

-Research Article-

## Comparative Analysis Between the Cinema of Yılmaz Güney and Dariush Mehrjui A Contextual Analysis of two Films: *Hope* and *The Cow*

Nafiseh Laleh\*

### Abstract

*This comparative study analyzes two films by two auteur directors of Iran and Turkey; Dariush Mehrjui and Yılmaz Güney to investigate the probable similarities between their cinematic languages and attitudes. For this purpose; Gav (The Cow, Dariush Mehrjui, 1969) and Umut (Hope, Yılmaz Güney, 1970) are sociologically analyzed according to Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration. The current research makes visual and content codes from both films by using contextual analysis and intends to find out any common obvious and hidden meanings through decoding them. As a result, it leads to finding out similar concepts such as society, culture, identity, political activity, and hegemony critique in their cinematic languages which can be seen in the named films. It proves that there were same problems in both society at the same period of time also there are social and cultural connections between the two countries.*

**Keywords:** Yılmaz Güney. Dariush Mehrjui. Cinema. Anthony Giddens. Structuration. Structure. Agency.

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-Araştırma Makalesi-

**Yılmaz Güney ile Dariush Mehrjui Sineması Arasında Karşılaştırmalı  
Analiz İki Filmin Bağlamsal Analizi: *Umut* ve *Gav* (İnek)**

Nafiseh Laleh\*

**Özet**

*Bu karşılaştırmalı çalışma, İran ve Türkiye'nin iki auteur yönetmeni olan Dariush Mehrjui ile Yılmaz Güney'in sinematik dilleri arasındaki olası benzerlikleri tartışmaktadır. Yönetmenlerin *Gâv* (The Cow, Dariush Mehrjui, 1969) ve *Umut* (Hope, Yılmaz Güney, 1970) filmleri, Anthony Giddens'in yapılandırma teorisi çerçevesinde bağlamsal analiz yöntemiyle ele alınıp devamında kodaçıklama gerçekleştirilmiştir. İki yönetmenin kullandığı sinema dilinde toplum, kültür, kimlik, siyasal etkinlik ve hegemonya eleştirisi gibi kavramların, özellikle adı geçen iki filmde göze çarptığı sonucuna varılmıştır. İki toplumun, aynı zaman diliminde benzer sorunlara maruz kaldığı bunun yanı sıra aralarında kültürel ve toplumsal benzerliklerin de olduğu görülmüştür.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yılmaz Güney. Dariush Mehrjui. Sinema. Anthony Giddens. Yapılandırma Kuramı. Yapı. Aktör.

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## Introduction

*Life is the basic element of cinema and cinema is a form of art that despite all its limitations can express many human issues. Cinema is a powerful and influential medium that has always been a means of serving the political propaganda of the ruling states so it has been widely used in different periods.*

*Social sciences study the various dimensions of society. A society that has been formed in a certain period of time has its own characteristics which can be analysed in lots of frameworks. Anthony Giddens as a social scientist in Structuration theory, sees social interaction and social structure as intertwined. People follow the rules that are available in the social structure and by gaining collective knowledge (based on social interactions) they interact with each other and with the structure again. He describes people as subjects to the rules and its creators. In short, we create society and at the same time, we are created by it. The human being who builds society also has the ability to make changes in it as a filmmaker by expressing the issues of life through cinema and draw the attention of the people or in some cases the officials in that community to such issues. Sometimes even the appearance of such problems in films has affected the process of addressing them in society. For example, we can mention the movie *The Cycle* (1978) by Dariush Mehrjui which with reference to some of the problems related to blood transfusion, helped the way for the establishment of the Iranian Blood Transfusion Organization. Just as Dariush Mehrjui is known in Iran as a director who cares about the issues of his community so Yılmaz Güney is known as a stylist director of social realistic films in Turkey.*

*According to Giddens' theory, Mehrjui and Güney as two social realist directors are agents who try to interact with structure, shape and create it. They also criticize their society through their films with a similar point of view. "According to the minimal hermeneutic claim, the interpretation of the film requires an understanding of its constructive work" (Jamadi, 1999, p. 215). To understand an art work, one must have a correct understanding of the creator and his point of view. In both films, Güney and Mehrjui also consider the issue of identity. Anthony Giddens considers identity as an action in the structure of society.*

*"Identity means being and existence. Something that is a means of identifying a person who is a set of personal characteristics and behavioral characteristics from which the person is recognized as a member of a social group and is distinguished from others" (Ashraf, 1995, p. 27).*

*According to him identity is rooted in society and culture, it also ultimately leads to the formation of backward or progressive societies. Both filmmakers, given their activism in society, have chosen a social theme for the purpose of filmmaking so this has led to Anthony Giddens' theory of structuralization that does not make man a passive being in society.*

*The purpose of this study is to investigate the commonalities of the cinematic languages of these two prominent Iranian and Turkish filmmakers. Both of them have tried to portray some of the problems in the lives of their communities through cinema.*

### **Dariush Mehrjui (1939; Tahrán, Iran)**

Dariush Mehrjui is an Iranian screenwriter, translator, producer and director who is known as one of the most influential filmmakers and creators of the new wave of cinema in the seventies. He was the initiator of realism in popular Iranian cinema. He adapts from fiction in most of his works. In a sick social system where the task of cinema is to sell dreams to people in order to get away from the bitter and biting reality of society, New Wave Cinema tells true stories of hardship in the lives of people in society. Therefore, many similarities can be found between the works produced in this period and the New Realism of Italian cinema, a new school of filmmaking after World War II was moving away from the current Hollywood style of filmmaking and telling realistic stories from the problems in people's lives. This genre tells stories of poverty, unemployment, hunger by not using professional actors and using

long shots and real locations (not studios). “These films depict an inhumane and sedentary environment full of deprivation and ruthlessness. The emotional spirit of these films is a combination of fatigue and despair” (Huaco, 1983, p.26).

Mehrjui’s work has a special place in the *New Wave of Iranian Cinema*, especially his film *The Cow* which is considered as the initiator of this process. In response to the question of what model he had in mind for making *The Cow*, Mehrjoui mentions *Italian Neo-Realist cinema* films such as *Bicycle Thieves*, *Rome: Open City*, *Paisan*, etc.

*The Cow* was made in 1969 in response to the conditions of the time. *The White Revolution* in 1960 was supposed to take steps to protect the interests of farmers and workers through land reform and some other fundamental changes. However, the movement was met with some opposition from various factions and remained fruitless. “The White Revolution dismantled the traditional foundation of patrimonial authority - the clergy, merchants and the landowners - which established the link between the former oligarchy and the urban and rural masses and tribes” (Ashraf, 1995, p.136). *Ashraf* in his article entitled *From the White Revolution to the Islamic Revolution* says that the prosperity of cities, population growth, increasing migration from rural to urban areas, the disappearance of previous social arrangements in rural areas, many other changes and transformations led to changes in the social and class structure of Iranian society. The most important of these changes was the formation of new classes who played a significant role in subsequent social developments.

*The Cow* is the story of a person’s life and is limited to his personal world. It describes his vulnerability and sometimes his complete degeneration in the context of complex and abnormal individual and social relations. Dariush Mehrjui as the auteur (director) who has always been associated with Iranian social issues chose the story of *The Cow* from the collection of stories of *The Mourners of Bayal* by *Gholam Hossein Sa’edi*, a doctor who narrated realist stories from the villages where he practiced medicine.

The director of this movie tried to fulfil his social duty. His action was to raise awareness in the society as well as criticize the structure of how societies and individuals have become confused and drowned in ignorance and superstition, despite their claims of modernity and the prevalence of urbanization.

### **Yılmaz Güney (1937; Adana, Turkey - 1984; Paris, France)**

Yılmaz Güney was born in a Kurdish family in Adana. At the age of fourteen, he got to know cinema while working for a film distribution company and at the age of seventeen he became acquainted with socialism through a poem by *Nazım Hikmet*.

His prevailing attitude towards cinema is summed up in this sentence: “At the moment I read Hikmet’s poem, it sparked a fire in me and I realized what class I belonged to. I was a villager... and my liberation was possible only with the liberation of my class” (Varol, 2016, p.11). He began writing poetry and short stories for various publications in the same years and in 1961 he was arrested and imprisoned for writing a story in 1956 entitled “Three Uncertain Systems of Inequality” that did not accepted by the governmental system at the time. During his imprisonment, he continued to write stories. He worked as an actor, director, screenwriter and then he created four of his most influential films in the genre of social realism in the 1970s. His first film was *Hope* and his next films were *Arkadaş (Friend)*, *Sürü (Herd)* and *Yol (Road)*. “In the films he makes between 1960 - 1970, Güney always takes the side of the oppressed and tells the stories about the struggles of this class and their resistance to the power of oppressors and their pressure” (Varol, 2016, p.82). *Hope* is a turning point in Turkish cinema. A change took place in Turkish cinema with this film and social realism emerged as a genre.

“During this period, there is a struggle for freedom in Turkey (as in the rest of the World). The changes in economic and social conditions have made human life more difficult. The sum of these factors has made human beings rebel and rise against oppression” (Varol, 2016, p.83).

Güney, in his films made during the seventies, focuses more on social criticism and tries to show that individual effort do not lead anywhere and only the collective effort of individuals in the context of society leads to change. *Hope* is about poverty, backwardness, feudalism and the transition from feudalism to capitalism and it shows the conflict between the oppressors and the oppressed. “Güney tries to evoke action by relying on human emotions and invite people to think by portraying inequalities” (Scognamillo, 2003, p.340).

*Hope* won the Best movie, Best Director, Best Screenplay, Best Actor and Best Picture awards at the Adana Film Festival at 1970. He was also awarded as the Best Actor at the *Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival*. The movie was screened at the *Cannes Film Festival* the following year and won a special award in the *repertoire of selected Grenoble films*. Güney became internationally known for the first time with this film. His cinema especially *Hope*, does not directly address political issues but essentially the political dimension of his cinema is highlighted by expressing the characteristics of the human world itself. The expression of naked, primitive and violent truth is inherently a political matter and the important point in Güney’s cinema is that he does not present this truth with political expression, but with his unique cinematic language. He is the narrator of these stories.

“The film aroused the emotions of the people in Turkey in the 70’s and attracted a lot of attention, so it was banned. The reason for the ban was the sharp expression of the truth. The characters, identities and the events in Güney’s cinema are taken from legends and popular literature, especially the stories of bandits” (Atman, 2000, p.80).

Yılmaz Güney faced restrictions due to his thought which eventually led to his departure from the country in 1981. He went to France and made his latest work called *Duvar (The Wall)* in that country. In 1982 he won The Golden Palme for his film *Yol* and in 1984 he died in France and was buried in *Pere Lachaise Cemetery*.

### **Anthony Giddens and Structuration Theory**

Giddens divides societies to four general categories: tribal societies which emphasize kinship and tradition in time and place, class-divided societies which are organized with a kind of urban / rural differentiation and class societies with four specific institutional areas, especially economic and political.

“According to Giddens, structure for functionalists is something like the skeleton of a building or its main pillar which is external to the human agent. According to structuralists and poststructuralists, structure is the underlying codes that we understand from its manifestations” (Giddens, 1984, p.16).

However, in his view, structure finds meaning only in human act and consequently creates a link between the views of structuralists and individualists and therefore structuration is a two-way theory that refers to the duality of structure; the interrelationship of structure and act. “According to Giddens, society can be understood as a combination of repetitive actions that form institutions. These actions depend on the habits and forms of life to which individuals are accustomed” (Pearson, 2006, p.134). In his consideration, structure consists of rules and resources. It means that there are resources in society which generate rules for living in that society and with the flow of them in society, social interaction occurs. Rule is a method or technique that provides a suitable formula for action, and agents are often only implicitly aware of it.

“From a sociological point of view, the most important rules are those that agents use in reproducing social relations over a certain period of time or space. These rules express certain characteristics: 1. They are frequently used in conversations, interaction rituals and routines. 2. They are implicitly understood and are part of the actors’ cognitive reserve. 3. They are informal, unwritten and implicit. 4. They are enforced through interpersonal techniques which are used as a tool for mild punishment” (Turner, 1984, p.408).

Agents use resources to perform actions and activities. Giddens considers resources as including things that create power. When agents interact with each other, they use resources and when they use resources, they shape the acts of others. “Giddens considers action or agency and structure and power as the main parts of social science and considers agency as the fundamental basis of power” (Pearson, 1996, p.146). He sees power within social structures as having a broad meaning (the power of doing things by all individuals) and a limited one (the domination of some over the others). These resources are used by active agents and the structural features of society are created by repeating behaviors. By continuing and expanding these features in specific time periods, social relations are formed. While describing the characteristics of the agent, Giddens refers to the concept of ontological security “which is the root of the agent’s behavior. Ontological security refers to the continuity of personal identity in terms of time and place and the reliability of social life” (Turner, 1984, p.406). Many of the things that give direction to the act are hidden in the subconscious. Giddens divides the knowledge of the agents into practical consciousness and discursive consciousness. “Discursive consciousness is something that the agent understands, knows and can express but practical consciousness is perception and cognition that cannot be expressed. Rules and resources are procedures and behaviors that are embedded in practical consciousness” (Leskiewicz, 2004, pp. 23-24). The agent acquires knowledge with discursive consciousness and practical consciousness to perform social action. Thus, without this insight and awareness, the possibility of social interaction and mutual reproduction, the formation of institutions and consequently structure does not exist. In any reflexivity that consists of actors and scenes, the rethinking of the monitoring of the action in an orderly manner is accompanied by the monitoring of the environment of interaction. This phenomenon is fundamental to the guessing of the future course of action in the realm of temporal-spatial relationships, which Giddens also calls co-presence.

The interaction of act and structure on each other means that without ontological security the agent has no knowledge of social action so it is with ontological security that he reaches discursive consciousness, practical consciousness and performs social action.

“Social actions are not spontaneous and completely voluntary but are organized during time and space. In other words, they are regular and create reactions. Social actions create visible patterns and those visible patterns build and shape society. Therefore, the structure is dependent on the activity. Structure is both a mediator and a consequence of the process of structuring production and reproducing actions in terms of time and space. Giddens calls this process double hermeneutics which is a two-way conflict between individuals and institutions”. (Rose, 1998, pp.6-7).

In this way the agent with the rules and resources, gains enough power to repeat social action and causes the formation of interaction and thus social actions are formed and become a social structure. The cycle of this interaction continues in the same way. Now it must be imagined that if one side of this cycle fails, for example the agent does not act or act unknowingly or do predetermined and defined tasks in the lack of ontological security, this

defect also spreads to the structure and social institutions which will not meet the real needs of agents and individuals in society because this cycle has remained flawed. It has not been expressed correctly and the response has not been adequate. In this way, the formation of interaction has remained barren. Such a society will gradually lead to the domination of a limited number on the mass (who have no agency). Power will be in the hands of a limited number and thus the rules will be determined and defined by these same limited resources. To prevent such an event Giddens introduces the concept of Dialectic of Control.

Although authority and consequently obedience are the inescapable realities of social life, the power relations between the powerful and the powerless consistently involve a combination of freedom of action and dependence. However, the powerful rely on those deprived of power to carry out certain actions and procedures. Whatever the extent of the reliance of those in power on those deprived of it, subordinates can skillfully use it as a lever for freedom of action in some areas. Strikes, civil disobediences, strategic forms of participation in elections are all effective tactics used by the disenfranchised in what Giddens calls the dialectic of control.

“In fact Giddens, in the dialectic of control, states that the sum of power in society is not zero and subordinates always have the ability to change the situation. In support of this, he cites the example of a prisoner who could change the situation in his favor by going on a hunger strike” (Layder, 2016, p.167).

#### **Methodology: Contextual analysis by descriptive method**

Context of *The cow* and *Hope* are sociologically analyzed according to Anthony Giddens’ theory of structuration. For this purpose, first the society depicted in both films then story of them described and after that both films are coded in two categories of **Structure** and **Agency**.

The variables in the category of **Structure** are defined in two sections: **Resources** and **Rules**. The variables in the category of **Agency** are defined in the sections of **Ontological Security**, **Practical Consciousness**, **Discursive Consciousness**, **Social Action**, **Social interaction** and **Presence**.

In this way, it will be possible to compare the commonalities and differences of both films. By re-reading the works produced in the past, one can understand some of the unspoken truths of that period. The historical and cultural similarities between neighboring countries in the same periods can also be examined from this perspective. Finding these commonalities among the works of contemporary artists indicates the existence of a common pain that although expressed in two different languages but has a similar appearance in the same cinematic language and can help to find solutions tailored to the problems in both of them. The new filmmaker generation can also be made aware of the importance of cinema, its impact on issues related to human life and draw more attention to cinema closer to their own culture.

Leading research is limited to these two films due to the high number of films made by both filmmakers and also the initial similarities found between them such as being produced in the same period of time, using an animal to tell a story in the same genre (Neorealism), similarities between two main characters as individuals in semi-similar societies. Both films are analyzed only in the framework of the proposed theory.

#### **Findings and Analysis:**

##### *The Cow*

The script of the movie *The Cow* is based on a story by *Gholam Hossein Sa’edi* called *The*

*Mourners of Bayal*. This realist writer tells the story of a rural man who had a deep emotional connection with his cow which was a source of income for him and his family. The cow was killed for an unknown reason. The man goes crazy after the cow dies and after that he thinks that he is a cow. In writing this story, *Sa'edi* uses magical realism to address the authoritarian monarchy, poverty, corruption and oppression that ruled Iran from the 1940s to the 1960s. "It depicts the superstitions and popular beliefs of the people in relation to the prevailing oppression with surreal, mythical and imaginary justifications" (Mazandarani & Gabanchi, 2015, p. 17).

According to Giddens's classification of communities, the community depicted in *The Cow* is in the category of tribal society because the illustrated community in the film is based on kinship and the definition of the relationships between people based on common traditions in the specific time period and place of the story. Mehrjui criticizes the system which society is ruled with and challenges the process of urbanization. The tribal community which according to Giddens is still involved in ethnic relations and superstitious customs, does not have the power to face the state of getting urbanized. The aimless behavior of children and young people in the film, their indecision, their meaningless behavior in dealing with a madman in the village, show the lost identity of people in such a community. The existing problems are accepted as destiny by the people who are immersed in superstition and to get rid of problems they use magic as a pretext because a rational attitude does not rule society. The short walls, the windows in the walls and the intrusion of people into each other's lives show that there is no privacy in a society that allows anyone to interfere in another's life. The identity of the woman is the same as the traditional one. It means that she finds meaning as a wife, mother or future bride. The same situation rules the man who is subject to the primitive definitions of gender and existence. In this society with the loss of the source of power- which is the cow- the rules of one's life and also his activities are changed. One is lost and becomes passive. He loses his identity because he has lost the source of his identity. In this way the structure neither gives him any rights nor recognizes him.

Seif, in his book *Markings in The Mourners of Bayal* describes Bayal as a village on which the pollen of death and nothingness is sprinkled. The villagers live in a situation that they seem to have to endure until death comes. They are not aware of their situation and do not try to get rid of it. They accept that this is their portion of life. Social determinism goes hand in hand with the natural determinism to shape their lives. Anyone who is born in this village will mature in this culture and will eventually become someone like his parents. There is no sign of growth and prosperity in this village. This is the real world of Iran in the 1940s and 50s. The people of Bayal immersed in poverty and superstition are waiting for a savior.

According to Giddens's theory of structuration, the main character of film; Mash Hassan, is a symbol of the non-urban person in a tribal society. He has no agency and therefore does not interact socially so social action is not repeated and thus there is nothing to be institutionalized to form a structure in society. This society has not changed and is not structured according to time and place so the source of power is given to a limited number which according to Giddens causes the domination of a few over the majority. Mash Hassan loses his mind and ends up in the desert, falls into the abyss and dies. Just like the main character of Yılmaz Güney's film *Hope, Cabbar* who heads to the desert to find treasure, Mash Hassan heads to the desert. While Mash Hassan dies after falling into the abyss, Cabbar loses his mind.



### *Hope*

*Hope* was written by Yılmaz Güney and Şerif Gören. The movie tells the story of Cabbar's life in 100 minutes. Cabbar is a coachman from *Adana*. He is a poor man and cannot find a customer because every one is too poor to afford a ride. His horse carrying his cart dies in an accident and because the law does not protect the rights of his class, he is found guilty. The creditors are looking for him to get their debts and he goes to the elders of his tribe to borrow money and pay his debts. In the end he can not do anything and accompanies his friends, he goes to the desert to find treasure. He loses his mind at the end of the story.

*Hope* is a realistic film that addresses the problems of people in society. It is taken from the truth of the society and has a bitter and biting expression of it. The main character of the film is selected from the lowest class of the society which in this sense is different from the character of Yeşilçam films both in appearance and in terms of social status because he is an ordinary person. In the first part of the film, the character loses his horse and in the second part of the film he tries to make up this loss with the help of superstitious beliefs through individual efforts. It shows that society has not been able to create ontological security for the individual.

According to Giddens's classification of societies, the society in this film takes place in the category of societies divided into classes. However, the society depicted in this film has not yet been fully urbanized and rural - tribal relations still dominate its atmosphere. This film which tells the story of the life and hardships of the working class, shows the audience that the main character is not part of society. He is ignored by individuals (creditors, tribal elders), rulers and structures (police and the financial structure). The city is full of contradictions. It is a space that seems modern but most of its people are poor and not yet modern. The different treatment by the law of the rich and the poor, represented by the police, indicates the disordered structure of the system in this society. Children representing the new society are deprived of their most basic childhood rights, namely playing games (Cabbar's sons cycling) and proper education (Cabbar's daughter's failure at school). Cabbar is a coachman who dreams of paying off his debts. Even his basic dream of living and fulfilling the most basic needs is not completely realised. The person is not an agent in this film and he takes abnormal steps to solve his problems. He resorts to methods that come from traditions of societies, superstitions and ignorance. He does not claim his right so it seems that the character of the film has discursive consciousness but fails in practical consciousness and gives in to the superstitious ways of tribal communities.

The structure has not made a fundamental move to change the way of thinking of the people and their lifestyles, so the person who considers himself alone in the world defined by the structure, does not have ontological security. He remains passive in such a society and social interaction does not take place in this way.

It is in such circumstances that the main character chooses the same eternal path, which here is the individual effort of the person to go in search of treasure in the desert which stands for nowhere. Therefore the structure does not encounter a new rule and imposes itself on the person without any difficulty. In this way power remains in the hands of the same limited minority as one of the sources of power and no correction occurs in the cycle of the influence between structure and agent.

Güney criticizes the system with this film but on the other hand his focus is on the agent. He depicts behavior and movements, misconceptions and superstitions so that the

audience is confronted with their own possible image and realizes the weaknesses and wrong decision of the main character. In the movie the municipality starts collecting carriages and the coachmen become unemployed. They decide to hold peaceful protests. In describing the reason of this decision one of the coachmen says that: **“Friends, our protest is to protect our rights. If we unite, I am sure we can get our rights back. Unity brings power. Let us become one, friends”**. But Cabbar who no longer has a horse or a carriage decides to find a way out individually. This is the duality of structure: agent’s action and its influence on structure. In fact, hope and despair are intertwined, says Yılmaz Güney about the film: **“Hope is the product of despair and despair is one of the results of hope”**

**Table 1: Categories and Codes of two films:**

“Our perceptions of the themes of a film do not always correspond to the intentions of a filmmaker. The relative nature of the audience’s view in terms of differences in personal and cultural views and other factors, sometimes leads to interpretations of a film that the filmmaker never even imagined” (Wollen, 1998, p.46).

The Structuration Theory								
Category	Agent						Structure	
Code	Ontological security	Practical consciousness	Discursive consciousness	Social action	Social interaction	Precense	Rules	Resorces
<i>The Cow</i>	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Common terms and literature in traditional societies</li> <li>2. Superstitious beliefs</li> <li>3. Traditional customs</li> <li>4. Common behavior and speech in traditional societies</li> <li>5. Lack of personal space</li> <li>6. Relations are based on traditions not codified rules</li> </ol>	Limited

<i>Hope</i>	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Common terms and literature in traditional societies</li> <li>2. Superstitious beliefs</li> <li>3. Traditional customs</li> <li>4. Common behavior and speech in traditional societies</li> <li>5. Lack of personal space</li> <li>6. Relations are based on traditions not codified rules</li> </ol>	Limited
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This is what *Stuart Hall* calls *coding* by the creator and *decoding* by the audience. In this process, the reader (here the audience) tries to decode film based on his or her personality, cultural components and perceptions of the world.

In the first encounter with both films, the cow and the horse as animals are significant. Mehrjui narrates his film with a cow and Güney with a horse. Both animals are sources of power for the films' main characters. Domestic animals, dominated by the humans they accompany and serve, in most cases do not have the power to object to their conditions. It is just like the time when the human being is used by the capitalist system of the modern world and in most cases despite having the power to protest, prefers passivity and silence.

As *Luis Bunuel* mentions: "every film is political inasmuch as it is conditioned by the ideology that created it - or within which it was created, which has its roots in the same place". According to this interpretation by Luis Bunuel, both films are political. The similar economic and social infrastructures as well as the geographical location of both countries have caused both of them to express the problems of their society in the same period of time. A simple narrative, in which the role of language is only to convey concepts is used in both films. We also see obvious signs of Neo-Realist cinema in both films. Reality-oriented films with long shots, real places, hard and bitter ways of life and its problems, difficulties, poverty and superstitions, can be seen in both films. According to Giddens, in ancient cultures and traditional societies, the idea of destiny, chance or the will of the gods are in the forefront. But with the modernization of societies the main emphasis is on the individual. Both films depict the individualism of the modern world, but a world that has not yet been modernized and of course its main characters have not yet been able to break free from traditional societies and both lose their minds. They are passive and each has somehow refused to accept social responsibility as an agent. The response to the question "who are the main characters?" is that they are others who lose their selves and minds. They are rejected by the society so they seek to find themselves. Simple characters who are typical. They exhibit the distinctive characteristics of a particular class and thus, are considered representatives of that class.

According to Giddens' structuration theory, both main characters in both films as agents don't have ontological security. They have practical consciousness but don't have discursive

consciousness, social action and social interaction. The resources in both society are limited to minority. The rules that govern the society are almost the same in both films:

1. Common terms and literature in traditional societies
2. Superstitious beliefs
3. Traditional customs
4. Common behavior and speech in traditional societies
5. Lack of personal space
6. Relations are based on traditions not codified rules

The common heroism in *FilmFarsi* (Persian film movement) before *The Cow*, which was similar to the heroism of *Yeşilçam* cinema before *Hope*, was inspired by realism. The character was chosen from ordinary people and the filmmaker depicts their weaknesses, fears and desires through de-heroizing. One loses his mind upon losing his cow and ends up thinking he himself is a cow, heading to the desert, the other one loses his mind upon losing his horse, seeks a treasure which is the source of his power (the economic source that solves his problems and restores his life, his identity, his acceptance in society). Both are dependent personalities who by force of habit insist on doing daily activities and never seek to oppose them; static characters who insist on not changing. Mash Hassan does not deal with the village thieves and falls victim to this passivity. Cabbar is not able to struggle with the system and eventually loses his mind.

### **Conclusion:**

Here, it is the filmmaker who as an agent invites the audience to think about the lives of the main characters and tries to make them aware of human passivity in society and the role of this passivity in keeping the structure flawed. His act is to make films in order to try to make a difference by examining the existing problems and expressing them in the popular cinema industry. He attempts to alter the rules that lead to the formation of structure. In this cycle, he interacts with his audience and thus the flow of movement from action to structure occurs. Both filmmakers are concerned with the question of identity.

Güney and Mehrjui criticize authority and the system in a similar cinematic language. They portray the atmosphere of society with a critical look: the realistic atmosphere of the society in which the element of habit and coexistence is seen in both of them and is derived from the traditional thinking of Eastern societies. One depicts the rural atmosphere that pervades ignorance and superstition, where privacy has lost its meaning and nothing but cultural and material poverty exists, the other depicts the contradictions of the urban and rural systems and the tribal intertwined with them. Both films also criticize the unfair distribution of life opportunities and the system's dual treatment of different people as well as traditional societies in terms of misconceptions and superstitions. As Bunuel says, "In the hands of a free spirit, cinema becomes a glorious and dangerous weapon. In fact, it is the best weapon through which you can express the world of dreams, emotions and instincts".

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The author of the article declared that there is no conflict of interest.

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