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Original Research Article

The Impact of Architectural Spaces on Iranian Expressionist Films A Comparative Study with German Expressionist Cinema

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Abstract

Problem statement: Cinema and architecture are regarded as two corresponding categories that have had a mutual impact on each other since the life of cinema. In the last century, the impact of architecture on cinema has been reviewed. Since Iranian cinema is considered as one of the most effective stylish ones, the impact that it has had on the architectural spaces can naturally make it necessary to study in this field. Perhaps the most prominent style that influenced architectural form in cinema was the influence of expressionist architecture on cinema between the two world wars, where architecture and cinema are immensely close together. Expressionist, as one of the manifestations of the 20th century, has also appeared in Iranian cinema during decades, however, the lack of research in this area has left the impact of this type of architecture on Iranian expressionist films unknown.

Research objective: The aim of this study is to investigate Iranian expressionist cinema in the contemporary period and how films are influenced by architectural spaces.

Research method: This study was a qualitative study with comparative study and content analysis. In this passage, the expressionist concept and its concepts in architecture and cinema are discussed first, then by examining the examples and content analysis, the role of architectural spaces in Iranian expressionist cinema is examined.

Conclusion: The results show that the influence of architectural spaces on expressionist films in “A Party in Hell” has a tangible and intuitive reference to architectural spaces due to its massive decoration and adherence to expressionist pillars. Unlike other examples where these expressionist films have reduced the physical effects of architectural spaces to a minimal extent, other elements such as shadows and light have also been taken into consideration.

Keywords: *Architectural Spaces, Expressionist Films, Iranian Cinema, Architecture, Cinema.*

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Introduction

German expressionism appeared in connection with the art of painting and then entered the category of literature and cinema (Nazerzadeh Kermani, 1998, 37). The history of the expressionist movement dates back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, When German expressionist schools were influenced by the work of artists such as “Vincent Van Gogh”, “Edward Monk” and “James Ensor”. The roots of expressionism can be traced back to Germany, which later spread rapidly as an alternative to impressionism and naturalism in other major European cities and gained popularity after World War I (Kennedy, 2015, 6). The pioneers of the first expressionist movements in Germany were Paula Madison Becker (1876-1907) (Davies, Jacobs, Denny, Hofrichter, Roberts & Simon, 2009, 943). An important point to be made about that period is that the Expressionist movement was introduced in Europe at a time when the continent was full of distress and distrust. Expressionism, which began in Germany before World War I, began with a kind of fear of the spread of modernity and sought a new form of freedom for the individual and society (Kennedy, 2015, 6). Many artists see the beginning of the expressionist movement as part of Paul’s group. Four German students established an office in 1905 that played a significant role in shaping expressionist forms in architecture (ibid.). The second most important group was the Blue Rider. Like Paul Bridge, the group’s painters, in addition to art forms from Western art history, relied on non-Western art forms and traditions to create images to cast doubt on modern urban life (Davies et al., 2009, 946). The most compelling character in this group was “Wassily Kandinsky”. He hoped that through his art, he could begin a new spiritual period for the modern man (Kandinsky, 2002, 22).

Before the presence of other artistic styles in the newly established cinema, architecture had always been considered a permanent element for the creation of various content forms in cinema. The most profound bond between the two has existed since the beginning of the creation of cinema and

has continued brilliantly in various genres. Perhaps the most striking presence of architectural spaces in the expressionism films took place between the two world wars in Germany, When the link between cinema and architecture was able to move ahead of its time and provide a warning of the future for its audience. The same thing continued in the style of imperialism and later years, but in expressionism, the critical point is its presence in Iran at the same time as its global brilliance. This issue necessitates a comparative study of the presence of these spaces in Iranian cinema. Therefore, the present study aims to achieve the standard component of physical architectural spaces in the genre of expressionist cinema, which is a symbol of these effects. This research seeks to answer the question of what role architectural spaces have had in Iranian expressionist cinema and whether this influence has been purely physical or has entered a semantic load. For this purpose, among the limited films made and close to expressionist cinema, four Iranian films were selected as the case studies and based on the implemented components of this style in world cinema, a comparative study of this film with its constituent elements were conducted.

Expressionist

Expressionism is a two-way street. One was the psychological aspect of fear, panic and rejection from World War I and the other was cultural discourse. An art that, after Impressionism, showed the spatial reflection of the sensory effects that expressed the artist’s innermost feelings and desires (Bani Masoud, 2013, 241). Another type of expressionism that emerged in the years after World War II in the United States was known as abstract expressionism, whose preoccupations were to reveal global facts the same as surrealists. Therefore, they are considered the heirs of “Kandinsky” and “Malevich”. The beliefs of existentialism primarily influenced abstract expressionism. A philosophy that emerged with depression and post-war deprivation, because the war not only questioned

the people's belief in faith in science and logic but also questioned the concept of progress for a better world (Davies et al., 2009, 1026). "Nietzsche" may be considered the most critical person to attribute the theoretical foundations of this movement to it. "Nietzsche" discussed the belief in the originality of the individual and the sanctity of sensory perception, in the book "Thus Says Zarathustra". As a result, all of which were principles that formed the philosophical foundations of expressionism (Bani Masoud, 2013, 241).

Expressionism in cinema

The expressionist stood up to the Impressionist because he did not want to portray the Splendid outer world, but wanted to portray the turbulent inner world. Sharp spots, long bars, curved trails, formula-like symbols, ancient masks, re-readings of seismic distortion signs all go away and are unveiled like sediment. What the expressionist painting portrayed as a moving film came true in images such as "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari". The melodramatic effect of a painting on oil and oil hanging in a museum may be beyond the black box of cinema (Panahi, 2004, 10).

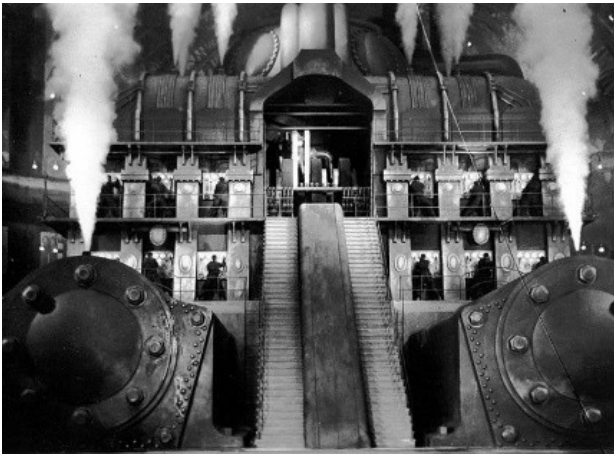
The five years that Germany went through the hardest possible form of defeat in the war and as a result of riots and coups, military interventions, devaluation of money and hunger, was severely unstable, are artistically the richest period of German cinema. This period was enough for anyone to give a theoretical view of German cinema so that it could realize the real application of the realm of cinema (Gregor & Patalas, 2015, 77). Numerous experts take the view that "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" film was the beginning of expressionist cinema (Jahandideh & Dehghanpour, 2012, 4). It was during this period that critics declared that the expressionist style, which had long been embedded in other arts, had found its way into the cinema. (Bordwell & Thomson, 2015, 84). In the expressionist film, actors, scenes and plot designs are designed and paid for as elements that convey the film's sense

and psychological space. The contrast of black and white colors in the scenes and the strange shapes embossed on the décor curtains intensify the mood. Also, the strange shadows that are seen on the screen due to the unique lighting mode, which means they play a significant role in making the scenes more and more harmonious.

Subsequent directors were able to demonstrate the warning features of indentations, trees, field stacks, shadows, triangles and serrated lines, without the need to resort to painted decorations. The fascination with the image of a superior human being continued in German cinema as long as social and political uncertainty persisted. Successful films of that time portrayed the nightmare of oppression and terror, all of which portrayed violent, oppressive and painful images of political dictatorship (Gregor & Patalas, 2015, 81). The Expressionist filmmaker, through high-contrast lighting, self-portrait camera angles and exaggerated games (Fig. 1), distorted the appearance of reality and created a new reality that he believed was the truth of his contemporary world (Rahimian, 1990, 42). In German expressionist films, the shadow of the darkness of human existence and evil was spreading. In these films, the shadow was not only a sign of the dark side of the individual but also a symbol of the dark side of society, which has turned away from reality and taken refuge in its imaginations. The shadow is a symbol of the inevitable fate of a war-torn and oppressed nation (Jahandideh & Dehghanpour, 2012, 5). Therefore, the characteristics of the expressionist movement in the performing arts can be seen in Fig. 2.

Expressionism in architecture

Expressionism is used in architecture to refer to architects who worked in the Salafi lands between 1910 and 1925. Indeed, the main feature of which was to contradict the eclectic art of the nineteenth century and the common sense of functionalism of those years (Demartini & Prina, 2013, 326). Political, economic and artistic developments were the foundation for the early manifestations of



A



B

Fig. 1. A & B) Scenes from the 1927 film *Metropolis* by Fritz Long, which shows the exaggerated decorum of the director's expressionist expression. There is a kind of protest and disgust with the film about industrialization and modernism. Source: Authors archive.

expressionist architecture, especially in Germany, where the idealistic features of expressionism were more intense in spite of a leftist artistic community. A society that eagerly sought answers to the turmoil during and after World War I. A society that eagerly sought answers to the turmoil during and after World War I. (Sharp, 1966, 9). The defeat in the war, the removal of "Kaiser Wilhelm II", the deprivations, the rise of the social democrats and optimism for the Weimar Republic created a tendency among architects to pursue pre-war projects. Architects were among the art schools that sought the same revolution that had taken place in Russia. More expensive reconstructions were more reminiscent of the empire's past than during the war and the resulting depression (Pehnt, 1973, 20). Many writers were involved in the ideology of expressionist architecture. Philosophical sources that were important to expressionist architects included the works of "Friedrich Nietzsche", "Soren Kierkegaard" and "Henry Bergson". In particular, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" that his main character was the embodiment of freedom for expressionists. Freedom to reject the bourgeois world, freedom from history and the power of the soul in the isolation of individualism (Sharp, 1966, 41). "Wassily Kandinsky"'s artistic theories, such as the

spirituality of art and the point and line were the aims of expressionist thought.

The roots of expressionist architecture can be traced back to the industrial and professional movements, "Verbond" and "Arnaud. Bruno Taut"'s work in "Worcester" and "Gaudi"'s work in Art Nouveau were consistent with the expressionist ideas (Bani Masoud, 2013, 241). The language of expressionist architecture greatly influenced the prevalence of forms derived from nature, such as spiral and curved forms, as well as the visual values of materials such as brick and glass, especially on the exterior surfaces of buildings. Besides, among the architects whose style of work is attributed to expressionism, Anthony Gaudi may be considered the most influential. He discovered transformations in the physical structure of the building by using most of the freedom of action available in eclectic style compositions. Thus, it was impossible to separate the building's structure and its decoration. Gaudi's buildings can be considered as pioneers of expressionist themes in architecture. He said once in his statement, "The straight line belongs to man and the curved line to God" and then he expressed his geometric principles about curves, quotas and hyperbole. Gaudi's designs, while expressing intricate designs, had a passionate and treacherous meaning and offered a style similar to iconography, which was

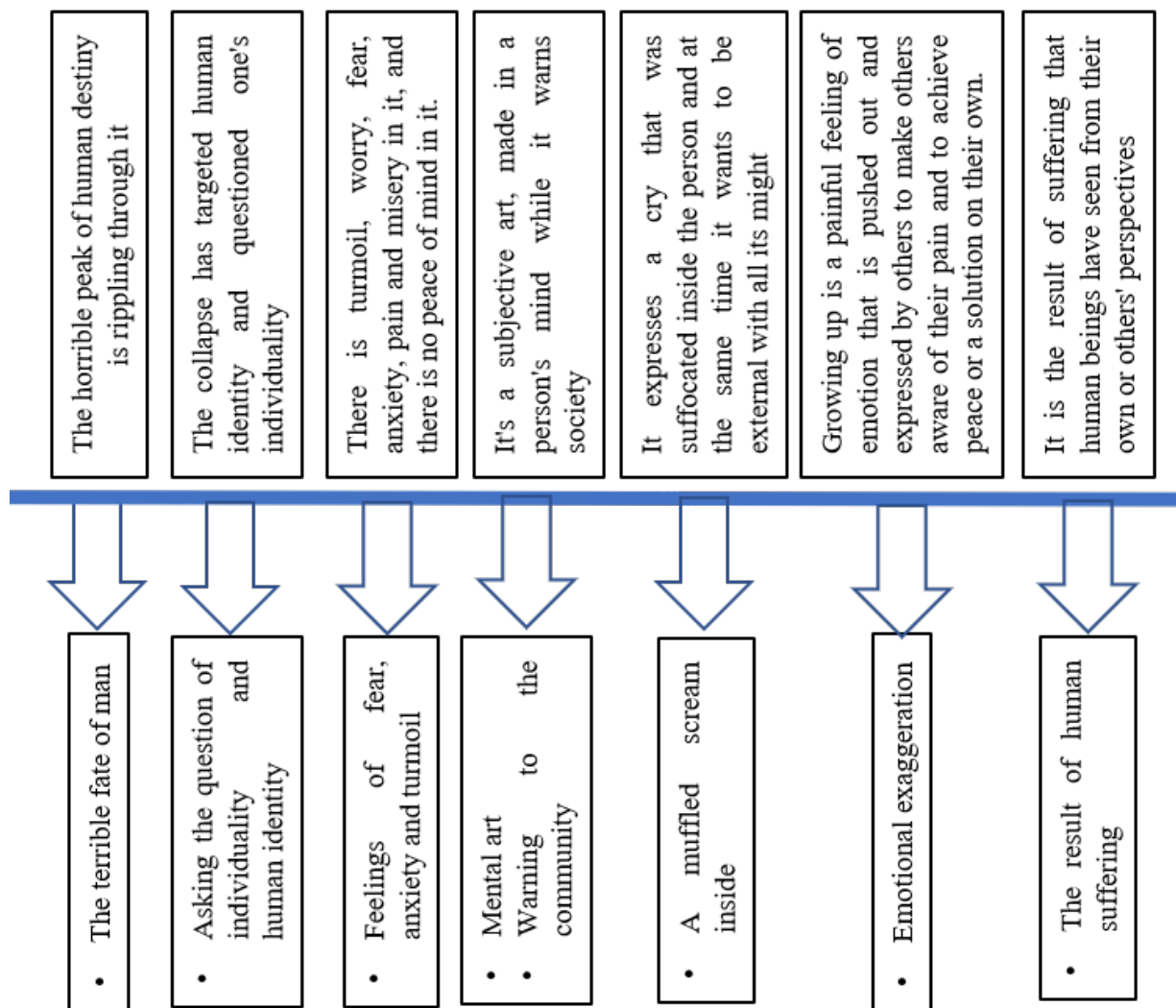


Fig. 2. Expressionist cinema indicators. Source: authors, Based on Khakinezhad, 2015, 8.

both realistic and metaphorical. (Crippa, 2008, 13; Demartini & Pmia, 2013, 292).

While the expressionist architecture was individualistic and in many ways opposed to widespread prejudices about aesthetics, it had its own set of principles. (Sharp, 1966, 166). Principles that, although distinct and abundant, are recognizable in works attributed to this style and these indicators can be seen in Fig. 3.

The effect of architecture on expressionist cinema

Many critics believe that there has been a deep connection between architecture and cinema since

the beginning of filmmaking. They point out that the stage design of expressionist art films often shows sharp building angles, high altitudes and crowded environments. For example, we can mention the film *Metropolis*, which has repeatedly paid attention to the number of towers in its array (Darsa, 2013). German expressionist painters rejected the naturalistic image of the objective reality that was often portrayed in the distorted faces of buildings and landscapes in ways that virtually ignored the principles of perspective. This approach was used in conjunction with jagged and rough shapes and unnatural colors and their combinations to convey mental feelings. Examples

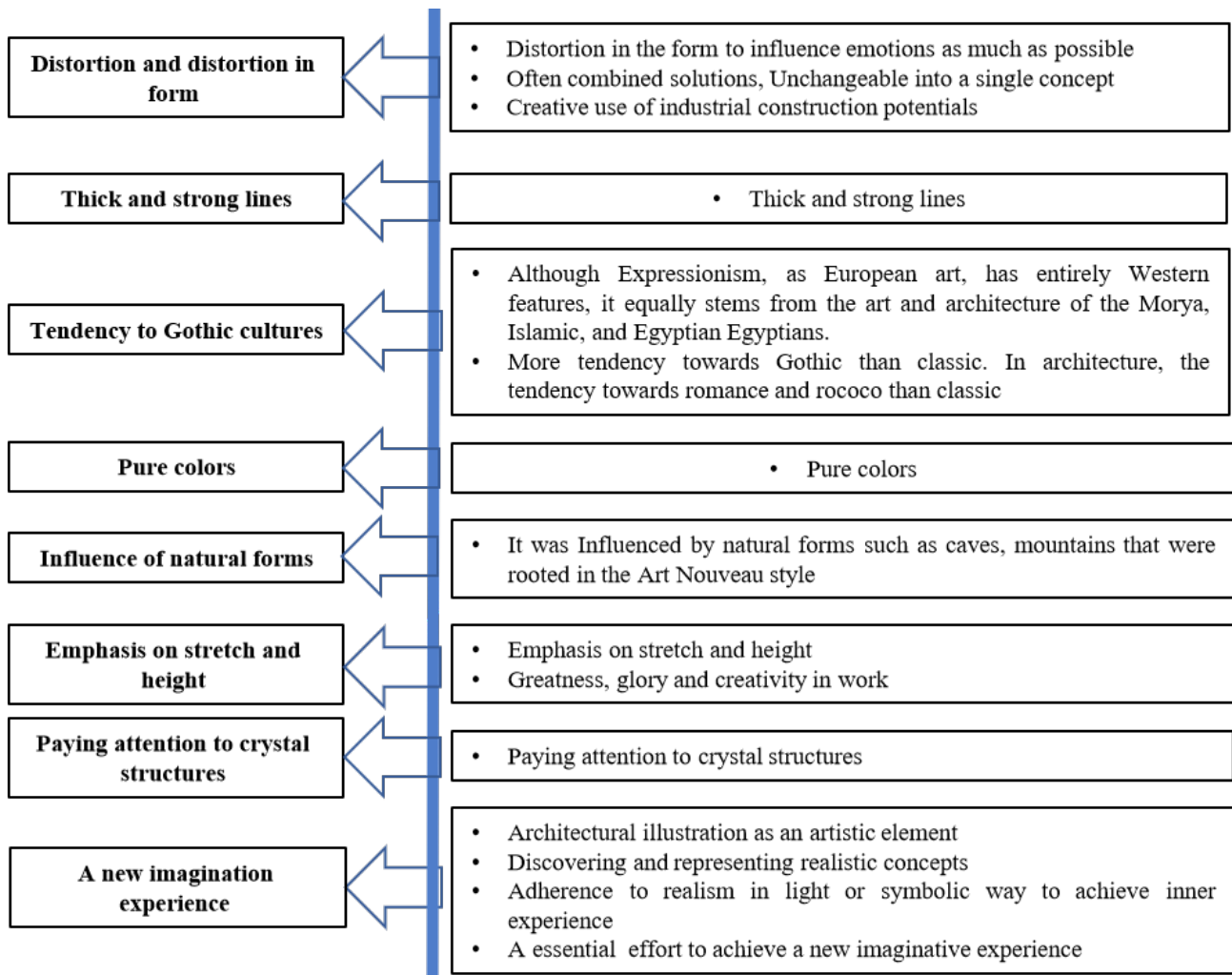


Fig. 3. Expressionist architectural indicators. Source: Authors based on Taut, 1919, 87; Pehnt, 1973, 20; Ahangar, 2005, 49; Reid, 1982; Sharp, 1966, 199.

include “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” Film, a masterpiece, in which the director employed a painter and stage designer to create a dreamlike environment of fantasy nightmares mixed with complex structures and landscapes with sharp and diagonal shapes.

The proposed expressionist films are generally related to the German expressionist, where architecture has played a significant role in creating excitement. By examining the typical chapter of the concepts of architecture and expressionist cinema, we can summarize the architectural effects on expressionist films as follows: unusual shapes, dense and short ceiling, winding and dark corridors, cracked stairs, shady streets and playgrounds with

colored lights, wet asphalt, old halls, creating a psychological atmosphere, castle ruins, creating huge shadows on the edges of the walls, warning features of congresses, trees, field ridges, shadows, triangles and serrated lines, painted shadows, lighting and lighting edge of the city in the future that each of them played a role in creation of excitement in Expressionist films (Panahi, 2004, 10).

The correspondence between the characteristics of cinema and expressionist architecture in this study indicates the four physical characteristics of the index in recognizing the effect of architectural spaces in this cinema. In the following, these characteristics are briefly introduced and examined in the case studies of films along with the semantic index, to

determine the influence of Iranian cinema on these indicators and the expressionist atmosphere:

Light, as one of the most prominent features of expressionist architecture, has played a significant role in introducing this model of cinema to the world. Therefore, lighting as an essential factor, as well as contributing to the revival of Gothic churches, became a unique signature of this genre.

The second feature introduced as a form, left its distinctive elements in expressionist architecture, of which the characteristics are proportions, elongation and heaviness of the spatial form. The performance of the form in this cinema also expresses the character of the film through which the sensory message is transmitted.

The third indicator, called space construction, is more represented in "Gaudi"'s expressionist, indicating the author's imagination and mental spaces entering the building, things that had never been seen before. It happened in cinema with the creation of dreamlike images and sometimes in opposition to realism, from the creation of imaginary utopias to the collapsed ruins of humanity.

The last criterion in the discussion of sensory suspension is that both in architecture and in expressionist cinema, geometric forms are taken out of its static state and proportions of human body lost to affect more senses that just eyesight.

In addition to these four physical characteristics, which are considered to be the principles for this adaptation, the expressionist has philosophical and semantic support in architecture and cinema. The support that has been used mainly to express and reflect the socio-political conditions of society. From the suffocation of the church to the hostile man in the first half of the twentieth century. This characteristic is considered as a separate category and is considered and examined along with physical characteristics (Fig.4).

Research methodology

The present study is a qualitative study that has been performed in a descriptive-analytical method with an emphasis on visual semiotics. Since this study examines the comparative study of the architectural

spaces of the expressionist genre cinema between the world and Iranian cinema, in terms of purpose, it is in the category of qualitative research. Besides, the research paradigm was selected from the qualitative research type (from theory to the studied sample) so that the research statements determine and guide the intellectual path of the research in the first part. In the second part, the case studies that have been proposed are examined according to the tables. Library resources and comparative studies have been used in the research process. The selection of case studies is based on a world-renowned reference sample ("The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari"), along with two films from the pre-1978 period in Iran in the expressionist genre ("A Party in Hell" and "Dash Akol") and two films after the Islamic Revolution of Iran ("Asphyxia" and "A Dragon Arrives!"). Then, for a more detailed study, by extracting the elements of the reference film and accompanying the library documents and finally with the logical argument of the author, the effect of architectural spaces in these four Iranian films is examined.

Research findings

"Cashmere Schmidt" defines expressionism as a reaction to anti-Impressionism, indicating ambiguity, diversity of concern and a fleeting image of nature. Although expressionist works may not look pleasant to the viewer, it depends on the emotional response the viewer makes. This feature is precisely where "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" film is influential. "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" film combines the denial of the bourgeois tradition with the power of human faith to shape society and nature. Overall, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" is defined as the standard for all films in the genre depicting the purest expressionist moments. For this purpose, four films from two generations of Iranian cinema will be included in the programs called "A Party in Hell" and "Dash Akol" as the representative of pre-revolutionary cinema and the films of "Asphyxia" and "A Dragon Arrives!" As the representatives of the cinema after the Islamic

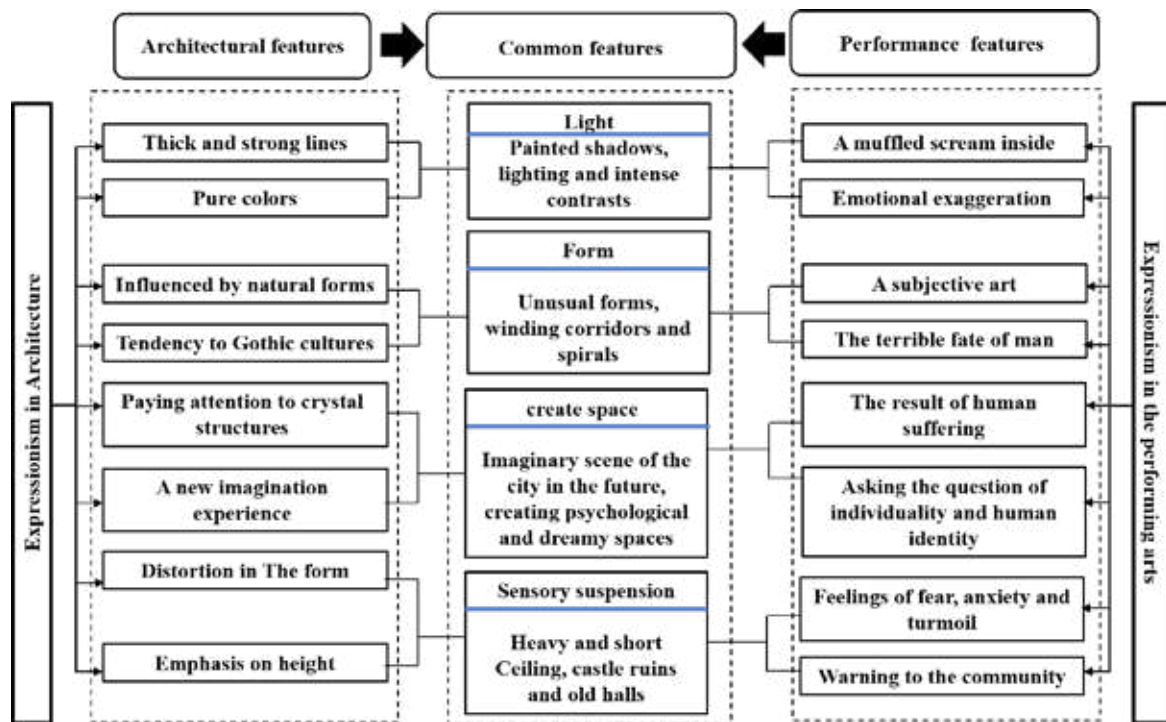


Fig. 4. Theoretical framework of the impact of architecture on expressionist cinema. Source: Authors.

Revolution of Iran. We are analyzing the views of expressionism and comparing it with the reference sample of “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari”.

Sample analysis

• **“The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” (1920)**

This film can be considered the complete expressionist film in history. In “the Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” film, the architecture of the buildings is edgy, pavilion and pleated and seems unbalanced. This unusual visual look, which, of course is intentional, encourages the viewer to pay attention to the reality of the inner emotions instead of realism. It conveys to the viewer a disturbing set of feelings of instability and fear of being indoors (Ebert, 2015). “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” is defined as the cinematic expressionism. The images shown in this film can be considered a tribute to expressionist paintings between the years 1900-1910 (Reimer & Reimer, 2012, 144). The result of this coordination is a film that is both familiar and expresses the strangeness and experiences and moods of the terrified German

people in the physical and mental dimension after the First World War. “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” film seems to combine the denial of the bourgeois tradition with the power of human faith to shape society and nature (Kracauer & Quaresima, 1947, 61) (Table 1; Figs. 5 to 7).

• **“A Party in Hell” (1956)**

“A Party in Hell” is an Iranian film made in 1956, directed by “Samuel Khachikian” and “Mushegh Sarvarian”. The special effects of this film have been significant during its production period. The film is known for making massive arrays at the time. “Khachikian”, who had been in charge of editing his films since the middle of the film, interfered in the lighting and work of his filmmakers and chose the music for his films himself. According to him, he did all this based on his inner perception (Baharlou, 2003, 39). He is considered as one of the most influential directors in Iranian cinema, so that he has been called the “Hitchcock of Iran”. He has also been mentioned as the “master of horror” in Iranian cinema (Lazaryan, 2009, 44). Of course, the success and fame of the “A Party in Hell” were due

Table 1. Analysis of sequences selected from “The Cabinet of Dr.Caligari”. Source: Authors.

Description	Interpretation	Character	Sequence analysis	Sequence architectural space
The robbery scene of the night man	Pressure and apprehension	Caesar and Lille	Captive Caesar is forced to carry out the order. Involuntarily and involuntarily, he is forced to suppress his senses	A path with an unbalanced scale and aggressive forms that is heavy with a sharp perspective that is a symbol of hesitation.
Wandering	Confused	Sub-character	Creating doubt and expanding it	Crystal-shaped and threatening forms, disobedient geometries, and threatening shadows
Escape the thief from the people	Tight and dead-end	Caesar and Lille	An unsuccessful and doomed attempt failed	Convergent forms with a focus on contrast and sharp shapes
Awakening the thief from the grave	Pressure	Dr.Caligari and Caesar	Suffocation. Modern slavery	Short ceiling and the out-of-scale room with light shade focus



A



B

Fig. 5. A & B) Light indicator in a sequence from “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 6. Space indicator in a sequence from “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 7. Sensory suspension indicator in a sequence from “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari”. Source: Authors archive.

Table 2. Analysis of Sequences Selected from “A Party in Hell”. Source: Authors.

Description	Interpretation	Character	Sequence analysis	Sequence architectural space
feast in hell	Uncertain. The contradiction at the same time	Group of Actors	Surprise and doubt in the face of ignorance and doubt about the preconditions	Inhomogeneous forms. Forms outside the notion of ethnicity
Perceptions corridor	The transition phase	Group of Actors	Doubt the path ahead and the horror ahead	Crystal-shaped and threatening forms and a narrow and dark path
Temple in Hell	The imagination of not knowing	Group of Actors	An idea of God’s rule. Judge in Hell	Out-of-the-ordinary classic forms and emphasis on grandeur and height
Physical corridor	Pressure and hesitation	Group of Actors	Fear and pressure	Short ceiling and the out-of-scale room with shadow and light focus



Fig. 8. Light indicator in a sequence from “A Party in Hell”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 9. Form indicator in a sequence from “A Party in Hell”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 10. Space indicator in a sequence from the movie “A Party in Hell”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 11. Sensory suspension indicator in a sequence from the movie “A Party in Hell”. Source: Authors archive.

to the “Mushegh Sarvaryan”, because he made the huge stage decoration of the film and Led to a big

Box office. The film also used rock ‘n’ roll dancing. (Mehrabi, 2009, 88) (Table 2, Figs. 8 to 11).

Table 3. Analysis of selected sequences from “Dash Akol”. Source: Authors archive.

Description	Interpretation	Character	Sequence analysis	Sequence architectural space
A fight at night	Threat, intimidation	Group of Actors	The explosion of hatred and warning. Hidden chaos	Emphasis on height and contrast of light and shadow
the ruins	The transition phase	Group of Actors	Hidden fear before it happens	Points of sharp points and contrast with destroyed shapes



Fig. 12. Light indicator in a sequence from “Dash Akol”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 13. Sensory suspension indicator in a sequence from “Dash Akol”. Source: Authors archive.

• **“Dash Akol” (1971)**

In the years following World Wars and the School of expressionism in German cinema, that pure cinema gradually changed its meaning and disappeared in the midst of visual images. Therefore, “Dash Akol” cannot be considered an expressionist film. However, there are traces of expressionist frameworks and spaces that are part of this transition from the early days of German expressionism. In this film, the director simply gives a different body to space by emphasizing high-contrast lighting and there is no more element of the enormous decorations of expressionist films (Table 3; Figs. 12 & 13).

• **“Asphyxia” (2017)**

In this work, the film’s director, “Fereydoun Jeyrani”, has tried to get closer to the expressionist frontiers. With sharp contrasts in the scenes and make-up of the actors and even exaggeration in the plays and finally the atmosphere created in the film (Table 4; Figs. 14 to 16).

• **“A Dragon Arrives!” (2016)**

Like “Dash Akol”, the film does not claim to be an expressionist, but there is no doubt that there is a trace of the influence of this style. From exaggeration in acts to symbolic lighting full of contrast (Table 5 ; Figs. 17 to 19).

Summary of findings

The answer to the question of what kind of presence architectural spaces have had in Iranian expressionist cinema and whether this influence has been purely physical or has a semantic aspect, is a point that has been summarized in the analysis of this research. In response, it should be noted that according to the findings of Table 6, this effect was more represented in the early days of making such films. The influence of these spaces on interior architecture and the design of facades causes a formal connection in the space, light and form of the architecture, which is reflected in the two films

Table 4. Analysis of Sequences Selected from “Asphyxia”. Source: Authors.

Description	Interpretation	Character	Sequence analysis	Sequence architectural space
Asylum office	Fear, crunch and hidden crime	Masoud Sazegar Sahra Mashreghi	The illusion of fear of focusing on the magnification of destiny	Dark contrast and being scale less of the room and the pressure on the ceiling
Hospital corridor	Anxiety, turmoil, and emotional outburst	Group of Actors	Uncertainty, individual crisis, and questions about what	Huge dimensions with a neutral color and threatening shadows
Hospital room	Intimidation and pressure	Nasim Sazgar	Social suffocation with an eruption of emotion	Short roof and off-axis forms

of “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” and the A party in hell. As discussed in Table 6, the concept of expressionist cinema in relation to its influential architecture created an inseparable form that was later recognized as the index of expressionist cinema in body and meaning. Although this point physically manifested in Iranian films, has never gone beyond form and led to semantic influence (Fig. 20).

Expressionism in cinema has taken on a new meaning by combining dramatic features and architectural spaces so that it can present political and social concerns. Thus, German expressionist films try to convey a message to the audience through unusual architectural spaces. The issue became less prominent in world cinema and became only a symbol of nostalgia and in Iranian cinema, it remained the only imitative form. In Table 7, the four Iranian films examined in the above texts, together with their valuable foreign examples, have been evaluated in comparative comparison with each other to determine a small criterion for the presence of indicators in them.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the expressionist cinema in Iran and how architectural spaces influence it. The present study seeks to answer the question of how architectural spaces have looked like in Iranian expressionist cinema and whether this has been a physical or semantic effect. Following the research and using a descriptive-analytical method and emphasizing visual semiotics, the most prominent of this genre in world cinema, “The Cabinet of Dr.

Caligari” film, was used as a symbol of expressionist cinema that used architectural spaces, as a criterion for analysis. Also, other Iranian films are divided into two Iranian cinematic periods and it was adapted to

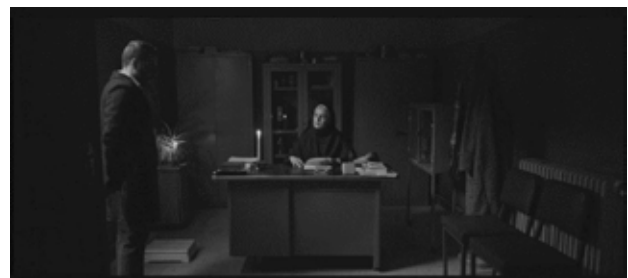


Fig. 14. Light Indicator in a sequence from the movie “Asphyxia”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 15. Form Indicator in a sequence from the movie “Asphyxia”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 16. Sensory suspension Indicator in a sequence from the movie “Asphyxia”. Source: Authors archive.

Table 5. Analysis of Sequences Selected from “A Dragon Arrives!”. Source: Authors.

Description	Interpretation	Character	Sequence analysis	Sequence architectural space
Inside the ship	Doubt and distrust	Babak Hafizi	Doubt, expect fate and unknown	A warm color scheme with a relatively short ceiling
View of the cemetery	Intangible and illusory	Group of Actors	Doubt the events and make up the human imagination	An imaginary place. Designed to ask what
View from inside the ship	Dreamy	Babak Hafizi	Crisis, the question of human identity and the eruption of emotion	Short ceiling and distorted and unstable forms

that standard. “A Party in Hell” and “Dash Akol” are included as examples before the Islamic Revolution and “Asphyxia” and “A Dragon Arrives!” films are interpreted as representatives of modern Iranian cinema, respectively, in Tables 2 to 5 and finally analyzed in Table 6 in full.

The results of this study revealed that what is known in Iran as expressionist cinema, seems to be only a superficial understanding of the nature of early expressionist cinema compared to a period in which architectural spaces were created to make social, political and cultural influences. To this end, it should be noted that the samples produced in Iran have mostly imitated the second period of the expressionist wave in the world. Table 6 shows that Iranian expressionist cinema has a mostly passive approach to the use of architectural spaces in terms of semantic approach and these spaces, which are the inseparable nature of the body and give meaning to the expressionist cinema, are underestimated. As shown in Table 7, the atmosphere of architecture in Iranian films, as a comparison, is still a long way far from using architecture in their films. It seems that expressionist filmmakers are divided into two categories, willingly or unwillingly, in terms of spatial architecture. The first group includes form-dependent filmmakers in all components of the film and the second group of filmmakers who have imitated other filmmakers. In the case of Iranian cinema, it can be said that filmmakers have become more imitative and do not have a coherent preconceived notion about the influence of architectural decor in their works. In films attributed to the expressionist movement, the premise (architectural and designed space) and the

actors’ acting coincide, taking on a two-dimensional state, as the background and foreground are inseparable. The four characteristics examined in this article include light, form, spatialization and sensory suspension. That



Fig. 17. The light indicator is entered in a sequence from “A Dragon Arrives!”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 18. The space creation indicator is entered in a sequence from “A Dragon Arrives!”. Source: Authors archive.



Fig. 19. The sensory suspension indicator is entered in a sequence from “A Dragon Arrives!”. Source: Authors archive.

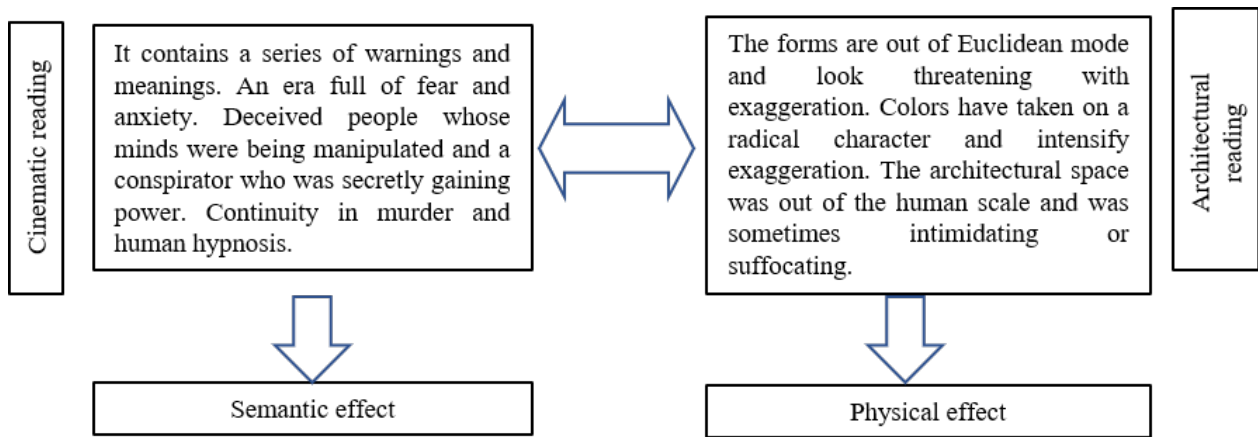


Fig. 20. How cinema and architecture interact in the two shells of body and meaning in “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” film. Source: Authors.

Table 7. Evaluation of The “Cabinet of Dr. Caligari”, “A Party in Hell”, “Dash Akol”, “Asphyxia” and “A Dragon Arrives!”. Source: Authors.

		Case study	Movies before 1978				Movies after 1978				
		The Cabinet of Dr.Caligari	A Party in Hell	Dash Akol	Asphyxia	A Dragon Arrives!					
Indicators	Criteria	Physical effect	Semantic effect	Physical effect	Semantic effect	Physical effect	Semantic effect	Physical effect	Semantic effect	Physical effect	Semantic effect
the light	Painted shadows	•	•	•	•	•	-	•	•	•	•
	Scattered lighting	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Intense contrasts	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Form	Abnormal forms	•	•	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Twisted and dark corridors	•	•	•	-	-	-	•	-	-	-
create space	Imaginary pictures of the city in the future	•	•	•	•	-	-	-	-	•	•
	Creating a mental space is a dream space	•	•	•	•	-	-	-	-	•	•
Sensory suspension	Heavy and short ceilings	•	•	•	-	-	-	•	•	-	-
	The ruins of the castle	-	-	-	-	•	-	-	-	•	•
	Old halls	•	•	•	-	-	-	•	-	-	-
Total		18		13		6		10		12	

Table 6. Analysis of sequences and its adaptation to indicators. Source: Authors.

		Case study	Movies before 1978		Movies after 1978	
		The Cabinet of Dr.Caligari	A Party in Hell	Dash Akol	Asphyxia	A Dragon Arrives!
Physical indicators	the light	Extremely exaggerated lighting, combined with intense contrast between white and black color tones, conveyed a sense of fear to the viewer (See Fig. 3).	Impressive lighting and a stark contrast to the designed sculpture made the space scarier and more suspended. (See Fig. 7)	High contrast and artificial lighting had increased both the suspension and the fear in the scene (See Fig. 11).	The high contrast between the foreground and the characters blended the architectural space with the people, taking it out of its three-dimensional form and making it look like a bed. Inducing tension and fear hidden in the room atmosphere. (See Fig. 13)	The same shades of paint using pure colors that increase the tension and fear in the scene (See Fig. 16)
	Form	The labyrinthine corridor, which was accompanied by the unusual floor and wall forms. Natural forms, including Gothic with its enormous structure. (See Fig. 4)	It had natural and crystalline forms and broken, and sharp lines were its features. Perhaps the director's goal was to create a space for human horror in hell (See Fig. 8).		The sharp perspective was reminiscent of another type of serrated form that focuses on the entire architectural space, focusing on the result. Dirt and antiquity with neutral contrast in this space emphasized the end of the hallway (See Fig. 14)	
	create space	Lighting, camera angle and sharp shapes with bold and strong lines. It challenged the destiny of modern man. The corridor of infinity might be the destiny of modernism (See Fig. 5)	Hypothetical hell was different from society's imagination. Expressing the director's inner thoughts and desires. A space that came to mind from the courts of God's justice and the various ways of imagining one's identity. (See Fig. 9)			The dream space of the being that exists and that was the ship. According to the director the dragon, in his view, was the hidden treasure or metaphor of Iran. (See Fig. 17)
	Sensory suspension	It showed the fear, anxiety, and distress of the German society. A feeling of suffocation that was undeniable by its dense, short roof and inhuman scale (See Fig. 6).	We saw a dense atmosphere in which the shadow of fear and terror dominates to some extent (See Fig. 10).	Not like its predecessors, and it was just a state of ruin trying to weigh down space with high contrast and shading. (See Fig. 12)	By humanizing the size of the treatment space, the director emphasized a certain amount of doubt. Doubt that rooted from a lack of internal and public trust. (See Fig. 15)	There was no mention of old and dilapidated halls. However, inside the symbolic ship, it was depicted in an abandoned and destroyed form, which, according to its meaning, had an expressionist expression (See Fig. 18).
Semantic index	Intense contrasts indicated fears of World War I. The labyrinths that represented the vague destiny of man. It was the destiny that was falling behind the form and the apprehension that existed in time.	Lighting and contrasting shadows often had a physical function and did not make sense while the atmosphere and architectural forms strongly warned of the social conditions and the conflict between tradition and modernism and human ignorance.	Neither the lighting nor the sensory suspension had seen in the film had a significant semantic function and merely showed the physical appearance of the effect.	Although the film had problems with the atmosphere, other elements in the film, such as light and shadow and sensory suspensions, did not lose their semantic function and warn of fear, distrust, and the doomed destiny of society and its surroundings.	All the physical elements designed in this film have a symbolic function and meaning. There is a fine line between being symbolic and being an expressionist. Warning the meaning that exists throughout the film through the elements.	

indicators prove to the Iranian expressionist cinema in the field of architectural spaces that, apart from the film “A party in hell”, which is almost the same as German expressionism, other films made in this valley did not pay much attention to the main elements. Because they focused on lighting, makeup and other points. A situation like this has been the case in world cinema as well. However, in recent years, decoration and architectural spaces have flourished again as the mainstay of filmmaking in such styles, while Iranian cinema has not changed much in this area.

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