Heidegger's authenticity, and Sartre's good faith.

On the whole, existentialism highlights the idea that our existence is typically *material* and *accidental*. It is accordingly meaningless unless subjective interferences give it a meaning. Up to this level, existentialism inherits its tenets from the already mentioned Marxist *Dialectics of Nature* that teaches the materialistic and Darwinian interpretation to existence. Both philosophies insist on the development of humankind from an animalistic stage following the law of dialectics / evolution / selection. This development is indeed in an ongoing process till it reaches levels beyond what is supposed to be human. This *Darwinian, Marxist, and existentialist* doctrine aims first and foremost at opposing the idealist and metaphysical interpretation to existence by specifying that there is no meaning that can be engendered from one unity of existence. The meaning however is generated if only two or more unities of existence get in conflict / contradiction, the idea that is based on the Darwinian struggle for existence and the Marxist law of dialectics. There is accordingly no metaphysical explanation to existence outside this formula since what gives life and existence is merely these interactions or rather conflicts amongst interior unities of the same existing thing or the

contradiction between two or more existing things. Water for instance gets evaporated because this materialistic principle operates. Mankind in like manner is being developed on the bases of dialectics (or struggle for existence) and transmutation that acts out of purely physical interactions.

Existentialism however transcends the expected obstacles facing Marxism by highlighting subjectivity over objectivity, maintaining the materialistic interpretation, which is a corner stone of Marxism. It modifies the mode of historicity, scientificity, and the non-practical notion²⁹ of the praxis in Marxism by giving the priority to the individual's hermeneutic sense. On so doing, existence adopts more absurdist characteristics that become a matter of personal treatment. Notions of freedom and individuation replace the Marxist collective mode as well.

Concerning arts, the existentialist subjectivity as Clark explicates marks a kind of bracketing to Art's *commonplace* to declare the *death of arts*, the idea suggesting that there is only one reality / truth / explanation / way of practicing arts, which is the artist's one (Clark 62). *Modernism* likewise adopts the existentialist bracketing to transcend *past methods and styles* such as meta-narratives, linearity, historicity, and realism. It instead encourages *personal* and *empirical* experiences in arts rather than what is supposed to be logical, formulated, or regulated, that is a sort of Heideggerian hermeneutical mode refusing conventional aesthetics, meaning, and taste (Clark 41). Clark in this context links this existentialist hermeneutics with *nihilism* as an anti-realist way of thinking that considers life to be meaningless and absurd. The modernist belief

²⁹The non-practicality of Marxist praxis is a very relative idea since it is situational and follows different spatial and temporal factors.

in *no essence* is rendered into a nihilist negative attitude bracketing conventional and moral values. Reginster argues that this mode generates despair since it teaches that the “highest values cannot be realized” (Reginster 9). This is how themes of anxiety, loneliness, individual freedom and despair are shaped within modernist cinema. A kind of *skepticism* comes up as a result to question if not to *deny* the whole existence. Nothing becomes absolute or concrete. Reality, knowledge, science, time, life, values, and religions are all considered according to this mode to be untrue since they cannot manifest as a real active factors in human lives. The idea of the death of God generates skeptical behavior towards all kinds of conventional ethics. For example, what is supposed to be wrong acts such as killing or suicide are viewed by nihilists and skeptics as a personal freedom. Schopenhauer explains:

They tell us that suicide is the greatest act of cowardice... that suicide is wrong; when it is quite obvious that there is nothing in the world to which every man has a more unassailable title than to his own life and person (...) Now let the reader's own moral feelings decide as to whether or not suicide is a criminal act. Think of the impression that would be made upon you by the news that some one you know had committed the crime, say, of murder or theft, or been guilty of some act of cruelty or deception; and compare it with your feelings when you hear that he has met a voluntary death. While in the one case a lively sense of indignation and extreme resentment will be aroused, and you will call loudly for punishment or revenge, in the other you will be moved to grief and sympathy; and mingled with your thoughts will be admiration for his courage, rather than the moral disapproval which follows upon a wicked action (Schopenhauer, *The Essays of Arthur Schopenhauer* 22).

The Nietzschean idea of death of God on the whole gives rise to other deaths: death of the author, death of the theory, death of morals, death of arts etc. This is subjectivity in its extremist dimensions. Modernist cinema suggests trends that try to be inspired by this existentialist intellect. Surrealism, Poetic cinema, neorealism, and La Nouvelle Vague are salient modernist genres highlighting notions of existentialism, nihilism, and skepticism.

Surrealism as a cinematic trend marks one of the first modernist movements that attempt to bracket classical tendencies. It abandons objectivity to declare a total adherence to subjectivity by discarding rationality, reason, and common beliefs. For surrealists, rationality is nothing but a Bourgeois ideology that leads to war and human despair (Breton 5). This is how surrealism becomes against conventional arts. On so doing, surrealist films juxtapose images that seem to be realistic, but the way these images are assembled is rather odd, shocking, and illogical. Some aesthetics such as superimposition, slow motion, fast motion, and stop motion are used to serve the aim of distorting *what is suppose to be conventional realty*. Surrealism for Bordwell is “the research for bizarre or evocative imagery, the deliberate avoidance of rationally explicable form or style”(Bordwell and Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* 452). While it originates its avoidance of classical styles from Existentialism, Surrealism stems its revolutionary mode from Marxism. It is an anti-bourgeois movement that opposes capitalist understanding to history. For surrealists, there is no common understanding to history or reality that are merely products of materialistic interactions. It is the opposing material elements that give sense to them regardless any logical, spiritual, or idealistic reasons. Breton in his surrealist manifesto declares that:

The case against the realist position needs to be considered, after considering the materialist position. The latter, more poetic however than the former, admittedly implies on the part of a man, a monstrous pride, but not a new and more complete degeneration. It should be seen, above all, as a welcome reaction against certain ridiculous spiritual tendencies (Breton 5).

Surrealists like Breton believe that reality should be treated as *superior* since it operates beyond the normal. Only *dreams* and *psychoanalytical* modes can be used to understand how surrealists shape their images. Surrealism, therefore, adopts Marxist and existentialist tenets to contribute along with other non-conventional genres in the modernist cinema that breaks ties with old styles. However, it allows *psychoanalysis* though this latter is considered to be part of the classical paradigm (Husserl as I have mentioned before includes psychoanalysis in bracketed theories). There is a common mechanism amongst Marxism, Existentialism and Psychoanalysis. It is embodied in the materialistic interpretation, opposing conventions, and dialectics. One can infer within this context that this mechanism undertakes the *materialist method* determining the function of these three theories.

Bunuel tries to liberate Marxist cinema from its rigorous objectivity, benefiting from Kuleshov's constructive montage. Just like Kuleshov, he accentuates image over narrative. However, he goes further than that, as he feels disposed towards the idea of subjectivity embodied in the surrealist movement. His *An Andalusian Dog (Un Chien Andalou)* manifests as a *personal expression* that highlights image and abandons conventional narrative seeing that linearity is viewed as a Bourgeois culture within the surrealist context. Bunuel does not opt for delivering an ideology in a deliberate way as

done by Eisenstein. This is why he discards the organic unity supported by Eisenstein to opt for a *fragmented* way of constructing his images. This artistic choice renders the existentialist nihilism into non-sense images that refuse to offer any signification. Bunuel declares, “*Un Chien Andalou* was born of the encounter between my dreams and Dali’s. Later, I brought dreams directly into my films, trying as hard as I could to avoid any analysis”(Bunuel 92). Bunuel’s *An Andalusian Dog* springs its mode from Breton’s belief in personal experience, which means a kind of adherence to phenomenological and existential intellect. In this film, Bunuel denies reality, as it is objectively understood to create a personal one that transcends time and space to mark a radical detachment from Eisenstein’s organic unity.

The film’s scenario is free of any tempo-spatial linearity because it is based on Bunuel and Dali’s dreams. It avoids logical events to represent detached and non-sense ones just like what happens in dreams. The characters in *An Andalusian Dog* are nameless. The card titles are not compatible with the images as if Bunuel wants to ridicule linearity throughout representing non-sense title cards. The causality also is disrupted, which means that the viewer is in front of a purely *visual* film that operates outside narrative, linearity and organic unity. The film starts with an inter-title reads “once upon a time” followed by a man sharpens a razor. A thin cloud goes throughout the moon as if it is going to slice it into two pieces. In like manner, the man slices a woman’s eye using his razor in a disgusting way. Another inter-title reads “eight years later” followed by a man cycling. This cyclist wears some nuns’ clothing (only some articles) and hangs around his neck a box. The previous woman is reading. She sees from the window the cyclist lying on street. She tries to help him and kisses him in the

same time. She puts his clothes on the bed. Suddenly, the cyclist stands up next to the door. His hand palm appears with a hole from which ants are getting out. An androgyne appears in the street moving a cut hand using her cane while a policeman tries to dismiss people around her. The policeman puts the cut hand in the same box that first appears with the cyclist and gives it to her. She eventually hugs the box. After a car runs over the androgyne, the cyclist gets aggressive towards the woman as if he wants to rape her. The woman resists him and then she appears nude allowing him caressing her. She puts him away and he drags two pianos on which there are two dead donkeys. Two stone tablets are hung to the ropes he uses to drug. Two priests are also drugged by the cyclist while the woman stands terrified in a corner. The cyclist's hand, which is full of ants, is trapped in the door. Another inter-title reads "around three in the morning". Another man blames the cyclist and throws the nun's articles of clothing throughout the window. An inter-title reads "sixteen years ago". One of the two men, who resemble each other, holds a gun and shoots the other. Men come to bring his corpse. The woman feels disgusted and quits the apartment. As she gets out of the building, she waves to a guy in the beach. This scene is confusing because the apartment first appears on a street, but later it turns out to be near a beach. The woman meets another man and goes with him. Both find the cyclist's box, which is broken, and the nun's articles, which are wet. The new man kicks the box. As she gives him the nun's clothing articles, he throws them one by one. An inter-title reads "In Spring". The couple is half buried as if they are dead.

Bunuel refuses any type of analysis to his *An Andalusian Dog* because he wants it to be rather a personal experience that amalgamates dreams, childhood's

psychological crises, and souvenirs in an inexplicable mode. A psychoanalytical approach however is not impossible. Though Bunuel apparently declares his avoidance to psychoanalysis (Bunuel 175-228), he does not deny his influence by Freud, “(...) my discovery of Freud, and particularly his theory of the unconscious, was crucial to me” (Bunuel 229). This is why analysts like L. Williams apply the psychoanalyst method to understand various nuances related to Bunuel’s *An Andalusian Dog*. She construes that the film conveys themes of sexuality, castration, and the human unconscious. L. Williams draws the viewer’s attention to Bunuel’s use of Freudian fetishism in *An Andalusian Dog*. Woman in Bunuel’s film stands for a sexual object. The razor signifies the phallus while the eye (one of the film fetishes) that is sliced conveys vagina (L. Williams 82). L. Williams bases her analysis on Freud’s theory suggesting that women feel a lack of penis, that is the notion of castration while the fetish compensates this lack / fear (Freud, *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* 152). Accordingly, before the death of the androgyne, the cyclist is represented as a calm person, but just after her death, he becomes aggressive. For L. Williams, before the androgyne death, the cyclist stands for both female and male. What confirms this view is the nun’s clothing articles (other fetishes) that are dressed with the cyclist’s suit, signifying a tamed masculinity or rather the presence of religion that controls this masculinity and renders it into a passive behavior. The androgyne gives sense to this representation as she too represents both female and male. Her death signifies the absence of femininity of the cyclist who turns out to be aggressive that is a kind of masculinity’s presence. L. Williams explains that the nun’s articles / fetishes contribute in representing the cyclist as a sexual object too (L. Williams 84). The cut hand which is being moved by the androgyne using a cane constructs another suggestive fetish that symbolizes the absence

of penis for the androgyne. L. Williams construes that the fetish is meant to deny the penis, yet it confirms it. This duel between presence and absence reveals the cyclist / men “fear of castration” (L. Williams 84). Freud explains:

We can now see what the fetish achieve and what it is that maintains it. It remains a token of triumph over the threat of castration and a protection against it. It also saves the fetishist from becoming a homosexual, by endowing women with the characteristic which makes them tolerable as sexual objects(Freud, *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* 154).

Freud believes that as the fetish represents the man’s penis, it stands in the same time for women’s inferior penis (clitoris) symbolizing a lack of that penis (castration) (Freud, *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* 157). Fetishism in Bunuel’s *An Andalusian Dog* therefore acts as both absence and presence of castration. This is why the androgyne dies just after holding the box with the cut hand. This signifies a masculinity presence vs. a femininity absence. L. Williams explains that the androgyne “is a dominantly feminine version of the contradictory gender traits of the dominantly masculine cyclist” (L. Williams 85). On the other hand, the existentialist / nihilist notion of suicide is involved within this context. The way the androgyne dies seems to be a kind of a suicide because she stands in the middle of the street where vehicles pass fast as if she awaits one of these vehicles to run over her. The ambiguity of this scene engenders the probability of suicide, which is a crucial existentialist theme. After the death (suicide) of the androgyne, the cyclist’s unconscious overcomes his conscious (objectivity) as if the death uncovers the secret of the cyclist’s psychology or rather a kind of attempt is made to question objective ideas about sexuality, death, and consciousness. This refers to Schopenhauer’s idea about suicide:

Suicide may also be regarded as an experiment _ a question which man puts to Nature, trying to force her to an answer. The question is this: what change will death produce in a man's existence and in his insight into the nature of thing? It is a clumsy experience to make; for it involves the destruction of the very consciousness which puts the question and awaits the answer(Schopenhauer, The Essays of Arthur Schopenhaur 27).

Bunuel constructs the scene of the androgyne's death in a way that suggests various existentialist themes though he makes the combination between existentialism and psychoanalysis possible in his film.

The absence and presence of phallus becomes a *motif* in Bunuel's *An Andalusian Dog*. L. Williams explains that this duel ends up by the death of the androgyne, which is a sign of *sexual resolution* for the cyclist who tries to rape the woman directly after this resolution (L. Williams 87). The *unconscious* within this context transcends the control of *objectivity embodied in religion and social morals* to reach a kind of reconciliation between the ego and the id. The control over the instinct leads to the formation of the ego that tries to balance between the sexual needs (the id) and the authority oppressing these needs (the superego) (Freud, The Ego and the Id 51-52-58). In *An Andalusian Dog*, the two tablets and the two priests that are drugged by the cyclist approves this struggle between the *id* and the *superego* since the two tablets signify the Ten Commandments and the two priests are a clear representation to the heavy burden of religion. The two dead donkeys, the ants that are getting out from the cyclist's hand, and the cyclist grimace after caressing the woman stand all for the theme of death, which is linked here to how religion oppresses sexual desire:

I've tried to translate this inexplicable feeling into images, as in *Un Chien Andalou* when the man caresses the woman's bare breasts as his face slowly changes into a death mask. Surely the powerful sexual repression of my youth reinforces this connection (Bunuel 15).

Bunuel declares his avoidance to psychoanalysis, but he along with other surrealists like Breton state that surrealism is associated with psychoanalysis, though. The film moreover exercises Husserl's bracketing by giving a wide berth to classical conventions to settle on a personal experience. Accordingly, the subjectivity suggested by Bunuel opts for Heidegger's interpretation as this personal experience transcends objective analysis to generate different subjective explanations. However, *An Andalusian Dog* implicates psychoanalytical mode though it is considered to be one of the objective theories that Husserl has bracketed.

Without regard to bracketed theories, Bunuel tries at the *thematic level* to offer his spectators with a typically subjective work. As the *method* is concerned, Bunuel cannot operate outside materialistic and Marxist mechanism (objectivity). For Ben Plotkin, psychoanalysis bases its method on the Marxist *dialectics* (Ben Plotkin 177-182). Brunner confirms this attitude by explaining that the way Freud's id and superego get into conflict resulting in the unity of these contradictions (of pleasure and reality) strongly relied on dialectics (Brunner 72). The fetish is a negation of the sexual organ (absence of this organ). A new negation emerges to oppose the previous negation (presence of the same organ). This negation of negation leads to a change, that is the mode reconciling desires (sexual needs / id) with reality (social norms / superego). Surrealism, hereafter, highlights this psychoanalytical approach to accentuate the unconscious within a process of change. What stimulates human behavior is the

sexual factor, which is a typically materialistic belief. On the whole, surrealism stems its tenets from Psychoanalysis, Marxism and materialism.

Poetic realism is another style that is caught between classicism and modernism, the situation that marks later on a transitional stage to a total adherence to avant-gardism. It tries to render reality into a personal / subjective perception by opting for existentialist modes such as nihilism. Though it represents its stories in a narrative / conventional way, it avoids *heroism* and *happy ending* (Thompson and Bordwell, Film History 289) to focus on the other hand on a *banal reality* of ordinary people (Bordwell and Thompson, Film Art: An Introduction 50). Poetic realist films do not communicate any promises or great expectations neither from characters nor from events, seeing that there is no essence in the reality surrounding us. The reality as represented in classical works for poetic realists such as Renoir is merely given, objective, and absolute. Films, however, have to construct subjective realities, that is one way of applying Heideggerian interpretation. In the context of poetic realism, reality in general is represented as refractory since time seems to be stopped and characters are helpless and unable to achieve what is supposed to be great, noble, or idealistic goals. This nihilist way of dealing with the conventional narrative retards active and motivated reality to represent a more foul and repulsive one. This is a sort of *lyricism* that suggests personal expression and neglects conventional styles. What is more, what marks this tendency is its distinguished aesthetics that gives prominence to two main techniques, namely the *sequence shot* and the *depth of the field*. Unlike Eisenstein who focuses on the role of montage, Renoir for example opts for *long takes* because the importance is given to the cameraman/woman rather than to the editor. The way the sequence shot includes the

whole action without a cut and the way it encompasses different frame scales, angles, and depth of fields stands for an existing witness, which gives the sense of everyday reality, especially that the sequence shot suggests many focal shifts just like a person's eyes do while s/he is involved in an event:

Throughout the entire last part of *The Rules of the Game* the camera acts like an invisible guest wandering about the salon and the corridors with a certain curiosity (...). This sort of personification of the camera accounts for the extraordinary quality of this long sequence (Bazin, Jean Renoir 87).

Montage on the contrary is typically mechanical. It offers short and functional results but poetic realist cinema tries to convey the idea that long takes are *analogous* to the everyday reality. For Bazin, when Renoir uses long takes, he can transcend the limits imposed by rectangular frames that go hand in hand with classical or artificial montage. This is for him what can distinguish cinema from other arts such as painting or theater. Cinema as he believes can transmit reality in more effective way. This is how poetic realist films pave the way for salient trends like the Italian *neorealism* and the French *La Nouvelle Vague* since some film directors of these two styles have worked as assistants' directors in poetic realist films.

Renoir's *The Rule of the Game* depicts the everyday life of an aristocrat family which is rather ridiculous, trivial, and imperfect. An aviator loves a wife whose husband himself has a love affair with another woman. This situation is interrelated with a similar one, which is a servant tries to seduce the gamekeeper's wife. During a party, all the characters show a tendency to be foolish, childish, and superficial, which is a clear stand against the classical notion of *heroism*. Kristin and Bordwell write, "Despite the

characters' foolish actions, no one becomes a villain" (Thompson and Bordwell, Film History 291). Though Renoir keeps linear narrative, he avoids important classical characteristics such as constructing a collision between a hero and a villain. He moreover makes time more disrupted because (in classicism) it is the hero's attempts that changes hard situations and therefore make time *active* and *meaningful*. In Renoir's *The Rule of the Game*, nothing is absolute and real since there is no belief in meaningful ethics, absolute religious principles, or heroic performances. It is rather a nihilist point of view that makes reality mundane, and absurd. However, Renoir chooses a dynamic way of photographing as if he wants to invite the viewer (the present-absent witness) to interfere the long moments of this party. Many sequence shots are used to allow characters getting into the frame and outside it in an active manner. The camera too changes angles and depths of fields constantly, the way of shooting that demands more concentration and collaboration between the actors, the photographer, the photographer first assistant, and the rest of the members of the crew who all work together to synchronize these camera movements with the actors' ones. This way of photographing suggests a kind of deconstruction to the classical rapid cutting because the aim is to represent reality as earthly away from the constructive/artificial one preferred by classist film directors.

Renoir effectively reflects the Marxist notion of the base and superstructure in his *The Rule of the Game*. The servants in this film are depicted as individuals who want to play the same game played by the bourgeois or rather want to imitate the game, the fact that transforms them to be trivial just like the bourgeois people. Like Chaplin, Renoir uses Marxist themes of estrangement and alienation (Marx, The Economic and

Philosophical Manuscripts 39) to explain the production relations and therefore to mock them. On one hand the bourgeois everyday life stands for the superstructure that affects human behavior and transforms it into a mechanistic and instrumental mode in the hand of the capitalist system and on the other hand the servants or the working class people refer to the base because they are no longer autonomous. They are rather subordinate to the system that, in its turn, aims at shaping new morals using them. The imitation of the servants to the bourgeois ethics and decorum directly indicates a kind of reciprocity resulted from the dialectical relationship between the superstructure and the base. Renoir hereafter reproduces Marxist themes within a nihilist and existentialist manner. He does without Eisenstein's stylistic oppositions (dialectic montage) to accentuate on narrative ones. However, he tries to escape classical heroism and rapid cutting to give reality a new sense that is based on subjectivity, poeticism, and lyricism. Marxist and materialist interpretation to reality overall remains the crucial motive in film theory up to now.

Italian *neorealist* films inherit many poetic realist approaches. They go even further to construct a salient filmic experience. After the Nazi's loss of power, and the Second World War results ensuing, Italy experienced serious social problems such as poverty and unemployment. Film directors such as Visconti, Rossellini, and De Sica show a great tendency to *socialist* realism as they tackle issues that are strongly related to working class people and individuals' social needs. These are again Marxist themes that are related to the mentioned notion of alienation. Not far from Eisenstein's Typage, they continue highlighting mundane human behaviors expressed by ordinary people over artificial acting methods. They however abandon rapid cutting to opt on the other

hand for sequence shots. This method as they believe empowers the socialist commitment to change injustice situations because it renders the camera lens into a witness recording injustice images and events. The *non-professional actors* can transmit real social problems as they are. They can also give a concrete idea about helpless people who struggle against injustice. Neorealist cinema is once more about class struggle and alienation. Moreover, it raises the existentialist mode of anxiety. It is another subjective experience that tries to transcend objective understanding to reality that for neo-realists is perceived only from its oppositions and conflicts.

To depict this hard reality, neorealist directors prefer real locations, ordinary stories that represent mundane reality, natural lighting, and non-professional actors. As for the themes, they see that the compatible themes with these choices should refer to poverty, misery, injustice, and working class problems. As far as the scenario is concerned, it should avoid classical perfection and happy ending. Most of neo-realists choose to shoot *accidental events* or rather look for *unplanned shots* or *scenes* to disrupt the conventional, objective, and well-structured plot. All these contribute to construct a nihilist mode that views reality as material and imperfect. Thompson and Bordwell explain that neorealist films “reject the carefully motivated chain of events in classical cinema” (Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History* 363). For instance, the rain in De Sica’s *The Bicycle Thief* is not used as an integrated filmic element but rather as an accidental event that disrupts the journey of the characters (the son Bruno and the father Ricci), which is searching the thief who has stolen Ricci’s bicycle in a critical moment where he has just found a job after two years of waiting. For Deleuze, this is a kind of *plunging into time* that tries to be detached from the *classical action*. It is the beginning

of *the time image* (Deleuze, Cinema 2, The Time-Image 42) and the decline of *the movement image*.

Just like Eisenstein, De Sica in his *The Bicycle Thief* focuses on conflict that is engendered from the class struggle. He however discards Eisenstein's intellectual montage to represent this conflict within sequence shots and long takes. De Sica's *The Bicycle Thief* represents Recci's family as the example of the working class who suffers within a bad economic system. The members of this family endure hardship, as they are experiencing shortage of money, the situation that obliges Recci to sell his bicycle. While a clerk declares to the new workers including Recci that they can be hired only if they have bikes, he is left with no other option but selling his *intimate* bed sheets to buy his bike again. In the pawn, a man climbs up a staircase in a beautiful shot that makes the viewer feel that the shot will end up sooner, but it continues to show more bed sheets. It is not only Recci who suffers but many others are like him as the shot suggests. It shows the struggle/conflict within a continuous shot to imply the spectator within its mode because the aim is to make her/him a *real eye witness*. Many other scenes in this film represent this notion of *social ladder*. The clerk declaring the new job in the beginning of the film stands up in position that is higher than the men who are listening to him. Recci tries to climb up the stairs but retreats as the clerk insists on the bike, which signifies the hardship of transcending social classes. In the upper position, there is the clerk who speaks on behalf of the capitalists, whereas in the lower position there are many workers who want to be employed. The fact that Di Sica puts in the upper position one person and in the lower one many people signifies the rich minority

versus the poor masses, which is once more another way of representing the conflict between the classes.



Figure 3

Though Pasolini is considered to be one of the salient neo-realists, he goes a little bit further as he calls for a *cinema of poetry* rather than the one of the prose. For him, cinema should be disengaged from objectivity and the coherent narrative related to it. Cineastes within this context can be compared to poets because they are not looking for establishing direct discourses. The viewer on the other hand does not feel that everything is *given* to her/him ready. Pasolini's style all in all coexists Marxist and existentialist modes to construct a *subjective, political, and picaresque* cinema. He neither believes in religion nor in history. His doctrine believes only in the materialist interpretation to history and reality (Hamza 177). Religion offers false understanding to

life that is viewed by Pasolini as materially motivated. For Hamza, Pasolini's salvation is "the struggle of the poor and the oppressed against the reign of capital, corruption, and so forth"(Hamza 8). In his *Pigsty* (Porcile)³⁰, Pasolini suggests two different and intercut stories. The first one is about a man who lives in the past but Pasolini prefers do not mention any exact period. The man is a cannibal who is arrested. As he is convicted of cannibalism, he says: "I killed my father, I ate human flesh and I quiver with joy"³¹. As for the second one, it depicts the life of a modern young man who prefers erotic relationships with pigs to his beloved. He ends up by being eaten by pigs.

Pigsty is a Pasolini's *vexing* critique to *Bourgeois* behavior aiming to *alienate* peoples' local culture. *Materialism* explains the two class struggles in both stories. Starvation and the need to survive push people in the past to kill and to eat human flesh. In the modern era, the situation is even worse because the economic system engenders monsters in shape of humans. All the historical and social changes as Pasolini implies occur due to materialistic reasons; and the quest to survive embodies class struggles (conflicts). Therefore, no *idealistic* factors interfere to shape turning points in history or reality. This is a materialistic and Marxist interpretation to history and reality as adopted by Pasolini to be the crucial concept behind *Pigsty*'s images. As a further matter, Pasolini's *Pigsty* suggests an existentialist and subjective mood that is responsible for making the film fragmented, imperfect, cryptic, ambiguous, and mysterious. The choice of personal expression in this film reminds us of Husserl's role of *conscious* and *personal experience* as I have explained in the beginning of this chapter. This is why

³⁰*Pigsty*. Pier Paolo Pasolini, New Line Cinema, 1969. Film.

³¹*Ibid*.

Pasolini highlights *poetic, stylistic* and *aesthetic* aspects that he detached from objective and linguistic context to make them operate within a filmic dimension that should be, for him, subjective in its nature. Departing from this, he replaces *syntax* by *styleme*, which is a “unit of style”, to characterize cinema with particular tenets that are different from the ones of the language (Pasolini 545). Pasolini, hereafter, transcends classical linear narrative to bother his spectators with two stories that are not related to each other as if he tells us to look for the missing link within the poetic style and not at the narrative level.

The *French New Wave (La Nouvelle Vague)* is another Marxist trend that is considered to be a legacy of the Italian neorealism. Films that are affiliated to this modernist tendency inherit from neorealism the documentary style, disruptive narrative, long takes, mundane characters, rejection of heroism, hand-held camera, etc. Godard as one of the most salient adherents to this style goes beyond all these by using the *jump cut* technique. In his *Breathless (A Bout de Souffle)*³², he introduces a new way of editing that spectators find bothering because Godard transgresses the cinematic consensus by using the cut within one shot. This makes actors’ movements jump, which is annoying as it ends up in an abrupt change of movement that does not relax the spectator’s eyes. The aim therefore is to disturb spectators rather than entertain them. For Godard this way of editing helps film directors to go beyond the suture system and the organic unity that is related to classicism (Godard 39). In a sense, reality does not suggest any coherence or logic. It is merely random and chaos or more precisely it is a materialistic approach that teaches the absurdity of the existence, following Marxist and

³²*Breathless*. Jean-Luc Godard, UGC, 1960. Film.

existentialist ideas about reality and existence. In short, Godard opposes all the classical characteristics that signify organization, or structure. On doing this, he prefers *mismatches* (faux raccords) to *match cuts* that guarantee continuity and hereafter make spectators feel identified with heroes in classical cinema. The idea within this context is to *distantiate* spectators from the image, going behind Brecht's concept of distantiation³³ as opposed to the idea of identification.

Distention marks Godard's films seeing that he aims at representing reality as anarchic. In his *Weekend* (*Week-end*)³⁴, Godard opts for a subjective way of representing his film. To criticize the reality and people shaped by capitalism, he depicts *Weekend's* events in a cryptic way as well as he introduces his characters as ridiculous. Corinne and Roland start their way to reach the place where a relative has died to benefit from his inheritance. We know that they have waited for his death so long. During their travel, Godard describes his spaces with chaotic, anarchic, and surrealistic images of so many accidents and dead bodies. The way the characters act is rather odd and ridiculous. Moreover, the relationships are so detached and shallow. For example, Corinne and Roland kill the woman who refuses to help them have the inheritance, but the whole atmosphere of the act is strange and ridiculous. As another example, during their journey, they/we witness a quasi-surrealist scene of a woman representing the

³³**Distanciation/Distantiation:** (an estrangement effect/defamiliarization) is coined by Berthold Brecht (1898 - 1956) in his "Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting" (1936). For Brecht, distantiation prevents the audience to feel identified with the characters of some artistic work. Distantiation stems from the Russian formalist school. Viktor Shklovsky, in his turn, considers distantiation as the essence of art since it opposes the idea of hegemony and identification suggested by classical works. Actors who adopt this method should destroy the "fourth wall" creating a barrier between theater stage and the audience. The aim is that the audience can never feel unseen and marginalized. This is to derange the homogeneous linearity suggested by classicism and to make the audience part of the spectacle. Brecht's actors can address their audience and even walk amongst their seats while performing.

³⁴*Weekend*. Jean-Luc Godard, Athos-Films, 1967. Film.

upper class shouting at a tractor driver who stands for the working class after he has run over her car leaving her boyfriend dead. She is eventually angry not because of her boyfriend's death but because of the class represented by the tractor driver. The whole scenes of this film are rather cryptic, absurd, and anarchic owing to the fact that capitalism produces strange situations. What emphasizes this interpretation is the epic scene of jammed cars hindering the movement of the couple's car. Godard concentrates all the Marxist ideas such as alienation and class struggle in this scene as he constructs it to signify the industrialization and capital production that turns out gracefulness to be indignation. It is the same idea that is repeated in other Godard's films such as *My Life to Live (Vivre sa Vie)*³⁵ that convicts capitalism of producing prostitution in an era that commercializes everything including peoples' bodies.

Following this, modernist trends such as the Italian neorealism and the French Nouvelle Vague attracts many remarkable film directors in the history of cinema. Though these tendencies remain limited in time, many of their aesthetics have been used so far. Bertolucci is one of the Marxists who opt for both sequence shots and jump cuts to create a sense of dynamic images. At the thematic level, just like Marxist film directors be they classicists or modernists, he tackles the issue of alienation. In his *The Conformist*³⁶, Marcello prepares to assassinate an anti-fascist. During his journey, we discover how shallow is the life of the upper class embodied in his mom's manners, for instance. Pontecorvo is another Italian film director who uses many neorealist aesthetics in his *The Battle of Algeria*. Though this film can be considered as a postmodernist, if

³⁵*My Life to Live*. Jean-Luc Godard, Pantheon Distribution, 1962. Film.

³⁶*The Conformist*. Bernardo Bertolucci, Mars Film Production, Marianne Production, Maran Film, 1970. Film.

we take into consideration its *postcolonial* theme, it opts for non-professional actors and real locations to construct a documentary style with a built-in Marxist perspective. The choice of black and white colors gives the sense of reality that is characterized with a Marxist conflict between the colonized and the colonizer. It is the same idea of the class struggle and the material interpretation to history. However, when post colonialism, feminism, the queer theory, and cultures of minorities in general attract film directors, a kind of demarcation is established to differentiate between modernism as an elite tendency, and post modernism that tries to liberate cinema from its *elitist mode*.

The Postmodernist Deconstruction and Marxism

No one can stick her/his neck out to avert that there is a fixed definition to *postmodernism*, but most of the theorists have a quasi-consensus on the role of post-structuralism and Derrida's *deconstruction* in constructing innovative concepts that concerns *gender, class, and race*. Be that as it may, existentialism continues functioning as a crucial mechanism if not the active motive for reacting against *high modernism* by fostering popular culture, and marginalized groups. The boundaries amongst elitist art and the popular one should be blurred out, as this new body of ideas puts forward. This is how hybrid versions of art emerge to help in erasing borders between the high culture and the low one from one hand and amongst genres from another hand. Pastiche, homage, paradox, and inter-textuality come into view in reaction to what is supposed to be the Canon. *Meta-narratives* are targeted by this postmodernist trend to give them new interpretations in a sense that they are merely constructed works that should not be treated as sanctifying. *Fragmentation* is also highlighted within the postmodernist context because reality, time, and history are viewed from a subjective / existentialist point of view, meaning that the aim is to represent them as *constructed* and not *absolute*.

Meaning in postmodernism is based on a total subjectivity since postmodernists also avoid the idealist stand believing in the mind as the center. For them, factors such as society, religion, culture, and other *objective* modes disrupt the direct contact with the mind to construct what is supposed to be objectivity. This is how Derrida develops his notion of *deconstruction* from Heidegger's phenomenological way of alienating the

subject from the social and traditional imposed meaning (Heidegger 21). Derrida, on his turn, alienates the meaning of a *text*³⁷ from any ideal, objective, or one-dimensional meaning. The meaning, for him, is neither ready nor given (Derrida 10). It is rather subjective and constructed. Derrida, in fact, goes beyond the 1960s' structuralism believing that the meaning is generated from the arbitrary relationship between the signifier (e.g. d-o-g)³⁸ and the signified (the mental concept of the creature with four legs – dog-ness). The meaning, for him, does no longer exist within one sign³⁹, but this sign engenders other signs that are all in interrelated relationships. It is these on-going relationships amongst the signs that give meaning(s). Meaning on this basis is *generative* and *contextual* as it is stemmed from a system of *differences*. Derrida concludes, "... the sign must be the unity of heterogeneity..."(Derrida 18). The meaning hereafter does not stop at the level of the sign, but it is shaped and re-shaped as the interrelation of various signs are in an on-going process of change, the idea that puts *Heidegger's hermeneutical formula* into practice. Derrida's deconstruction clearly marks the coming of post-structuralism which paves the way to postmodernism.

Though Marxism is considered by postmodernists to be one of the meta-narratives and objective theories that should be *bracketed*, the dialectical mechanism can be discovered within the post structural and postmodernist mode. The way signs get in on-going interrelations to shape new meanings is clearly derived from the dialectics. For Marxists, the world/reality is created out of material causations and oppositions following three main laws, namely the law of the transformation of quantity into quality

³⁷Anything can be a text. For example, a song, film, painting, photo, building, fashion, table, or car is a text.

³⁸ Physical existence (sound/word/image).

³⁹A sign is consisted of the signifier and the signified.

and vice versa, the law of the interpretation of the opposites, and the law of the negation of the negation (Marx and Engels, Collected Works 364-365-366). It is the same mechanism that determines post structural and postmodernist way of thinking since meaning is created out of dialectical and relational bases. In another word, the Marxist and existentialist interpretation continue operating within Derrida's deconstruction.

Postmodernism is associated with *breaks* and *discontinuities* with theoretical modes and tendencies to challenge the dominant culture and eventually to establish ambivalent and shaky mode of thinking because no one, for postmodernists, has the absolute *truth* or *reality*. Harvey, also, supports the idea that this skeptical stand has many things in common with the post structural thinking. He explains:

This aspect of postmodernism has reinforced by the activities of the deconstructionists. In their suspicion of any narrative that aspires to coherence, and in their rush to deconstruct anything that even looks like meta-theory, they challenged all basic propositions(Harvey 350).

Dealing with pluralities, postmodernism encompasses race, feminism(s), post colonialism, queer theory, and historie(s) (with small h and plural form) rather than History (with capital H and singular form). While the first word *deconstructs* hegemony and *represents* all the differences and contradicted points of view, the second one is *constructed* according to a coherent ideology. Moreover, feminists try to replace *history* by *herstory* as the first word suggests patriarchal dimension (his + story), but the second one provides women version to history (her + story). On the whole, postmodernism does not suggest any theories. Instead, it welcomes all the cultural varieties including

the ones of minorities and the marginalized. Postmodernism, therefore, renders the *saturation* of theories within these *unstable* societies, which are in a constant process of change because of technological transformation.

Just like modernism, postmodernist films continue *deconstructing* notions of metanarratives, linear reality, heroism, and coherence:

The grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is speculative narrative or a narrative of emancipation(Lyotard 37).

*Fight Club*⁴⁰ and *Pulp Fiction*⁴¹ for instance represent their events as fragmented, nonsense, and uncertain. General modes in these films generate feelings of *skepticism* because nothing is sure. All the relationships amongst the characters moreover are rather meaningless, and aimless, considering these films use the materialist mode and the existentialist notion of *nihilism* that I have mentioned earlier. What differentiates these films from the modernist ones is their attempt to blur the boundaries between high and low culture. The down to earth dialogues are used along with scenes imitating classical and high modernist films to amalgamate all in postmodernist pastiches. This is why one can find in *Fight Club* and *Pulp Fiction* scenes referring to Godard's style, and to other films such as *Saturday Night*, *The Seven Year Itch*, *Vertigo*, and *Born to Kill*. This new tendency goes beyond classifications to erase the boundaries amongst genres to declare the death of theory following Nietzsche's death of God (Nietzsche 5).

⁴⁰*Fight Club*. David Lynch, Regency Enterprises, Linson Films, 1999. Film.

⁴¹*Pulp Fiction*. Quentin Tarantino, Miramax Films, 1994. Film.

In cinema, it is not easy to determine what does a postmodernist film mean and it is impossible to find a *fixed* list of these films. This difficulty to design a filmic map, which can be relied to the postmodernist mode, reflects the way postmodernism refuses to be regulated or framed within certain *stable* tenets. However, the supposed to be modernist films share aspects of *pastiche*⁴², *parody*⁴³, *irony*⁴⁴, and *repetitions*. They do not suggest any new theories, but rather repeat other salient stories and ideas from our human heritage. This is not for the sake of celebrating this heritage but in order to mock or at least react against it using a kind of representation that is based on *hyperrealism* and *simulacra*. Baudrillard explains how images, nowadays, go beyond all the different and contradicted theoretical representation of reality to the extent that they erode reality. Simulacra⁴⁵, for him, transcend simulation, which is the process of imitating reality. When this process generates *copies* without *origins*, simulacrum reveals. It is the hypereality mode that again erodes the boundaries between what is *real* and what is *fictitious*. This has nothing to do with metaphors or dreams that are represented in classical films as metaphors or dreams, but postmodernist films amalgamate metaphors, dreams, and the supposed to be reality to create a suggestive third space:

The very quotidian nature of the terrestrial habitat hypostasized in space means the end of metaphysics. The era of hypereality now begins. What I mean is this: what was projected psychologically and mentally, what used to be lived out on earth as metaphor, as mental

⁴²**Pastiche:** a technique in arts that imitates previous works. Pastiche does not aim at ridiculing the imitated work, but rather celebrate it.

⁴³**Parody:** imitating previous works to mock and trivialize them.

⁴⁴**Irony:** showing contradictions between what is said or written and what exists in reality.

⁴⁵**Simulacra:** (singular form: simulacrum) is an exaggerated imitation of someone or something. It suggests a distorted image without any qualities of the origin (a distorted copy of reality). The word is associated with Jean Baudrillard who construes that Simulacra becomes itself another reality and constructs its own truth. Simulacra, then, erodes the original image to establish a distorted one or rather imitates reality in a hyperreal way to the extent that it erase this reality...

or metaphorical scene, is henceforth projected into reality, without any metaphor at all, into an absolute space which is also that of simulation(Baudrillard 128).

In *Fight Club*⁴⁶ by Fincher, the narrator feels that he and Tyler Durden are one or in another word one is *projected* in the other. In this film the ego and the super ego are interrelated and cannot operate as separate. All the spaces and characters are uncertain and operating within emptiness, which reflects the dilemma of postmodernism. The meaningless relationships between the detached characters and their aimless purposes signify the *death of theory*, as suggested by Aijaz Ahmad, and create new concept of characters that are no longer heroes – *death of heroism*. Everything is nonsense and nothing is reliable in *Fight Club* since capitalism continues in exploiting people and people continue behaving as nihilists. The film, therefore, reflects the conflict between the postmodernist will to break ties with the social mainstream and the high modern mode embodied in the imposed capitalism.

*Pulp Fiction*⁴⁷ by Tarantino and *Blue Velvet*⁴⁸ by Lynch are good examples of pastiche since they repeat many scenes from other famous films. Tarantino, in his *Pulp Fiction*, not only intertextualizes Godard's style, but also plays with scenes from previous films. For example, the scene of Monroe's dance refers to the Travolta dance in *Saturday Night Fever* and Monroe's white dress refers to *The Seven Year Itch*. Of course, the film suggests other repetitions and pastiches. As for Lynch's *Blue Velvet*, it repeats scenes from *Vertigo*, *Born to kill*, *l'Arrosseur*, etc. Moreover, Tarantino uses a fragmented narration to the extent that he makes his character Mia addresses directly the

⁴⁶*Fight Club*. David Lynch, Regency Enterprises, Linson Films, 1999. Film.

⁴⁷*Pulp Fiction*. Quentin Tarantino, Miramax Films, 1994. Film.

⁴⁸*Blue Velvet*. David Lynch, De Laurentiis Entertainment Group, 1986. Film.

audience and this is a kind of repetition to the modernist notion of *distanciating* and *estranging* the audience. The dialogues that Tarantino uses does not highlight the high culture, but rather represent a down to earth way of speaking. Sometimes, the way Tarantino's characters speak about important things is in the same rank with the way they speak about trivial things and this what shows the film director's deliberate act to blur boundaries between high and low cultures. Naficy explains how Hollywood gets influenced with this postmodern mode. In the past, Hollywood companies of productions used to refuse any other language except English, which is viewed by post colonial and feminist theorists as the symbol of high culture and the signification of the WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant). Now, there are postmodern films that represent many foreign languages. *Babel*⁴⁹ by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu is a film that represents English, French, Spanish, Japanese, and Moroccan Arabic. This is for Naficy another kind of blurring the boundaries between many culture(s) and a clear example of postmodern fragmentation that transcends dialogues to reach the narration. He states that: "these interlocking stories are deftly woven into a tragic tapestry"(Naficy 7).

*Mulholland Drive*⁵⁰ by Lynch is another example that represents *confusion*, as suggested by postmodernism, by using hyperrealism in representing the two interrelated characters, namely Betty and Haring, an actress and an amnesiac woman who forgets everything after an accident in Mulholland Drive. In fact, Betty's reality is uncertain and not tangible. However, Haring and Betty are one. They are overlapped just like the conscious and the sup conscious. The events, that they are experiencing, are rather *cryptic* and *mysterious* to create a real confusion around them. This is based on a

⁴⁹*Babel*. Alenjandro Gonzalez Inarritu, Summit Entertainment, Central Films, Media Rights Capital, 2006. Film.

⁵⁰*Mulholland Drive*. David Lynch, Les Films Alain Sarde, 2001. Film.

psychoanalytic background, namely the Lacan's *identification* in his *The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic Experience*. What emphasizes the Lacanian philosophy in this film is the scene of the mirror when Haring looks at the mirror reflecting both her face and a poster of a film hung on the wall. It is this contact with the mirror that makes Haring think of the name of Rita since it is shown on the poster. This scene, along with other scenes relating Rita to Betty, suggests the transformation of the *subject* which is the *I* into an *object* to be viewed in order to develop the *I/self* and eventually to create a libidinal relationship with the image / the object (Lacan 4).

Though postmodernist films continue highlighting the existentialist subjectivity, many of them keep attached to the Marxist mode. In *Fight Club* for example, the Marxist idea of alienation continues to operate as it benefits from the fragmented events and the detached characters to show how capitalism exploits people and transforms them into rather aimless and trivial individuals. Other postmodernist films such as *Thelma and Louise* tackle Marxist themes though they apparently address feminism and gender issues. Scott's *Thelma and Louise* depicts how two women adopt negative attitudes towards a husband and a boyfriend. To get away from their bad experiences with men, the two friends decide to travel but unfortunately this travel does not create any break from patriarchal practices as another man tries to rape Thelma around a motel. Her friend Louise shoots the man in an attempt to stop him raping her friend. As they feel that the police will not believe them, they decide to escape. The film accentuates a negative stand against marriage and male domination from which women are suffering.

The travel suggests the desire to reach certain freedom, but the bloody event happening around the motel, puts forward how the system does not allow any kind of emancipation and self-determination. However, their strongest message emphasizes the importance of achieving this freedom (Fourie 403).

Concerning feminist⁵¹ cinema, one cannot determine one category of feminist films. There are different feminist films since there are many feminist trends (liberal, Marxist, radical, anthropological, etc.). However, the majority of these films react against the way traditional films represent women. Mulvey declares that: “Woman’s desire is subjugated to her image as bearer of the bleeding wound; she can exist only in relation to castration and cannot transcend it”(Mulvey 422). Because of this lack of phallus, women, according to patriarchal ideology, deserve negative representation and should have no access to the center where she can be viewed and heard(M. Kennedy 42). Mulvey explains that patriarchal films objectify women at two levels. The *scopophilia* level that suggests the pleasure of looking and hereafter an erotic context, and the *voyeurism* level that refers to a narcissistic context of spying on the women’s bodies. Scopophilia and voyeurism determine a sadist relationship between active men (bearers of the look/subjects) and passive women (objects of men’s gaze). It is another kind of sexual ambivalence and perplexity that reduce women in merely commodities

⁵¹**Feminism:** a “political” movement defending women rights. There are many trends, tendencies, and ideologies that mark the feminist movement. This is why there is no unique feminist movement, but there are many: liberal, Marxist, radical, etc. The feminist theory tries to understand how gender operates to differentiate between men and women within patriarchal societies and groups. Feminism went throughout three main waves. The first wave feminism tried in the 19th century to claim woman’s suffrage along with other simple rights. In the mid-twentieth century, Simon de Beauvoir published her “Le Deuxieme Sex” using Marxism to deconstruct many of the patriarchal representations to women. This marks a second wave feminism that went further in claiming women rights... The third wave feminism started in 1990s in the USA. It challenged issues of sexuality and patriarchal notion of “femininity” vs. “masculinity”. However, post-feminism tries to question many of reductive choices in feminism without being against principles of general feminist tenets... In general, one cannot explain feminism unless s/he takes into consideration the plurality of this movement...

and erotic objects(Mulvey 423-424-425-427). Mulvey, also, accuses these films of presenting women's body in a *fragmented* manner, which is *fetishism*. She gives the example of Marilyn Monroe's in *The River of No Return* that suggests a kind of flatness in Monroe's fetishized shots to create more eroticism, rather than opting for the depth of the shots suggesting different contexts(Mulvey 426). This is rather an ideological representation that feminists want to deconstruct. *Aicha*⁵² by Yamina Benguigui tries to adopt a feminist approach to deconstruct a traditional patriarchal system. Though the film keeps certain linearity in its narrative, it represents feminism at the level of the content. This shows how postmodernism encompasses various styles and alternatives.

Aicha is a girl that is caught between her Algerian traditional culture and her liberal choices in France where she lives along with her family. Aicha represents a woman perspective by seeking individual freedom. The camera angles, in *Aicha*, suggest women's search for liberation rather than suggesting fetishized female bodies like in traditional films. All in all, there are many women film directors that try to create such style in choosing the camera angles. Hansel is one of the directors who is famous of following Mulvey's model:

Thus, Hansel's films follow Mulvey's admonition 'to free the look of the camera into its materiality in time and space and the look of the audience into dialectics and passionate detachments' in order to break through the viewing pleasure of male voyeurism(Smelik 85).

⁵²*Aicha*. Yamina Benguigui, France 2, 2009. Film.

Hansel, along with other feminist film directors, aims at establishing suggestive styles that react against masculinity characterizing traditional styles. Most of the time, traditional film directors choose a kind of shot list that serves the patriarchal dominant ideology. For example, women are depicted in physical positions signifying their subjugation and submissive state while men are put in more comfortable positions to convey their control over women's bodies. Most of the shots are taken from male's perspective such as the POV shots suggesting man's point of view. *High* shots are sometimes used to minimize the image of women who should appear *under* the male's domination. Women appear in these films, as inviting, easy going, and ready for sexual adventures to stimulate males' fantasies. As for costume, makeup and lighting, erotic choices are dominant in these films... Feminist film directors, however, look for ways to react against these artistic choices by opting for shots (low angles for example) that can show women as strong as men, as free as men, as intellectual as men, etc. Nevertheless, Balazs does not see in patriarchal films any harm that might be done to the image of women. He argues:

The revival of visual culture with the advent of the film has again made physical beauty an important experience of the masses. If to-day every illustrated paper of the world is full of the pictures of beautiful women, this does not mean that all mankind has grown less serious-minded (Balazs 283).

Chopra-Gant disagrees with this opinion and argues that the way these patriarchal films represent women renders the masculine identity that becomes visible and salient after the return of male soldiers from the World War II. The mode that is created because of this masculinity reinforces the social constructed gender and

encourages certain kind of women dresses and styles to please the males gaze and therefore spread this fashion and feminine manners worldwide(Chopra-Gant 102).

Postcolonial films are, also, postmodernist works that deconstruct the imperialist ideology based on colonization and exploitation. *Hors-La-Loi*⁵³ by Bouchareb maintains linearity in its narrative; yet, it suggests *fragmentations* at other levels, namely, at the levels of the identity and nationality *vis-à-vis* colonization. In the first scene, Bouchareb tries to use long and very long shots that clearly dominate the sum of the scene shots to characterize his events with a *real* dimension. The film director uses a style just like the one preferred by documentary film directors to give his audience a real feeling of the events. However, he opts for an isolated detail on the mother's hands taking a handful of soil. In a direct tilt movement, the camera moves to a close up on the mother's face in a strong linkage between the mother's face and the soil. He uses another medium close up on the father's face promising his sons of an inevitable return to their colonized land. It is evident that the mother signifies Algeria, which is the father's land in the scene and the father's promise stands for the pursuit of freedom liberation, and independence. Everything in this scene refers to the way the parents transmit ethics, resistance, history, identity, and nationality to their sons. This, for Bhabha, is the *pedagogical* dimension that supposed to be continues and linear.

Yet, when the family is forced to leave Algeria and lives in France, "Said" one of the sons adopts colonial characteristics such as speaking French and wearing suits, which is for Fanon, as he analyses the colonized psyche, a kind of dependency and

⁵³*Hors La Loi*. Rachid Bouchareb, Tessalit Production, 2010. Film.

inferiority complex(Fanon 8). Said, also, seeks ways for salvation even if these ways are illegal like prostitution. This what marks, for Bhabha, a kind of *disruption* to the mentioned linearity. It is the *performative* dimension leading to *hybridity*, *ambivalence* and *uncertainty*. Bouchareb's film renders Bhabha's postcolonial insight since it shows how the performative, embodies in the *disruptive present*, destroys the *pedagogical principles of the past* to create a *third apace*, which is hybrid in its nature(Bhabha 215-216-217). Therefore, colonization disrupts the linearity of identity as suggested by Bouchareb in his *Hor-La-Loi*. On so doing, Bouchareb wants to detach himself from postmodernism and find himself in a more promising style, which will be clearer in his *Enmy Way*.

Hor-La-Loi does not only blur the boundaries between two identities, but also transcends nationalism when the producer chooses his crew from both countries. The production of the film, also, is shared between France, Algeria, Tunisia, and Belgium, which signifies how contemporary cinema breaks total ties with the structural binary oppositions at all levels. Naficy argues that:

Multiplicity is manifested in the films' multilingual dialogues, multicultural characters, and multisited diegeses, and the many languages of the filmmakers and their crews and the stories about which they make films drive it. Multiplicity feeds into and off of the horizontality of our globalized world, where compatriot diaspora and transnational communities and individuals are in touch with each other laterally across the globe, instead of being focused on an exclusive, binary, and virtual exilic relation a former home country and the current homeland(Naficy 5).

Moreover, Naficy draws our attention to think about the role of digital technology in shaping this multiplicity. He insists on the crucial role of technology during all the filmic production processes (Naficy 12). Digital technology becomes within this postmodern tendency not only the most reliable medium of communication amongst the film crew, actors, and producers, but also becomes itself a communicative message as suggested by McLuhan in his *The Medium is the Message*. Cinema now is fused with technological mode and the audience starts consuming cinema throughout digital devices. Technology, also, guarantees the differences and pluralities since it helps spreading videos, texts, hyper-texts, photos, blogs, sites, and Facebook digital messages embodying millions of non-censored ethnic, personal, and lingual contents. Technology is the new world of the future generations who will transcend all the limits to erode the boundaries between the real world and the virtual one in a successful attempt to create a more hybrid world.

Be that as it may, both *feminism* and *post colonialism* operate within the same Marxist mechanism. They merely replace Marxist conflicts between classes with conflicts between men and women and the struggle to reach emancipation as opposed to *alienation* with the struggle of the colonized to deconstruct the colonizer ideology. Materialism and the ideological conflicts remain the crucial motor that leads these postmodernist trends. What existentialism adds to this mechanism is only the mode of the subjectivity over the objectivity. In another word, a kind of saturation as I have already mentioned is manifested here because though there is apparently a kind of

change embodied in subjectivity, multiplicity, fragmentation, hybridity, and formal innovation, the real motif remains all the time Marxist with a an existentialist flavor.

The challenge now is how can traditional, Avant-garde, or even postmodernist films, based on psychoanalysis, feminist, or postcolonial mode, can shape a new *configuration* reflecting this ongoing hybridity, trans-nationality and multiplicity? All the tackled theories and genres in this chapter were generated either from limited and local political circumstances or from specific philosophical trends with which only Europeans that are familiar. Therefore, what about these hybrid generations operating simultaneously in *one world with different cultures*? Throughout the Facebook, a young person from Morocco, for example, can communicate with virtual friends from all over the world using more than two or three languages and discussing different themes according to different cultural backgrounds. All these fragmentations are interrelated in a hybrid space that transcends all the theories, cultural backgrounds, languages, etc.

These new hybrid societies, inevitably, try to go beyond any *tutelage* imposed by either European Avant-garde, that represents itself as the source of intellectuality, or activists groups worldwide, like post colonialists or feminists, since this multiplicity shapes a sort of heterogeneous way of thinking for them, because of the non-stop process of ideas' interrelations. As another example, an adolescent, expressing herself on her Facebook page to react against a maltreating act that she experiences, has the ability to treat her problem at multiple levels that relates what is patriarchal, with what is political, personal, subjective, objective, situational, economic, professional, imperialist, public, human, medical, natural, psychic, organic, religious, artificial,

technological, etc. All these factors, therefore, interrelate to generate the *injustice* from which this girl is suffering. The search of a solution for her problem should take into consideration different angles and perspectives, rather than moving within the vicious circle of one approach.

What is then the kind of cinema that can mark a new beginning towards a fourth tendency with a real, or at least a more, belief in pluralities and multiplicities? What the researcher should look for is how can these new generations, who are shaped by technology, deal with *separate* and *concentrated* genres such as surrealism, psychoanalysis, feminism, or post colonialism, while they are daily exposed to rhythmic, multiple and interrelated themes suggested by technology; and how can they feel adapted to the slow rhythm of time image? This dilemma is one factor behind the death of theory and hereafter of generic tendencies that fails in reaching people from different cultures and belongings. So, is there any common point that can link all these elements (new generations, technology, multiplicity, and cinema) to overpass this stagnation and vicious circle embodied in repetitions?

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Theoretical Framework

Film theory has been related *deliberately and unconsciously* to Marxist tendencies since 1925 when the Russian film director Sergei Eisenstein⁵⁴ released his *Battleship Potemkin*⁵⁵. In this film, Eisenstein opposes characters, events, places, and all the remaining filmic elements to deliver contradictions that had led to the Russian 1905 events. Many critics all around the world tackle the three shots of the stone lions⁵⁶ as an example of this dialectical montage though other Russian directors like Pudovkin and Vertov (Deleuze, *Cinema 1 The Movement-Image* 40) may go further in their Hegelian dialectic filmic approach. It is, then, the contradiction between the first shot to represent a sleeping lion and the last one to depict a roaring one that foregrounds an intended “meaning”. This transition from inaction and insouciance to action suggests, in this context, the awakening of Russian people and hereafter the revolution alternative. Eisenstein puts the two shots in a dialectic relationship to construct a metaphor for Russian people who finally wake up and revolt against the dominant capitalist mainstream. Deleuze, moreover, suggests four main types of this mental opposition, which are the quantitative, qualitative, intensive, and dynamic oppositions (Deleuze, *Cinema 1 The Movement-Image* 33). As for the quantitative, it represents one versus

⁵⁴**Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein** (1898-1948) is a Russian film director and theorist who bases his way of montage on the Dialectical approach of Marxism...

⁵⁵*Battleship Potemkin*. Sergei Eisenstein, Mosfilm, 1925. Film.

⁵⁶Eisenstein believes that the meaning cannot be generated from one image. However, juxtaposing two or more images can deliver a meaning. It is a dialectical approach to montage that should link contradicted things to construct meanings serving socialist ideas. For example, Eisenstein uses three successive images of stone lions. The first image depicts a sleeping lion, the second one describes an awakening lion, and the last one suggests a roaring lion. The meaning, therefore, is created thanks to the dialectical relationship between the images. In this example, the roaring lion stands for people who start revolting after a period of passiveness referred to by a sleeping lion.

many, like the dialectical scenes in *Battleship Potemkin* that represent one ship versus a fleet. The qualitative opposition suggests sea versus land, while the intensive opposition puts dark and light in contradiction. Finally, Eisenstein composes scenes of movements upward and downwards via using the dynamic technique of oppositions. The process of these contradictions consequently helps Russian directors to establish a Marxist ideological trend of cinema to communicate and interact with the mass.

For Eisenstein, the organic unity is intrinsic because it *mediates* the meaning, which is Marxism in this context, between the sender/the film director and the recipient/the audience who should know about revolution and about communism respectively. To ensure this political purpose, the organic unity should adhere to the dialectic approach(Eisenstein, Problems of Film Direction 2).

Eisenstein believes in the *structural* nature of the narrative to guarantee the organic unity. It is the structure that shapes meaning, especially when it uses particular examples to refer to general phenomena and vice versa. This matches with the notion of the “whole” that Eisenstein borrowed from Lenin(Eisenstein, Problems of Film Direction 2) who believes in the reciprocal relationship between the particular and the general. For Eisenstein, if one knows how to build up this relationship in a deliberate and professional way under the *law* of dialectics, films will deliver meanings of communism. The effective tool to ensure all these is embodied in the way the film director uses montage. Eisenstein, hence, gives much importance to montage rather than to other filmic elements including acting. Organization of events, for him, should take into consideration the cause and effect relationship.

This Marxist tendency marking film theory transcends the Classical genres such as the Russian School and continues generating another cycle of genres after the World War II. The after war Modernist trends such as neorealism, surrealism, Dadaism, and absurd are all legacies of Marxism. They are, hereafter, typical Marxist films directed by salient film directors like Pier Paolo Pasolini, Micheal Angelo Antonioni, Vittorio De Sica, and Jean Luc Godard. Some of these film directors modify the way Eisenstein tackle his films, but others try to go even further by abandoning linearity, organic unity, sensation (pathos), heroism, star system, action, chronological representation of time, etc. They rather opt for representing life as fragmented, banal, and arbitrary to oppose the Hollywood aesthetics suggesting capitalist mode, as they believe.

Jean Luc Godard is one of these film directors who seeks banalities and naiveties to replace the American homogeneous characters. For him, it is the mundane life and detached people that should be tackled because films should be closer to what happens in ordinary and daily life including trivial things like an empty road, a sleeping animal, a door that swings as the wind blows, indifferent faces of people, stagnant sightseeing, etc. It is not necessarily for these trivial things to have any logical link to the story since the aim is to disrupt the linearity and to show the fragmented side of “reality”. From another perspective, this is a kind of existentialist attempt to renew Marxism as I have already explained in the second chapter. It is then a subjective mode that is added to the Marxist theory to liberate it from rigidity and of course to make it live longer. On the basis of such background ideas, Godard rejects the American comedy of Chaplin. Even the comedy, for him, should adhere to original representations

of life rather than depict conventional themes. Godard, then, prefers Tati's comedy since it renders this way of representation that takes into consideration the existentialist mode (Godard 47).

This subjectivity in filmic representation can suggest effective nuances signifying various human themes in Godard's films. This means "subtle emotions" (Godard 53) for Godard who likes to reveal human contradictions and ironical psychologies of people.

Filmmakers like Godard prefer to be visible and noticeable by choosing non-conventional styles (classicism and scientific Marxism) of camera frames and movements. The classical framing is determined and ruled by movements. It is the positions and movements of characters and things that are highlighted in narrative, organic, and classical works. Spectators, hence, do not feel the work of the camera as if there was no camera at all. This is, of course, to involve the viewer, control her/his attention, polarize her/him, shape her/his ideological stands, etc. Pasolini, on his side, supports the visibility of the camera movement and hereafter of the film director because he believes that classical films manipulate the audience using coherence and linearity. Film directors should rather address the mind and not the feelings (Pasolini 556).

Pasolini believes that narrative cinema and non-visible camera can be taken for "prose" as suggested by the field language. For him, he practices the cinema of "poetry" rather than the one of "prose" since the former is communicative, direct, superficial,

linear, organic, commercial, ideological, and ready to be understood, while the latter is *expressive*, inner, enigmatic, ambiguous, negotiable, and elite. The first is adhered to the scientific / absolute Marxist while the second is existential by nature. Notwithstanding Pasolini's belief in a system of cinema that can resemble the one of language, he borrows the notion of the prose versus the other one of the poetry to point out how cinema, as an art, should transcend the communicative mechanism characterized with no poetic talent (Pasolini 547). Pasolini's style has many common points with the formalist school that is interested in the style and the form rather than the content. It is, therefore, the "authentic inspiration" (Pasolini 555) that matters for Pasolini and not the direct communication that seeks merely superficial significations with no metaphoric, or symbolic dimension.

Godard's approach to expressive or existentialist cinema is based on representing ironies and non-idealistic characters rather than constructing linear trajectories for them. To achieve this, Godard designs four main movements. He calls the first one the *objective description*, which is divided into two other sub-movements, namely, the *object description of objects* and the *objective description of subjects*. The object description of objects represents locations and props like houses, shops, books, etc. As for the objective description of subjects, it deals with characters. Godard names the second movement the *subject description*, which is, also, divided into the *subject description of subjects* dealing with feelings and emotions, and the *subject description of objects* dealing with settings. The third Godard's movement is the *search for structures* that brings the two previous ones together, but not in harmonious state. The aim is to depict complex feelings, people, and things rather than represent homogeneous

stories and characters since, for Godard, society does not represent any harmony. It operates instead within consumption values. This shows Godard's influence by Marxism that though many theorists including Marxists themselves question it, it plays an important role in the way some Modernists like Godard and Pasolini represent their works. Finally, the fourth movement, for Godard, is *life* where all the previous interrelated movements continue to function seeking for a deep reality (Godard 241-242). Godard, therefore, looks for the detached, and fragmented reality because he does not want his films to impress, but he wants them to provoke, question, criticize, bother and disturb his audience unlike narrative / scientific Marxist cinema that aims at entertaining them.

As far as Deleuze is concerned, in his *Cinema II, the Time-Image*, he tries to focus on these avant-garde / existentialist films to decode their tenets and characteristics. He differentiates them from the classical films of action since they operate outside the "sensory motor" mechanism. On neglecting the movement-image / (scientific Marxist films) and its linear and leading narration, cinema of modernism / existentialism opts for two main things: *Optic* and *Auditory* situations. For Deleuze, the modernist director is like the modernist painter who gives the priority to *aesthetics* and arts rather than hollow attractive *techniques*. The Marxist Modernism allows, hereafter, the director to intervene, to be present in the film, and create beyond the boundaries of conventions. What is more, the spectator is invited to share this filmic experience to break ties with one constructed directional relationship between the sender and the recipient. As for realism, these films go further than representing characters and events as real since realism becomes questionable and problematic. The existentialist

Modernism, however, suggests avant-garde trends that re-write the classical notion of realism. Neo-realism is one of these genres that cut ties with the structural paradigm (Realism, History, Heroism, Religion, etc.) and thus with the successional representation of actions to establish a new kind of representation that deal with daily “banalities” of life. Other existentialist genres like surrealism and Dadaism go even further in their way of representing *subjective* attitudes of ordinary people plunging in their mundane experiences such as dreams and childhood souvenirs. These experiences are yet suggestive since they try to come to grips with human issues. It is, therefore, a *mental* image with non-chronological time, fragmented narration, detached characters, mundane events, optical manifestation of settings, and sound presence.

Italian Neo-realism suggests another representation of ‘reality’. It is no longer organic but rather “*dispersive, elliptical, errant or wavering, working in blocs, with deliberately weak connections and floating events*” (Deleuze, Cinema 2, The Time-Image 1). What is real becomes, thus, ambiguous and complicated. Reality, in this context, is not given as an easy task to be understood. This is why Neo-realist films question the classical montage with its four types and replaces the logical and rhythmic cuttings, which guarantee continuity and clear linearity, with “the *sequence shot*” to create an optical image. The sequence shot in Neo-realist films aims at representing a more “concrete” reality since successive cuttings shape a forged one. Furthermore, the sequence shot stimulates the spectators’ mental activities to become more interactive with the image. It is this attempt to decipher ambiguities, missed meanings, and plunging in time that creates a deep and mental reaction to Neo-realist films such as Rossellini’s *Paisa*, or De Sica’s *Bicycle Thieves*. In these films, everything is depicted

as ordinary, mundane, and miserable as experienced by *defeated* and *helpless* people (Marxist representation) that are represented as different from the *heroes* in classical films. To deliver these everyday atmospheres, neo-realist directors avoid excessive cuttings. Instead, they opt for “realist” sequence shots to describe things almost as they happen and appear.

After 1970s, a kind of postmodernist saturation exists. It is not easy to determine what does a postmodernist film mean and it is impossible to find a *fixed* list of these films. This difficulty to design a filmic map, which can be relied to the postmodernist mode, reflects the way postmodernism refuses to be regulated or framed within certain *stable* tenets just like the way existentialism supports diversity, multiple interpretation, and generic amalgamation. However, the supposed to be modernist films share aspects of *pastiche*, *parody*, *irony*, and *repetitions*. They do not suggest any new theories, but rather repeat other salient stories and ideas from our human heritage. This is not for the sake of celebrating this heritage but in order to mock or at least react against it using a kind of representation that is based on *hyperrealism* and *simulacra*. Baudrillard explains how images, nowadays, go beyond all the different and contradicted theoretical representation of reality to the extent that they erode reality. Simulacra, for him, transcend simulation, which is the process of imitating reality. When this process generates *copies* without *origins*, simulacrum reveals. It is the hypereality mode that again erodes the boundaries between what is *real* and what is *fictitious*. This has nothing to do with metaphors or dreams that are represented in classical films as metaphors or dreams, but postmodern films amalgamate metaphors, dreams, and the supposed to be reality to create a suggestive third space.

However, themes and techniques of Marxism continue operating within the postmodernist mode. Postmodernist feminism, raceology, and post colonialism stem their tools and mechanisms from Marxism. Since these tools are still exercised and relied on within the process of the recent attempts to transcend the postmodernist saturation, I notice that it is rather the saturation of Marxism and not of theory in general. If so, a fourth cycle of film theory will emerge but with more *consciousness* as when the saturation reaches its top, it creates a sense of awareness and balance. Let us use a metaphor to clarify this concept. Any science student knows how a liquid gets boiled. At a high degree of temperature, the liquid's particles evaporate because of the pressure. Scientists call this level "saturation vapor pressure". People usually think that the saturation is the last level that can be followed only by death, void or nothingness. Our scientific experience may render this belief since evaporating particles will cause a shortage in the quantity. If it continues, no water will remain. However, in our scientific example, the particles after saturation level stuck on the surface of the container's cover to become liquid again, which is another level that can be called a level of *balance*.

On this basis, I am looking for the reason or reasons behind the postmodernist saturation. Is it because everything has been tackled, or because all the film genres were stemmed from materialism, particularly Marxism and existentialism?

Since this dissertation deals with various themes tackled by the films under study, and since it is based on clear theories such as Marxism and existentialism, I am obliged to follow a kind of *eclectic* theoretical framework. I use Marxism and

existentialism to understand the trajectory of the materialist mechanism repeating itself in the history of the filmic experience. I use, also, crucial notions from post structuralism to decipher the nature of postmodernism. On doing so, other theories are automatically involved within the postmodernist context, such as post colonialism, feminism and race. As for the analytical part, all these theories operate since I compare its tenets with new concepts stemmed from Einstein's discoveries that concern the relationship between matter and energy because these concepts challenge the materialistic mechanism that causes this cinematic stagnation_ postmodernist cinema.

Research Method

This study aims at understanding the reason behind the mentioned cinematic saturation. Such a research requires an eclectic method because, it is necessary to deal with various aspects such as film genres, theories, styles, aesthetics, etc. The appropriate method for this eclectic research is to follow both *textual* and *stylistic analyses*. Textual analysis suits the domain of film theory since it deals all the time with cultural studies, philosophy, communication and media. Film theory, be that as it may, is stemmed from all these fields if not amalgamates them in one vision. I choose, hereafter, textual analysis because it has direct links with post structuralism, which is associated all the time with post modernism. This allows me to deal with meaning as a generative phenomenon since my method that I am trying to construct is based on this transitive mode. My aim, therefore, is to liberate the meaning from its regulated sense. This is why I have started from some postmodernist principles to go further in my process of this liberation. The practical aspects of textual analysis allows me to put the texts / films under study into various components and to reconstruct new perspectives in order to shape an idea about their signification from one hand and their relationships to the theory on the other hand. The textual analysis, finally, goes hand in hand with the *qualitative method* which is my option within the context of this dissertation.

Concerning the stylistic analysis, it is very important since I am too much concerned with cinematic aesthetics and styles. The techniques used by film directors are very significant as they show whether a film is adhered to a certain philosophy or to

another. I have already explained how montage helps us understand the Marxist background of Eisenstein, how lighting is significant to discover the link between expressionism as an artistic genre and Murnau's *Nosferatu*, and how jump cut renders existentialist ideas into filmic practice. This stylistic analysis allows me to go through stylistic elements such as camera movements and angles, montage, colors, costumes, lighting and acting method to understand the films under study.

Film Sampling

This study is concerned with films from different cultures because the aim is not to understand the saturation within one specific country but to decipher the nature of this saturation within the cinematic experience be it local or international. Be that as it may, I limit these films in the last sixteen years as a salient change is observed in the postmodernist cinematic trajectory. Since 1970s, postmodernist films reflect the dominant mode of artistic *repetitions* not for the sake of repeating previous themes, figures, or esthetics *per se*, but for *reacting* towards them by using ironies, pastiches, or parodies. To be clearer, let us give an example from architecture, some postmodernist architects, nowadays, use classic designs of arcs, gates, or windows, but these arcs, gates and windows lead to nowhere since they are merely decorations with *no functional or practical aspect*. They are annexed moreover, to quite different mode of architecture in the same space. This is a kind of repetition, but not for *concrete use*. It is rather a reaction. Films such as *Pulp Fiction* and *Blue Velvet* (see the second Chapter) have the same mode of dealing with previous tendencies. However, the researcher notices in recent years a decline from this artistic alternative.

The aim behind this choice concerning the film sampling is to explore whether these films start constituting a new configuration, a kind of expansion, in an attempt to transcend the saturation and exhaustion in theoretical and generic aspect. This sample, therefore, includes *Enemy Way* (2014) by Rachid Bouchareb, *Black Venus* (2010) by Abdellatif Kechiche, *12 years a slave* (2013) by Steve McQueen, *Hero* (2002) by Zhang

Yimou, *Death for Sale*(2011) by Faouzi Bensaidi, and *Life of Pi*(2012) by Ang Lee. The researcher will examine these films to discover how they use all the past genres and techniques to establish new cinematic grammar. On analyzing them, various theories will be involved to construct a deep understanding to their themes and styles. These films are chosen because they are significant in terms of hybridity, multiplicity, cultural interferences, identity, language, integration, hatred, tolerance, etc. They, also, opt for multiple styles adopted from the past different tendencies. Hence, these films suggest hybridity or multiplicity in both the thematic aspect and the esthetic one. They, moreover, aim at both *expressing* and *communicating* and this is another characteristic marking this new tendency in today cinema.

Delimitations and Limitations

Concerning the generic aspect of this dissertation, I prefer not to tackle the very long, detailed, interrelated, and unlimited list of genres and sub-genres because showering the reader with too many details will be non-sense since they will lead to the same results. All the genres and sub-genres are classified according to three main tendencies, namely classicism where classical Marxism apparently operates, modernism where existentialism becomes salient, and postmodernism that amalgamates both Marxism and existentialism. Then, any other treatment that concerns genres will follow one of the three tendencies determining major tenets, strategies, modes, meanings, and significations of cinematic genres. Genres, also, have no fixed definitions as they are treated from various artistic, thematic, and ideological perspectives. Sometimes, one film can be interpreted in different ways, especially if it is interrelated with various genres and influencing ideologies. However, discussing the salient tendencies controlling these genres offers a clear and to the point understanding of how these genres get influenced by philosophical and theoretical modes and how they are opposed by other counter genres.

The researcher has found three main difficulties while dealing with this dissertation. First, in Morocco, researchers find obstacles in finding original copies of international films. The only opportunity to have access to films is either visiting festivals worldwide, attending cinema halls in other European countries, or buying original copies on line, the solutions that most of researchers do not have at hand. Second, film research in Morocco is in its beginnings. Most of the Moroccan critics do

not write as academically or scholarly recommended. Therefore, the researcher cannot consult most of the cinematic writings that are classified as journalistic or amateur. As for international references, most of Moroccan intellectuals are not interested in film studies, critiques, and academic research related to cinema, which explains the absence of cinema books by Deleuze, Bazin, Metz, Smelik, Rosenstone, etc.

I am invited as a film director to many cinematic activities in Europe, Asia, and the USA. While attending these activities, I can sometimes have the access to original copies of both films and books. The researcher, moreover, can have the access to many cinema halls including various cinema theaters in Brussels, Amsterdam, Geneva, Doha, Vichy, Lyon, New York, Los Angeles, Hong Kong, etc. These activities, also, allow me to interact effectively and exchange experiences with young cineastes worldwide. In June 2011, for example, the researcher was invited by the US Department of State for cinematic exchange, meetings, and screenings in New York, Washington DC, North Carolina, and Los Angeles wherein he developed interesting discussions with American, Indian, Bangladeshi, Afghan, Saudi, and Emirati young cineastes about issues of hybridity and multiplicity in the world cinema. The researcher developed many of his observations and hypotheses in exchange meetings and screenings in institutes like the Academy of Motion Picture, arts and Sciences, Sundance, PBS, P.O.V, Filmc, Downtown Community Television Center, The Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), The Los Angeles recording school, Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, The Los Angeles Film School, the Full Frame documentary film festival, Tribeca Festival, Film Society Lincoln Center, etc. This meetings, screenings, and interactions help a lot to understand more new tendencies and trends preferred by young

cineastes and audience worldwide. The researcher, also, develops many of his ideas during his intensive two years practical training in the Euro-Mediterranean Center of Cinema and Audio-visual⁵⁷ in collaboration with Cinecitta⁵⁸, Regione Lazio⁵⁹, Istituto Luce⁶⁰ de Roma, and Dagham Films (a Moroccan production company). In this center, the researcher exchanges *practical* and *professional* experiences with Italian practitioners and professionals.

These discussions and practical interactions about cinematic issues in suggestive institutes give an idea about how new and diverse generation deal with films. Moreover, I prefer to deal with films from inside. This entails discussing technical aspects such as camera movements, montage, lighting, and acting since he can use his professional background as a second and first assistant director in American, Italian, German, French, and Moroccan films, the experiences that make me exposed to various styles and methods of film shooting. I worked, as well, as a film director for many documentaries. Some of them were produced by the first Moroccan Channel and al-Jazeera Documentary one while others were produced within the dimension of self-growth as a film director. Therefore, the academic aspect, the international contacts

⁵⁷This center was created for two years (2004 to 2006) by Moroccan and Italian professionals to train around 100 students in different subjects such as: filmmaking, editing, camera, sound, lighting, script, props, costume, make up, grips, etc. each class contains 6 students who collaborate with the rest of the center students to do practical exercises. The program was 80 % practical. The center was in Kan Zaman Studios in Ouarzazate. It was stretched over an area of sixty acres. The Kan Zaman studios put their structures and professional technical equipments available to the students of the center. The teachers were Italian professionals and the students were selected throughout three stages. They followed their training in Italian...

⁵⁸**Cinecitta** is a very large studio in Italy. It was built in the Fascist era. It is referred to as the Italian Hollywood...

⁵⁹**Regione Lazio** is an institution that aims at promoting film industry in relationship with cultural aspects to link Italian cinema with the international one...

⁶⁰**Instituto Luce** was founded in Rome in 1924. The Institute produces and distributes films and documentaries. In July 6, 2012 the Luce Institute announces the opening of a public channel on YouTube that offers more than 30,000 videos telling 40 years of Italian history...

related to cinema activities, and the professional background help me a lot to well understand various theoretical, experimental and practical phases in cinema. However, in many occasions I find difficulties in accessing filmic or academic sources because these activities are not regular and recurring.

Finally, as a practitioner, I have accompanied this dissertation with making a film that I have entitled *Tarantella* to test my findings. Of course I do not include my film in the analytical part, because I do believe that the film director should not analyze her/his own film. Be that as it may, I use the press reactions at the end of this dissertation just to give a kind of evidence that my eclectic method, *helixism*, can be put into practice. I have, also, accompanied this dissertation with publishing many academic articles some of which are shared with my supervisor Dr. Houcine Ibrahimi Ouazzani within the works of the laboratory of research: *Discourse, Creativity, and Society, Perception and Implications*. One of these articles is entitled: ***Pedagogical Continuity and Performative Disruption Manifested in Films of National Identity***, which is published in an edited book: ***Theorizing Cultural Contemporaneity, A Paradigmatic Approach to Popular Fiction and Films*** (Excel India Publishers, New Delhi, p: 46 to 62). Another article is entitled: ***Psychological Transgression from Communicative Mode to Fragmented Discourse: Murnau's Nosferatu and Lynch's Mulholland Drive as Case Studies***, Which is published in an edited book: ***Languages, Cultures, and Comparative Religions***, University of Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah (p: 207 to 219). Other articles are published in academic journals related to the university of Ibnu Zohr, Namae for Academic Researches, WVoive, etc. During my research in the laboratory: *Discourse, Creativity, and Society, Perception and Implications*, I have, also, published

a book where many of these dissertation insights are mentioned. To have a close idea about some cultures that highlight esoteric modes over materialism, I have visited Honk Gong in 2015 particularly for attending Asian arts such as theatre and operas. This activity enables me too much to understand *Hero* and *Life of Pi*. Moreover, I have been giving many academic lectures about these findings that concern my new cinematic method in Moroccan universities such as Moulay Ismail University, Ibnu Toufail University, Ibnu Zohr University, etc. Along with these lectures, I have been lecturing for American students from several American universities such as Ohio University and I have been opening many interesting academic discussions about this dissertation.

PROSPECTS FOR NEW FORMULA

Multiplicity

Some contemporary film directors go further than what postmodernism suggests. They do not only repeat previous and epic works to react towards their themes, but they also allow classicism (objectivity) and modernism (subjectivity) to operate altogether. All the previous accumulations (see the first chapter) shape in contemporary works a complete *vocabulary* and *grammar* to compensate the missing elements in classicism, modernism, or postmodernism. On analyzing some contemporary works, one remembers the Indian parable about a subtle reaction towards how reality is interpreted. When blind men try to *interpret* what the elephant looks like, they end up with many contradicted descriptions.

While they are all true, none of them represents the reality. The one who is feeling the head says that the elephant is like a pot. The one who is dealing with the hose thinks it is like a snake. The one who is in contact with the leg believes it is like a pillar. The one who is touching the tusk argues that it is like a plowshare... Everyone seems to be right, but they all represent *a part of the truth* rather than a whole truth since the meaning exists only when the *entire* descriptions come together. Contemporary film directors, also, start using all the esthetics accumulated throughout the three main paradigms. They relate *pathos* with *thoughts* and they blur boundaries between high and low culture in the same time. This is a new formula that links action to mind and hybridity in a configuration that tries to be less reductive and more effective.

Bouchareb is one of these film directors who go beyond the limited representation of post colonialism as a trend that operates within postmodernism. In his *Enemy Way*⁶¹, Bouchareb amalgamates organic unity, mundane issues, and fragmentations to look for an effective esthetic. His scenario keeps certain linearity tracking a life of an African American who has just converted to Islam while he was in prison. He spent eighteen years in capture as he murdered a sergeant. After being released, Garnett (played by Forest Whitaker) decides to lead a very simple life away from a gangster life. Unfortunately, he faces successive harassments by Bill Agati (Harvey Keitel), the Sheriff of the area who is seeking revenge for his sergeant. Terence (Luis Guzman), an ex-crony, tries, also, hard to convince Garnett to come back to criminal activities that they were both leading.

Yet Emily Smith (Brenda Blethyn), a parole officer, warns Garnett to meet the criminal Terence; otherwise, he will be arrested again. Garnett cannot be away from New Mexico for a given period of time since he is still under watch. The paroled Garnett finds a modest work in a farm with no privileges since the options for an ex-prisoner are limited. However, he wants to have a woman in his life and to establish a family. He meets Teresa (Dolores Heredia), the bank clerk, when he opens an account in one of the city banks. His parole officer asks him to tell everything to Teresa, who does not show any bad reaction either to his past, or to his religion though she is a descendant from a catholic family. Unfortunately, Terence, who seeks all the ways to have Garnett back in a new criminal mission, harms her by beating her savagely.

⁶¹*Enemy Way (Two Men in Town)*, Rachid Bouchareb, Tessalit Production, 2014. Film.

Garnett does not accept this and decides to kill Terence in an uncontrollable yet a relieving behavior.

From the very beginning, one explores the immigration theme putting forward the notion of the borders *vis-à-vis* multiple characters and backgrounds. The story runs on in a *border area* that is New Mexico, existing in the southwest of the USA. The population of New Mexico is very diverse since many races before the European settlements in the new world inhabited it. Now, multiple races like Hispanics, Natives, Navajo, whites, African Americans, and Puebloan inhabit the area. These multiple races form interrelated spaces lead to certain *interactions* and *frustrations*. For example, Agati, the sheriff, deals with illegal immigrants trying to cross the borders for better life. The American parole officer, Mss. Smith, appears listening to a French song, which is another way of crossing the borders. Garnett crosses the borders many times as he adopts a new religion and, also, wants to cross the borders between a life of a gangster to reach a life of a peaceful person.

Sometimes, crossing borders becomes an illusion or rather a suspended dream. Mrs. Smith is unable to cross the borders imposed by the sterile judicial system. She fails, for example, to convince Garnett's mother to receive him as a way that may enable Garnett to escape the parole period and therefore the Sheriff's harassments. Richard Wayne, the old man who is also paroled for another year cannot cross the borders to reach his family in Ohio. He, instead, dies in New Mexico because of the same stagnant law. Terence does not succeed to cross the borders between him and

Garnett; yet, he crosses borders between life and death. It is, then, a kind of *contrast* characterizing the notion of boundaries in *Enemy Way*.

The notion of contrast is very strong in Bouchareb's film. The way this film director uses lighting is very telling as it renders the characters' psychological states, and the ironical situations permeating these characters' trajectories marked by contradictions. He gives lighting a very *subjective* dimensions because it refers to the inner world of Garnett who experiences a *transitional* stage. This is why there are many scenes that are shot in sunset, which denotes a *transitional* effect of sunlight. This metaphor in lighting goes back to the German expressionism or the French impressionism; and gives the impression as if we are watching paintings by Monet⁶² such as his Sunrise⁶³ or by Renoir⁶⁴ such as his Guernsey's Moulin Huet Bay⁶⁵. It makes one think, also, about films by Murnau who used to apply *chiaroscuro* technique in lighting. It is obvious that Bouchareb does not use this contrast in lighting caused by sunset light to react against expressionism or impressionism; he rather gets inspired by these tendencies to construct his contemporary themes using backlight, and transient light to express transitional psychological states and hereafter sensation or pathos related to the movement-image. In the same time, this way of using light puts forwards psychoanalytic and thinking themes tackling issues of the dark side of the human soul related to the time-image. The sunset light (that suggests low position of

⁶²**Claude Monet:** (1840 - 1926) a French Impressionist painter.

⁶³In 1872, Monet painted the sunrise over Le Havre's harbor from his bedroom window in France. One can see this painting in the Marmottan museum in Paris.

⁶⁴**Auguste Renoir:** (1841 - 1919) a French Impressionist painter.

⁶⁵In 1883, Renoir painted the sea of Guernsey, Channel Islands in a transitional effect of sun. One can see this painting in the National Gallery, London.

backlight) causes lit areas and dark ones in one given scene to refer to Garnett's conscious and sub conscious in *Enemy Way*.

In the scene of prayer in prison, there is the same light effect indicating contrast. As Garnett is praying, he faces the sunlight penetrating the window. The sunrays that are shed on his face create a suggestive contrast as Garnett's face is lit, whereas his back is dark. This renders Garnett's will for change and purification. Light that is shed on his face conveys his inner psychological state seeking guidance to the right path (his conscious) within an obscured world of criminality and violence (his sub conscious).

In the next scene when Garnett meets the Imam (Maher Hathout), there is the same conception of light. It gets throughout the prison's hall window, which is in a high position, creating contrast on Garnett's face to signify his attempt for repentance and reformation. Bouchareb's esthetic choice in lighting is confirmed when the Imam offered Garnett a significant ring with a golden star and crescent on red background. The Imam says: "... this is the crescent, it means: *light* in the midst of the *darkness*. As you had your difficult days, you'll have your bright days..."⁶⁶. Though the Imam looks like an Arab, because of his physical appearance and his way of pronouncing the 'r', the act of offering this significant ring describes salient black Muslims' activities in US prisons. For decades, many prisoners have been recruited by black Muslims using spiritual therapy and religion to polarize them in a certain ideological belief system(Lotfi 95).

⁶⁶Enemy Way (*Two Men in Town*), Rachid Bouchareb, Tessalit Production, 2014. Film.

The signs on the ring do not only signify light (the coming bright days) and dark (the past difficult days), but they also represent a telling hybridity. Bouchareb's isolated detail on the ring refers, also, to the New Mexican flag since the ring and the flag share the same colors, namely the gold/yellow and the red. In the same time, the ring's signs refer to the Nation of Islam's signs⁶⁷. Muhammad Elijah, the leader of this organization, teaches:

The flag of Islam, given by Allah (God) to the Lost and Found in America, represents the SUN, MOON and STARS. The SUN consists of fire, which is 853,000 miles in diameter, and on the average of the 93,000,000 miles from the Earth. The SUN controls nine (9) planets with light and heat which give the planets energy and life. It represents Freedom.

The MOON is part of our Earth, it represents Equality. The STAR is light that dispels the darkness of space and bears witness to the SUN. The STAR is without numbers in space. It represents all the stars of the Universe and it signifies justice⁶⁸.

It is clear from Elijah's teachings that the lost America stands for darkness, and the founded one stands for light. The star, therefore, is the light of *faith* that "dispels the darkness of the space" as rendered in Bouchareb's contrast and transient state of light shed on Garnett's face. This transient light suggests, also, a hybridity between religions

⁶⁷**the Nation of Islam:** (NOI) founded in 1930 by Wallace D. Fard Muhammed. It conducted a supremacist trajectory and confronted the white supremacy and racism by another racist mode. The NOI is associated with Elijah Muhammad (1897-1975) who used to give his teachings in specific temples. Malcolm X (1925 - 1965) was one of his ministers but he abandoned the supremacist mode and opted for the orthodox Islam. Eventually, Malcolm X was assassinated by Elijah's followers in 1965. However, Elijah's son Writh Deen Mohammad changed the name and the mode of the organization after his father's death and opted for the orthodox Islam. In 1977, Louis Farrakhan established another movement with the same name (NOI) and the same supremacist mode...

⁶⁸<http://www.farrakhanfactor.com/library/foi/foi1.html>

<http://www.muhammadspeaks.com/home/teachings/the-flag-of-Islam-page-75>

since the Nation of Islam used to represent the notion of trinity from Christianity along with certain tenets from Islam. Many Elijah's followers erode the boundaries between "the messiah of Christians and the Mahdi of the Muslims" (Turner 228) since they both refer to one God. Elijah teaches his followers that God is incarnated in the shape of a man called Master Fard Muhammad who once came to Chicago to give him prophecy. Fard Muhammad told Elijah that Islam is the religion of the blacks.

The mode, then, is separatist and racist though Garnett is not. Bouchareb, hereafter, transcends all the boundaries between Christianity, Islam, politics, activism, racism, and imperialism to suggest multiple interrelated spaces shared by the black Muslim Garnett, his white mother, the Arab Muslim Imam, the Catholic Hispanic Teresa, the white American Agati, etc. Even at the level of the scenario, it is written by different screenwriters, who are the Algerian Yasmina Khadra (Mouhammed Moulessrhoul), the French of Algerian origins Rachid Bouchareb, and the French Olivier Lorelle. The film, also, is produced by French and American companies. As for the languages used in this film, they are English and Spanish. It is, then, a new world that goes further than hybridity.

The way Bouchareb uses lighting links action-image, embodied in linearity and sensation, to time-image, embodied in particular psychoanalytic representation of Garnett. Bouchareb represents Garnett as someone who struggles to cut ties with violent behavior. Garnett is caught between a stable psychological state that is controlled by the conscious and the violent sub conscious. Many times Garnett reacts in uncontrollable manner. He, once, scares Mrs. Smith when he angrily gets closer to her in his room, the act that obliged her to take out her gun. In another scene, Garnett appears beating his

chest alone in a mosque after prayer. This is very suggestive as it indicates his inner struggle to control his violent behavior. In the same time, this act reminds us of the purifying self-flagellation existing in some religious practices and beliefs.

However, Garnett cannot control his anger. He breaks the TV set of his white racist mate after being harassed and humiliated by him. Because of this violent behavior, Garnett is strongly blamed by Mrs. Smith who tries to solve the problem. When Mrs. Smith is in the white mate's room trying to solve this problem and to prevent a probable prison for Garnett, he appears waiting for her in the hotel's corridor. He swings between the lit space, where sunlight is shed, and the dark one, where there is the shadow. This renders his inner struggle to reach faith, peace, and calm behavior. After Mrs. Smith comes out of the room to meet Garnett at the corridor, they both stand up (in a medium close up shot) in a lit frame of light surrounded by shadow. It is like the classist chiaroscuro technique used to mark expressionist films. Mrs. Smith, then, is trying to *balance* the situation and to help Garnett finish his parole period successfully.

Montage, also, serves to represent the notion of contrast. Bouchareb does not adhere to either the classist Marxism nor to the existentialist modernism. He, however, uses both modes to be more *expressive* and to *communicate* in an effective way. Bouchareb avoids Hollywood traditional close ups to opt for long shots, and medium ones as his dominant choices in his *Enemy Way*. But, he most of the time respects the montage traditional rules suggesting *harmony* and *coherence*. When he conveys the meaning of *contrast* and *conflict*, he opts for a modernist style that breaks ties with the norms and puts forward the notion of *discontinuity*. In the scene of the dance hall,

bouchareb continues editing his scenes as normal as any movement-time film. This linear editing style changes as Garnett meets Terence. At the beginning of this contact, Garnett is put on the right side; whereas, Terence appears on the left. As the conversation between the two men is developed, a sudden skip of the imaginary line occurs to swap the positions by putting Garnett on the left and Terence on the right.

Normally, film directors, especially the Americans, use a master shot to be followed by several close ups or medium shots. The master shot is the one that determines all the axes that should be respected by the following shots in a single scene to guarantee match cuts⁶⁹. It designs and obliges an imaginary semi-circle. The shots following the master shot should not skip an axe of 180°. However, Bouchareb, in this scene, uses two different axes in one scene, which is a skip of 180°. The way Bouchareb skips the imaginary line of traditional montage reminds us of Godard's jump cuts. The skip, here, is done on purpose to deliver the idea of contrast or rather the contradictory attitudes of Garnett and Terence. It is a telling skip or rather an *overturn* since there are hints of potential conflict between Garnett and Terence. In fact, the movement-image style tolerates this kind of skip since there are two master shots both including the two characters. The logic, here, is that the existence of the two characters in both master shots will not confuse the audience. What confuses the audience is the skip of the imaginary line by one or many close ups (or medium close ups) of the same master shot. But the choice of juxtaposing of two master shots with two opposing axes, as used by Bouchareb, has still been viewed as interesting choice since it has been used by film

⁶⁹**Match cut:** (known in French as "raccord") it is related to the montage process. The cuts should keep the continuity of characters, movements, directions, and objects. Different shots, therefore, should be connected to keep things appear in harmonious movements... the contrary of "match cut" is "jump cut" ...

directors such as Kurosawa⁷⁰ in the 1950s. This choice, as it is explained, has classical mode embodied in linearity since it aims at not confusing the audience. It represents the two characters in both master shots, the fact that makes the montage linear and understandable. In the same time, this choice has an avant-garde tendency since it suggests two opposing axes that change the characters' positions *vis-à-vis* the *space* and *directions* as well. It is, therefore, a real helical relationship between different tendencies paving the way for a new *generative* cinematic configuration.

Bouchareb's overtone of axes is repeated when Mrs. Smith tries to convince Agati, the sheriff, to stop harassing Garnett. In a party organized by Agati honoring lieutenant Joe Corals after his return from the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, Mrs. Smith, who is invited too, asks Agati to move a little bit from the rest of the guests. While discussing the case of Garnett (in medium shots), I notice that Bouchareb skips again the 180°, which is the imaginary line. The skip is done also when Agati is speaking to Garnett, and when Wayne is speaking to Mrs. Smith. Such skip is never done when Garnett speaks to Teresa. There are, hereafter, problems of communication between the characters depicted by shots skipping the imaginary lines. The way Mrs. Smith interprets law is different from how Agati wants to apply it. Agati and Garnett are leading contrary directions and aims. Wayne feels desperate and Mrs. Smith feels helpless in front of a rigid law. All these relationships are sterile as they are contradicting and disrupting each other.

⁷⁰Akira Kurosawa has opted for this style since 1950s. In his *Idiot* (*The Idiot*, Akira Kurosawa, Shochiku, 1951. Film.), for example, he juxtaposes many master shots with opposing axes.

The other relationships are constructed in a linear montage as they are interactive and positive. After meeting Terence, Garnett delivers Teresa to her place. While speaking to each other, Bouchareb does not apply the skip as the aim is to show certain agreement and tolerance between Garnett and Teresa. The match cuts, here, opposes the previous idea of conflicts and discontinuities to establish certain tolerance and peace. This tolerance becomes clear when Teresa, who is a Catholic, hangs the Garnett's picture of Mecca on a wall of her house. In the main scene, when Garnett decides to tell her the whole truth in a coffee shop, Bouchareb uses ordinary reversed shots. The reversed shots, in general, are not dominant in *Enemy Way* since Bouchareb tries to keep his style characterized with long and medium shots rather than connecting close ups in reversed shots.

In this scene, he starts with fixed medium full shots on both of them, but when Garnett starts speaking emotionally, in the two shots, a mechanic zoom gets gradually closer to them. Then, Bouchareb cuts them to full close ups with a focus in on their faces and a focus out on the backgrounds to show their focus and plunging in emotions and love, which makes them isolated from any other surrounding existence. Here, the film director avoids any contrast of light on Garnett face to depict his credible, sincere feelings and his serious need to re-shape his life. All these shots are linked harmoniously according to a developing linearity without skipping the axe of 180 °to indicate the positive will to construct trust and tolerance.

As this montage style blurs the boundaries between classical and modernist modes (or rather Marxist and existentialist styles), the way Teresa is represented erodes

borders between the way traditional films represent women and feminist ideas standing for a postmodernist mode. Though Bouchareb maintains a traditional narrative style, he seems selective towards the shots reserved to Teresa. This indicates the influence of feminist criticism that starts leaving its impacts on film directors. First, Bouchareb uses Mrs. Smith to transmit the right of Teresa as a future girlfriend or wife in knowing all what concerns Garnett's past. Garnett too appears very respectful towards her as he accepts her religion and the way she is. The camera frames and movements pertaining to her image render Garnett's respect to her body as a woman since there is no scopophilia, voyeurism, or fetishism(Mulvey 426).

Teresa, however, is depicted as a woman who is not only passive, but also a victim of the bad circumstances surrounding Garnett's life. Teresa, in fact, represents the Hispanics who are not considered as whites. Her voice, then, is very important to be heard and therefore represented. In *Enemy Way*, she does not suggest any personal attitude or effective act. She does not, also, insist on her right to know many facts and on going events. If the idea is to show the stagnant world where both Teresa and Garnett live, she should at least express her point of view as a woman and as a Hispanic. Spivak refers to the responsibility of women in creating this silence. She insists on the fact that "the relationship between woman and silence can be plotted by women themselves"(G. C. Spivak 28). Bouchareb represents Teresa as someone who does not ask for her rights. Is it, then, a feminist representation tackling the issue of silenced women, a deliberate representation, or rather a gap in his narrative? Bouchareb, however, makes a step further towards a more positive representation of women since he *amalgamates*

classical narrative, with modernist mode, postcolonial themes, and feminist representation to women in an attempt to create a new effective configuration.

Eventually, Garnett, also, is represented as helpless. Bouchareb associates Garnett to Malcolm X, the famous minister in Nation of Islam. Garnett looks exactly like Malcolm X. The eyeglasses he puts, the suit he wears, and the small beard he leaves on his chin are too much identical with Malcolm X' appearance. However, though Garnett and Malcolm X resemble each other in appearance, they differ in behaviors and attitudes. While Malcolm X believes in change and chooses to be an active revolutionist in Nation of Islam, Garnett tries to avoid any political involvement since he aims at leading a very simple life. When Agati asks Garnett about his future intentions, Garnett answers: "... live in peace, establish a family, have a small house, find a work, a wife, kids and neighbors"⁷¹. Garnett does not tend to be racist or separatist, but Malcolm has experienced a separatist mode based on Elijah's teachings before he is converted to the orthodox Islam(Haley 180). Garnett's photo of Mecca suggests his rejection to the separatist identity as Mecca receives Muslims from all colors and nationalities. Unlike Malcolm, Garnett has a tendency to be helpless in front of a rigid Sheriff and law.

Garnett stands for both continuity and discontinuity *vis-à-vis* the past of black Islam in the USA. He represents a kind of development within the American black Muslims, the majority of whom, including Malcolm X, adopt the normal Islam instead of the one based on Elijah's racist ideology. Garnett, also, refers to many African Americans who wants to live in peace away from any political approach or agenda that

⁷¹ Enemy Way (*Two Men in Town*), Rachid Bouchareb, Tessalit Production, 2014. Film.

can spoil their faith. As for discontinuity, the revolutionist approach of separatist ideology is viewed now as a modernist tendency that establishes a binary opposition between *nationalism* and *the other*. For Bhabha, the modernist notion of nationalism based on historicity gets, now, in a conflict with the postmodernist notion of identity based on events of everyday that have nothing to do with the “centered events”(Bhabha 213-214). People, therefore, as understood from Bouchareb’s reference to the black Islam, are not historical entities. They are rather operating within a complex social reference suggesting ambivalence and mundane events. This is why Bouchareb represents mundane events that remind us of DeSica’s *Bicycle Thief* rather than tackling high or heroic events. Bhabha explains:

To write the story of the nation demands that we articulate that archaic ambivalence that informs the time of modernity. We may begin by questioning that progressive metaphor of modern social cohesion – *the many as one* – shared by organic theories of the holism of culture and community, and by theorists who treats gender, class, or race as social totalities that are expressive of unitary collective experiences(Bhabha 212).

Garnett, then, is not reflecting a monolithic dimension concerning the black Islam but rather stands for diversity and ordinary approach. Bouchareb, in fact, refers to another monolithic approach, namely the one that has something to do with the WASP (White Anglo Saxon Protestant) ideology embodied in Agati and the sterile judicial system. In the opening scene, Agati appears supervising the desert from an airplane. This conveys his distant position and *imagined* supreme vision. Bouchareb uses the

empty desert to signify the sterility, and empty potentiality surrounding Agati and the law he represents. Bhabha construes:

(...) this centred vision of 'the gentle man' is so to speak a condition of empty potential, one who is imagined as being able to comprehend everything, and yet who may give no evidence of having comprehended anything(Bhabha 214).

The way Bouchareb links existentialist approach with its monolithic vision imposing binary oppositions between *the self* and *the other* shows his deconstructing attitude towards the high culture. He opts, therefore, for the culture of the everyday rather than the culture of the heroes.

Bhabha insists on how mundane events do not lead to any kind of particularities, but merely render sorts of *ambivalence* and *irrationality*. Nothing happens to change the stagnant situation that does not differ too much from the capture where Garnett was. The fact that Garnett opts for peace and religious life do not help in *motivating* anything. Moreover, harassments reach unbearable stages, especially when Terence abuses Teresa. Garnett decides to *act* instead of waiting for an *imagined* justice that will never manifests just like the wide bare and sterile desert around him. The situation, here, has much to do with Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. The desert and the road in *Enemy Way* are similar to Beckett's setting where Vladimir and Estragon wait in vain for Godot. Both works put forward absurdist feeling and mode of behaving articulating in vicious circle. Eventually, Garnett decides to kill Terence. Before doing so, he takes off his eyeglasses, ring, and tie and after killing him he hesitates as he approaches a lake intending to do *wudoo* for prayer. As he realizes that he does not put his ring, he goes

back towards the sunset without wudoo. On doing this, he feels relieved as if he finds another way of purification. Does this signify a kind of discarding to his new identity, which is Islam as many black muslims do (McCall 250), or rather he cannot do without the ring as it means a lot for him? Can the researcher consider his removal of the eyeglasses and the tie as a sign indicating that he will never see life with the other's eyes and vision? Does his act of killing signify that his conscious subjugates his subconscious incarnated in Terence after a long struggle? It is, then, the ambiguity, ambivalence, and irrationality of the everyday events as suggested by Bhabha.

Bouchareb in his *Enemy Way* does not classify himself within a certain body of monolithic theories, avant-garde styles, or classical trends. He, however, feels free to cross the boundaries amongst all the three major tendencies to give his work a more insightful treatment based on multiple angles and different approaches. He does not reject classicism and organic unity as he opts for a linear narrative; meanwhile, he chooses mundane and stagnant events that remind us of the *timeless spaces* and *time without duration* in avant-garde films. He escapes dealing with *heroism* and *centered events* of the high modernism, but he explores lives of marginalized people like Garnett within a rising development of the film narrative. Bouchareb, also, erodes the boundaries between the conventional montage based on continuity and the non-conventional one as he skips the imaginary line in some scenes for indicating notions of disruption, fragmentation, and contrast. He, also, uses multiple approaches while dealing with his themes to remove the borders amongst post colonialism, feminism, psychoanalysis, immigration, race, and historicism. He links all these amalgamations

with low culture of ordinary people to deconstruct the high one. He, therefore, transcends *hybridity* to celebrate *multiplicity*.

Sensation within a Disrupted Mode

The way some film directors want to *derange* their audience rather than entertain them is associated with the Marxist avant-garde style. Godard, as mentioned in the first chapter, transcends the neo-realists directors and refuses to plan his narrative (Moulet 46) because his aim is to provoke the viewer and hereafter to stimulate their minds and not their emotions. However, some contemporary films are able to derange their audience though they suggest sensation and respect linear narrative. It is possible, for them, to construct conventional narratives with deep meanings and thoughts. Abdellatif Kechiche, for example, tries to find links amongst organic unity, sensation, discontinuity, and deranging images. He, also, amalgamates feminist themes such as voyeurism with race, eurocentricism and imperialism to operate within a style that is closer to the documentary one. It is, then, another attempt to blur the boundaries amongst classicism, modernism, and postmodernism as a new configuration aiming at both *attracting* and *deranging* the audience.

Kechiche's *Black Venus*⁷² tells the story of a South African black woman who is brought to London by her Master Hendrick Caezar (André Jacobs) to exhibit her as half human being half animal. The story is linear and circular. It starts in 1815 by a lecture delivered by Georges Cuvier (François Marthouret), an anatomist in the Royal Academy of Medicines in Paris. This anatomist explains to scientists and students that

⁷²*Black Venus*. Abdellatif Kechiche, MK2, 2010. Film.

Saartjie Baartman (Yahima Torres) is a creature that has human and animal characteristics in the same time. She is, as he explains, the missing link between humanbeing and a sort of monkeys. To support his data, he shows them her genital organ that is amputated and put in a jar for scientific exhibition. The events go back in time (flashback) to depict Saartjie's trajectory before reaching this humiliating destiny. Since she has been brought from Capetown to London, she is exhibited, against her will, by Caezar in a circus as an interesting animal. He tells her that she will be a rich woman out of this deal. He, moreover, asks his audience to touch her buttocks to please them.

After this scandal reaches secretaries of an African institute, the court, and journalists, Caezar and his new friend Réaux (Olivier Gourmet), bring Saartjie to France to start a new phase of exploitation. She is exhibited not only in carnivals, but also in Aristocrat's salons where she becomes an object of *voyeurism* and *erotism*. Cuvier, the anatomist, visits one of the shows and makes a deal with Caezar to profit both from Saartjie. Caezar delivers Saartjie to the medicines institute where she is treated like a strange phenomenon. Cuvier's assistants measure her body parts, except her genital organ since she strongly refuses the act. Caezar notices how Saartjie starts saying no for many practices. He, eventually, sells her to Réaux and leaves her confronting her new destiny with new people. Saartjie experiences uncivilized practices that worsen her situation. She, also, gets infected with a venereal disease. She does not find any other alternative to survive but prostitution. Her body gets gradually weak until she dies. Her dead body is sold to Cuvier by Réaux and only at this time the scientists can examine

her genital organ, amputate it along with other organs, and makes a model out of her body to be exhibited in the Medicines institute.

Like Bouchareb, the French Tunisian Kechiche writes his script along with the French Ghalia Laroix, the fact that highlights the notion of hybridity. The film is produced by France, Belgium, and Tunisia. The languages heard in *Black Venus* are: French, English, and Africans. As for the film's characters, they convey multiplicity as there is the African Saartjie, the French Réaux and Cuvier, the Arab and North African prostitutes, the English audience, Judges, and secretaries of the African institute. They are all constituting an amalgamation of nationalities declaring the dead of borders in these contemporary films under study. All these interrelated settings, characters, and languages give hints that the film is operating within postmodernism. However, *Black Venus* gets its grammar from all the previous mentioned tendencies.

The theme of *the gaze* is intrinsic in *Black Venus*, but Kechiche transcends the notion of *voyeurism* as discussed within feminist contexts. The researcher feels ambivalent towards the way Kechiche tackles the gaze, voyeurism, Eurocentricism, exoticism, and eroticism. It is obvious that he constructs a stand that is not too much different from the feminist one, but, in the same time, he offers his audience with voyeuristic images! Then, does he aim to create a sort of catharsis⁷³ like that ancient Greek one (which is a classical tendency)? Does he use women body for creating erotic contexts (like commercial films)? Or does he rather want to make the theme of voyeurism irritating, and deranging (like modernist films)? In fact, Kechiche goes

⁷³ **Catharsis:** It is a kind of purification that is created when the audience interacts with artistic works. Through arts, one can avoid having the same negative outcomes tackled in a play or film. Catharsis is associated with Aristotle. In his *Poetic*, he tackled the issue of catharsis in theater.

beyond feminism when he chooses to unmask people's behaviors while dealing with Saartjie's *body*. Everybody wants to get something from her including European Aristocrats, the white audience, the white scientists, the white women, etc. Voyeurism, as tackled by Kechiche, takes a *crystallized* form since it has various faces and perspectives. It is this characteristic that makes Kechiche's theme of voyeurism become irritating and deranging since audience experience contradicted feelings. Sometimes, they hate people gazing at Saraatjie, which is a kind of sympathetic feeling towards her, in the same time, they feel that Kechiche's images are rather disgusting as they arouse *nausea* and *loathing*. If Deleuze, then, relates the metaphor of crystallized form to time to explain how the past, the present, and the future are virtual, subjective, unconscious, and interrelated (Deleuze, *Cinema 2, The Time-Image* 69), the researcher explores that this metaphor can be applied to linear images too. Moreover, Kechiche transcends the virtual dimension of this crystallized form of voyeurism to create a tactile voyeurism since the gaze at Saartjie leads the white men and women to touch her in an obvious interaction between the virtual and the tangible. Therefore, gazing, touching, feeling disgusted, feeling sympathy, hating, being shocked, condemning, and feeling amazed are all the equal sparkling faces of the crystallized voyeurism in Kechiche's *Black Venus*.

The gaze in *Black Venus* takes many courses. It does not refer only to voyeurism, but also to the bumptious view of the 19th century Europeans who used to consider the non-Europeans and the blacks to be merely animals that should be civilized by teaching them the white's ethics, language, religion, and manners. Kechiche, then, deals with a postcolonial approach, which deconstructs imperialism and Eurocentricism.

His way of representation makes us directly think of Fanon, Bhabha, Spivak, and Said. Fanon, for example, conducts a whole psychological research to understand well the way the whites humiliate the blacks. He states that: “It has been said that the Negro is the link between monkeys and man – meaning, of course, white man”(Fanon 18). Fanon explores how the Eurocentric vision dehumanizes the blacks by describing them as cannibals. He examines the racist books published by the white supremacists:

Recently, in a children’s paper, I read a caption to a picture in which a young black Boy Scout was showing a Negro village to three or four white scouts: ‘this is the kettle where my ancestors cooked yours’. One will gladly concede that there are no more Negro cannibals but we should not allow ourselves to forget(Fanon 158).

Just because Saartjie looks different from the European women, she is introduced like an animal that can harm the white audience if they are not careful and cautious. Cuvier explains to his audience that Saartjie is an important scientific discovery since one can determine that she is the missing link between mankind and a sort of apes. Caezar, on his part, addresses his audience that she has “the ability to parade as a European lady”⁷⁴ since she can *imitate* but not *create*. This is a Eurocentric way of dealing with the savage *other* embodied in non-European races as suggested by Kechiche.

Caezar manipulates Saartjie by forcing her to exhibit her buttocks. This act has two interrelated dimensions. The first one is purely erotic, while the second one is based on the inferior representation of the blacks. Caezar tries to convince Saartjie that she is

⁷⁴*Black Venus*. Abdellatif Kechiche, MK2, 2010. Film.

attractive: “your body fascinates them. You’re to be proud...”⁷⁵. But sometimes he shouts at her: “they are here to see your buttocks”. Meanwhile, he represents her as savage since he renders the Eurocentric attitude towards Africans. Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* is the most salient Eurocentric example depicting Africa as savage, ambiguous, dangerous, and mystic. It is the place where the whites disappear or get infected by fatal diseases. In other contexts, Africa is the world of exoticism as suggested by the 19th century European historians and travelers(Said 117). Kechiche finds in the real story of Saartjie another example of Eurocentricism. He represents Caesar as a white exploiter who puts Saartjie in a cage just like the one where fierce animals are captured and isolated from people. When Caesar and Réaux decide to go to France, they put Saartjie on the seat of the chariot reserved to animals, as she is all the times associated with beasts, sharing with them her imposing spaces. The two dimensions, in fact, converge to create an *irony* for how can a beast be sexually appealing?!! It is the same idea founded today in some street publicity posters depicting half naked women wearing the bra, or the boots made out of tiger’s leather to link femininity, softness, beauty, and coquetry with savagery and barbarism. The aim is to connote that the described woman is sexually very hot to the extent that she offers a wild desire. It is the contrast between softness and savagery that creates erotism and this is exactly what Caesar tries to achieve.

The sensation is differently treated in *Black Venus*. It is no longer associated with linearity and classical works. It can derange the audience, just like the fragmented narrative can do, by addressing both their minds and emotions rather than dealing with

⁷⁵ Ibid

only the mind as the high modernity suggests (see the first chapter). The sensation or pathos in *Black Venus* is generated from the way Kechiche represents the exploited Saartjie, the greedy Caezar, the rapacious Réaux, the sadist audience, and the ridiculous scientist. All these characters form a deranging duality of the *center* and the *muffled*. Caezar, in many occasions, promises Saartjie that he will never cause a bad thing to her and assures her that she will return to Capetown as a rich woman. Yet, he allows people to jab her buttocks in an obvious humiliation to her. In fact, everything that is related to Saartjie is exploited. She is used to entertain people. Statues that look like her are sold to increase the incomes. Her body is used in the scientific research. A dummy made out of her body as an evidence of the missing link between apes and human being. Her genital organ is amputated and put in a jar for scientific exhibition. There is no honor and no money, but a shocking humiliation that deranges *Black Venus*' audience.

A deranging mode can also be generated from linear narrative. It is the image, then, that can derange be it interweaved with other images in a harmonious structure (classicism), or detached from the other images (modern avant-garde). The humiliation experienced by Saartjie reaches various phases. Réaux brings Saartjie to Paris to exhibit her in the Aristocrates' salons where she becomes a sexual stimulus. Everybody feels fascinated by her body as if she is a "goddess of sex". Réaux himself feels perplexed because though he represents her as an inferior creature, he cannot resist her body. Surrendering to his sexual drive, Réaux uses religious words to express his sexual desire to her. When Saartjie finishes one of her shows, Réaux appears *carressing his bear* while he is waiting for her. As she enters the sideline, he tells her that *God created* her to teach men something. He adds that she is a *God's grace* and she should be proud as

she is *beautiful* and *attractive*. It is a kind of *ecstasy* that makes Réaux feels anesthetic since he transcends the borders between sexual desire and religious beliefs that lead him to bring Saartjie to the church for baptizing. The religious context in *Black Venus*, hereafter, is interrelated with sexual drive, wildness, and disgusting atmospheres to create a sort of deranging images.

The representation of Saartjie *per se* suggests deranging images. Though she has in many occasions the opportunity to divulge her plight, she seems hesitant and most of the time reluctant to reveal anything about her sufferings. This is another sort of the Bhabha's ambiguity and ambivalence we have already mentioned in the first chapter. Is it the need of money that leads Saartjie to this decision, or is it because she knows that going back to Africa does not differ too much from her staying in Europe since her country is still under the whites domination? In all the cases, her *silence* generates more exploitation and subjugation. She has never expressed herself. On the contrary, Caezar, Réaux, secretaries of the African Institute, the scientist Cuvier, and Jeanne Réaux' assistant speak on her behalf but for their own benefits and interests. As explained previously, this suggests the contribution of women in constructing their silenced and subjugated space (G. C. Spivak 28). Spivak suggests that the subaltern may be responsible too for her/his inferior position. She states that: « ... the agency of change is located in the insurgent or the 'subaltern' » (G. C. Spivak 3). The audience, therefore, feels perplexed and deranged as they do not know whether they should feel pity for her, to blame her, or to be understanding towards her silence! Kechiche, then, aims at deranging his audience by opting for this kind of representation that criticizes

racism, and stresses in the same time on the inferiority complex that the blacks cannot get rid of easily.

The shooting style used by Kechiche reflects the intended deranging way of representation in *Black Venus*. Kechiche chooses the hand held camera⁷⁶ to convey a very *subjective reality* that is highlighted by avant-gardists like Godard. It is neither stable nor reassuring but rather trembling just like Saartjie's psychological state. To link this trembling reality with the psychological state, Kechiche frequently uses *close ups* that are preferred by classical cinema. He also opts for *sequence shots* and *slow scenes* that are dominant in neorealist cinema (see the first chapter). However, Kechiche's narrative is linear as it goes back to the classical use of the *flashback* technique but his themes are purely postmodernist since they tackle race, feminism, and post colonialism. Kechiche borrows from the three different vocabularies (classicism, modernism, and postmodernism) not for the sake of repetition but rather to enrich his style and therefore his way of representation.

In the first scene, Kechiche describes Cuvier while exhibiting Saartjie's skull in the Medicine institute in various close ups. In the same time, he interrelated Cuvier's close ups with the addressees' ones. It seems as if Kechiche suggests other exhibitions pertaining to the scientists' different faces and heads shapes. This is very telling because while Cuvier explains that Saartjie has a different skull from the normal ones, Kechiche shows how human skulls are really different. The way Kechiche interrelates Saartjie's skull with the scientists' faces directly condemn the ridiculous scientific research

⁷⁶**Hand-held camera:** a technique of shooting. The operator does not use the tripod or any other equipment to fix the camera. S/he, however, hold the camera with her/his hands to make the image appear unsteady...

conducted by the whites trying to find whatever evidence to discriminate the blacks. Kechiche connects these close-ups with certain camera movements such as the *tilt*⁷⁷, and *panoramic*⁷⁸ movements. Sometimes he uses both of them in one trembling sequence shot to give the impression of an *amateurish way of shooting* resembling from one hand the non-professional scientific study conducted by Cuvier and from the other hand the *voyeuristic mode* dominating this film. It seems like an intended convergence of the trembling reality, the discomfort of vision related to science, the spying gaze, the troubled psychological state of Saartjie, and her boozy physical condition.

The montage related to these trembling shots and scenes is neither rhythmic nor speedy. It constructs a slow motion to make us feel *bored*, just like Saartjie's feelings, but reluctant to stop watching the film, the fact that creates a deranging way of editing that does not respect the traditional norms. Meanwhile, this montage gives the impression that we are watching a *documentary* film that most of the time avoids the rapid cuttings. However, though Kechiche reestablishes the way documentaries are directed in classicism as explained in the first chapter when tackling Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*, he extracts many characteristics from the time-image. In the *large form* of the movement-image, the narrative follows a rising trajectory based on the characters' challenge to the milieu. Saartjie in *Black Venus* does not resemble Nanook in *Nanook of the North* since this later is operating within a *heroic* context, while the former is unable to challenge the milieu. Saartjie's situation is stagnant just like the situations created by modernist film directors who suggest hallucinations and dreams rather than conscious and effective actions. In *Black Venus*, there is no challenge and hereafter there is no

⁷⁷**Tilt:** a camera movement. When the camera is fixed on a tripod and rotates in a vertical plane.

⁷⁸**Panoramic:** When the camera is fixed on a tripod and rotates in an horizontal plane.

change as Kechiche escapes heroism and significant achievements. Kechiche does not totally plunge in time as well as he does not totally believe in action. He rather wants to be both expressive and communicative using postmodernist themes.

In many occasions Kechiche uses a rapid movement to shift from a close up to another maintaining the slow rhythm of the scenes. It is a kind of nervous mode referring to the non-at ease relationships amongst characters. But when Saartjie ignores Caesar's instructions as she starts playing correctly on her musical instrument, Kechiche moves the camera slowly from her to the audience who look fascinated by Saartjie's way of playing music. This slow movement marks a kind of reconciliation or rather communication occurred between Saartjie and her audience, the thing that makes Caesar too much angry. It is the same idea used by Bouchareb when he associates matches up with harmonious relationships and skips of 180 °with contradicted ones. This also stands for the crystallized image of Saartjie. She is represented as a beast, yet when she plays music properly, she drives the white audience's attention. The scientists represents her as the missing link between apes and human being, but Reaux in one of his shows tells his audience that the most beautiful amongst them is the one who will eat the apple he is holding. Eventually, he gives it to Saartjie, which conveys the hidden desire of the whites towards the black beauty. Sometimes, Kechiche too skips the 180°of the imagined line, but he insert shots between the two opposed axes to put forward various angles of voyeurism. This makes classicism tolerates the skip as it remains indirect.

In the strong moments of disagreement, Kechiche prefers do not insert the two opposed axes to make us in front of a direct skip of the imaginary line. When, for example, Cuvier wants to see Saartjie's genital organ, she violently pushes him. The two shots depicting this act skip the axe as Cuvier first appear on the left, and in the following shot he becomes on the right of the frame. This shows her human *nature* that skips the Eurocentric axe and transcends their imposed barbaric identity. When she throws the money given to her by scientists to suborn her, she reverses the situation, as suggested by the reversed axe, to make them look like non-human beings. To show the scientists' superficial way of thinking, Kechiche depicts them collecting the coins scattered on the floor in a funny way. The aristocrats in the French salons are also described as superficial and childish.

The image here is crystallized too as these aristocrat men and women look uncivilized when they start being involved in erotic contexts while watching Saartjie's show. The crystallized image, then, leads us to wonder who does have animal characteristics, Saartjie or her audience? Within this context, Saartjie unmasks their sub conscious. On gazing at her body and jabbing her buttocks, they all feel as if they are hypnotized until Saartjie is in tears. Saartjie's reaction reveals the crystallized manifestation of the conscious and the sub conscious of these aristocrats. This crystallized manifestation tends to be so active in *Black Venus*. When Saartjie plays her role in the cage, Kechiche enters his camera inside the cage to reverse the situation as he gives the impression that thereal imprisoned is not Saartjie but the audience. Saartjie's p.o.v shots, in general, suggest a reversed reality to indicate how the racist ideology can mold and shape the masses.

Black Venus gives the evidence that the crystallized and deranging images cannot be generated only from the fragmented narrative. The multiple levels of the representation of characters, the deep emotional approach, the challenging montage, the disgusting atmospheres, and the significant framing can be constructed to form deranging images. It is not necessarily for mental images to be associated with the time-image since Kechiche can mingle both mental and emotional images to suggest a more effective result. In *Black Venus*, Kechiche transcends the borders amongst classicism, modernism, and postmodernism.

He opts for a linear narrative by seeking a developing circular story. He, also, imitates documentary styles, but in the same time he discards the notion of heroism. His character Saartjie feels unable to change the bad luck she experiences. She is so helpless. She makes the audience feel as if they are watching a *nightmare*, a kind of plunging in time without effective action that can change or create hope. It is, then, a combination between a historical approach using classical flashback linking tenses as used in the Marxist cinema and the hallucination of the existentialist school that refuses the cause and effect relationship between the past and the present. The shot list of this film reflects, also, this formula as it suggests an interaction between the classical close ups and the modernist avant-garde sequence shots. This selective amalgamation, also, stems its strength from postmodernist modes such as feminism, race, and post colonialism.

SCREW-SHAPED INTERCONNECTIONS

Rapid and Slow Montage in a helical relationship

Some recent *suture system* films tend to adopt many characteristics from *neorealism* though they tackle *postmodernist* issues. *12 Years a Slave*⁷⁹ by Steve McQueen represents a mundane story from slave narratives. It is *mundane* because it does not suggest any heroism or faked bravura, but it depicts in unusual way what happens to a helpless African American. The only difference between Northup in *12 Years a Slave* and Ricci in *Bicycle Thieves* is that this later cannot find his stolen bicycle, while the former can return his freedom after being a slave for 12 years. Ricci is depicted as *unable to act* as suggested by the time-image, but Northup's challenge to the imposed milieu remains *relative*⁸⁰. Steve McQueen posits his film somewhere in between the classical approach and the modernist one. Though the two scripts tend to be linear but they run events that are not strongly connected as happens with classical works. The connections are really *weak* and open to *unexpected* destinies (look at the first and second chapters). Both films, therefore, discard the *classical representation of events* and the *rapid cuttings* that stand for well-constructed realities to offer more *optic images* allowing the audience to get in a *mental* and *emotional* interaction with events.

⁷⁹*12 Years a Slave*. Steve McQueen, Regency Enterprises, River Road Entertainment, Plan B, Film 4, 2013. Film.

⁸⁰ The notion of relativity will be clearer in the last chapter. Relativity as suggested by the researcher is a sharing space amongst classicism, modernism, and postmodernism since it refuses absolute representations and highlights multiplicity.

Steve McQueen does not make a typical neorealist film, but he rather finds another *configuration* that links the classicism, the modernism, and the postmodernism altogether. His narrative seems to be linear since it tells a continuous trajectory pertaining to Solomon Northup (played by Chiwetel Ejiofor), a free African American living in Saratoga, New York. Northup is a violinist who leads a happy life with his wife and two children. In 1841, Brown (Scott McNairy) and Hamilton (Taran Killam) offer him a two weeks job as a violinist in Washington D.C where they drugs him and sells him as a slave. A slave trader changes his name. He obliges him to be called *Platt*, a name of another slave who escapes from Georgia. Northup is sold to William Ford (Benedict Cumberbatch), a white master who has a plantation. One day, Northup helps Ford to find a way to transport logs throughout a river. As a way to thank him, Ford offers Northup a violin on which he carves the name of his wife and two children.

Ford's carpenter, John Tibeats (Paul Dano), hates Northup. One day, Tibeats attacks Northup. After defending himself, Tibeats and his friends hang Northup to a tree, preparing him for lynching. One of the Ford's men prevents them to do so, but he leaves Northup hung on tiptoe for hours. To save his life, Ford sells Northup to a new master called Edwin Epps (Michael Fassbender) who believes that the bible gives him the right to abuse his slaves. Epps tends to be psychologically disturbed. He desires Patsey (Lupita Nyong'o), a woman slave whom he rapes continuously.

Epps' wife feels jealous when she notices the way her husband gazes at Patsey and as a result she treats her very badly and violently. Eventually, Patsey begs Northup to kill her, as she feels fed up with the situation. Northup gets some money after he is

hired to play the violin in a ceremony of a white neighbor. He asks Epp's overseer to send his letter to his friends in Saratoga; unfortunately, the guy gets the money and betrays Northup as he tells Epps about the letter. Samuel Bass (Brad Pitt), a Canadian carpenter, comes to build a gazebo in Epps' garden. On helping him, Northup begs him to write a letter and send it to his friends in Saratoga. One day, a sheriff along with Northup's friend comes to Epps plantation to save him. After returning to New York, Northup finds his daughter married and has a child whose name is Solomon Northup.

McQueen treats his film from a racial and postcolonial point of view, which gives the work a postmodernist dimension. He deconstructs all the reductive approaches like imperialism, slavery, manipulating religious beliefs, and nationalism highlighted by the white supremacy to opt for a more liberal mode incarnated in modernist and humanist perspectives regardless peoples' racial, religious, or ideological differences. On cutting ties with monolithic and hegemonic theories including the notion of historic *heroism*, McQueen prefers to tackle racial issues that were marginalized in both the classical and the modernist eras. However, he discards the *hyperrealism* used by postmodernist film directors since he goes for a more neorealist style of representation. One expects from *12 years a slave* images of lots of blood, broken human bones, and horrible contacts between whips and human bodies while the whites lash the blacks. Yet, McQueen chooses to be realistic in many violent scenes though he creates horrible and scary atmospheres dominating the film trajectory.

Though McQueen does not represent the *crystallized time* interrelating the past, the present, and future in one manifestation, he extracts the soul of this modernist idea

to link it to his flashbacks. As mentioned before in the first chapter, time in time-image blur the boundaries between tenses to construct a new concept of time which reflects all the tenses as if they are the equal sparkling facades of the one crystal. The use of Flashback, however, suggests a cause and effect relationship between the past and the present as used in the movement-image. McQueen discards the use of the crystallized time, but he gives his flashbacks a crystallized shape. Sometimes, the audience feels that the McQueen's flashbacks are merely nightmares. They will end up once Northup wakes up the next morning, but instead of ending up, they rather generate other flashbacks. These flashbacks are interweaved with a sort of a *hallucinating* sense as they are operating within a psychological context. Sometimes, McQueen gives us the impression as if he uses the *mise en abyme*⁸¹ technique as his flashbacks recur and interrelate with the present time to generate many similar images of slavery. For example, when Northup is imprisoned in a gloomy room in Washington D.C, he starts regaining his consciousness in a scary atmosphere. In the same time, he reminds how Brown and Hamilton trap him in humiliating conditions. These two flashbacks are generated from others preceding this scene and of course are followed by others to give the impression that we are experiencing a sort of *hallucination* or rather *nightmare*. However, all the flashbacks are in a cause and effect relationship with the present. The researcher, then, notices a kind of mingling the two concepts of time, namely the time-image and the movement-image.

⁸¹**Mise en abyme:** reproduction of one image, story, event, etc. It is a technique allowing images to include their copies. It is a kind of recurring and reproducing (for example, a film within a film or an image within an image). Shakespeare uses *mise en abyme* in his *Hamlet* when Hamlet directs a play. It is, then, a play within a play...

McQueen repeats this kind of representation to time in several occasions. For example, when Tibbeats ask the Ford's slaves to clap their hands, the same sound track continues to link this scene with the following one. McQueen, moreover, *interrelates* the two scenes to create a *mise en abyme* kind of images or at least recurring shots from both scenes that really amalgamates two tenses and manifests them in a crystallized dimension. Here, the approach gets too much closer to Godard's representation of time, though no one can dare say it is a total *plunging in time* since all the events are linked in a chronological logic. Sometimes, McQueen does not interrelate his scenes, but merely links them with the sound track to convey the idea of the *stagnant time* and to connote therefore *the difficulty of challenging the situation*. In the scene when Eliza weeps for her children from whom the whites separate her, Northup feels deranged, as he does not like to surrender under sadness and despair. Eliza continues weeping in the following scene when Ford appears preaching to the group of his slaves, but no hope seems approaching.

To make us plunge in time and feel the stagnation, McQueen avoids the rapid cuttings of the movement-image. The most interesting scene that one can use as an example is the one when Tibbeats and his friends hang Northup to a tree to lynch him. This scene lasts around four minutes though there is no active events or long conversation to justify its length. Furthermore, there is no music accompanying the scene, but natural sounds of ambiance surrounding Northup such as birds songs, the other slaves' steps sounds, the leaves sound created by wind, Northup's tiptoe's sound as it touched the mud, etc.

If one isolates this scene from the whole narrative, s/he will notice how much it takes after the *optic and audio* images in time-image as analyzed by Deleuze. In this scene McQueen erodes the limits between the *filmic time* and the *real one* to create a sense of wait, stagnation, trapped lack, and difficulty to challenge the lieu. The scene when Northup is lashed for the first time, McQueen opts for enduring shots as usual. These shots are followed by an exterior sequence shot starting from the prison's window and ending above the building's roof showing the isolated space. It is a psychological approach serving the idea of how much it is difficult to challenge the situation and the lieu. The shot, also, is accompanied with Northup's cry that no one will hear_ a real trap.

McQueen tries to extract the time-image mode to depict his character, who leads a linear trajectory, in a more effective way. Though Northup returns his freedom at the end, he is described as someone helpless. He can neither change his bad luck nor help the other suffering slaves, namely women such as Eliza and Patsey. He is suddenly stripped of everything, including his name. McQueen, then, does not like to design a historical context for a hero, but rather wants to describe a *normal* African American experiencing the injustice imposed in a certain period of time by the white supremacists. It is like the approach used by neorealist film directors such as De Sica, Rossellini, and Visconti. To be consistent with this style, McQueen uses significant sequence shots suggesting the bitter reality of slavery.

Though the Steadicam⁸² technique appears long time after the neorealist era, McQueen uses it to give more energy to his sequence shots. He aims at depicting the intensive slave trade activity when he opts for a three minutes shot, which is typically an *optic image of avant-garde style*. Freeman, the slave trader, moves actively and continuously for about three minutes amongst the naked slaves trying to exhibit them to the whites that come for buying them. It is a deranging image as well since it describes the blacks as animals for sale. It shows the bothering reality imposed by the white supremacy. McQueen uses, also, a hand held camera in another sequence shot, depicting Northup's attempt to escape in the forest, to imitate his frightened psychological state. The researcher, therefore, notices how McQueen uses a neorealist style concerning the *12 years a slave* images.

In this film, one can find, also, some vocabulary associated with Pasolini, Tati, Rossellini, and Godard. The slow shots on the boat rear paddle, the burning letter, the trees in dusk time, the things that look like cotton hung down from tree boughs, and the river look like shots by Tati. The slow close up on the slave woman who keeps silence for seconds before starting the religious hymn in a slave modest funeral look like Pasolini's close-ups. Sometimes, McQueen gives the impression that he uses the jump cut. In the scene of the boat, a slave appears bridled and his saliva comes down through the iron bridle tiny holes. Without any use of insert shots to indicate a time passage, the slave appears, directly in the following shot, with a clean face talking to Northup and another slave. Though this cannot be considered as a real jump cut since the two shots can be divided into two separated scenes, it reminds us of Godard's jump cut that can

⁸²**Steadicam:** a camera stabilizer that gives the image a smooth movement without shaky effects.

break the continuity even within one shot. When Northup gets on the chariot with his friend and the sheriff leaving the Epps' plantation, Eliza remains behind. The camera suggests Northup's position on the chariot, making us feel that we are getting away from Eliza who suddenly faints in a long shot. The shot gives the impression that it imitates Rossellini's *Rome, Open City* when the Nazi soldiers arrest Francesco and bring him in their military vehicle leaving Pina behind in the similar long shot. Both Eliza and Pina are collapsed. The first falls down out of sorrow, while the Nazi soldiers shoot the second one.

McQueen in his *12 Years a Slave* uses themes, techniques, and approaches from all the past schools. He constructs his story according to an organic unity, and uses flashbacks to link events in a certain order. However, this use of flashback operates within a modernist mode since time is represented as stagnant. The milieu is not that easy to defeat, this is why Northup feels helpless and unable to change the stagnant situation. To represent this, McQueen opts for slow montage and sequence shots depicting the horrible slavery and the imposed identity on the helpless and marginalized women and men. McQueen supports his way of treating the slavery issue by being postcolonial and anti-imperial since his work unmasks the savagery and the supremacist ideology.

Helical Narratives

Zhang Yimou in his *Hero* chooses a subtle historical narrative method that exceeds postmodernist *haphazard* amalgamation of tendencies and genres. The way he ingeniously interweaves selected stories about history puts film directors' pursuits to transcend the postmodernist saturation. It is so significant to study Yimou's strategy to understand how he constructs a *meaningful* historical filmic discourse. He casts both traditional Marxist narrative and modernist existentialist fragmented one to embrace multidimensional historical stories based on *chained but not necessarily homogeneous trajectories*. He ends up with neither linear nor disrupted events. In the same time, he opts for the postmodernist multiplicity discarding both absolutist representation of history and reductive European elitism to link local cultures to international ones within *helical trajectorial movements* characterized with esoteric temporal modes. He, however, keeps the modernist *enigmatic* mode reinforcing the aura of cinema. Yimou singles out the historical event of the successful attempt of the King of Qin to unify China in 200s BC to suggest his cinematic method.

King of Qin⁸³(played by Chen Dao Ming) receives a warrior who is referred to in *Hero*⁸⁴as Nameless (Jet Li). This latter claims that he has killed Broken Sword (Tony

⁸³**Ying Zheng**: He was known as **Qin Shi Huang** and was the king of Qin state. He conquered the rest of the Chinese kingdoms to unify China. He is famous, also, of accomplishing the building of the **Great Wall of China** to protect China from invasions... He died in 210 BC.

⁸⁴*Hero*. Zhang Yimou, Sil-Metropole Organization CFCC, Elite Group Enterprises, Zhang Yimou Studio, Beijing Picture Film, 2002. Film.

Leung Chiu-wai), Flying Snow (Maggie Cheung Man-Yuk), and Long Sky (Donnie Yen), the three assassins who attempted to kill the king. Nameless is asked to kneel 100 paces away from the king as no one before was allowed to be this distance of the king. When Nameless finishes his story about how he has killed the three assassins, the king asks him to be closer. Nameless, now, can stay only 10 paces from the king. However, the king suggests his own interpretation to what has happened or rather told by Nameless. Though Nameless provides the assassins' weapons as proofs, the king suspects him. Nameless does not deny the fact that he has not killed Long Sky, but continues telling another version of the story. He tells the king that Broken Sword has changed his mind and has reached the truth that the King of Qin is the only capable one who can unite china. Therefore, no one wants to kill the king. On listening to this version, the king trusts Nameless who in his turn gives up the idea of killing the king after he has jumped and caught the king. The guards, eventually, ask the king to execute Nameless. After killing him, Nameless' corpse is carried by a great number of the guards. They offer him a *hero* funeral.

Zhang Yimou in his *Hero* abandons not only the *high* modernist fragmented way of telling history, but also the classical *duel* between two contradicted trajectories of good and evil. The linearity he opts for in this film is neither disrupted nor one-dimensional. Zhang Yimou suggests a *continuous* narrative that takes into consideration the postmodernist plurality, skepticism, and individual interpretation. The story that is told by Nameless constructs a first version. This story is modified by the king who constructs a second version. Nameless, however, does not refuse the king's personal interpretation to what he tells him, but he rather *develops* the second version into a third

one. *Two different narrators*, then, tell these stories. The film director puts his audience face to face with different non-fragmented directions that are chained, but not homogeneous. The first story shapes a *spiral movement* that is chained to the second spiral movement suggested by the second version, which is also chained to the third version or spiral movement. These spirals construct a kind of a *helical trajectory* that is in a continuous *ascendant movement*. This is a very *subtle* way to escape both the one-dimensional narrative and the fragmented one within a serious attempt to transcend the postmodernist saturation.

Yimou's helical trajectory transcends classical linearity, Godard's detached narrative, Pasolini's poetic style, and postmodernist repetitions. Godard believes that the only way that makes a film director *visible* is to abandon the attempt to attract the viewer who should be *conscious* towards the images offered to him. To *distantiate* the receiver from the image for Godard, as it is explained in the review of literature, the film director should avoid sensation. *Fragmented narrative, jump cuts, and hand held camera movements* are effective ways for Godard to guarantee the required distantiation and visibility (Godard 39). The visibility of style or the poetic style, as Pasolini calls it, is a way to go beyond the organic unity's coherence and homogeneous narrative aiming at shaping the way the audience think and react (Pasolini 556). Yimou, however, can be visible, poetic, and deranging without risking the communication with his audience.

It is clear that Godard's films are watched by the elite in Europe who share Godard's cultural and Ideological background, namely Marxism and Existentialism. His modernist films cannot reach different cultures in our contemporary era since they are

limited to certain ideological context that is based on reductive elitism _ high modernism. Without taking into consideration the already mentioned *multiplicity* (that goes beyond third space), films cannot transcend the postmodernist saturation. Yimou's *Hero* stems its strong energy from communicative classicism, deranging modernism, and the multiplicity of postmodernism (Naficy 5). It discards non-communicative narrative fragmentation, but it keeps the *enigmatic* spirit of high modernism, as films in general should not be as direct as journalistic articles. Eventually, it attracts spectators not only from China but also from different areas in the world since cultural boundaries are being eroded in our era.

Helical stories in *Hero* interweave what is *real* with what is *imagined* to suggest a non-absolutist version of history. This choice goes hand in hand with Eco's idea indicating that there is no analogous image to reality since films are merely *representations* to realities (Eco 596). *Hero*, then, is not a historical document but rather an individual reaction to history. Rosenstone, as indicated in the first chapter, insists, in his turn, on the idea that historical films do not render history, but they suggest different interpretation of it (Rosenstone 34). On opting for this choice, Yimou escapes classical binary oppositions, and the absolutist/Marxist representation of history that characterizes classical films. Nothing is sure for what has happened *vis-à-vis* the assassination attempts generating different versions. History, therefore, is rather what is *in our minds* as there is no *unique representation* that can operate within this context:

... truth of beliefs may vary with social situations: what is true in our context, for some people, may not be true in another, so that also knowledge may contextually differ.(Van Dijk 11)

Yimou in his *Hero* suggests a *contextual* representation to reality and to history to avoid *totalitarianism*. This situational dimension helps a lot in creating a helical narrative that suggest different versions but in a continuous ascendant trajectory.

The contextual representation of history, for Yimou, does not discard links and relationships amongst the present, the past, and the future. This may oppose Hall's *significant breaks* explaining the discontinuity and fragmentation that disrupts historical linearity. Hall argues that: "what is important are the significant breaks where old lines of thought are disrupted"(Hall 57). Hall's significant breaks may be effective within a pure *avant-garde context*. It may, also, be significant within postmodernist modes, but for Yimou what has happened in the past can explain what is going on today, and the current events can influence the way we will be in the future. He *discards Godard's plunging in time to opt for colorful flashbacks*. In the same time, he represents these flashbacks as problematic and non-absolute. This may put Modernist skeptical mode together with the classical causal relationship to give a new dimension to tenses. The acts of violence in *Hero*, for instance, are motivated by noble reasons and causes, yet they are still *ironical* for how can violence create peace? Does not that refer to what our contemporary world suggests since there are many wars and violent acts that are practiced in the name of religion, peace, world security, and social development? Yimou, then, opts for helical trajectories to put forward multidimensional but strongly related directions, namely contextual and relative representation of history, *spiral* but *causal* relationship amongst the past, the present, and the future, and the interweaved themes relating what is national, historical, and cultural with what is international, current, and hybrid. Within this context, Yimou refuses the *post-modernist historical*

and *cultural breaks and ruptures*. He successfully constructs a *new grammar out of the previous salient tendencies* avoiding *classical absolutist mode, modernist narrative fragmentation, and postmodernist historical breaks* to simply blur the boundaries between the past and the present, between the self and the other, between stories and counter stories, and amongst salient tendencies themselves. All these are interweaved within helical ascendant trajectories.

Helical trajectories in *Hero* engage not only history, but also the *local culture*⁸⁵. This is a clear attempt to transcend *Existentialism*, the *common factor* of the modernist genres. Instead of opting for a nihilist mode characterizing European arts after the war, Yimou uses spiritual dimensions stemmed from Chinese heritage, namely the *five elements of life*⁸⁶. In *Hero*, one can see candles' flames move towards one direction without any physical reason such as wind for example. When Nameless asks the king how can he determine his version, the king answers: "I was warned by 100 candles. They can sense your treachery"⁸⁷. Calligraphy, also, transcends the arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified (Saussure 67)⁸⁸. Here, the signifier is limited within a concrete spatial dimension, but it incarnates unlimited spiritual and mystical world, namely the energetic one, the only power that can face the king's one.

⁸⁵The cultural context will be more elaborated in the coming chapters as the researcher links it to semiotics and interpretation.

⁸⁶Lexiguide de la Medecine Traditionnelle Chinoise, Hong Kong, Elyeditions, 2008.

⁸⁷*Hero*. Zhang Yimou, Sil-Metropole Organization CFCC, Elite Group Enterprises, Zhang Yimou Studio, Beijing Picture Film, 2002. Film.

⁸⁸There is no "inner relationship to the succession of sounds s.o.r which serves as its signifier in French..." as explains Saussure who influences the linguistics research in the 20th century. The idea of the arbitrariness in signs goes back to the linguistic renown Arabic book "Dala'il al-'jaz" "Intimations of Inimitability" by Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani (1009/1078) (الجرجاني، عبد القاهر، دلائل الاعجاز في علم المعاني، القاهرة، (مكتبة الخانجي، صفحة ٤٩) ... The notion of arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified was frequently tackled in the Arab's narratives such as "Hayy ibn Yaqzan" by Ibn Tufail (known in English as Abubacer) (1105/1185) (ابن طفيل، ابو بكر، حي ابن يقظان، النسخة الخامسة، الافاق الجديدة، بيروت، صفحة ٢٢٦) .

The scholar (Liu Zhong Yuan) addresses his students: “Remember scholars, the arrows of Qin are strong. They can completely demolish our whole world, but they can’t demolish *our written world* (...) *our great secret*”⁸⁹. Calligraphers as believed in Chinese culture are stemmed from divine energy since they can be fused with supernatural spaces. It is a kind of ecstasy, eternity, and immortality implicating meanings of *peace*, as the king eventually perceives. The Qin’s arrows, therefore, miss the scholars’ bodies though they penetrate and pierce everything around them. It is a spiritual manifestation that operates within an *esoteric* and *mystic* space understood by merely spiritual people. Yimou, then, interweaves what is mystic with what is physical. The esotericism, in this context, gets in an ascendant helical relationship with exotericism, which can be perceived, in this scene, within the context of the importance of writing in saving history and identity and, hereafter, in resisting colonization and alienation. All the events and characters’ relationships operate according to the interactions between the theory of five elements.

When Nameless and Long Sky are fighting during a rainstorm, a blind musician stops playing on his traditional wooden harp. Nameless gives pieces of metals to the blind musician asking him to play music again. According to the five elements philosophy, the element of metal controls the element of wood in our life. Nameless, hereafter, controls the blind musician who plays on the wooden harp by metal. The wood itself suggests wind since wood corresponds to the windy climate as indicated in

are, also, studied according to this arbitrariness. However, in *Hero*, there is a different view. Yimou represents the way his local culture relates calligraphy to supernatural power which means there is no arbitrariness between the signifier and the significant...

⁸⁹*Hero*. Zhang Yimou, Sil-Metropole Organization CFCC, Elite Group Enterprises, Zhang Yimou Studio, Beijing Picture Film, 2002. Film.

the five elements theory. *Wind* (air) is the element that transmits the *sound*, which is the music in this scene. Wood, also, generates or rather supports fire that stands for power. This *decodes the signs* in this scene since the aim of Nameless is to reach the strength throughout the sound coming from the wooden harp. Music (wind), eventually, generates the fire, the symbol of power. The five elements theory, therefore, explains all the relationships amongst characters, props, costumes, setting, lighting, and colors in Yimou's *Hero*.

Yimou constructs, also, two ascendant interweaved trajectories, namely the one of *mystery* and the other one of *science*. To provide his audience with reasonable action, he links the two helical trajectories with a common logic between what is esoteric and what is exoteric. In the same scene, for example, Yimou uses a poetic *if not* epic representation of water that goes beyond conventions. He opts for a *hyperreal representation*⁹⁰ of water that gets in an ascendant helical relationship with other physical and non-physical elements to construct a harmonious choreographical manifestation of water, music, swordplay, colors, conscious, unconscious, attraction, concentration, esotericism, exotericism, etc. If one focuses her/his analysis on how water is used in this scene, s/he will notice a clear use of *simulacra* that go beyond the normal level. However, Yimou's simulacra in *Hero* are *significant* because they have nothing to do with Baudrillard's notion of the copy and the origin (look at first chapter). In this context, Yimou's simulacra do not erode reality by generating copies without origins (Baudrillard 128), but they rather render an *esoteric reality*, which is a kind of

⁹⁰The researcher will differentiate in the coming chapter between the *hyperreal* and the *paraoptic* representation. He opts for his own expression "paraoptic" to describe non-material existence that is based on energetic, psychological, personal, parallel or spiritual dimensions. As for the hyperreal, he links it to fabulous, extraordinary or fictional events of the film (see the coming chapter).

doing without materialism be it Marxism or existentialism. They try to tell other *intangible* dimensions transcending our three dimensional existence. Simulacra, here, are *suggestive* rather than merely *hyperreal*. The aim, hereafter, is not to distort reality, but to tell personal experiences that are not all the time material or reasonable. Since Existentialism is compensated with the local culture in *Hero*, new meanings can emerge to transcend European limited beliefs *vis-à-vis* reality, life, and other physical and metaphysical things. It is a sort of a *multiple space* where all the previous contradicted or reductive areas such as esotericism, exotericism, science, and metaphysics get in helical relationships.

While Nameless, in the rainstorm scene, runs towards Long Sky to fight him, Yimou uses detail shots on his feet stepping on rain water, his sword splitting drops of rain into other tiny drops, and other spectacular *hyperreal* interactions amongst rain drops and the rest of the scene's characters and elements. Moreover, Yimou depicts his fighters flying in space as if they were floating on water. This means how *Hero's* characters are good at *activating* the existence of water in their bodies. Their aim in doing this is to be fused with the energy of water that makes 60% of human body (blood is 92% water, brain is 75% water, etc). The situation here is explained by hydrostatics, namely the Archimedes' principle. This latter indicates that the weight of a body immersed in water equals the weight of the displaced quantity of water. The immersed body, therefore, becomes lighter as there is a pressure created by water causing the body to float (Archimedes 262). On the basis of this principle, Yimou's characters, thus, *concentrate* using inner energies to expand the quantity and energy of water inside their bodies and therefore to become as light as the floating bodies. Moreover, Yimou

interrelates colorful close ups of Nameless and Long Sky as they close their eyes with black and white different shots of their fight. He, also, uses details of slow drops of water. On so doing, Yimou suggests that the black and white fight occur in an esoteric world of energy that helps the two fighters to be more fasten than the movement of the falling drops of water. This, of course have something to do with Eisenstein's relativity because when they become faster within a *fourth dimension*, the movement of water gets slower according to the energetic speed they reach⁹¹. This is like a *Sufi metaphysics* uniting the body with the sole and transcending physical limited world to reach energetic unlimited world. Bruce Lee explains when he was hosted in *The Pierre Berton Show* this Chinese philosophical approach *vis-à-vis* water. He says: "Empty your mind, be formless, shapeless like water, you put water into a cup, it becomes the cup, you put water into a bottle, it becomes the bottle, you put it into a teapot, it becomes the teapot. Water can flow or it can crash. Be water my friend"⁹²

As far as the Chinese local culture is concerned, water stands for the power of the sky. The *flowing* water symbolizes, also, harmony and prosperity. Water in the rainstorm scene is not *stagnant* as it is raining and this is very telling because stagnant water stands for negative connotations. Nameless, in his first story, is in black, the compatible color with water⁹³ that flows everywhere. There is, then, an obvious *fusion* between human bodies and water throughout concentration and inner energy. On so doing, Yimou blurs the boundaries between myth and science/materialism. Instead of

⁹¹This is not to be confused with Godard's relativity, as this latter operates within existentialist mode. Yimou, however, goes further as he refers to parallel existence.

⁹²*The Pierre Berton Show*, Television Show, Presented by Pierre Berton, Produced by Elesa Franklin, directed by Michael Rothery, 1971.

⁹³Lexiguide de la Medecine Traditionnelle Chinoise, Hong Kong, Elyeditions, 2008.

representing them in a contradicted relationship, he just suggests a helical manifestation to them. This opposes the classical representation that creates enmity between science and cultural beliefs. It discards, also, modes of nihilism and existentialism making people fear innovation. It is rather a kind of integrating science effectively to generate culture and promote it. This integration constructs a bridge of communication between local cultures and universal modes of thinking and reasoning. It is, in another word, a helical representation that transcends reductive binary oppositions to empower a more multiple space.

Helical trajectory seems to characterize various filmic elements in *Hero*. The use of colors is very suggestive at this level since each story (each flashback) in *Hero* has its own color that gets into a helical relationship with the colors of the other stories. The image of the first story that is told by Nameless is dominated by the color red. The color red in the Chinese culture refers to various themes such as: Nationalism, sex, beauty, and anger. The red's climate according to the five elements of life is hot, which symbolizes fire. Yimou, then, links these themes to the first story as told by Nameless. This latter tells the king that he has uncovered the secret between the two lovers, namely Broken Sword and Flying Snow to problematize their relationship. Eventually, Broken Sword made love with Moon, his servant knowing that Flying Snow is nearby witnessing. This latter has killed her lover to take revenge. Moon tries to kill Flying Snow but she was slain to death. These warriors are *nationalist* as they aim at confronting the king's desire to conquer their lands. However, love, betrayal, sex, and anger disrupt their harmonious relationships. Yimou expresses all these by his artistic choice pertaining to the color red dominating the images of the first version of story.

The image of the second story told by the king is dominated by the color blue, which means many things in the Chinese culture. Relaxation, calmness, and exploration are some of these various significations related to the color blue. It is obvious that both characters are depicted as calm though the king suspects Nameless' first story. The king, then, as if he explores the truth and goes on in the blue flashback presenting his interpretation to what has happened. This suggests the use of mind, reasoning, and analyzing to search and, hereafter, explore the truth. Nameless remains calm. Instead of denying, he develops the king's interpretation into another story that Yimou represents in Green symbolizing generating, growing, refreshing, harmony, patience versus anger, and peace. In this story, Nameless tries to seek all these significations to convince the king that he abandons the idea of assassinating him. The story told in a white dominant color deals with the death of both Broken Sword and Flying Snow. In the Chinese culture, the white color stands for death, dry climate, metal, and autumn. The colors, therefore, are strongly related to the circle of life involving dominant relationships amongst wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. In general, relating significant themes to colors reminds us of Murnau's Expressionist choice of using light to render inner psychological states of his characters. On so doing, the researcher finds that Yimou opts for an eclectic approach selecting esthetics from the three great tendencies.

Yimou, in his esthetics, refuses to represent his flashbacks in black and white or sepia color that is widely used by postmodernist film directors. This refers to his attitude to the past and history. He wants these historical events to be more visible, salient, and remarkable. He, moreover, links them to universal themes of passion, anger, love,

peace, exploration, nationalism, death, life, power, etc. this is his way of making a *visual style* without fragmenting the narrative or detaching the characters, spaces, and themes within an existentialist mode. History, in this context, is not a dead issue to be represented in sepia that connotes ambiguous, misty and vague events. For Yimou, history is as vivid and active as these colors are. From another perspective, this choice opposes the modernist plunging in time though it keeps its mode and spirit that relates the past, the present, and the future into one temporal unit. Yimou's choice of colorful flashbacks (the past) is involved in helical relationships with the present and the future. However, the choice of different colored flashbacks remains open to *helical interpretations*. Yimou, himself, does not want to be explicit⁹⁴ so as not to limit or reduce the *aura* of his artistic work in concrete, rigid or stagnant interpretation. He wants interpretations to be as flowing as the flowing water in the rainstorm scene. As a film director, the researcher knows well how film directors avoid interpreting their works. They understand well that one-dimensional interpretation can easily harm the aura of their films. The work of analyzing and interpreting films is rather the job of critics, researchers, and authors.

Concerning the theme of heroism, though Yimou entitles his film *Hero*, he *problematizes* the notion of heroism. At the first level of interpretation, one thinks that Yimou represents Nameless as a hero. Then, Nameless, himself sees the king as a hero. From another perspective, the king is not a hero since he was caught by Nameless despite the precautions he makes. He, eventually, kills Nameless, using thousands of his soldiers' arrows though Nameless abandons the idea of assassination when he catches

⁹⁴http://www.indiewire.com/people/people_040827hero.html

him. A real hero cannot do this coward act. Broken Sword and Flying Snow are also represented as heroes. Yet, they are unable to achieve their mission. Therefore, there is no hero in Yimou's film. The way Yimou makes his audience look for the hero in his film transcends the one-dimensional trajectory in the narrative to opt for a more *generative style*, which is full of significations.

Yimou seems that he structures all his filmic elements such as the narrative, the image, the themes, the settings, the props, and the characters in ascendant helical trajectory. This is, for the researcher, does not only transcend classical one-dimensionality, but also modernist fragmentation and postmodernist shallow repetitions. If we take the example of the rain, Yimou strongly relates the rainstorm to what water signifies (according to the theory of five elements). This explains many explicit and implicit relationships in *Hero*. The rain is not detached from the major themes in Yimou's film. This is different, for example, from De Sica's use of rain in his *Bicycle Thieves* that is detached from the whole as we have already explained. In the same time, Yimou does not opt for a typical classical narrative. He is rather eclectic. All the elements in *Hero*, are interweaved in helical trajectories and not in a linear one. The film stands in a multiple space amalgamating some elements that are stemmed from the three tendencies and omitting other reductive elements in the same tendencies.

Yimou in his *Hero* feels free to be open to different cultures. He does not see any enmity between local cultures and international ones. They are interactive within helical trajectories constructing effective results. His selective method of filmmaking is not superficial but it suggests insightful reactions to previous styles. It conveys that

cinema has just found its starting point since its grammar has just been completed. Now, it is the era when this grammar is used to construct more effective styles and themes. In relation to this context, helical trajectories reflect different elements that get in an interactive mode rather than in a reductionist one.

HELIXIST MODES

Interweaved Subgenres

Bensaidi does not limit his style to a specific genre. He chooses a kind of helical manifestation of subgenres from different tendencies that are effectively engaged to construct a complete integration. The postmodernist theme of marginalized groups gets in an interweaved relationship with the classical film noir, black comedy, and Gothic images without neglecting neorealist and naturalist modes of modernism. *Death for Sale*⁹⁵ makes these subgenres look like the sparkling sides of a crystal. They may look different. However, they act together to form one crystal unit. The relationships amongst these subgenres are so effective that they *generate* rich significant meanings out of the same ascendant and interweaved helical trajectories we tackled before.

Death for Sale tells the story of three young guys who are jobless. The three guys have a great desire to change their social status. They decide to lead a dangerous alternative in life since they opt for robbery. Once they agree on robbing a Spanish jeweler, but this time each one has his own motivation. Malik (Fehd Benchemsi) loves Dounia (Imane Elmechrafi) and wants to save her from prostitution. Allal (Mouhcine Malzi) wants to be rich out of drugs smuggling. Soufiane (Fouad Labied), however, adopts extremist ideas and wants to revenge by killing and practicing violence. Bensaidi depicts these characters as helpless, and unable to cross certain imposed social borders. Though he tells his story in linear narrative, he describes his characters as detached,

⁹⁵*Death for Sale*. Faouzi Bensaidi, Entre Chien et Loup, Agora Film, Liaison Cinematographie, 2011. Film.

fragmented, and mundane. They are unable to change their milieu and therefore their status.

Bensaidi represents his characters and events in a very depressing manner. Nothing is glamorous in *Death for Sale*. Everything in this film is as sad as the dominant grey color pertaining to its image. In all the exterior scenes of this film, the film director chooses the grey sky of Tetouan to characterize his images with a kind of depressing mode. One can find this artistic choice in Monet's foggy and smoky paintings (such as his painting of St-Lazare's train station or his one of Westminster Thames)⁹⁶. Bensaidi's protagonists are experiencing miserable situations caused by poverty, ignorance, greed, violence, terrorism, and social cruel circumstances, which resemble the sad representation of Monet's foggy spaces. The mode of projecting psychological states on lighting in this context reminds us of the expressionist way of using lighting, especially when it comes to the chiaroscuro technique. Bensaidi suggests several night shots that look like the famous ones related to the chiaroscuroist Murnau (see the first chapter). Here are some of the Bensaidi's chiaroscuro scenes: the scene depicting the student who is giving a sermon to the other students in the boarding school as Soufiane passes by them, the following scene showing the students in different situations in their dormitory, during Aouatif's funeral when the mother tries to calm Malik and reciters are reading Koran in the background, and when Soufiane stands naked facing the burning tree.

⁹⁶In 1877, Claude Monet painted the foggy and smoky St-Lazare's train station in Paris. Before this painting, he had painted the Thames of Westminster in 1871 as he had been in London. One can find both paintings in The National Gallery of London.

The choice for grey color and chiaroscuro lighting help Bensaidi constructs gloomy atmospheres resembling classical Gothic images of European horrible castles and churches of the 18th century. Bensaidi benefits from this artistic choice to mark his film with certain mysterious spaces, dull colors, lost characters, negative energy, and neglected buildings. The influencing character of Dounia, moreover, creates a sense of sexual and emotional drives that get in an interweaved relationship with these dark significations. Dounia is the one that threatens the guys' friendship. She is, also, the one who misleads Malik and betrays him. She stands for a kind of *deception* just like the color grey, which connotes elegance as it is worn by businessmen in important meetings; yet, it signifies depression in other contexts. The role of this *femme fatal* along with the crime themes bring back some of the filmic elements of the *classical film noir* belonging to the Hollywood styles.

Death for Sale suggests a sense of humor though it sticks to serious modes. This esthetic choice creates a kind of *cynical* situations that engage *black comedy* as a subgenre of classical comedy. In general, as we have already tackled in the first chapter, laughter can be created out of *gaps* and this latter can generate ironies. Chaplin, for instance, constructs two opposing states and tries to *distantiate* between them to create a *caricaturing situation* within his attempt to produce the *burlesque* style. Bensaidi, however, uses the same strategy of finding gaps but in a serious way to avoid caricaturing styles. He connects humorous sense with negative situations to show to what extent the characters are helpless and the social mainstream is stagnant and corrupted. It is, hereafter, a humorous representation of serious issues such as politics, terrorism, suicide, education, prostitution, etc. In the main scene when Allal, Soufiane,

and Malik gather on the mountain to plan for the robbery, Soufiane declares that he intends to revenge for al-Andalus, the fact that causes his colleagues to mock him as how come for a thief to adopt such *big* political attitudes!!!The situation, however, is represented in a serious way though it is very humorous. This *eclectic* choice makes Bensaidi's black comedy more realistic than the burlesque style preferred by Chaplin. This may please Balazs and Bazin's fans and defenders since Bensaidi avoids *Bazin's sin* (Bazin, *What is Cinema?* 1 151), namely mechanization, fragmented rhythm, and separation of action from time while suggesting his humorous situations (see the first chapter).

In regard to the degree of reality in *Death for Sale*, Bensaidi goes for a more *naturalist* representation of dialogues and acting method. He tries to show his characters as vulgar as real thieves escaping any kind of *esthetic modification*. This choice allows him to use down to earth language that employs profane street words and obscene expressions in an attempt to make his film *analogous* to the dirty reality (regardless of the researcher's attitude towards the analogous image to reality). However, the helical representation bringing naturalism and other subgenres together can transcend the belief in the analogous image to reality as we will explore. Though Bensaidi leaves much freedom for his actors, he limits their freedom within the naturalist mode of Actors Studio. His actors go even further than Lee Strasberg's method to look more credible and to erode what can be described as reality to give birth to a *striking* one (see the first chapter). This is an avant-garde mode of course though it is very difficult to posit naturalism, emerged in the 19th century's painting and literature, under the modernist umbrella. However, naturalism contributes effectively in the emergence of surrealism.

This brings back the question about the real beginnings of many trends, genres, and subgenres. On the whole, Bensaidi does not aim at classifying his film within a certain category. He rather benefits from different aspects relating to previous tendencies, methods, styles, and modes to mingle the selected subgenres looking for a new way to construct his image.

Bensaidi interweaves these sad naturalistic and neorealist atmospheres with poetic romantic moments in a helical relationship. This combination between the two contradictory modes conveys that even marginalized and unwanted people can feel love since they are human beings. The helical relationship between neorealism and romanticism, therefore, helps in *completing and enriching the meaning*. It suggests a kind of different/multiple attitudes, interpretations, and viewpoints *vis-à-vis* the characters and the ironical situations they face. Though Malik, for example, is described as a thief, police informer, and criminal, he can seek peace and beautiful love. This *helixism* can go further than rather juxtaposing two different modes or genres. It can characterize, also, different elements even within one scene.

The researcher divides the scene when Malik and Dounia stand at the public balcony into three components that he calls: the first helical trajectory, the second helical trajectory, and the bridge linking both helices. The first helical trajectory is embodied in the medium shot of Malik and Dounia while they are emotionally looking at each other. The way they are emotionally interacting with each other, the music, the balcony, and the whole elements of the shot construct a romantic dimension as if Bensaidi made us feel Malik and Dounia's hearts throbbing. The second helical

trajectory suggests the high angle depicting a long shot of poor children that are playing with VHS tapes in a garbage space. The two helices are quite contradictory and creating an interesting irony between what is up (transmitted by a romantic style) and what is hidden down (transmitted by naturalistic and neorealist style). However, the *link* between the two spaces is the flying long pieces of tapes that appear in a detail shot. Bensaidi inserts this detail shot of the flying tapes, thrown by children, between the mentioned medium and high angle shots. The pieces of tapes, furthermore, manifest in both shots. While they signify poverty in the high angle shot, they appear in the medium shot as if they were fireworks. This bridge or link pertaining to the tapes suggests two levels, namely poverty and romanticism. In the high angle it shows how children cannot find means to play properly. In the medium shot, it stands for the passion and fantasy generated by love. As for the detail shot, it allows the viewers' minds to *generate* other meanings such as the death of videotapes (as they end up in a garbage space) and the beginning of digital technology. Therefore, the whole components form two separated but linked helices get in an ascendant and interweaved movement. This helical formula works to generate deep meanings and multiple interpretations rather than creating fragmentations or developing one style along with one-dimensional perspective. The helical relationships here characterize shots within one scene. They, also, characterize different narratives, genres, and modes at the whole structural level. They manifest in all the filmic elements in the stage of helixism.

The helical mode in *Death for Sale* pushes the debate on *reality and representation* forward. This realistic / romantic scene I have just tackled *transcends* Metz' belief indicating that images are analogous to reality since they are not as

arbitrary as language (Metz 585). The medium shot at the public balcony represents an inner feeling of love, fantasy, and fascination. If it is edited with other shots suggesting the same romantic mode, the receiver may feel confused about whether the image is analogous to reality or not. In this context, the shot is interweaved with the high angle shot of the poor children playing in garbage, which is characterized with a sense of neorealism. The combination between the two different helices (romanticism and neorealism) supports not only Eco's arbitrary *iconic signs* (Eco 594) that the researcher has already explained in the first chapter but also the Van Dijk's *contextuality* because it suggests more than one angle and allows multiple receptive interpretations. Of course, this helical representation does not end the debate once and for all⁹⁷, but at least it tries to look for various angles of treatment at the thematic level as well as at the esthetic one. This is not to be confused with Eisenstein's dialectic montage because it goes further than being adhered merely to the limited law opposing *antagonistic* forces. It rather searches integral, collaborative, and interweaved multi forces to escape the already mentioned tutelage of both the European Avant-garde and the classical one dimensionality both causing the mentioned postmodernist saturation.

Neorealism in *Death for Sale* neither imposes *autonomous meanings* nor hinders *functional* and *symbolic* ones. Though Bensaidi prefers to use non-professional actors, mundane events, helpless characters, a sad ending, and sequence shots that dominate his film, he employs *indirect connotations* that *oppose* the *neorealist* approach. As the

⁹⁷There is no analogous representation at all though the researcher suggests the helical method to highlight multi thematic, generic, and esthetic angles. He believes that this is the appropriate method that resembles the 'analogous representation'. The researcher rather tries to avoid both classical one-dimensional method, and modernist existentialist mode by creating a tolerant mode that is based on an *eclectic approach*... helixism, for him, is the relevant choice and the first step to transcend the postmodernist saturation...

researcher has already construed, neorealist modes come to disrupt the continuity of the meaning. The chair, for example, does not refer to sitting, but it reflects the personal view of the film director. When Bruno (Enzo Staiola) in *Bicycle Thieves* stops to pee, it does not mean that De Sica wants to construct any significant dimension. De Sica wants merely to *disrupt* the continuity of the events. He uses the same reason behind the rain that *interrupts* Bruno and his father Ricci (Lamberto Maggiorani)'s search for the stolen bicycle. In Bensaidi's film, however, there are symbolic elements that get in helical relationships with neorealist and naturalistic modes.

In the last scene, for instance, Bensaidi uses a sequence shot that resembles neorealist films; yet, he relates it to a *metaphoric* dimension. Malik appears in an extreme wide shot. He gets out of the bus station from the gate reserved for the buses. He continues in walking in a full shot with depression towards the camera that takes a high angle and then a top angle, the esthetic choice that *dramatizes* the situation. Bensaidi wants, here, to depict Malik as *powerless* and *minimized*. Both Malik and the camera continue moving in a way that the camera turns upside down to depict him from behind, the esthetic choice that shows Malik upside down as if he was walking on his head. The upside down shot signifies a famous Moroccan proverb describing someone who experiences a big trouble or trap and feels as if s/he was rotating. The proverb says: "S/He feels as if the whole world was rotating". Bensaidi, hereafter, transcends the autonomous function of neorealism to opt for communicative skills allowing imagination, indirect messages, metaphors, and esoteric dimensions.

The choice of sequence shots in *Death for Sale* transcends the neorealist / existentialist characteristics to highlight intended signification. It is true that Bensaidi opts for these sequence shots to make his audience feel a sense of reality as he remains within a documentary style that helps in creating distanciation between the audience and the events. However, his linear narrative (objectivity) and esthetic choices aim at communicating several symbolic modes relating helpless characters to miserable spaces embodied in ugly walls, dull café shops, and neglected areas resembling ghettos. When the drunk Allal, Malik, and Soufiane get out of the pub, the camera follows them in a sequence shot till it frames them in a full shot. Then it moves up in a high angle depicting them swaying drunk beside garbage to connote how they are looked down on by the society. The high angle shot gives the impression as if they were stubbed out in this garbage space. Allal and Soufiane in the same sequence shot prevent Malik to go to Passarella nightclub where he wants to look for Dounia. After they salute each other in their manner, they quit from different directions leaving the space empty. The high angle describes the garbage and the three empty bottles left by the guys. Suddenly, the guys from outside the frame throw stones at the empty bottle. The frame points out the emptiness of both the space and the bottles that reflects the guys' spiritual emptiness. The little garbage and the three broken bottles give the space underground world characteristics. This high angle, also, constructs a very limited space conveying that there are no promising prospects waiting for these guys. Their inescapable space, hereafter, is merely a confined one. Malik enters the frame again in a hidden attempt to go to Passarella nightclub, but Allal and Soufiane enters to prevent him again emphasizing the limited and controlled choices. Everything is limited and controlled either by each other, the bad luck, the police guy, or deception.

When Malik arrives home in another sequence shot, the camera follows him in a long shot. As he climbs the exterior stairs, the camera, which is on the crane, continues following him. At the level of the house balcony, his stepfather shows up to blame him for being so late. The camera follows Malik who reaches the roof, enters his small and confined room, and switches the light off. The camera remains all the time outside to depict him throughout the room window. He switches the light off to sleep as it is understood and the camera goes down to show throughout the balcony his sister who is having her early breakfast and then gets dressed to go to work. This shot links both the characters and the space to communicate the significant relationship between the two.

Malik accesses his room on the house roof using exterior stairs. Bensaidi chooses an exterior shot to imitate the situation and therefore the space to connote how Malik is rejected and not wanted inside. The inside space may give the sense of the center; whereas, the exterior stairs and the roof stand for the margin. Malik, within this context, is described as double victimized because even the interior of this house does not suggest that importance of the center. The whole family is, indeed, marginalized. As the camera remains outside, the audience feels as if they were spying or at least witnessing and not involved in the situation. However, the symbolic and poetic senses are operating within the situation. The smooth movement of the camera, the light that is switched on and off, along with the combination between foreground settings and the background ones create a sort of *personification* to the space that shares the characters' plight. While the characters suffer from marginalization, the space is described as gothic, dull, and neglected. The personified space, moreover, is described as reluctant to

any attempt of change or modification. It gets in a challenging relationship with the mundane, helpless and detached characters whose failing attempts indicate that there is no Deleuze's *re-established order* (Deleuze, Cinema 1 The Movement-Image 141). This is, again, a sort of combining modernist time-image embodied in the stagnation of the milieu with classical movement-image embodied in the linear narrative.

The sequence shots in *Death for Sale* link contradicted events and situations. In the sequence shot the researcher has just tackled, Malik switches off the light to sleep as he comes late, while his sister Aouatif switches on the light in the same time. For him it is late at night, but for her it is time to go to work. Though the shot is linear according to its narrative side, the meaning it bears is very fragmented: sleeping and waking, coming home late and leaving home early, lighting the space and switching off the light, soberness and drunkenness, etc. All these contradictions are operating within a kind of stagnation and movement reflected in the slow sequence shot that combines stillness and movement altogether. The stillness is embodied in the moments when the camera remains fix, nihilist moods, depressed emotions, waiting, detached feelings, hatred, stagnation of time, enigmatic atmospheres, deception, the coming unknown, etc. As for the movement, it is incarnated in the struggle for change, the moments when the camera moves, love, hope, friendship, linearity of time, etc. Both stillness and movement create a *rhythm* just like that one of music.

Being adhered to either time-image or movement-image is what contributes in the postmodernist saturation. No human being can listen to monotonous sounds, as s/he will feel not only boring but also irritated. This is why composers work on different

rhythms to avoid boring results. This, also, makes the researcher believe that neither the time-image alone nor the movement-image alone can be effective. The combination amongst the time-image, the movement-image, and the postmodernist pluralities is the appropriate way to create an interesting rhythm as no life without rhythm; otherwise, it is death (time-image / existentialism) or violence / conflict (movement-image / Marxism).

The helical relationship between the time-image elements and the movement-image elements in *Death for Sale* creates a rhythmic representation between the continuous narrative and the disruptive psychological time. Directly after the main scene, Soufiane goes alone in darkness leaving behind Allal and Malik who tries to follow him. Malik, However, does not feel at ease in darkness. He asks Allal: “Allal, stop.. we should go back to the village.. I can’t see.. the vision is not clear”. This emphasizes that Soufiane opts for the most dangerous. Bensaidi uses darkness in this scene to connote the obscure that marks Soufiane’s destiny, especially when he depicts him naked in darkness practicing strange rituals as he stands facing a burning tree holding two burning branches. This scene has something to do with Godard’s hallucination, fourth dimension, and plunging in time. However, it is not detached from the *whole* because Bensaidi interrelates it with the following scene describing Allal and Malik who see the fire from far as they are leaving the mountain back to the village, which means it operates within a tangible world. In fact, the two interrelated scenes are not logically linked, as there is no neorealist explanation to Soufiane’s practice. Is it a dream, a hallucination, or rather an inner psychological state? The illogical dimension (time-image) along with the logical linear narrative (movement-image) of this scene

generate various meanings relating the esoteric world pertaining to the unreason with the exoteric one belonging to the reason.

This ambivalent manifestation between Soufiane's inner obscure world and his fanatic decision end up in burning a tree. The element of the tree and the other one of the fire suggest two contradictory things, namely life that is referred to as a tree, and death that is referred to as fire. Here, one should pay attention to how the signification of fire changes from power in Yimou's *Hero* to death in Bensaidi's *Death for Sale*, which reinforces the idea of the Van Dijk's contextual meaning opposing the pure structuralist mode of interpreting (look at the coming chapter). The fact that Soufiane is depicted naked has something to do with purification. Feminist works, normally, are known of this kind of representation. If we take, for example, Nejjar's *Les Yeux Secs*, the film director describes Fahd (Khalid Benchagra) naked in snow to show a man's desire to purify the dirty practices of the men using women as sex objects. It is a kind of scarification since symbolically indicates Fahd's purification in snow, referring to whiteness and purity, on behalf of the others. The same representation can be found not only in films but also in various feminist writings. However, Bensaidi changes snow, symbolizing purification, for fire, signifying death. He, also, opts for night rather than day. Fire, night, obscurity, chiaroscurist images, and nudity are all telling elements referring to a rather satanic adherence than religious purification. It is dirtying *vis-à-vis* purification. The situation shows to what extent Soufiane is deceived and misled by extremists who make him understands killing as heroism. It is a kind of blurring boundaries between the right thinking and the wrong decision generated by growing negative ideologies and deception.

Bensaidi suggests his own vision to what happens nowadays. He believes that various dramatic events sometimes exceed reality and goes far beyond it to construct an ironical relationship between reality and imagination. In the scene when the three guys commit their crime, he depicts a cinema crew, who come in front of the jewelry shop, preparing for filming while the three guys are inside the closed shop. The camera operator adjusts his focus point on the jewelry gate. As he is focusing on the gate, it gets damaged because of the sudden violence occurring inside. As spectators, we see this event throughout the operator's camera that normally record imaginary situations. Now it records something real but transcends the cinema imagination to erase the boundaries between reality and imagination. After Soufiane has killed the Spanish person, he sits down on the street's sidewalk looking at the sky with blood on his face. Suddenly armed soldiers enter the low angle frame suggesting Soufiane's p.o.v as if they were coming from the sky. Bensaidi continues constructing ironies about the phantasm Soufiane is experiencing. While he is expecting grace from sky, he gets arrested and imprisoned.

Bensaidi in his *Death for Sale* opts for optic images opposing classical cuttings. In the same time, he amalgamates between functional meanings of the classical approach with the autonomous meanings pertaining to subjective perspectives. Though he wants to be communicative by choosing cause and effect narrative, he tries to suggest personal poetic images. The sequence shots he uses link subjective modes with conventional ones to interweave all the elements of continuous representation of reality,

imagination, the slow time standing for stagnation and characters' inactivity, symbolic modes, tangibility of events, and aura of psychological states.

Fusaifisic Representation

The way Lee represents meaning is not absolute but rather *mosaic*. In his *Life of Pi*⁹⁸, he describes reality as manifold. Life, for Lee, is not only exoteric, but there is a parallel esoteric manifestation, the fact that generates interweaved modes of continuity (Objectivity) and discontinuity (subjectivity). It is this unlimited obstetrical transfiguration of reality that substitutes the salient *center* for transcending *decentralizations* with dynamic modes. Reality, hence, becomes more relative, interactive, and active since it transcends borders between dimensional spaces to create various options. *Life of Pi* reflects these ongoing interrelations.

Piscine Moliter (Irrfan Khan)⁹⁹ or Pi tells his adventure to Yann Martel¹⁰⁰ (Rafe Spall) who is a novelist. Pi, as he tells the writer in flashbacks, is named by his father (Adil Hussain) as “Piscine” after a French swimming pool. He, nevertheless, decides to change his name to “Pi” since he is called “Pissing” from his fellows. Pi’s family owns an interesting zoo. Amongst the various animals that Pi’s father has is a predatory Bengal tiger, called Richard Parker. Pi, once, tries to deal with the tiger, which is behind bars. His father, suddenly, interrupts the situation and prevents Pi from doing so. He shows him how this tiger is extremely dangerous by exposing a goat to it. Richard kills it quickly in a savage way, leaving Pi very surprised.

⁹⁸*Life of Pi*, Ang Lee, Dune Entertainment, Ingenious Media, Haishang Films, 2012. Film.

⁹⁹The character of Pi is played by four actors: Gautan Belur (age 5), Ayush Tandon (age 11), Suraj Sharma (age 16), and Irrfan Khan (adult).

¹⁰⁰The same name of the *Life of Pi*'s real writer. Ang Lee has adapted Martel's novel into a film.

Pi's family religion is Hindu. At the age of 12, he becomes a Christian and then a Muslim. He, eventually, decides to follow the three religions because he wants merely to love God regardless other considerations and borders amongst the three religions. At the age of 16, his father wants to get rid of governmental problems related to financial support. He decides, as a solution, to move along with his family to Canada where he can sell his animals. On a Japanese ship, a cook does not serve Pi's mother (Tabassum Fatima Hashmi) the fact that makes the father feels angry with him. A Bhuddist sailor tries to solve the problem by serving her, but Pi's mother appologizes. A sudden disaster happens as a severe storm comes causing damages in the ship. Within the mess and the horrible situation, a staff throws Pi into a lifeboat. The ship, however, sinks into the sea. Pi's family dies all. Pi thinks that there is a survivor, but it turns out to be Richard, the Bengal tiger. Though he tries to keep it away from the boat, the tiger can get on. Pi, eventually, find himself with the tiger, an orangutan, a hyena, and a wounded zebra.

Thehyena kills the zebra and the orangutan. It, also, makes attempts to attack Pi. Then, the tiger emerges from its shelter (the boat's tarpaulin) to kill the hyena. To protect himself from the danger that can be caused by the situation on the lifeboat, Pi constructs a raft out of things he finds on the lifeboat. He spends days and days trying to deal with this difficult situation. He fishes to eat and uses rain water to drink. Pi wants, gradually, to tame the tiger in order to create a kind of trust between him and it and therefore to establish a sense of communication and coexistence. After days, the lifeboat reaches a beautiful island where they find things to eat, fresh water to drink, and so

many meerkats around. Unfortunately, at night, the island transforms to a wild and carnivorous space. Even the fresh water gets poisonous. He and the tiger escape all these and retrieve to the lifeboat. They sail as far as they arrive to the coast of Mexico. They, finally, find themselves on land. Richard leaves Pi without even looking at him.

Pi finds himself in a hospital. Insurance agents, who are sent to him by the Japanese Company owning the ship to investigate the accident, do not believe Pi's story. He, therefore, tells them a different version that he is in the lifeboat with his mother, the wounded Buddhist worker, and the cook. Pi tells them that the cook kills the sailor to eat him. Pi's mother pushes him on the raft for protecting him. The cook kills her and Pi kills the cook to eat his flesh. Pi, eventually, reaches Mexico. The agents do not believe Pi's second story too. Yann, the author, compares both stories to find out that Pi's mother is the orangutan, the sailor is the zebra, the cook is the hyena, and Pi is the tiger. Pi, then, asks the author which story does he like? Yann chooses the first one since it is the better one. Pi thanks Yann and says: "... so it goes with God"¹⁰¹. As he looks at the insurance report, Yann reads: "Pi survived 227 days at sea with a tiger"¹⁰², which means that they opt for the tiger story too.

Religions, for many, teach different doctrines towards God. Yet, they all aim at worshipping the same God. This is a kind of continuity and discontinuity *vis-à-vis* different believers in the same God. Even if Pi experiences these differences, he finds a fine thread relating all the religions. It is not important how to worship God, but what

¹⁰¹*Life of Pi*, Ang Lee, Dune Entertainment, Ingenious Media, Haishang Films, 2012. Film.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*

matters, for Pi, is how to believe in him. It is likely a question of faith rather than the way to reach this faith.

Lee, by his way of tackling religions, makes his audience facing two different but interrelated worlds, namely the exoteric world standing for discontinuity in this context¹⁰³, and that one of esotericism shaping a certain continuity and linearity. At the concrete level operating within our three dimensional existence, one cannot be a Hindu, a Christian, a Muslim and a Jew at once since there are clear binary oppositions. If one transgresses one of these boundaries, s/he cuts ties with her/his previous position to embrace a new one. Pi, however, transgresses borders between these exoteric manifestations to operate within esoteric dimensions. The tangible discontinuity, in *Life of Pi* gets into a helical movement with inner, philosophical, and spiritual spaces. Lee goes further than merely tackling the classical idea of religion and destiny, but rather suggests an esoteric journey for searching *faith*. This latter, as it stands by itself, cannot be one-dimensional, however. It is as multiple as the different religions are. Here, one can notice how in relationship with the Lee's linear esoteric world, there are multiple exoteric manifestations of faith, generated all from multiple, representational, and situational teachings.

Pi's question to the author: "which story do you prefer?" suggests that what is important is *interpretation* and not even the truth itself since this truth is situational. This rather renders how the film neither claim this truth by imposing one version of Pi's story with a coherent meaning, nor opt for total disruptions to convey the death of this

¹⁰³In other contexts, the esoteric and exoteric modes can be represented differently.

meaning. This shows that whatever the version looks like, it leads to the same discovery, which is faith. Religions also provide different versions for the same truth. Faith is there, alive, but it is multiple as it is consisted of two strands, one is exotericism and the other is esotericism and both strands are coiled in helical movements. Lao Tzu¹⁰⁴ mentions this interrelation between exotericism and esotericism in Tao-The-Ching¹⁰⁵, the Toist book:

As the origin of heaven-and-earth, it is nameless

As “the mother” of all things, it is nameable

So as ever hidden, we should look at its inner essence

As always manifest, we should look at its outer aspects(Tzu 3)

Faith, therefore, cannot be understood unless unlimited manifestations of hidden /continuous and exposed/ discontinuous modes get interrelated. The situation, within the whole context, is like a mosaic representation that refuses the idea of the center and opts for dynamic, generative, and creative way of dealing with meaning and hereafter with faith. Lee opts for a suitable narrative choice to render this mosaic manifestation linking continuity to discontinuity. The narrative is continuous since it keeps the audience following the causal events; however, it is, also, discontinuous since the second version disrupts the first one. It is, therefore, a relative helical narrative coiling continuity with discontinuity.

Reality, hence, is multiple. Pi is alone in his esoteric journey. All what he sees, hears, experiences and witnesses transcends our three dimensional existence. He cannot be easily understood by people who are limited in an exoteric world. The different

¹⁰⁴**Lao Tzu:** (6th century BC) Chinese philosopher, founder of Taoism, and author of Tao-The-Ching.

¹⁰⁵**Tao-The-Ching:** the Chinese fundamental book.

versions, however, are not important for Pi since they all lead to the same result, which is faith. On following this mode, the film does not suggest one-dimensional interpretation. For example, when Pi stand besides Anandi (Shravanthi Sainath) looking at the tiger, Pi interprets its head movements as a kind of showing off; whereas, his girl friend suggests another interpretation, “No.. He heard something.. He is listening.. You see”. From another perspective, these two interpretations convey two different worlds, namely the exoteric one and the esoteric one. Anandi, accordingly, is more esoteric, at this level, than Pi, but his coming journey will introduce him to esotericism. In this example, Lee exposes his audience to two different kinds of interpretations to one act to reflect the whole Buddhist mode of the film fluctuating between our three dimensional world and the hidden one.

The religious representation in *Life of Pi* is based on Eastern spiritual writings and beliefs, namely Taoism and Buddhism. Taoism teaches how the soul can transgress various spaces including esoteric ones. Buddhism, also, believes in Nirvana as an esoteric state that is reached by a believer who feels free and released from the material limited world. Both Taoism and Buddhism suggest paths, ways and methods to reach faith that manifest within esoteric modes. This is why Lee chooses the wide and unlimited sea as a dominant space in the film. He wants to render the importance of water in referring to faith, life, and God. This choice reflects, also, how Yimou represent water in his *Hero*. Lee, in one of his interviews, confirms these philosophical backgrounds. He answers:

I wanted to use water because the film is talking about faith, and it contains fish, life and every emotion for Pi. And air is God, heaven and something spiritual and death. That's how I see it. I believe the

thing we call faith or God is our emotional attachment to the unknown. I'm Chinese; I believe in the Taoist Buddha. We don't talk about a deity, which is very much like this book; we're not talking about religion but God in the abstract sense, something to overpower you.¹⁰⁶

To be able to do so, one should transcend our three dimensional existence to respond to mystic manifestations that operate only in our inner feelings. Taoism and Buddhism, however, do not conduct any enmity with other religions. The Taoist can follow other religions. As for the Buddhist, s/he should not have any negative or bad attitude towards other religions.

This epistemological short background helps in understanding how *Life of Pi* operate away from accustomed western existentialist mode that has been dominating films since 1940s. This is not to be understood that it constructs an enmity with it. When Pi is sleeping (01: 24: 32), he gets up to look at the sea (meditating) where a sort of a cattle catches a whale look like fish. Something like an explosion happens to generate other kinds of species including a crocodile, giraffe, rhinoceros, etc. These animals refer in the same time to the lost animals in the accident. Some shapes appear to look like gametes, celestial bodies, and suddenly a flower of life manifests. The image of Pi's mother eventually appears. This dream look like scene, nevertheless, does not make Pi existentialist. The way Lee constructs this scene is typically mosaic. It combines between the Darwinian notion of evolution and in the same time it suggests the flower of life that symbolizes in many religions God's creation and spiritual

¹⁰⁶An interview with Ang Lee done by Roger Ebert. It is published on the 17th, November, 2012 in a web site named Interviews (<http://www.rogerebert.com/interviews/ang-lee-of-water-and-pi>).

manifestations. This scene, also, fluctuates amongst a dream, a meditation, a nirvana state, intangible faith, etc. Pi therefore experiences all the beliefs at once, but does not limit himself to non. It, also, helps in interpreting the way Pi deals with other religions. There is a truth, for him, in all the different religions, but what matters a lot is to find faith regardless which exoteric method can help in finding it:

But for an earnest believer, the God-idea is more than a mere device for explaining external facts like the origin of the world. For him it is an object of faith that can bestow a strong feeling of certainty, not only as to God's existence "somewhere out there," but as to God's consoling presence and closeness to himself. This feeling of certainty requires close scrutiny. Such scrutiny will reveal that in most cases the God-idea is only the devotee's projection of his ideal — generally a noble one — and of his fervent wish and deeply felt need to believe. These projections are largely conditioned by external influences, such as childhood impressions, education, tradition and social environment. Charged with a strong emotional emphasis, brought to life by man's powerful capacity for image-formation, visualization and the creation of myth, they then come to be identified with the images and concepts of whatever religion the devotee follows. In the case of many of the most sincere believers, a searching analysis would show that their "God-experience" has no more specific content than this.¹⁰⁷

Buddhism accepts all religions but differs in the way it understands God manifesting in deep spiritual dimensions as well as in values and positive cultures including theism if it teaches good ethics. This representation, hereafter, transcends negative, coherent, and linear reductive mode towards the *other* and opts for reconciliation and tolerance if it is

¹⁰⁷Buddhism and the God-idea, Thana, Nyanaponika, BuddhistNet edition, 1996 (<http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/nyanaponika/godidea.html>).

viewed from existentialist mode. It rather reflects all the discontinuous differences within a continuous philosophy, the fact that constructs a dynamic mosaic representation.

The way Lee tackles faith is so *communicative* because he aims at creating an active relationship with his audience by leaving them choosing the story they like. *Interpretation*, here, is very important. It transcends the spiritual theme behind the film to reach different viewers' points of view. The role of the audience in *Life of Pi* is very suggestive as Lee escapes reductive choices belittling from the audience's importance. This is to somehow a linear, continuous, and communicative mode, which is interrelated with another mode of discontinuity or rather disruption, which, in its turn, disturbs existentialist modes of interpretation. On doing so, Lee's artistic choices questions the way traditional semiotics deals with the relationship between artists / senders and recipients / audience. Lee's *Life of Pi* and Yimou's *Hero* cannot be effectively treated by traditional semiotics since it focuses on internal relationships amongst signifiers and signified within a given text¹⁰⁸ discarding external factors such as the author's life or certain cultural circumstances. In these two films, one cannot limit herself/himself to only this existentialist mode in traditional semiotics to go deep in generating suggestive interpretations.

The hyper-real in *Life of Pi* goes further than merely representing clichés without origins generating simulacra in postmodernist images (look at the first chapter). Lee opts for this hyper-real to show how in our contemporary era reality becomes

¹⁰⁸Be it a written, imagery, or audio-visual. Text in this context means anything that can be interpreted.

multiple diverse, and complex. He reflects a diverse reality rather than trying to distort it for visual metamorphoses, attraction, or avant-garde abstract ideas aiming at creating gaps between artists and their audiences. The existentialist mode constructs reductive reactions towards artistic works with different opinion *vis-à-vis* reality. Any kind of representation that transcends the visible and tangible world of three dimensions is classified as fantasy. Though existentialist critics classify some non-western works within realism, they find it difficult to accept the way reality is treated in them. This is why they add the adjective *magic* to *realism* to differentiate between reality as viewed by existentialism and that one as viewed by the culture of the other.

To be more precise, *magic realist films* are those works representing fantasy and extra-ordinary events (first) for visual illusory and attraction, (second) for comedies, and (third) for reacting towards previous works using pastiche, parody, and irony as postmodernist tools. Bowers, moreover, relates the magic reality genre to modernism as it aims at disrupting the linearity along with the classical notion of history (Bowers 8). Unfortunately, he does not differentiate in a subtle way these *fabulous* characteristics from modes dealing with *intangible parallel worlds*. He uses *rational science* as a measure to classify magic realist works. He construes:

In magic realism 'magic' refers to the mystery of life: in marvellous and magical realism 'magic' refers to any extraordinary occurrence and particularly to anything spiritual or unaccountable by rational science. The variety of magical occurrences in magic(al) realist writing includes ghosts, disappearances, miracles, extraordinary talents and strange atmospheres but does not include the magic as it is found in a magic show. Conjuring 'magic' is brought about by tricks

that give the illusion that something extraordinary has happened, whereas in magic(al) realism it is assumed that something extraordinary really has happened (Bowers 19).

Bowers includes in the magic realist works even the ones tackling parallel energetic spaces. This is a reductive classification that becomes less significant with the progress of science itself. Einstein's famous equation ($E = mc^2$) has confirmed that our existence and environment do not involve only absolute existence of matter as traditional existentialism teaches, but there is an energetic manifestation operating within different principles. He, even, gives much importance to this energetic existence. He explains, "If the relativity-postulate be placed at the head of mechanics, then the whole set of laws of motion follows from the law of energy" (Einstein 139). Hawking, also, confirms that time is a matter of personal experience since the principle of relativity makes scientists abandon the idea of the absolute time:

"...each event could be labeled by a number called "time" in a unique way, and all good clocks would agree on the time interval between two events. However, the discovery that the speed of light appeared the same to every observer, no matter how he was moving, led to the theory of relativity—and the abandoning of the idea that there was a unique absolute time.

The time of events could not be labeled in a unique way. Instead, each observer would have his own measure of time as recorded by a clock that he carried, and clocks carried by different observers would not necessarily agree. Thus time became a more personal concept, relative to the observer who measured it. Still, time was treated as if it were a straight railway line on which you could go only one way or the other.

But what if the railway line had loops and branches, so a train could keep going forward but come back to a station it had already passed? In other words, might it be possible for someone to travel into the future or the past? H. G. Wells in *The Time Machine* explored these possibilities, as have countless other writers of science fiction. Yet many of the ideas of science fiction, like submarines and travel to the moon, have become matters of science fact. So what are the prospects for time travel?" (Hawking 53).

Films such as *Life of Pi* and *Hero* are, therefore, considered, if we apply Bowers' definition, to be magic realist works since they suggest metaphysical and mystic representations. However, from an Asian point of view, these films deal with reality from its multiple manifestations. Reality, for them, has a visible appearance and in the same time it embodies hidden energetic powers. Reality, at least, is situational as it is visible from the existentialist point of view and multiple from the perspective of Buddhists, Taoists, and other different esoterists who transcend the three dimensional existence. Then, should we generalize the term magic realism to mean everything that exceeds the *western existentialist culture*? If the answer is yes, then, we are rather constructing more reductive modes towards different cultures and ways of thinking.

I have made a research on western critiques dealing with Lee's *Life of Pi* to find out that there are many writings that try to use existentialist methods in analyzing the work. It is true, as the researcher has already explained, that interpretation is a matter of flexibility, but this does not mean to follow wrong paths leading to reduction rather than tolerance. Most of these existentialist analyses are generally divided into two kinds. The

first kind of analyses concludes that the film is a clear invitation to Darwinism as they limit the fish scene, for example, within nothing else but Darwin's theory of evolution. As for the second kind, it considers that the film is a failure since it cannot provide the viewer with a strong evidence for God's existence. The film, however, is far away from these two themes. It goes deeper than that. One has to relate it to *external cultural contexts* such as Buddhism and Taoism to decipher its significations. The semiotic approach, moreover, should be developed to escape limitations and rigid formulations minimizing meanings in existentialist regulations.

The Marxist and existentialist methods construct at worst reductive reactions towards the culture of the *other*, and at best a distinguishing classification, which is in our context magic realism. Wilson uses an existentialist method concluding, "The idea that trees are emblematic of the magic realist genre can be traced back to Italian novelist, Italo Calvino"(Wilson 129). He adds that mixing up fantasy with mundane existence is what gives the film its magic realist mode (Wilson 131). Wilson, here, uses a typical existentialist method to understand *Life of Pi*. He, however, ends up as if he dressed a fat person a very tight garment. This act would inevitably either tear the garment or harm the person. How come for a typical communist such as Calvino to be compared with a typical esoterist like Lee! On writing his *The Baron Rampante* (The Baron in the Trees) in 1957, Calvino reflects his negative attitude towards political and ideological events, namely the violence practiced by communists themselves (Weiss 5). Hereafter, Cosimo in *The Baron Rampante*(Calvino) makes the decision to climb up the tree to distance himself from the others. Cosimo's decision is *deliberate* as he aims at reacting against people by isolating himself from them. The *fable*, here, refers to a

communist *utopian* mode looking for human justice. Whereas, Pi's isolation is *accidental* as it is led by a hidden power and spiritual force that really exists for Buddhists. No extraordinary fable or fictitious symbolism is in this film but rather a representation to a parallel world or at least to a scientifically proven energetic existence. Cosimo looks for exoteric justice, but Pi is in a spiritual journey looking for faith. We are, therefore, in front of two quite different modes. One is typically existentialist, political, ideological, utopian and exoteric while the other is so spiritual, esoteric, philosophical and personal. The comparison, therefore, is misleading. It confuses even Wilson as he finds Lee's works difficult to be analyzed (Wilson 133).

After understanding the different mode of the hyper-real in *Life of Pi*, now it is easy to interpret Pi's journey as a journey that occurs in the esoteric world, inner feelings, psychological modes, energetic existence, or hidden spaces of human soul. The accident of the ship leaves Pi having nothing. Even to step on a land becomes hard to achieve. This refers to the typical Buddha's journey to look for faith as he characterizes this journey with asceticism, abstinence, and self-discipline. The ship, hereafter, stands for life, family, equipments, pleasure, exoteric dreams, and material existence. To start an esoteric journey, one should get rid of all these temporal things. S/He has to retreat to the hidden dimensions where the soul lays. Thera explains how Buddha goes through such asceticism and self-mortification as a method to reach purification and faith. As he arrives to Uruvela¹⁰⁹, Buddha begins a rigorous self-discipline:

There was, and still is, a belief in India among many of her ascetics
that purification and final deliverance can be achieved by rigorous

¹⁰⁹**Uruvela:** was a village in India where Buddha reached enlightenment. It was one of the places where Buddha stops during his journey. Uruvela becomes now an important place that is visited by great numbers of Buddhists.

self-mortification, and the ascetic Gotama decided to test the truth of it. And so there at Uruvelà he began a determined struggle to subdue his body in the hope that his mind, set free from the shackles of the body, might be able to soar to the heights of liberation. Most zealous was he in these practices. He lived on leaves and roots, on a steadily reduced pittance of food; he wore rags from dust heaps; he slept among corpses or on beds of thorns. The utter paucity of nourishment left him a physical wreck. (Thera 15)

Similarly, Pi endures the same spiritual journey. The Bengal tiger, moreover, is nothing but a reflection to his *wild* needs. The struggle between Pi and the tiger renders, therefore, Pi's struggle to tame his soul and promote it to the Nirvana state, which is the moment when Pi can achieve a kind of communication with the tiger. This reconciliation between them connotes the *enlightenment* that Buddha reaches after the rigorous program he started following at Uruvela.

Pi and the tiger stand for the contradictory yet complementary relationship between nature embodied in the tiger and culture embodied in Pi. One, as Buddhism teaches, should transgress the nature state leading to sensuality and greed to the cultural state leading to enlightenment. Here again, there are helical movements between *culture* and *nature*, that though they try to interrupt each other (the discontinuous dimension / exotericism), Pi (human being) finds a way to make them communicate (the continuous dimension / esotericism). One cannot get rid of egocentricism, narcissism, materialism, and greed unless s/he experiences such a spiritual journey as Buddha suggests. What confirms this Buddhist theme is the choice of an Indian character (Pi) that is played by three Indian actors (Ayush Tandon, Suraj Sharma, and Irrfan Khan) though Lee is a

Taiwanese American. The Indian identity, in this context, strongly refers to Buddha's origins, as he was an Indian-born person. Anandi signifies, also, the spiritual perspective in the Indian way of dancing. Her teacher addresses her and her colleagues while learning how to dance, "let that spiritual energy pulps through you..". On trying to convince Pi to leave India, the father tells Pi that they will make the same journey of Columbus. Pi, however, replies, "but Columbus was looking for India!!!". All these elements along with others show the spiritual dimension of the place where Buddha was born.

As Pi and the tiger render two faces of the same coin, the island reflects the helical relationships between culture and nature, esotericism and exotericism, Pi and the tiger, etc. The way the island shifts from a peaceful state to a dark side of this state sums up the main theme of the film. The island in the daylight conveys peace, beauty, and anything that can be good. At night (darkness), it turns out to be wild. It reflects how human being exercises good things when s/he is within a given society (visible space). As being alone (at night), s/he can seize the opportunity to commit errors away from eyes. The island, then, should be discovered and understood just like the dark side of human being embodied in the tiger. Mind as it stands by itself, however, cannot do this discovery unless it gets into a helical relationship with the soul. The absolute logic dealing only with our three dimensional world cannot absorb the way faith manifests. Heart should *interrupt* the concrete logic linearity to feel the abstract faith. This clearly marks the coiling continuity and discontinuity around each other. It, also, shifts the positions of continuity and discontinuity related to esotericism and exotericism to create flexible, dynamic, and mosaic modes just like what reality is.

If one escapes describing this film as magic realist and if s/he transcends the existentialist method, s/he can easily link all the film elements within generative interpretation. Take, for example, the mathematical equation used by Pi to change his name, it helps in understanding that human being is transitive, dynamic, and creative. It, also, signifies that human being can transgress the imposed limitations (embodied here in the imposed name of Piscine) to reach unlimited capacities as suggested by the transcending number in Pi's equation. This is another way to render the main theme, that is one can transcend his imposed material world to free spaces of spirituality. The use of mathematics, in this context, is very significant. It is by the help of equations that we know, in our recent era, the existence of black holes, wormholes, speed of light and how the concrete mass can be transformed into intangible energy¹¹⁰. Our reasoning, accordingly, follows the principle of relativity to construct new vision towards our surroundings. Reality and time, therefore, are neither linear (objectivity), nor fragmented (subjectivity). They are multiple, and follow helical movements with certain rhythms that are created by the coiling of continuity and discontinuity around each other.

Lee's esthetics reflects this interrelation between continuity and discontinuity. He uses reasonable causation to link his shots, scenes, sequences, acts, and narrative in general. He, does not, however, respect the 180° rule of classical montage in some of his scenes. In the kitchen scene where Pi introduces his story to the writer, Lee skips the imaginary line of the master shot. Some of the chosen reversed shots are not in harmony

¹¹⁰This refers to Eisenstein's well-known equation: $(E = mc^2)$.

with the master shot where Pi is on the left addressing the writer who is on the right. The two positions get swapped to change the looking directions of both characters. This skip is repeated in other scenes such as the one of Pi and Anandi looking at the tiger, and the one when the father decides to tell the family about the issue of quitting India to Canada. The use of the digital techniques helps Lee looking for non-conventional ways to represent his images within a continuous mode of visual narrative. He, for example, assembles three shots in one by using the green screen method. Pi, in one of these shots, is depicted in a close up as he is reading. In the same shot a detail on the book is shown as his POV. The background of the shot, moreover, shows Pi lying on the raft. Pi, therefore, is multiplied in one shot and this creates continuous and discontinuous modes in the same time. As for the narrative, Lee interrupts many scenes with different kinds of high angles shots to suggest a Godlike point of view and hereafter to correspond to Pi's address to God. This interrelates various points of view that are not only belong to exoteric, esoteric, and divine dimensions, but also suggest continuity and discontinuity within mosaic manifestations.

New digital techniques will be very suggestive in the future helixist cinema since it will help in transcending, in more effective ways, the obstacles limiting cinema potentials. The Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) will effectively respond, for example, to the idea of multiplicity in reality and time. Just before some years, cineastes used to avoid shooting scenes with animals and water. Now, however, *Life of Pi*, along with other films, proves that with CGI, film directors can imagine even more freely. The use of the CGI is very significant, in our context of helixism, since it is based on

numeric sciences helping in understanding more the elements on which helixism works on, namely time, space, DNA system, mosaic representation, etc.

Life of Pi, hereafter, interrupts the continuity of existentialist method of interpretation. However, it keeps attractive narrative and esthetics to communicate with different audiences around the world. The way it deals with meaning corresponds to the notion of relativity and multiplicity as neither reality nor time is absolute. Lee suggests, then, a subtle representation that refuses reductive modes towards the culture of the *other*. In the same time, he does not construct any enmity with European existentialism. What he exactly does is representing reality as mosaic or rather Fusaifisic. In the coming sections, I will explain why I prefer the word Fusaifisic to mosaic.

Helixism as a Method

Image as Inter-disciplinary

The six films that the researcher has chosen for this study have a lot in common. They all share a kind of *eclectic* mode mixing different methods and genres from even contradictory tendencies. In the same time, they refuse being adhered to rigid regulations of a restricted theory be it classical, modernist, or postmodernist. This eclectic choice indicates how some film directors get aware of the fact that a *theory* nowadays cannot be effective unless it transcends boundaried formulations. Hawking does not believe in theories even in science as they merely reflect limited and one-dimensional perspective. He construes that:

(...) a theory is just a model of the universe, or a restricted part of it, and a set of rules that relates quantities in the model to observations that we make. It exists only in our minds and does not have any other reality (...)(Hawking 10)

The researcher, accordingly, has already given an idea about how *reality is problematic*, especially when it comes to the filmic representation of it. After reviewing the salient theories for and against *reality*, he infers that films are not *analogous*, but they are rather representing *one* or *some* angles of reality (Eco 596). Van Dijk, also, supports this stand when he suggests that reality “may contextually differ” (Van Dijk 11). All the tackled tendencies and genres get *saturated* in our current *multidimensional* world simply because they are unable to get along with cultural multiplicity and increasing interdisciplinary interests of peoples from different areas of the world.

However, every theorist, film director, or critic that is mentioned in this dissertation has a *part* of truth that can never be effective unless it accepts collaboration with other *parts* of theories. We are, herewith, in front of a normal development of the cinematic trajectory heading for *maturity* and avoiding reactive modes based on limited ideological, racial, colonial, reductive, or gender reasons. Bouchareb is one of many contemporary film directors who start looking for ways to escape the saturation embodied mainly in parody, pastiche, and irony – the trinity of saturation. He uses, for instance, immigration as a workable tool to mark his *Enemy Way* with various nationalities deconstructing and problematizing metanarratives, notion of borders, racist supremacies, and fixed identities to simply create a multiple interrelated spaces. Kechiche, also, follows the same strategy when he opts for multilingual tongues and nationalities with which he marks his characters. He, along with McQueen, eclectically amalgamates the neorealist style within a conventional narrative. McQueen, in his turn, uses classical flashbacks but characterizes them with existentialist / avant-garde's stagnation of time. His themes, moreover, are typically postmodernist. For Bensaidi, he uses multiplicity to find a common space for different genres to act just like the sparkling sides of a crystal. As for Yimou, he suggests a multiple vision to history discarding the absolutist representation to it. Opting for parallel non-matter existence, Lee, eventually, escapes the absolute representation of reality and time as suggested by old schools to represent multiple, dynamic, and generative reality.

The way these film directors choose aspects from contradictory tendencies (classicism, Marxism, and existentialism) indicates how a theory can be reductive and monolithic towards life, reality, and other theories, but the subtle combination between

genres or tendencies can provide a workable *strategy*. Films represent life in all its manifestations and relying a film on a limited, rigid, and reductive theory will result in a very limited film with sterile prospects. The situation, therefore, is very complex because since life is multidimensional, limited theories cannot fit to do any effective act between the senders' encoding signs and the recipients' decoding activities.

Semiotics itself will not be able to endure if it keeps itself operating within the *structural approach*. It is thanks to Eco's subtle notion of the already mentioned representation that many theorists and practitioners continue working on the semiotic approach. Now, it is time to liberate itself to refresh its effective role in creating bridges of communication between artists and their audiences. On so doing, I adopts a communicative method rather than a non-communicative one that takes into consideration merely a very limited group of audience as if *other* audiences were not at the same level of analyzing, criticizing, and interpreting. The non-European audiences are neither illiterate nor stupid in interpreting arts. The problem is rather that the avant-garde styles use a different language based on a different ideology. Hereafter, the avant-garde styles are confined within one-dimensionality that neglects the way of how people are developed to be more active in a multidimensional world. People now are exposed to multi languages, philosophies, cultures, mix marriages, etc. The planet becomes a multiple space for different cultures, races, and beliefs. To continue sticking to reductive modes will serve cultural saturation more than anything else.

Since Semiotics is a genius theory that can help effectively in creating interactive interpreters / recipients, the researcher considers it as an important

mechanism in the *eclectic* and *generative* cinematic *method* of Helixism. To play this vivid role, semioticians along with practitioners should go beyond the enclosed system of interpretation introduced by Peirce who designs the trajectory of the encoding / decoding process of producing meaning within a limited triangle. The sign, for him, is understood according to three main elements that are: a sign, an object, and an interpretant. The sign is the signifier that can be a word, utterance, or other things such as images for example. The object is the signified. It is the thing in reality to which the sign refers. As for the interpretant, s/he is the physical person who understands the relationship between the sign and the object (Peirce 99). The most important element, for Peirce, is the *interpretant* who is viewed as crucial within this triangular relationship. However, the interpretant with only her/his physical interference cannot reach the signification as other *external factors* are neglected in the encoding / decoding trajectory of making meanings. Though Peirce refers to the probability of *other experiences* to which the index is connected (Peirce 109) and though he gives examples of a similar theme (like the example of the two men looking at the sea (Peirce 101)), he does not give the external factor much interests and study to strongly structure it within the system.

The decoding act of a given sign is actually in an ongoing process of change since external factors interfere to create generative interpretations. If the interpretation process stops at the physical state of the interpretant, the generative process can never manifest. The *cultural context*, hereafter, as the most important exterior factor, helps in generating multiple versions of interpretation. The degree of its function is principle because it is responsible for the required *openness* of the interpretant. Imagine you

meet, for example, two non-Asian persons who experience different contexts. The first has visited other different countries and has developed a sense of tolerance towards other diverse cultures. The second one is stuck in the mud since s/he has never tried to get in contact with other different civilizations. If you ask them to give their opinions about Yimou's *Hero*, Bouchareb's *The Enemy Way* or Lee's *Life of Pi* which form interesting sets of signs, certainly the first interpretant will interweave a network of relationships amongst icons, indexes, and symbols¹¹¹ and hereafter will link these signs to objects. In the same time, s/he will interfere in this procedure his stored knowledge of the Chinese five elements, pieces of information about the Nation of Islam and Buddhist esotericism, which are here the cultural context. His interpretation, therefore, will be rich and generative. As for the second person, s/he will interpret the film signs according only to her/his very limited context. The results absolutely will be so shallow. Therefore, the interpretant without cultural contexts can never be interactive and generative. This is why the researcher links all the six films to external cultural contexts to give evidence of the importance of openness and going beyond the enclosed existentialist method. Without any idea about Malcolm X, the separatist mode of white supremacy, the Chinese five elements, Monet's paintings, and Buddhism, one may have difficulties in dealing effectively with Bouchareb's *Enemy Way*, Kechiche's *Black Venus*, McQueen's *12 years a slave*, Yimou's *Hero*, Bensaidi's *Death for Sale*, and Lee's *Life of Pi*.

¹¹¹A sign can be an icon, an index, or a symbol. The icon resembles the referent (images for example). The index is associated with its referent (smoke refers to fire). As for the symbol, it is related to its referent by conventions (language, or traffic signals)...

Peirce does not operate outside the triangle of the sign, the object, and the interpretant because he bases the interpretation process on *natural evolution* of the interpretant's mind. His Darwinian background characterizes his enclosed method since it deals with *nature*, but it disregards *culture*. He relates the mind to merely instincts and natural mechanisms such as: development, chance, mechanical necessity and the law of love (Peirce 339). He declares that: "... the regularity of nature and of mind are regarded as products of growth" (Peirce 339). The reductive behavior towards culture, in this context, is explained by the belief in the animalist origins of the interpretant. However, Nature and culture are reciprocal and strongly linked to each other. The fact that human being eats is nature, but the way s/he eats is framed within culture. S/he can use the fork if s/he is in France, but s/he can use chopsticks if s/he is in Japan or China. Feeling thirsty is nature, but the shape and the brand of the glass one chooses to drink is culture. Sex is nature, but various kinds of marriages worldwide are culture, etc. Lee suggests an interesting relationship between nature (the tiger) and culture (Pi) to indicate how the two are interrelated and in need of each other. The conflict that may rise between them, for him, is rather required as it brings them to a reconciling stage.

In fact the DNA scientific research challenges the belief in the animalistic origins of human being since the genetic pieces of information, that are transmitted from generation to another and that are *encoded* in the system, indicates the impossibility of this theory. Human being is a complex creature with multiple dimensions as supported by the DNA researches. It is, therefore, Kress who tries to transcend the enclosed system of semiotics by taking into consideration the *social role* which is part of the already mentioned cultural context. He suggests that: "The distinct

material of sound (in the case of speech) and of graphic stuff (in the case of writing) is constantly shaped and reshaped in everyday social lives” (Kress 80). Eco and Kress, then, can be trusted in going further in their semiotic researches to transcend the rigid mode that has been controlling the encoding / decoding process of interpretation. Reductive approaches to human multidimensional skills and interrelated abilities are one of the reasons leading to the postmodernist saturation. Human being without culture, philosophy, and mental activities cannot survive simply because s/he daily interacts with interrelated but not separated unlimited aspects of culture and nature. This is why the researcher believes that Helixism will be one of the effective methods paving the way to a fourth cycle of new theories characterized by openness, tolerance, balance, and eclecticism.

The researcher borrows the DNA system¹¹² to explain the helical method. He chooses this system because it corresponds to plurality, generative modes, multidimensionality in both themes and esthetics, encoding / decoding procedures linking senders with recipients, double ascendant helical trajectories in narrative suggesting different helices but interweaved ones, and finally multiple representation of history with discarding the notion of significant breaks. The DNA system manifests just like a text that is encoded as it embodies pieces of information at the biological dimension. Scientists can decode these pieces of information to know about multiple things that are transmitted from generation to another such as: the individual’s origins, physical characteristics, hair and skin’s colors, nutrition needs, psychological behavior, etc.

¹¹²Discovered in late 19th century by Friedrich Miescher.

This indicates how an individual has *already* personal and collective qualifications. S/he receives heredities from her/his ancestors, but has her/his own specific characteristics. On this basis, any individual shares many inherited factors with many other individuals descending from the same ancestors. This can be described as an *objective* aspect. In the same time, this objective factor can be modified with time to develop personal skills and characteristics and this can be depicted as a *subjective* aspect. The different subjective aspects generated by sons and grandsons help in guaranteeing *diversity* and hereafter *plurality*. This suggests that there are no breaks and disruptions in history but just turning points and significant accumulations leading to multidimensionality interweaving inherited factors, collective thinking, personal qualities, and diversity in open ended helical movements. The personal / collective or the subjective / objective aspects form two helices with different directions but in the same ascendant helical movement. Because films deal with human beings who can be either senders or receivers, they should transcend historical one dimensionality by interweaving the two aspects, namely the subjective helix with the objective one that are different but complimentary in the same time. Yimou's *Hero* does not construct any reductive mode towards history but it represents it as multiple. History, for Yimou, is both collective/objective and personal/subjective since it is perceived from different positions and attitudes.

Subjectivity and objectivity, moreover, call to mind the communicative mechanism of creativity and perception and hereafter of encoding and decoding. While subjectivity deals with personal creative skills related to senders, objectivity has

something to do with receivers' receptions. It is the personal view of the artist that films represent. Of course it is since the researcher has already explained how films are not analogous to reality. They are merely representations to it with personal and subjective modes. However, the interaction happens between film directors and spectators generate an objective mode. Spectators / interpretants link signs, objects, altogether with cultural, psychological, and historical contexts to decode the film meanings. The sharing elements such as culture and history amongst the interpretants characterize their ways of interpretation.

Nevertheless, subjectivity and objectivity, within this context, are neither fixed poles nor separated notions, as they are reciprocal in nature. What is personal and subjective is influenced with what is objective and collective because the artist's psychological memories, which have been formed throughout years or decades, interfere her/his choices. Though Yimou, for example, suggests his personal and subjective view to history, he shapes the Chinese culture (objectivity) to suit his personal artistic choices (subjectivity) and in the same time he tames his fantasies to meet the collective culture. Lee, in his turn, projects historical events related to Buddha (objectivity) on personal experience, that is life of Pi (subjectivity). Kechiche and McQueen recall, also, history for future remedy, as personally viewed. In the same time, objectivity is influenced by subjectivity. Interpretants, therefore, do not form coherent interpretations to signs, but they shape multidimensional reactions since they may agree on some meanings but they may disagree on others. They construct, therefore, heterogeneous reactions towards one artistic work.

Effective films interweave subjective modes with objective ones. They neither represent one-dimensional and linear narrative (faked objectivity of classicism), nor opt for plunging in Personal reductive modes (subjectivity of existentialist / avant-garde style). However, they opt for *balance* since they interrelate subjectivity with objectivity. Bouchareb tries to render this balance by creating multiple spaces where conscious, unconscious, objective, and subjective modes exist altogether. McQueen and Bensaidi find ways to make classical, modernist, and postmodernist styles in effective collaboration that highlights this balance.

Films in fact should not only interweave subjectivity and objectivity, but also other elements such as the positive and the negative. Film directors of Hollywood classical style try to represent the white's civilization as superior. They hide negative sides in the white history such as racism and colonialism to highlight the supreme religious mission of civilizing the *other* that is represented as savage, primitive, and exotic. When it comes to the white's historical figures, they are depicted as brave, attractive, intelligent, and competent heroes. This is the classical positive representation to reality. Of course, this kind of representation does not refer to reality in an effective way because it aims at rendering the interpretant's attitudes to rather biased and partial ones. Moreover, the required and generative interaction between film directors and their contemporary audiences cannot occur since there is one directional trajectory imposing specific meanings.

As for the modernist style, avant-garde film directors react against classicism by opting for the contrary. Since this option is based on ideological reaction, it highlights

negative representation of reality and people. Nothing can be described as positive for them. Miserable milieus, obstacles, helpless people, sad endings, and pessimistic future are dominant elements in such films. This tendency, also, is not effective because it is ideologically manipulated. It aims only at recruiting the audience within limited political concepts. Furthermore, it programs people's minds to believe in nihilism. In our recent era that is marked by violence and terrorism, the researcher does not see in nihilist modes any effective role except causing more fear, despair, and violent reactions.

The helixist method, however, tries to suggest a balanced representation to reality, based on the representation of both the negative and the positive. One should not consider all the time the negative as bad and the positive as good but sometimes we should think of them as two different but complementary elements. Asian people know this very good as they see aspects of life such as human being, nutrition, and energy divided into yin (negative) and yang (positive). Both Yin and Yang cannot exist separately as they are all the time interacting. There is, for example, no shadow without light and no men without women¹¹³. The DNA system, also, interweaves the positive super coil with the negative one and interrelates both of them not only in an open ended ascendant movement, but also in different directions.

Bouchareb and Bensaidi put not only darkness and light, but also conscious and unconscious in coiled ascendant movements though the researcher considers their way of engaging positive and negative strands as weak if compared to Yimou's *Hero* or

¹¹³These examples along with others are well known in Chinese culture and writings about the five elements and the Chinese medicines.

Lee's *Life of Pi*. If Bouchareb gave voice to Teresa, representing women's experience in a multiple space, the narrative would engage various stories and will end in rich interpretation. Bensaidi, also, mingles different subgenres, but he does not attempt to coil two different points of view, namely the female and male ones. He suggests the story of Dounia from a male's point of view. If he made his audience deal with the events throughout Dounia's point of view along with Malik's one, it would be more effective in this sense. As for Kechiche, though he criticizes Saartjie's silence and submission to sexual abuse and humiliation, he does not allow his audience to know the reason from her point of view. It would be more interesting if he went inside her world to reveal more personal modes. Kechiche, however, goes with his themes and esthetics beyond patriarchal modes since he insists on the struggle between the center, embodied in the white tyranny, and the muffled, embodied in Saartjie. This duality constructs the helical movement of the negative and the positive. The same remark can be done on McQueen's film as he renders women's plights, but he does not offer their points of view.

The coiling female's story around the male's one can resemble the interaction between the X and Y-chromosomes determining the human and animal sex. Bensaidi, moreover, does not totally liberate his narrative from nihilism since he is still to some extent influenced by French avant-garde nihilist / existentialist modes. Since the interaction between negative and positive exists in nature, why not adopting it to create more balanced representation? He, however, represents sad events in humor and sarcasm that slightly belittles from the degree of nihilism. The way McQueen represents his characters is really mundane, but their hope for change makes the balance. Though

Northup finds himself trapped, he is saved after a long struggle. Other characters such as Patsey cannot reach a safe stage, but McQueen suggests a relative mode that is neither classical nor modernist. The fact that Lee makes Pi's negative experience occurs in a parallel sphere and the way it leads to certain *spiritual satisfaction* escapes nihilist modes in general. Kechiche ends up his *Black Venus* with real footage of Mandella receiving Saartjie's remains in a national ceremony in 1994. This changes the nihilism and to some extent balances the different modes.

For decades, societies have been influenced by nihilist discourses with one directional mode. In the Arab world, for example, feelings of despair has been growing to the extent that people have stopped fearing the imposed political systems used to oppress them for long time. This was one of the reasons encouraged people to revolt and therefore to change their political bosses. However, political and social gaps emerged directly after these revolutions as no one was prepared positively to lead the area or at least to fill the gaps by genius solutions. This happened because people have only learnt how to protest but they haven't learnt how to construct positive ideas, economic projects, scientific research, social activities, artistic tendencies, etc. The fact that there is no one who is qualified to deal with the emptiness caused by the one directional mode (one helix) and based on merely criticism shows the lack of another *different* but *complimentary* mode (another helix) that can fill the gap with creative skills, positive encouragement, hope, positive energy, etc.

Human minds are created without borders and whenever they are confined within limited regulations, no creative abilities can operate outside the imposed

boundaries. Marxism, for example, has designed formulations for many theories such as feminism, post colonialism, structuralism, post structuralism, raceology, etc. Therefore, theorists' minds have started repeating forms of Marxism with the illusion that new theories have been created. However, nothing is newly created but more Marxism(s) masked in postmodernist trends such as feminism, post colonialism, etc. In fact, there are so many ideas that are waiting for being discovered and developed, but without the courage to go beyond fixations, limitations, and confined regulations, and without the deep belief in human's mind unlimited capacities, our mental activities will follow unpromising one directional trajectory. It is not enough to replace the class struggle with gender or race one to find out original ideas since the mechanism of thinking remains the same. Human mind has two parts. One is reserved for creativity and the other one is responsible for reasoning (mathematics and language). The majorities of people use one part more than the other one, but just imagine if they use both in an open ended helical ascendant trajectory. A child cannot be a poet in future if s/he is only exposed to language. Unless s/he develops her/his imagination, s/he will never be able to be a poet. One-dimensionality, therefore, limits promising possibilities. It creates either cultural arrogance, or nihilism.

Multidimensionality generates meanings and guarantees chances of interactions between senders and recipients. Kress, hereafter, is conscious of the effective role of composing different modes including social and cultural ones in creating generative meanings within the field of socio-semiotic approach (Kress 82). His multimodality, which is still in a process of research, can help in transcending reductive tendencies and in creating subtle communication since meanings are generated from a complex

interrelations and helical relationships amongst signs, objects, interpretants, and cultural annexations. It is this latter that creates contextual meaning away from structuralist, or Positivist regulations because films do not render one objective reality or existence nor subjective and pragmatist existence but rather represent all in multidimensional levels of interactions. No mode can do without other modes. This is an eclectic method that combines objective structuralism and positivism with pragmatic usefulness *vis-à-vis* meanings without discarding the contextual and relative mode. Helixist films, therefore, form constructions that stand by themselves but in the same time they are strongly interrelated with exterior modes such as cultural, scientific, exoteric, esoteric, historical, physical, virtual, and social themes. On so doing, helixism aims at transcending classical linearity and coherence, disruptive non-communicative mode, and Postmodernist shallow repetitions mainly embodied in ironies, pastiches, and parodies to transform films into spheres of generative interactions between artists and audiences.

Narrative in Helixism

Helical narrative eclectically assembles classical linearity with modernist discontinuity to create a rhythmic representation with interrelated moments of activity and inactivity. It transcends, accordingly, absolutist ways of representing reality, fiction, and time since it gives the postmodernist notion of simulacra a new meaning. Relativity, as it becomes evidence, characterizes the helical narrative style coiling, in spiral movements, eclectic multimodal thematic and esthetic aspects.

Narrative films are generally associated with classical and communicative styles. They aim at representing understandable stories by juxtaposing temporal and special elements in a logical way allowing characters and events to be developed within an attractive mode be it ascendant or interweaved (look at the first chapter). It is, then an “intentional-communicative artifact” (Currie 6) because it is *constructed*. Without *causation*, these elements cannot form a comprehensible story because the causal relationship amongst events in relationship with characters is what “distinguishes stories from the contents of other representational forms: theories, chronologies, lists, the interpretive ruminations we find in sermons. These other representational forms are able to tell us about people, things, events, states, and processes, without telling stories about them” (Currie 27). Narrative, then, is strongly linked to causal story that connects all the filmic elements in a coherent constructed representation. Other representations are not necessarily narratives.

Narrative films can be narrated according to two major modes, namely the first person narrator and the third person one (limited or omniscient). However, the narrative point of view in films is still problematic. The use of the first person narrator, for example, is not as easy as that one related to literature. Who is the first person narrator in cinema? Is s/he the film director, the screenwriter, the storywriter, or the protagonist? Who is the third person narrator in films? Is s/he the omniscient (Godlike narrator), the person behind the *voice over*¹¹⁴, or the camera point of view?¹¹⁵ In the avant-garde cinema, film directors do not care about all these. They rather detach the events and the characters to avoid these general linear regulations related to narration and narrators. The result is to be rather expressive than communicative. Non-narrative films come mainly to oppose the one-dimensionality behind this linearity that is ideologically manipulated to serve certain political, chauvinist, and ideological purposes as the researcher has already tackled.

However, this modernist non-narrative style remains unable to transcend the *reactive mode* against classicism. This reaction constructs rather contradictory poles: fragmentation vs. linearity, detachment vs. coherence, mundane characters vs. heroism, real spaces vs. artificial ones, jump cuts vs. match cuts, common issues vs. individuality, sequence shots vs. rapid montage, etc. The question that comes up to the researcher's mind is that whether modernism aims at merely *contradicting* classicism in all its tenets? Whatever the answer is, the researcher believes that the modernist mode is

¹¹⁴**Voice Over:**the voice used to comment on events. Usually it is used in documentary films. It is not involved in the story such as the voice of the character that is framed in the shot and referred to as **voice in**. As for the **voice out**, it suggests sounds or voices involved in the events but not framed in the shot.

¹¹⁵To answer these questions, a whole research paper should be devoted to find out the exact meaning of the cinematic narrative point of view. The aim of the researcher, here, is merely to pave the third way for telling filmic stories, which is based on neither linear nor fragmented styles.

important since it draws cineastes' attentions to other choices and therefore to feel free while making their films. However, it is high time to escape reactive modes and to opt for non-reductive styles based on profound thinking and deep feelings.

The avant-garde non-narrative style, moreover, addresses only the European elites who can interact with certain philosophical trends such as *existentialism* and *Marxism* as if the rest of intellectuals from other cultures were not at the level of dealing with this elitist style. This way of thinking is now *transgressed* as the whole world shares the same interests, anxieties, worries, and hopes. All the countries of the world are strongly linked by new technologies and continuing thinking this way will neither serve cinematic experience nor audiences' pursuits. Cinema, today, is crucial within this universal communication connecting different cultures with almost similar intellectual levels. One of the reasons behind the occurred saturation is the limited prospect of this style that resists updating and openness. It is true that first modernist films impressed European intellectuals by the idea of discontinuity, but now the majority of people worldwide know that this existentialist idea is not the only one philosophical interpretation that can effectively operate within this complicated and complex world. Cinematic trends, hereafter, should take into consideration the multi-dimensional way of interpretation, representing different cultures, to guarantee its survival.

Another probable reason behind this saturation is the manipulation of this style by many unsuccessful film directors who fail to make interesting films to end up saying that they aim at deranging their audience and fragmenting the events for philosophical purposes. Many others do not have any idea about existentialist, Marxist, or absurdist

philosophies; yet, they hide behind the non-communicative style. No one can deny this fact, as it becomes almost a phenomenon worldwide. I do not see that history experiences breaks and discontinuities. What happened and is happening is rather a *normal development*. Cineastes are in need of all the previous styles, cinematic discoveries, and modes in their on-going process of filmmaking. No one can, also, deny this. What matters, is how to assemble all these? Eclecticism is the first strategy since it discards transgressed modes and develops workable ones from contradictory tendencies to pave the way for the fourth cycle taking into consideration the world diversity and multiplicity – one of the cinematic pursuits.

The defenders of the non-narrative style insists on the fact that their style resembles the reality which is not linear (look at the first chapter), but Eco ends up this discussion by showing how reality is so multiple and having one idea about it be it classical and linear or modernist and fragmented will reduce reality to one-dimensional angle. Reality, then, is *representational* and not analogous to the images to which we choose to relate it. On understanding this, is there any way to be closer to the idea of the multiple-reality? Reality can be continuous for some, discontinuous for others, and both for different kinds of people. It is so *contextual* and *situational* as explained by Van Dijk. To represent this multiple manifestation of reality, the researcher opts for a third way, namely the *helical narrative* that employs continuity and discontinuity within contextual and situational helical development of both linear and fragmented events to suggest multiple visions, attitudes, and angles. The researcher, of course, does not claim that this eclectic method will be analogous to reality since this latter cannot be easily absorbed and compassed in a certain style, but he aims at finding a way that gets closer

to a certain assimilation. Yimou's *Hero* and lee's *Life of Pi* are two examples showing the possible assemblage of continuous and discontinuous methods in a helical relationship.

The helical narrative is a mechanism that guarantees openness *vis-à-vis* reality not only amongst classicism, modernism, and postmodernism, but it also coils this reality into a helical relationship with fiction. In our recent era, a great *visual confusion* takes place as people find similarities between images produced by TV news, which is supposed to be reality, and cinema, which is supposed to be fiction. People, nowadays, feel attracted more to real TV news, and YouTube scandals than to feature films since these reality shows provide them with more exciting images. A great deal of people, moreover, starts waiting for new episodes of these real shows. Just before the 2015 summer, great deal of Moroccans and Americans were following with a noticeable excitement the real series events of the American Rebecca and the Moroccan Simou, two teen-lovers who seek being together. Rebecca, who is under age, decided to fly to Morocco to meet Simou. American TV news started broadcasting the disappearance of Rebecca after her travel to Morocco, the fact that inspired many TV and on-line channels along with YouTube videos to spread the news of probable kidnapping of Rebecca by the ISIL. After days, Rebecca and Simou broadcasted their own YouTube videos explaining to both Moroccan and American public that she is safe with Simou's family. The *real* series did not end up there, but other episodes were generated, especially when the American embassy interfered the events and asked Simou to convince Rebecca to go back to the States and if he did, the embassy would help them meet again after Rebecca reached the legal age... So many people, eventually,

broadcasted their YouTube videos reacting either for or against this love story. As a result, people in public spaces started tackling the issue as if it was the most important social one. For many, the events were discussed as if they were fictitious romantic shows to the extent that some online media sites ridiculed national TV soap operas that were unable to attract audiences as did the story of Rebecca and Simou.

Paying addition to this, there are so many examples depicting how the borders between *real* events and fiction are erased. The 9/11 events astonished people around the planet for how much the real images resemble the collapse of twin center in many films such as *Godzilla*¹¹⁶ for example. The images of violent events occurring in many areas of the world now are circulating in all TV shows, YouTube, and social media. This wide consumption to real yet unbelievable images is what makes Baudrillard believes that reality will absorb metaphysical dimensions while dealing with the notion of simulacra (Baudrillard 596). Jung supports the role of films in blurring the boundaries between reality and fiction as he construes that “the reference to cases of historical fascism equally supplies a reading of the film as a warning” (Jung 48). He, also, believes that cinema “reflects the current debates” (Jung 50). This is another reason why filmic narrative should put real footage of personal or social events in one helix that itself should get into a spiral relationship with another helix of fictitious images to represent this third/interrelated space(s) linking *reality* to fiction. The existence of these two kinds of footage can coil *continuous* and *discontinuous* elements around each other.

¹¹⁶*Godzilla*, Roland Emmerich, Centropolis Film Productions, 1998, Film.

Though Kechiche does not use too much real footage in his *Black Venus*, the way he links it to fictitious ones completes the meaning by linking the tyrannical past with the reconciling present. The way *reality* is connected to fiction does not all the time involve linking real footage to fictitious ones. Sometimes, film directors such as Bouchareb and Mc Queen opt for reconstructing the real footage. In his *Enemy Way*, Bouchareb makes clichés resembling Malcolm X, Mohamed Elija, and atmospheres connotating the black Muslims in America to the extent that spectators' minds directly go to Malcolm X as they interrelate his *real/referred* to appearance with Garnett. Bensaidi, also, does not use real footage, but he shoots his scenes in real spaces with real extras. He interrelates his film with the documentary style or at least Bensaidi's spectators feel certain helical relationship with real spaces. The use of real footage or the reference to it in a way or another supports the multiple and relative representation of reality and, of course, can suggest different angles at thematic level as well as esthetic one.

Helixist films, hereafter, can use visible spaces in different ways. One of these effective ways is to shape relationships between real footage, including sometimes even the way the crew shoots¹¹⁷ in the same film, and constructed ones. In the same time the different qualities, angle choices, and modes in general between fictitious and real footage will indicate certain discontinuity. This will make the audience in an *effective interactive* relationship with films as this choice will encourage more critiques, discussions, for and against points of view, and revealing personal experiences

¹¹⁷It seems strange, but it will show how the theme is viewed by the crew themselves as they are part of it. Their reactions while they are motivated, feeling boring, or tired shows to what extent they believe in what they are doing. Other significant themes can be generated from this choice.

influenced by the events of the real footage. The helical choice, then, delivers the idea of deranging the audience, multiple angles of representation and different attitudes towards the theme. It helps being more contextual and situational rather than linear and one-dimensional. Meanwhile, it does not literally apply philosophies such as Marxism and renders it into boring discontinuous images but it keeps it rhythmic and communicative.

The helical narrative should exceed assembling only fiction and reality to coil in spiral helices subjectivity with objectivity, mundane characters and spaces with historical figures and monuments, esotericism with exotericism, apolitical themes with politics, nature with culture, reason with psychological and inner modes, time as perceived by the majority with other parallel temporal dimensions, etc. Helixism, then, neither rejects the power of the image nor discards the communicative mode of the narrative. It is, as seen by the researcher, an open method that allows more research, innovations, and creativity within a subtle mode of multiplicity. After analyzing the samples, the researcher comes up to the idea that unless thinking of a method that abandons reductive reactions, rigid regulations, and formulations, cineastes will find themselves slaves to saturated and close styles. It is within freedom that one can create and produce films in different ways. This is why the researcher aims at constructing a generative method rather than a rigid regulation that can merely contribute in more saturation. As for the narrator point of view, Yimou has already made an interesting choice when he interrelated different narrators. This is important as it refers to contextual and situational events and how they change from one narrator to another.

The researcher prefers, then, to put various narrators in helical relationship to describe how many facts are rather interpretations from different angles.

Helical narrative should be like a hypertext or a Chinese box, that each helix be it a story from a certain narrator point of view, a real image, a constructed scene, a discontinuous mode, a continuous narrative, a skip of 180° within a continuous context or interrelated themes can take the audience to another arena of interpretation. This latter, on its turn, should take recipients to new and different arenas of interpretations and so on. It is a sort of interactive and generative relationship that should be found between the artist and her/his audience.

Helical narrative, moreover, will make the recipients read the film neither in a linear way nor in disrupted one but rather in multiple ways because reality is very complex. It compasses and interrelates this multi-dimensional universe around us, which is infinite when it comes to either its tiny creatures or its gigantic ones. However, tiny and microscopic creatures have relationships with gigantic creatures even in far galaxies. Microbes affect human and animals, and galaxies' movements affect gravity and therefore life on earth. Everything has a relationship with everything else regardless the size, the genre, the origin, the distance, or the dimension. Themes, pursuits, people, places, events, and problems of the world endure the same situation. A bankruptcy of somebody, for example, may have something to do with an economic, historical, cultural, or political decision. It can, also, occur due to professional, personal, national, international, social or psychological problem. Nothing stands by itself but everything is influenced by / influencing other things. The way they contradict or get in harmony with

each other makes us understand that continuities and disruptions are in an on-going process of ascendant helical movement just like the DNA system of helices. Continuity and discontinuity, in films, should, then screw around each other to form a helix with two spiral strands. These two different strands can guarantee different directions to escape classical one-dimensionality and can assure dynamic and transitive meanings, which end up in multiplicity.

Classical narrative, as the researcher has already mentioned in the first chapter, strongly links time to space. Both are represented as linear and causal in what is perceived as *chronological* representation of time. The non-communicative style, however, separate time from space to render a fourth dimension of time, the notion referred to as a *time without duration*. However, the researcher notices how (another time) this non-communicative style opts for the easiest way to do it, which is merely opposing classical tenets: chronological time in relationship with challenging the milieu vs. timeless space. This ends up in stagnant images with boring energy generating merely nihilism, laziness, sadness, amnesia, and hypnotism. All these effects contradict the *dynamism* of the current life marked by rhythmic velocity. People around the world feel now that their bodies become *extensions* of high-speed technological devices (Baudrillard 129) regardless to what extent we accept or refuse this existing fact. The increasing number of personal digital devices raises our lives rhythm since they offer unlimited visual choices with multiple alternatives. New generations, then, will interact with rhythmic images rather than stagnant ones.

The contemporary life dynamism is interrelated with velocity and movement. The way time is understood now transcends the absolute interpretation. In fact, time cannot be perceived without space. Hawking determines that "... time and space were curved and inseparable" (Hawking 15). Time, however, is relative since it changes when the space changes:

Our biological clocks are equally affected by these changes in the flow of time. Consider a pair of twins. Suppose that one twin goes to live on the top of a mountain while the other stays at sea level. The first twin would age faster than the second. Thus, if they met again, one would be older than the other. In this case, the difference in ages would be very small, but it would be much larger if one of the twins went for a long trip in a spaceship in which he accelerated to nearly the speed of light. When he returned, he would be much younger than the one who stayed on earth. This is known as the twins paradox, but it is a paradox only if you have the idea of absolute time at the back of your mind. In the theory of relativity there is no unique absolute time; instead, each individual has his own personal measure of time that depends on where he is and how he is moving (Hawking 27).

One can easily differentiate between Hawking's interpretation to relativity and Godard's one. Godard relates relativity to discontinuity, but Hawking, on the other hand, suggests multiple manifestations of time. Relativity is a complex notion that transcends being either continuous or discontinuous. It is, also, impossible to speak about time without space. Separating time from space is rather a kind of disequilibrium, and hallucination that hinders communication, dynamism, multiplicity, multimodality etc. This can merely signify death and saturation. Helixism, hereafter, suggests

continuity and discontinuity within helical narrative to represent a dynamic time and space. Even the energetic existence is totally linked to tempo-spatial one as explained by Eisenstein. Yimou shows the possibility of this helical temporal representation when he coils the exoteric relationships between characters with their esoteric spaces. Though both spaces are totally detached and different since they are related to different temporal dimensions; yet, they are linked by a causal relationship embodied in the esoteric energy influencing the exoteric decisions and material actions. Of course, this is one choice as other unlimited alternatives in future films can create more wonderful interrelations between chronological time of our tangible dimension and other different temporal modes be them psychological, personal, or philosophical. *The helical narrative, hereafter, is as relative as time itself.* It discards notions of absolutist, chronological, fixed, or stagnant time and opts for multiple explanations of it.

The representation of relative time will challenge even the notion of simulacra. Relativity as explained by authorities such as Einstein and Hawking shows how little we know about our existence and our surroundings transcending tangible and concrete limits to more multiple manifestations. Can we, then, consider Yimou's hyperreality embodied in esoteric spaces to be kind of simulacra? If the situation is viewed from an absolutist notion of time, the answer would be yes. But if it is tackled from a relative notion of time, it would be rather a kind of representation to this existing relativity. The second answer marks the way the helical narrative gives hyperrealist modes certain *functional* perspectives away from *the non-functionality suggested by postmodernism.* The non-functional mode is responsible for the already mentioned *gratuitous*

postmodernist repetitions causing saturation¹¹⁸. Hereafter, the researcher suggests referring to this hyperreality as *paraopticism* if it has functional mode within helical narratives aiming at detaching itself from postmodernist repetitions. Shall we, then, replace the word *simulacra* from the researcher's previous analyses pertaining to *Hero* and *Life of Pi* by the word *paraopticism*? The postmodernist *simulacrum* indicates certain imitations, likeliness, and similarities. It constructs, therefore, sort of *cliché optic* representations that cannot have functional mode. Most of simulacra are done for attracting audiences for the sake of attraction and visual dazzling. However, *paraoptic representation* suggests compared functional images. In grammar, for example, the parallel sentence is the one that has two equal grammatical forms, or clauses. The paraoptic representation is simply the attempt of the representation of parallel dimensions following the principle of relativity.

Neither time nor space is fixed. They are in an ongoing procedure of relative change and paradox. "...the theory of relativity requires us to put an end to the idea of absolute time. Instead, each observer must have his own measure of time, as recorded by a clock carried with him, and identical clocks carried by different observers need not agree"(Hawking 19). Positions as filmed can be presented to refer to these changing modes. Bouchareb uses two master shots in one scene to be stick to certain narrative, but in the same time he changes the axis determining the imaginary line of 180° to swap his characters' positions. This is one representation, among others, to relativity within the helical narrative. It aims at representing other kinds of relativity *vis-à-vis* human attitudes, feelings, psychological states, vision, etc. The non-narrative sequence shots

¹¹⁸Look at the section entitled: "Postmodernism and the Death of Theoretical Tendencies".

can be used, of course, but they can absorb esthetic, suggestive, and significant movements and angles to create both relative stagnation and relative change, but neither total stagnation neither absolute action can render the beauty of life rhythm. Relativity in helical narrative can, also, guarantee generative meanings because tackling themes, characters, and events from multidimensional ways will end up in interesting development of the film stories. This can be described as a kind of expansion operating within the interrelated spaces, differences, and multimodality, the choice that can generate balanced filmic works. On the whole, complex network of eclectic and creative skills should operate altogether to get closer to what this world looks like.

Helical narrative, on the whole, tries to avoid the classical, linear and bumptious representation to history, identity, and civilization creating coherent and chauvinist attitudes. It, also, opposes reactive modes claiming total disruptions ending up in inactivity and nihilism. Basing itself on multiplicity and relativity, it, rather, opts for updating the way meanings are traveling between senders and recipients.

Numeral Nature of Helixism

As a child, I did not know what those mathematical equations were for. Little by little as my age grew up, I got aware of how everything in life is well calculated. Humans cannot live without calculating days, months, years, and centuries in relationship with planets and galaxies' movements. They cannot eat if they do not calculate periods of plowing, harvesting, and marketing as well as they cannot perform any kind of activity without dividing time and knowing how to proceed within its regulations. Everything in this existence, therefore, cannot manifest, move, or function unless it endures certain calculations. The number of chromosomes, for example, determines the manifestation, the movement, and the function of a tree, an animal, or a human being. If this number changes, species with common genes change into different groups of units with different genes.

Human cells contain 46 chromosomes in 22homologous pairs (numbered 1 to 22) plus the non-homologous X and Y chromosomes that determine sex. All animals and plants chromosomes that look like these, but in different numbers: for example, a fruit fly has eight chromosomes, in three homologous pairs plus X and Y.(Calladine, Drew and Luisi 4)

Genes are, hereafter, numerically built. Researchers get aware of the role of numeric sciences in inventing and processing various technologies. There are, for example, many things in common between the DNA system and computer sciences as “this DNA is something like a computer tape that stores many programs for a large computer to

run” (Calladine, Drew and Luisi 3). The researcher has found the two systems similar. What differentiates the Word from the Excel, images, or any other program is a number too.

We are living now in a digital era as many technologies are now totally based on numeric techniques. When these human technologies have imitated the numeric system in nature, miracles have been achieved. The world has become eventually a real small village (McLuhan 5) since communication has become so fast and distance between far places gets so shrunk. Humans, therefore, get in real interactions with these technologies to the extent that human bodies get fuse with these technologies. There is an inescapable extension linking humans to new technologies. McLuhan explains how “...we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned” (McLuhan 3). Cell phones, tablets, computers, and other unlimited digital devices are strongly linked to human bodies, lives, programs, schedules, dreams, private life, profession, ritual practices, entertainment, research, communication, time management, shopping, recording, etc. It is without doubt that we are enduring a pure digital life. This does only blur the boundaries between biological life and digital technologies as it is widely believed, but human has just gotten aware of the miracles that can be achieved if s/he imitates the numeric system in nature. It is, for the researcher, the human first step towards maturity. *Cinema, also, should correspond, then, to the digital dominant system in both nature and culture.*

Cineastes should neither neglect nor belittle from this digital dimension in our lives. Time in cinema, accordingly, should not be reduced in absolute interpretation. It is measured by numeric rhythm. It is the number of orbits of the earth in relationship with other movements of the sun the moon that determines whether it is a day, a month, or a year. The numeric system, hereafter, renders life in general and since cinema renders peoples' lives too, it should take into consideration this digital dimension that does not only interfere life around us but also it is the reason behind life itself. Patriarchal films, for example, pass over the numeric system of the DNA as they omit the importance of women in life. The human chromosomes "contain 46 chromosomes in 22 homologous pairs (numbered 1 to 22) plus the non-homologous X and Y chromosomes that determine sex"(Calladine, Drew and Luisi 4). On this numeric basis, women and men should be represented in the same mentioned helical movement with two coiled strands.

Cinema, also, should transcend the absolutist notion of reality since this reality, as I have already explained, has no limits, no boundaries, and no unique manifestation neither in space nor in time. Reality is multiple, diverse, and follows numeric formulas to manifest in other different dimensions. The story of X should, for instance, interrelate with the story of Y. the coiled movements around each other is what generates life. The reality, in this context, is neither X nor Y, but the helical relationship between them. Unless this double representation manifest, life cannot exist. Reality, accordingly, is consisted of both X and Y along with the long history encoded in them. This marks reality with certain relativity proved by mathematical equations. Film director, then, should coil strands of different but complimentary modes such as coiling linear time

(the mass/the concert /the continuous/etc) with paraoptic representations (the energy/the abstract/the discontinuous/etc). On tackling history, as another example, helical films should coil *a civilization* or *a culture* with other strands such as the contribution of different civilizations and cultures in enriching human life on earth. One's culture has not been developed without interactions with different cultures. Even in criticizing colonial and neo-colonial modes, cineastes should depict the colonial limited way of thinking as different from women and men whom this reductive system wants, by force, to represent on their behalf.

Each civilization has its contribution in pushing the spiral movement forward. Human development, therefore, is shared amongst all the cultures of the world. By excluding a culture, one directly omits a suggestive spiral movement, and therefore s/he damages the whole mechanism of the helical representation. Films should transcend this reductive mode of classical cinema that represents the other as savage, the modernist one that creates reductive European narrow-minded elitism, and the postmodernist one that encourages banalities harming popular culture rather than promoting it. Rejecting a paradigm as a whole and adopting another as a whole is what explains reductive modes. The helixist method represents, hence, the numeric system by opting for an open vision towards eclecticism, diversity, and multiplicity (along with its mathematical conception). Helical films, also, deal with this multiplicity by coiling various strands of eclectic techniques and esthetics because shots should interweave different point of views, spaces, and temporal aspects within contextual ways of representation.

The use of numbers helps in rendering natural or artificial rhythms in life. Music is a good example in this context since composers rely on geometric sound dimensions to compose their rhythms. Rhythm is almost important in all aspects of life. One cannot imagine walking, eating, listening, talking, working, reading, writing, without moments of action and inactions. There is no mathematical rhythm unless there is a helical relationship between action/continuity and inaction/discontinuity. In the helixist method, scenes should render this *multiple rhythms* in life. One of the techniques that reflects, for example, how our minds get in interactions with the continuous logic and the discontinuous psychological modes is to coil continuity and discontinuity in helical movements. Bouchareb, for example, opts for this rhythm by contrasting lit spaces with obscured ones and by opposing the conscious with the unconscious, the fact that interrelates active moments with inactive ones. This helical relationship between what is active and what is inactive makes the eclectic collaboration between Deleuze's movement-image and time-image possible. This relationship amongst active and inactive genres gives a rhythmic mode to Bensaidi's *Death for Sale*. This rhythm is, also, a kind of numerical calculations determining qualitative and quantitative treatment to the different and sometimes contradicted genres. It rather gives the way to use various ingredients within a dynamic mode.

The way a cinematic scene is represented, it suggests technical boundary oppositions between spaces and times. A change of a lieu, or a time determines a change in a scene. The shots, however, form direct continuity, as they are small components of one temporal and spatial unit. The rhythmic helixist representation can create a *direct visual link* between two different scenes in space and time. It can, also,

opt for a technical disruption inside one of the two scenes to stimulate all the minds parts including the ones corresponding to continuous logic, and the other ones interacting with the discontinuous modes. As for the thematic side, these shots can be interfered with real or reconstructed shots of different footage reflecting thematic, subjective, or objective mode. This helixist choice has two interrelated dimensions that are continuity and discontinuity in one given scene. It resembles a hypertext mode also since it provides audience with various options of multiple esthetic and thematic representations. The six chosen films try all to render this multiplicity in different ways since the aim is to find a workable method rather than a rigid and reductive theory. Helixism, however, can pave the way for non-reductive theories in future.

This will help in developing *fusaiifisic images* conveying various thematic and esthetic modes. The researcher uses the Moroccan adjective *fusaiifisic* derived from the noun *Fusaiifisae* meaning mosaic tile work. He uses the original word to avoid confusion with other mosaic tile works that have different characteristics. The Moroccan *Fusaiifisae* is done by tiny pieces of colorful tiles in various shapes. Each shape has its own name. The different pieces are assembled to create interrelated colorful shapes of stars, circles, squares, triangles, etc. This work ends up in a typical *dynamic visual* phenomenon as it gives the illusion that the shapes are moving in various dimensions including the three dimensions suggesting the illusive depth of the shapes. It, also, suggests wonderful interrelations between continuous and discontinuous manifestations, the fact that proves the possibility of assembling continuity and discontinuity in one work. On speculating in *fusaiifisae*, one cannot find a center of the interrelated designs. Each time s/he thinks that s/he finds a center, other different

centers emerge quickly to manifest within a dynamic visual phenomenon. This is how helixist films should be like as they should discard reductive Eurocentricism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, absolutism, egocentrism, etc. Dynamic diversity as suggested by Bouchareb and Lee, then, should operate to replace these reductive modes.

The mentioned traditional Moroccan handcraft, which is called *Fusaifisae*, is done based on many techniques, namely mathematical squares and Vitagor geometric equations¹¹⁹. *Fusaifisae* is a good metaphor to what the helixist method looks like. It reflects all the helixist tenets including multiplicity, interweaved modes, eclecticism, open-ended dimensions, diversity, continuity versus discontinuity, numeric aspects, interrelated spiral circulations, contextual manifestations, tolerance, balance, the rhythmic representation between activity and inactivity, challenging mode, the coiled around epistemological and entertaining strands, and the DNA helical system. The researcher, hereafter, describes helixist films marking the transitional stage as *the fusaifisic-image*, to differentiate them from both *the movement-image* and *the time-image*.

¹¹⁹**Vitagor** (300-380 BC) is a Greek Mathematician and philosopher.

Conclusion

This thesis examines the works of some contemporary film directors to explore how they are trying to go beyond the *postmodernist hybridity* to embrace *multiplicity* that does not only reflect the culture of minorities, individuals, and marginalized groups, but also highlights interdisciplinary techniques and aesthetics from different theoretical trends. The *eclecticism* characterizing this new configuration originates more *effective* images that reject *reductive* tools, but uses all what serves multiplicity regardless limitations and borders distantiating theories from each other. Instead of believing in totalitarian approaches like for example nationalism and imperialism representing the non-whites as savage and dangerous, the new configuration chooses *communicative tools of classicism* discarding totalitarian modes that were associated with this communicative linearity for so long. The communicative alternative of this new configuration does not dismiss the intellectual and the epistemological dimension, as these contemporary film directors tend to address the mind. This is stemmed from the *expressive and avant-garde styles of modernism*. Both styles are interweaved to serve feminist, post colonialist, and race issues along with other marginalized and mundane stories and people, which is an obvious influence of *postmodernism*.

This configuration undertakes, as mentioned before, an *eclectic strategy* because it is based on the principle of multiplicity, which characterizes three main axes, namely, the thematic and theoretical approach, the aesthetic and technical side, and the *consciousness* accompanying this new tendency. Though there is a sort of reconciliation with the classical linearity, the conscious way of treating certain themes automatically

tends to discard monolithic and one-dimensional representations influenced by modes of patriarchy, Eurocentricism, imperialism, etc. It is mentioned in the first chapter how the traditional montage used to develop two contradicted trajectories to create narrative *conflict* controlled by the mechanism of *the movement-image*. The easiest way to do this is to construct a *duality* between good and bad people like in *Birth of Nation* when Griffith represents the supremacist Klu Klux Klan as good people and the African Americans as bad and violent ones. This new configuration, however, rejects this one-dimensional mode, but maintains linearity with a *weak* development as it becomes *relative* and caught between *the action* and *the inability to act*, between *the movement-image* and *the time-image*, and between continuity and discontinuity in an attempt to create a world with multiple angles and more insightful and subtle representation.

Concerning modernism, this new tendency, marking a transitional stage to the coming fourth cycle of theoretical mode, refuses to represent the relationship between the past, the present, and the future as hallucination, but it still gives the impression as if there is hallucination and bad dreams. It accepts the aesthetic accompanying the time-image, but it refuses the nihilist approach marking it. It does not suggest a nihilist ideology based on existentialism teaching that life is meaningless. This philosophical doctrine, of course, creates despair. The new configuration refuses to adopt this modernist mode though it tackles sad issues of injustice and oppression. In *12 Years a Slave*, McQueen represents Northup as unable to act, change, or react in an effective way. McQueen strips his character from all the heroic characteristics, but still there is a sense of hope since Northup continues believing in it. Northup is helpless, but McQueen is not a nihilist in his approach. The relative inability of Northup to act

suggests, therefore, a combination between the hopeful mode of the movement-image and the feeling of wait, reinforced by using modernist sequence shots of the time-image. But, there is no nihilist mode.

As for the representation of reality, this new configuration suggests a *relative reality* that is based on multiplicity of space, identity, language, religion, beliefs, ideologies, and races as indicated in Bouchareb's *Enemy Way*. In this film, no one claims that s/he has the absolute truth. However, truth is represented as ambivalent and changeable. This representation is compatible with the sense of multiplicity dominating this new configuration.

These contemporary film directors take into consideration all the filmic elements. The researcher concludes that scenario, lighting, acting methods, sound track and other elements are significant in the new configuration. This goes hand in hand with the notion of multiplicity involving themes, theories, esthetics, and techniques. It is therefore a kind of divaricating and generating multiplicity that manifests as a *Fusaiifisic* piece of art. In Neo-realism, for example, lighting is not given that much importance. For neo-realists, what represents the reality is the slow editing and mundane subjects as explained in the first chapter, while expressionists give too much importance to lighting but neglect the everyday stories and people. This new configuration, however, links ordinary stories with esthetic dimensions.

Though this new configuration maintains linearity, it does not discard the intellectual aspect of the modernism. Kechiche plays tricks with the notion of

voyeurism, which is an intellectual approach discussed within feminist contexts. Voyeurism looks in Kicheche's *Black Venus* like a crystal since it operates in different ways just like the equal sparkling faces of one crystal. Sometimes it means the way the audience gazes at Saartjie. In the same time, it suggests the way Saartjie looks at the audience. Reaux and Caesar want to represent Saartjie as an animal, whereas the males who gaze at her are depicted as the real animals. She looks scary; yet, the males desire her sexually. Her situation *vis-à-vis* this exploitation seems disgusting, but in the same time it generates attractive images. Linear stories, then, can be deranging too. It is a combination between classical continuity, avant-garde style, and postmodernist soul.

As far as history is concerned, these films do not break ties with the past by creating total gaps with different kinds of heritage. They do not, however, believe in absolute history to shape people within certain ideologies and chauvinism. *Hero* by Yimou, for example, represents history as situational just like reality in Lee's *Life of Pi*. There is neither reductive reaction against history nor manipulative intentions *vis-à-vis* collective events of the past.

The new configuration does not opt for hyper-real scenes for the sake of the visual influence or else as they are done in many postmodernist films. On doing so, it rather renders other aspects of reality, such as the energetic one. This supports the multiple dimensions of our surroundings. *Paraoptic representation*, therefore, is the esthetic choice used by Yimou and Lee in their *Hero* (energetic representation) and *Life of Pi* (spiritual representation) since *simulacra* and *magic reality* respectively refer to the distortion of reality and fabulous events rather than an energetic existence as proved

by Einstein. The paraoptic representation can serve in representing reality and life as multiple and diverse. It corresponds to new discoveries transcending material existence. Simulacra and magic reality, on the other hand, render an existentialist mode believing only in matter. One of the workable strategies to escape the postmodernist saturation along with reductionist modes to other cultures is to deal with history and reality as multiple. They are consisted of two different strands. One strand is positive, collective, linear, or continuous, as for the second strand is negative, personal, disrupted, or discontinuous. The two strands, thus, coil around each other in different directions to declare the death of both linearity and fragmentation. It rather highlights complex, multiple, and helical vision just like the interrelations of various discontinuous and continuous shapes in Fusaifisae.

The way these films interweave various cinematic elements creates *rhythmic* works. The continuity characterizing classical tendencies and the discontinuity marking modernist and postmodernist works can create a rhythm if they both operate within a helical relationship. Bensaidi eclectically mixes up different genres to end up in certain rhythm. This latter, as I believe should characterize films since there is no life without rhythms, otherwise it is stagnation leading to death _ saturation. I, also, come to the conclusion that these films under study try to deal with contemporary issues with more maturity since they opt for multiplicity, decentralization, contextual representation, visual dynamism, balance, and open communication (open semiotics). Since this is a new mode that is still in a process of development, I give it a name, that is *the Fusaifisic image* as added to the two notions of *the movement-image* and *the time-image*. The

Fusaifisic image, therefore, marks a transitional stage to the promising fourth stage of open and non-reductive body of theories.

The helixist method, in general, is not a reactive one. It, rather, reflects different but complimentary strands that are coiling around each other in an ascendant open-ended helical movement. It follows principle of multiplicity, diversity, entertainment, and epistemological perspectives without discarding the *aura* of cinematic creativity that refuses regulations and limitations. In its interrelated spiral movements, it represents multiple dimensions that manifest in double helical strands' movements with different directions. Each double helical movement has two strands. The first is positive, while the second is negative. Positive and negative strands, of course, stand for the functional meaning and not for the significant one that gives the positive strand good connotations, while it relates the negative strand to bad ones. It is, eventually, the interactions happening between these strands on one hand and amongst the other strands in other helical movements on the other hand that create significant *meaning* in the same filmic experience. To sum up, the proposed helixist method highlights twelve main esthetic and strategic modes:

- Fusaifisic-image
- Paraoptic representation
- Cultural contexts and open semiotic approach
- Rhythm
- Cinematic aura
- Helical narrative
- Helical history

- Helical reality
- Relativity
- Multiplicity
- Consciousness
- Epistemological mode

Along with this dissertation, I directed *Tarantella* (in Arabic: *The Tarantula's Dance*¹²⁰) to apply my Helixist method along with these principles. First reactions after some days of its premiere in Ouarzazate on October 27th, 2017 practitioners, cinema students and journalists sense a different kind of narrative representation. Some newspapers and online sites declare that though the film represents a story, there are many scenes that are not physically linked to the whole. Sometimes, for them, it seems that the events are fragmented and sometimes it seems that they are causative¹²¹, which puts objectivity in an ascending interweaved relationship with subjectivity; or rather which introduces the *Fusaifisic image*. Fatima Zahra Jebour, a journalist in Hespess, writes that there is a kind of reciprocation between the historical events of a certain human rights issue and a personal understanding to this history¹²² which means that there is a kind of journalistic consciousness towards this helical relationship between objectivity and subjectivity. In fact, I have accompanied this dissertation with making the film to test how the audience will perceive this method that aims in its turn at transcending the mentioned saturation. *Tarantella* is a practical side of this dissertation,

¹²⁰ *Tarantella*. Rabii el-Jawhari, Claquette, 2017. Film.

¹²¹ <http://www.douniappress.com/ورزازات-عرض-تجريبي-لفيلم-رقصة-الرتيلا>

¹²² <https://www.hespress.com/art-et-culture/369449.html>.

but I do not like to give it much importance in this context since I believe that a film director should not analyze her/his own film. This is why I focus within the context of this dissertation on other works that pave the way to establish a kind of consciousness to the filmic experience and to reach hereafter a sort of expansion enabling cinema to test new modes.

I find out that this new mode is a transitional stage for a new theoretical and generic cycle. Understanding the nature of this transitional stage, film directors, critics, cinema teachers and students will interact effectively with this new mode of filming. In fact, many young film directors are still caught between the three modes. These findings can encourage them to cross the boundaries and to feel free while dealing with their films. By transcending the borders amongst theoretical, technical, thematic, and esthetic areas, these young film directors can come out with new body of genres generated from this new configuration. This will contribute in creating new manifestos with new modes discarding reductive approaches and highlighting multiplicity.

As for the critics, this thesis can help them analyzing works in this transitional stage with more care since they are no longer operating within ironies, pastiches, and parodies, but they are transcending the saturation of the postmodernism. Teachers and students can expand this dissertation to tackle other points they feel that they still need clarifications. They can, also, do more academic researches to look for the reason or reasons behind the postmodernist saturation. Is it because everything has been tackled, or because the majority of classical, modernist, and post modernist theories are

operating within Marxist mechanism? To understand the future cycle, one has to determine the answer, since the hypothesis that is emphasized here is that it is the saturation of Marxism rather than the theoretical field in general.

Appendix

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- 2- *Black Venus*. Abdellatif Kechiche, MK2, 2010. Film.
- 3- *12 Years a Slave*. Steve McQueen, Regency Enterprises, River Road Entertainment, Plan B, Film 4, 2013. Film.
- 4- *Hero*. Zhang Yimou, Sil-Metropole Organization CFCC, Elite Group Enterprises, Zhang Yimou Studio, Beijing Picture Film, 2002. Film.
- 5- *Death for Sale*. Faouzi Benaïdi, Entre Chien et Loup, Agora Film, Liaison Cinématographie, 2011. Film.
- 6- *Life of Pi*. Ang Lee, Dune Entertainment, Ingenious Media, Haishang Films, 2012. Film.

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