ABSTRACT

PERFORMATIVE WRITING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO FILM CRITICISM

IN CONTEMPORARY CINEMA

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By moving from the filmic experiences I had with Possible Worlds by Robert Lepage (2000, Canada) and Vanilla Sky by Cameron Crowe (2001, USA), this study tries to question film criticism in contemporary cinema and offer a different approach to it through performative writing. After having pondered on the problematic of logocenterism prevailing in criticisms, the thesis resorts to the speech acts theory developed by John L. Austin so as to reconsider the role of language during the subject's relation to the world and compare it to cinematic apparatus in terms of their representative features. In this respect, the experiences of film viewing and writing criticisms are regarded to be performative from an Austinian aspect and are traced back to a first and foremost visceral, sensuous encounter with the films. By being aware of the discursive power of language, the study further attempts to re-animate these very encounters with the above mentioned films. Finally the possible contributions of performative writing to the discipline of film studies are contemplated upon.

Key words: representation, text, criticism, performative, speech acts, editing, narrative, citationality, corporeality, tactility, sensation.

ÖZET

EDİMSEL YAZI:

GÜNÜMÜZ SİNEMASINDAKİ FİLM ELEŞTİRİSİNE BİR ALTERNATİF

Dokumacı, Arseli

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Bu çalışma, *Paralel Dünyalar* (2000, Kanada) ve *Vanilla Sky* (2001, ABD) filmlerinin seyir deneyimine dayanarak, çağdaş sinemadaki film eleştirisini sorgulayıp, edimsel yazıyı bir alternative olarak sunmaya çalışır. Eleştirilerdeki aklın ve dilin egemenliğini incelendikten sonra, öznenin çevresiyle kurduğu ilişkide dilin rolünü yeniden gözden geçirmek ve bu rolü sinematik aygıtın temsilsel özellikleriyle karşılaştırmak için, John L. Austin tarafından geliştirilen söz edimleri kuramına başvurulur. Bu bağlamda, film izleme ve eleştiri yazma deneyimleri Austinyen bir açıdan edimsel olarak değerlendirilip, filmlerle olan bedensel ve duyumsal bir karşılaşma anı bu deyenimlerin temeli olarak alınır. Ardından çalışma, dilin söylemsel gücünün farkındalığı koruyarak, yukarıda adı geçen filmlerle olan karşılaşma anlarını edimsel yazın ile yeniden canlandırmaya çalışır ve son olarak edimel yazının film çalışmalarına olası katkıları üzerinde durur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: temsil, metin, eleştiri, edimsel, söz edimleri, kurgu, anlatı, alıntılama, bedensellik, dokunsallık, duygulanım.

For nobody in particular

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.　　The Subject

In the following project, I will question the relationship that film criticisms set with their "objects" and try to offer an alternative relation that is to be bridged between filmic experience and any writing on it, considered also an experience. In order to search for the possibilities of such an affinity, I will initially resort to philosophy of language, particularly the Speech Acts theory developed by John L. Austin and subsequently, I am going to handle films as aesthetic experiences within the light of these discussions. The corporeal encounter of the audience with the film and its performative aspect are going to set the ground for the entailment of Austin's theory and terms within film criticism.

Pursuant to the theoretical framework and the arguments developed therein, I will jot down two texts which would strive to reanimate my encounters with two films; *Possible Worlds* by Robert Lepage (1999, Canada) and *Vanilla Sky* by Cameron Crowe (2001, USA). In the conclusion section, after having named these texts as performative writing, I will be elaborating on the consequences of such a designation and the probable contribution of these writings to the discipline of film studies.

1.2.   The Aim and the Scope

Film criticism from the moment of its birth up to now has rather been a belated extension of literary criticism and adopted the various approaches embodied within. The debates over whether to see cinema as an aesthetic medium or a re-presentation of reality occupied the first decades of film theory and criticism. In the meantime, the formal features of films (such as camera angles, lighting, editing, etc.) were being set forth and matched with certain effects so as to define the tools of cinema. With the rise of film semiotics in the 1960's, criticisms elaborated more on the level of narrative and under the heading of interpretation, tried to unbury "hidden" meanings. Films have in time been incessantly analyzed from certain semantic fields that previously shaded into the treatment of literary texts. Yet the mainstream tendency has always been to objectify the films and contemplate on them from a domineering and assertive subject position. The pioneer force that caused this study to come along was my discomfort with this habit of writing. Whenever I turned on a newspaper or a magazine page and came across a movie review, or opened any book on film studies to read any analyses, I - in most of the cases - was disturbed by what the films have become through and to what they have been exposed by those writings. Regardless of the fact that whether they were praising, attacking or purely analyzing the films, these writings, by burying the films in a deadly silence, made me hear only the omniscient voice of a critic's "rationally" thinking mind. My further motivation that contrived the body of this study emanated from searching for a way of writing on films that would challenge the inclination of making films object of textual analysis and return the films back what had been stolen from them. While I was wondering amidst this

disturbance, in quest for a sort of writing that would ward off such authoritarian voices, my second viewing of *Possible Worlds* assisted me in prospering towards a probable destination for my search. Compared to the models of mainstream cinema, this film was peculiar in terms of the relation it set with its audience and duly cried out for a different way of writing. Instead of exposing a distinction of form-content or style-substance which would provide the critic by default with a body of tangible data to loot, *Possible Worlds* dwelled upon the ambiguity of such a distinction. The very film instead of offering me a cinematic experience understood by the general term, was inviting me into a kind of play that would only come about with the mutual performance of us. The film was not only showing, depicting or saying something but was also doing it which in turn awaited from any text on it to do the same (not only say but also do) as long as its aim was to give the right of the cinematic experience.

Dealing with film criticism also meant that two media of representation - film and written text - were involved in the study and I chose to embark from philosophy of language which would posit a common ground for the two. While dwelling upon the operation of filmic language, questioning the presumption of a form-content separation and the dominance of logocenterism in criticisms, I had recourse the linguistic theories put forth by John L. Austin in his lectures *How to Do Things with Words*. The debates in this book, unlike precedent approaches, was sceptic of the assumption that language was a mere tool for conveying meaning content and sought for a way in which it would not be a simple "apparatus" for reporting act or states but would take part in them as well. Austin's theory of performative utterances and the terms of locution, illocution and perlocution he invented later on

became my focus within the light of Jacques Derrida's deconstruction of the very theory in his article "Signature Event Context". While studying Austin's theories that priorly handled individual speech situations (parole) instead of a general structure (langue), Derrida diligently lays down the indeterminacy governing all contexts and "unique" situations (be that may speech, writing, reading and viewing). Yet by drawing attention on the citational and repetitive feature of representations within their utmost originality, Derrida sets forth the only possibility for Austin's terms to work. These studies provided me with the chance to concentrate on language in its most eventhood therefore to elucidate on the aesthetic experience and its later treatment by criticisms in their most eventhood as well. Driving from the phenomenological aspect of these arguments, I perused on the encounter of the subject with the world that would highly reason Derrida's points. This encounter was first of all a tactile one that had no other choice but to go under the taming of a representation. In order to comprehend the intertwining of the subject's bodily relation to the world with language, I benefited from Merleau-Ponty's discussions in *The Visible and the Invisible*, Jacques Lacan for his concept of the gaze and Susan Buck-Morrs's arguments in her article "Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered". I then handled the filmic experience as an initially corporeal encounter which necessitated me to probe into the cinematic language that tamed this relation as in the way language - understood by Austin - did. Austin's stress on the performative aspect of language and his concepts of locution, illocution and perlocution assisted me in establishing this common ground between the two more clearly.

After a thorough look at the affinity of the subject with the world, the role of language in it, the way that artworks make this relation suspend temporarily and how the film criticisms tend to medicate this suspension, I tried giving an account of my experience with *Possible Worlds*, which would make Austin's theories work from a Derridean aspect. I have particularly picked up *Possible Worlds* since that the way its cinematic language operated highly resembled the way that the performative utterances functioned. The film overtly challenged current film criticisms and asked for a sort of writing that would be able to reflect upon itself, be aware of its limits and therefore have a chance to leave behind a pile of residue that it would not be able to govern (in other words, delimit itself). I see this practice as performative writing which offers a chance for reviving the affections that the films have left upon me, both despite and because of the representational conventions in between. In order to test the applicability of performative writing to other films, I picked up *Vanilla Sky*, which specifically stood for a prominent mainstream cinema. At the beginning the film sounded to me as more of a constative utterance but during my further studies on Austin's theory, the boundary between constatives and performatives blurred and reduced to the degree of manifesting performance. Then *Vanilla Sky* provided the field for working upon the later arguments of Austin's theory and concentrate on the validity of illocution and perlocution in film studies. The fact that the film was a Hollywood remake of a Spanish movie called *Abre Los Ojos* (Alejandro Amenábar, 1997) had a certain influence on my selection since that it would expose the operation of those terms more explicitly. Two different texts would in the end make me question performative writing, reconsider film criticisms by way of comparing and elaborate upon its possible contributions to the discipline.

As a last remark, I should also note that the process that yielded in this study that you are about to read was not a linear one, unlike the outline and lining of thoughts herein. The selection of films to be studied, the topics to be handled and the influence of both film viewing and theory development phases upon the other were intertwined. The filmic experience belonging particularly to *Possible Worlds* caused a certain oscillation among theories, the practice of viewing, even the selection of *Vanilla Sky* as a second movie to try performative writing.

1.3. Related Terms and Concepts

Lest any reader may have the impression that the "criticism" gets replaced by "writing" in the further parts of this study, let me first clarify what is referred by the former word. Criticism stands as more of a general term which would include film reviews on newspaper columns to academic scholarly writings on films. In line with my emphasis on the tight bound between film criticism and literary criticism, Edward Said's description of the forms of literary criticism in his book *The World, the Text and the Critic* will serve as a basis to define the former term. In the notified book, Said claims that literary criticism is practiced in four different modules which are: 1) "Practical criticism in book reviewing and literary journalism", 2) "Academic literary history", 3) "Literary appreciation and interpretation principally academic but, not confined to professionals and regularly appearing authors", 4) "Literary theory" (Said 1991: 1).

The basic key terms and concepts that will be referred to throughout this project are: representation, langue, parole, signs, performative and constative utterances, illocution, perlocution, serious and non-serious utterances, citationality, general iterability, viscerality, tactility, chiasm, the gaze, synaesthetic system, pre-rational mimesis, mimesis-representation, logos, rationalization, punctum, studium, jouissance, plaisir, image, shot, editing, narrative.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Overview of Film Criticism

Has "writing on film" ever really begun? (Royle 2003: 75)

"Writing on film": who is it that writes on film? As *whom* does s/he (pretend to) write? (Royle 2003: 78)

Films, as an invention of the Western civilization, have mostly been postulated as mute texts waiting to be analyzed, diagnosed, interpreted and thus given a voice through critics writing on them. Having sprung forth from a long-rooted tradition of literary criticism which treated literary works in the same fashion, film criticism had no other choice but to be the delayed duplications of those criticisms and theories to the medium of cinema.

At its start, film theory was mainly occupied by the debates over how much of an aesthetic medium cinema was. The formalists headed by Rudolf Arnheim, Sergei Eisenstein and Bela Balazs celebrated cinema as an art form whereas the realists, including Andre Bazin and Siegried Kracauer treated it as an exact representation of reality. Though the two theories had their idiosyncratic understanding of cinema, both agreed on the reproductive features of it, which was then an emerging medium of representation needing designations. And in the 1930's, Rudolf Arnheim undertook this mission and codified the formalist effects through which films created (or reproduced) reality particularly by focusing on camera angles, framing, lighting effects, composition, lenses, focus, acting, costumes,

mise-en-scène, editing, etc. These resources were in time expanded and entailed in-depth by the other theoreticians.

Still, among all the theories inherited from literary tradition, structuralism has had the greatest impact on the development of film studies with its arrival into the field around the 1960's. Its founder's, being Ferdinand de Saussure, insights on language in his posthumously published work *Course in General Linguistics* (1916) were first entailed in the analysis of literary texts. In the case of cinema, it took an approximate forty years of delay. Saussure's theoretical discussions marked a clear turning-point in the history of Western thinking and became a source of fruitful debate that gave rise to a series of forthcoming approaches.

Up until *Course in General Linguistics*, the relation between objects and language had been regarded to be an objective, eternal and unchanging one. But Saussure questioned this objectivity and in a thorough elaboration, he tried to prove that language was based on subjective, internal and mental constitution of words, which he designated as "signs". As to his arguments, linguistic signs were composed of two parts: a "signifier" (physical, sensible unit of the sign) and a "signified" (the intelligible unit of the sign, the concept or meaning of it). In this way, meaning was not regarded to be inherent in the object but the syntagmatic relations among signs created a system of differences where the value of a sign could be established. Thus Saussure sought for defining the contents of this syntagma where he believed the signs to operate; because "[a] principle implied by Saussure's distinction is that the material organization of a language is ontologically prior to any meaning it produces" (Easthope 2000: 51). In order to

illuminate the material organization, Saussure constructed an all-governing structure for language under the name of "langue" for revealing and consequently analyzing the interrelations operating within the syntagma through which meaning was produced. As a result of foreseeing an ontological hierarchy between structure and meaning, Saussure disregarded individual uses of language, "parole", on the basis that they had no authority of their own but existed solely to actualize the ever-changing framework, that being the langue.

Not only Saussure's apprehension of language had its effects on film criticism quite explicitly but also it has rather been constitutive of it. In search for mapping a filmic langue, a number of theoreticians elaborated on Saussure's studies and tried adapting them to cinema. With their unrelenting efforts, film semiotics aroused and mainly sought for a quintessential filmic langue which would compare and contrast it with the other representational media. The spokespersons of film semiotics, such as Christian Metz and Stephen Heath, mainly dwelled on the narrative level for the construction of filmic structure. Through such criticisms, codes of signification were entailed within analyses and films were interpreted as culture-based phenomena which brought another dimension to film studies.

Following the obsession of film semioticians with an all-governing material organization that confined films in interpretations, alternative approaches to criticisms have in time boomed as well. Surrealism and impressionism (the films of Luis Bunuel, Man Ray and automatic writing in criticisms) challenged the imposition of such structures and defended the utmost subjectivity. And by introducing audience reception theories within analyses, the neo-formalist

approach has aroused particularly with the studies of David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson in the 1980's. But despite setting forth from a subjective perceptual and cognitive process taking shape during film viewing (instead of a coherent, objective filmic langue preceding such a process), the neo-formalist criticisms as well tried to reach at "scientific" and objective results in the end.

Besides these basic approaches shaping film criticism, other theories initially arising in literary criticism have arrived to the case of cinema. Psychoanalysis, sociology, hermeneutics, reception theories, feminism, gay and lesbian criticism, queer theory, cultural studies have all infiltrated into the realm of film and all of which are now welcomed within the limits of contemporary film analyses.

Be this or that stance, the mainstream tendency of film criticism has in most of the cases (automatic writing excluded) been inspired by a formalist appeal to films that would objectify them from an authoritarian subject position. Such kind of an understanding, characterized by descriptive strivings of a writer about the film, at the same time deprives the criticism of being a fertile ground for "its object", by presuming the film to embody coherent and salient features that could be elaborated upon. Thus any movie in this way is operated upon by an analytic mind, consumed up by its ends specific to its field of study, which, while doing what it does, would synchronously be working towards veiling the actual stimuli that caused this operation to commence. By these criticisms, the power of films upon us and their capability of affecting us are attenuated in strength through zillions of diagnosis which pass them off as the "must" consequences of "certain" forms and styles. The common point of all these theories is that they all take the film as a

stable object with certain inherent characteristics. And its silence as an inert object seduces the critics to interpret it, speak endlessly on behalf of it and accordingly fix it into a certain place.

Driven by the disturbance that the film's voice is suppressed by cacophony of criticisms, this study will attempt to reconsider film criticism in the light of John L. Austin's insights on language during his lectures compiled in *How to do Things with Words.* Austin's theory of performative utterances and further elaborations on the very theory both by himself and Jacques Derrida will be positing the main focus. I see this study as a substantial standpoint in offering a different approach to film criticism which has rather been overshadowed by the debris of other fields. I also claim that a delicate reading of Austin's theories not only allows for the compensation of the misgivings of formalism and structuralism but also offers a way out of them, which most alternative approaches have lacked.

Therefore I ask the following questions: could writings on film be performative instead of speaking on behalf of a "mute object", fixing it and thus consuming it up before the potential viewer has a direct contact with it? Could a critic prevent the incessant desire to interpret films and instead give an account of what has happened to her very self during the encounter with the film? Could performance and citationality leak the writing in such a way that the reader be hindered from being subject to the discursive power of language and identifying with the writer? Could the very unique filmic experience of one's own be better communicated to the reader in some other way than the descriptive content of writing? Could the writer be aware of what she is doing with the language? And could she also be

aware of what language is doing with her? Through such awareness, could the writing double the filmic experience within itself and let the affections felt by the critic be re-animated while it is being read?

2.2. Philosophy of Language: Speech Acts

2.2.1. Constative and Performative Utterances

Exclusion of parole from structuralist method of study is significant in that it is driven both by the disturbance that an individual staging of language would embody unobservable elements (due to phenomenological reasons) and by the relief that these elements, in terms of their strength, would not be able to breach the general organization. Without any contamination of contingencies, language for this way of study is forced to be a pile of data upon which the linguist can work as in the way that a scientist does in his hygienic laboratory.

This aspiration for establishing a transcendental structure in language was disrupted through a series of lectures delivered by John L. Austin during the mid-twentieth century. The ideas put forth during these lectures, due to the remarkable questions they posited about the representative quality of language, paved at that time the way for a succession of debates which were not only limited within philosophy of language but shaded into many other fields, such as literary theory, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism, phenomenology, and gender studies.

> [D]ebate over speech acts is whether language is to be conceived as essentially a system of structures and meanings or as a set of acts and practices … to ground language not in inert transcendental structure but in creative human actions (Robinson 2005).

Unlike structuralism that focuses on language as an inert organization that helps conveying information, depicting events and actions; Austin's theory makes use of individual speech situations. The shift in the focus from langue to parole threatens the transcendentalism attributed to language and regards it to be pregnant for a different sort of an interaction between subjects. As the name of his book *How to do Things with Words* (1962) may reveal, within those lectures, Austin comes up with the idea that language, in certain cases, instead of depicting the action or states, realizes them by itself. In this attempt, Austin tries to widen the scope of language from being a mere tool for the communication of a meaning content into doing something. In direct reference to their performative aspect, Austin calls these utterances as "performatives" where the act that a sentence describes is at the same time performed by delivering the sentence in question. The examples for such cases are: "I now pronounce you man and wife", "I christen this ship the Joseph Stalin," "I promise I'll be there," "I bet you five dollars", etc.

Performatives posit a divergence from the structuralist idea of language but this idea still resides in Austin's theory by the notion of constative[i] utterances that include all the utterances other than performatives. Differently from performatives, in constatives, the events and actions described ("The cat is on the mat.", "She is writing a novel.", etc) are regarded to never commensurate with the actuality of the event and action in question but rather rationalize it into a virtual "present" amounting to "the cat was on the mat, is on the mat and will continue to do so before and after the utterance". Language is seen to have failed in making experience of present and its textualization overlap. Such a conception also

stipulates the existence of a rupture between the experience of the subject and its representation in language as to which the subject first senses, then conceives the world and later expresses these data in language. In strict connection with the Lockean point of view, where "ideas originate in sensation and reflection and are only secondarily expressed in language" (Howells 1998: 43), the meaning content of a constative is seen as the secondary symbolization of the world of objects, events, actions that have already been sensed by the subject. Thus language is deprived of the chance to operate on these sensations. The concept of constatives reveals the long-rooted structuralist conception of language which searches for a tangible data to be operated on, namely the meaning content produced in the end of "a cognitive process" at the expense of the phenomenal experience of the subject within the world. The performatives on the other hand make the act come about through the utterance (unlike constatives which merely designate the act that is supposed to take place independently of the utterance). These utterances postulate that specific speech situations, unique contexts are indispensable for the functioning of meaning content and this function affects the context in return by enacting a new state of affairs. They expose that language does not refer to any such state of affairs, events, states that have already taken place prior to their representation. Thus Austin's discovery of such an entailing of language undermines the distinction drawn by structuralism between individual sensations and their representation in language for the sake of reaching a safe ground where a general structure of language (deprived of the contingencies) could be based upon. In performatives, the world where we literally act and live is put in interaction with its representations in language; or the other way around, language is given the chance to act upon actuality. It is made both to signify and be signified.

2.2.2. Locution, Illocution and Perlocution

In the later chapters of his study, Austin becomes discouraged about the constative-performative distinction and by claiming that constative utterances do also perform actions as in the way that performatives carry information, he admits that it is finally impossible to make such a division stick. This remark indirectly means that the subject constructs the world s/he inhabits through language because in all of its uses, language remains a performative, creative and dynamic human action (but just in some cases exposes this feature).

Compensating for the fuzziness between the borders of constatives and performatives, Austin then proposes new terms (locution, illocution and perlocution) that would keep his study still focused on language in its eventhood. He suggests that we call words/utterances extracted from their context as locution. It merely concerns the semantic aspect of an utterance, the mental construction of its meaning content which is taken to be independent of the interaction between speaker and hearer. Locution, in this way paraphrases the concept of "sign" in the Saussurean terminology. But the difference of Austin's theory comes forth with the other two terms - illocution and perlocution - that radically invite contexts and accordingly interaction within the analysis of language. Illocution explores locution on the part of the speaker so as to refer his/her possible intention that has activated the utterance (such as suggesting, warning, promising, requesting, etc). Perlocution, on the other hand stresses the possible effect that an utterance might engender on the hearer (like; persuading, frightening, amusing, or causing the listener to act). To exemplify:

> [T]he adult who says to a child, "I'd love to see your drawing," might be describing (or "constating") a state of mind (locution), promising to look at the drawing (illocutionary force), and attempting to make the child feel good, building the child's self-esteem (perlocutionary effect) (Robinson 2005).

By incorporating contexts, dynamic relations and handling language in pure occurrences, Austin's terms set forth that language is not only semantics, mentally constituted signs, and the transfer of a meaning content but is by itself an action, a performance as well.

2.2.3. Serious and Non-Serious Utterances

In spite of the revolutionary inauguration of his theory against the traditional disregard for parole, Austin soon takes a step back and prefers to exclude poetic and figurative language on the grounds that they are mere citations and parasitic upon the ordinary usages of language in life. He names poetic language as "non-serious" and splits it off as unrelated to his concerns (such a preference could also be taken as the influence of structuralist tradition pursuing tangible data that could be operated upon). Austin explains, the irrelevance of non-serious utterances to his study by saying:

> A performative utterance will... be in a peculiar way hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in a soliloquy. … Language in such circumstances is in special ways – intelligibly -- used not seriously, but in many ways parasitic upon its normal use -- ways which fall under the doctrine of the etiolating of language... (Austin 1962: 22)

> Walt Whitman does not seriously incite the eagle of liberty to soar (Austin 1962: 104).

What is meant above is that any poem, text or film aren't taking place in life and thus would be unable to carry out their referents in actuality. These occurrences merely cite from life, reality; and through this replica quality they would not be able to create a new state of affairs within the world cited. According to this stance, since non-serious utterances are fabricated through the distinct imaginations of the director and the audience non-synchronically, their experiences would never co-exist, interact and thus accordingly the film would not bring about any alteration in reality. As this line of thought puts forth, Austin's criterion for an utterance to perform is the synchrony of experiences. And consequently, any work of art since it cites from reality/life would destroy that synchrony by its very nature, by its very presence that stands for the non-presence of its interlocuter, who is one of the "indispensable" parties involved within the eventhood of language.

2.2.4. Deconstruction of Speech Acts

From the point of Austin, non-serious utterances are not counted as speech situations and moreover they are treated as dependant upon and inferior to actuality because they could only make sense thanks to a prior reality. In this way, an already existent actuality governs representation and is deemed a superior status over it.

Jacques Derrida in his work "Signature Event Context" focuses upon the possible drives that lie beneath Austin's exclusion of poetic language which he regards as undermining the most fertile ground of the very theory. As to Derrida's criticism, the "serious" utterances are not that much different from the "non-serious" ones in

that they are also citational. The real life, deemed with a sublime status thanks to its originality by such a distinction, can only make sense through quoting as well and even a unique speech act, in order to succeed, has to call upon an already authorized meaning. Derrida below removes the criterion of citationality vs. originality by asking:

> Could a performative statement succeed if its formulation did not repeat a "coded" or iterable statement, in other words if the expressions I use to open a meeting, launch a ship or a marriage were not identifiable as conforming to an iterable model, and therefore if they were not identifiable in a way as "citation"? Not that citationality here is of the same type as in a play, a philosophical reference, or the recitation of a poem. This is why there is a relative specificity, as Austin says, a "relative purity" of performatives. But this relative purity is not constructed against citationality or iterability, but against other kinds of iteration within a general iterability which is the effraction into the allegedly rigorous purity of every event of discourse or every speech act (Derrida 1988: 18).

Interlocutors constantly cite from their own "previous speech encounters" (Robinson 2005) and deposit "associative debris from other contexts into every new context in which it [the utterance] appears" (Walker 2005). And performative utterances – because that the use of language is defined by the eventhood - are not exclusions to this fact. On the contrary, they expose the inevitability of citationality in any representation.

Following Derrida's points, it could be claimed that trying to set apart the conditions where the performative quality of language malfunctions is useless. Misfiring of utterances versus their success is an illusionary opposition due to the slipperiness of the reference points (absoluteness of intentions and effects) that have been entailed to keep the opposition work.

In order for a context to be exhaustively determinable, in the sense demanded by Austin, it at least would be necessary for the conscious intention to be totally present and actually transparent for itself and others, since it is a determining center [foyer] of context. The concept of -or the search for- the context thus seems to suffer here from … theoretical and "interested" uncertainty … from … an ethical and teleological *discourse of consciousness* (my emphasis) (Derrida 1988: 18).

Under Austin's avoidance from poetic language, lies a fervent desire to determine the contexts, render the intentions transparent and create a presence of effects in a unique speech act. And this aspiration opposes his celebration of language's performative aspect, brings the theory closer to the structuralist tendency of fixation and determination. In line with the impossibility of a totalizing determinacy of intentions and affects, Derrida posits the following questions against Austin's vain fear of the "failure" and "misfiring" of utterances:

[D]oes the quality of the risk admitted by Austin surround language like a kind of ditch, external place of perdition which speech [*la locution*] could never hope to leave, but which it can escape by remaining "at home," by and in itself, in the shelter of its essence or telos? Or, on the contrary, is this risk rather its internal and positive condition of possibility? ... In this last case, what would be meant by an "ordinary" language defined by the exclusion of the very law of language? In excluding the general theory of this parasitism, does not Austin, who nevertheless claims to describe the facts and events of ordinary language, pass off as ordinary an ethical and teleogical determination (… *the presence to self of a total context, the transparency of intentions, the presence of meaning to the absolutely singular uniqueness of a speech act, etc.)* (my emphasis) (Derrida 1988: 17).

With these remarks, the scholar stresses the desperate need of language for repetitions even in the cases where it is captured with all its strict connections to eventhood. Still, in the end of the deconstruction of speech acts theory, Derrida celebrates Austin "for having discovered at least one instance in which language has no referent outside of itself" (Walker 2005). Austin's lectures, by moving

from speech acts, reveal the performative feature of language in general and expose how language –as a representation- is first of all a deed.

2.3. Some Ontological Questions

2.3.1 Context, Corporeality and Representation

> He adjusted himself to beams falling, and then no more of them fell, and he adjusted himself to them not falling (Auster 2003: 109).

> Nature creates similarities. One need only think of mimicry. The highest capacity for producing similarities, however, is man's. His gift of seeing resemblances is nothing other than a rudiment of the powerful compulsion in former times to become and behave like something else (Benjamin 1978: 333).

The former parts of this study have focused on language as a linguistic construction, speculated on its affinity with contexts and subjects. The forthcoming parts will however handle this tripartite contact and retrace it by starting from the point where the subject solidly embarks into the world (specific contexts- in the sense of physical setting). This path, throughout which Austin's theory would serve as a leitmotif, will attempt to enlighten their contact as the interlaced phases of an ongoing performance of the subject within the world. These discussions would be carried out with the aim of having a better grasp of the part that representations (from perception to language and films) take in the aforesaid performance.

Certain philosophers and theoreticians, when dealing with perception, have chosen to trace it backwards through explanations related to their field of study

(psychoanalysis, philosophy, phenomenology, etc.) and contemplate upon a pre-perceptual process, not yet governed by the consciousness but still happened to the subject's body in the most literal sense. Among all them, this chapter is primarily fed by M. Merleau-Ponty's arguments in *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1962) and *The Visible and the Invisible* (1969), Jacques Lacan's concept of the gaze, Roger Callois's focus on mimicry in *Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia* (1984) and Çetin Sarıkartal's notions of "pre-rational mimesis" and "mimesis-representation" (Sarıkartal 1999) which gather the former scholars' ideas in order to explain the subject's encounter with an artwork.

Jacques Lacan, in *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (1978) develops the concept of the gaze (which will further be referred to) in constant reference to Merleau-Ponty's arguments. As to Lacan, in *The Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty "brings us back... to the regulation of the form, which is governed, not only by the subject's eye, but by his expectations, his movement, his grip, his muscular and visceral emotion – in short, his constitutive presence, directed in what is called his total intentionality." (Sarıkartal 1999: 112). Lacan then continues by comparing it to *The Visible and the Invisible* where the writer "comes back to that [the flesh of the world] is prior to all reflection [eye] in order to locate the emergence of vision." (Lacan 1973: 139) Before moving on with the gaze, let me begin by Merleau-Ponty's latter work that has been quite of an inspiration to Lacan.

The significance of Merleau-Ponty's debates in *The Visible and the Invisible* for this project is that the philosopher while dealing with vision, primarily deals with

tactility and develops his arguments on their chiasmic feature. Thus he leaves aside the analysis of vision in the isolated body and turns to palpation by speaking of "flesh" (*la chair*) instead which constitutes the first and the foremost basis for all human relation to its surrounding.

> Flesh belongs neither to the subject nor world exclusively. It is a primal "element" (139) out of which both are born in mutual relation. It cannot then be conceived of as mind or as material substance. Rather, the "flesh" is a kind of circuit, a "coiling over the visible upon the invisible" (140) which traverses me, but of which I am not the origin (Leder 1990: 201).

Put forth by the above quotation, the distinction between the subject and the world arises out of a "mutual", a reciprocal relation that takes place throughout the flesh. On this theatrical stage, flesh operates vegetatively in accordance with the ever-changing world. Whereas this staging is never within the visible field of the subject who is supposed to be the very "owner" of the organism. The constantly changing environ is as well filled with other visceralities which are also beyond the vision of their 'owners' and acting in a similar way. The flesh serves an anchorage for the subject which is programmed to de-anchor all the time so as to adapt to an ever de-anchoring world. On this theatre, the play is more of a primitive kind because these invisible visceralities while providing the sole substrate for the life of consciousness, at the same time always elude from its grasp (consciousness has no idea of or control over its liver or nerve muscles apart from pure theoretical knowledge). Merleau-Ponty solidifies the chiasmic character of this staging on the flesh, by giving the example (but a conscious experience) of one hand touching the other where the body could both perceive and be perceived; could both play the role of subject and object at the same time.[ii] From the reciprocal relation within a lived body, Merleau-Ponty deduces that the relation between the flesh of the subject and the world to be the same; in other words both

of them touch upon the other and both are being touched by the other. At this point, under the influence of Merlau-Ponty's further arguments, I would like to go on with the chiasm of vision and tactility which actually rules the above mentioned theatrical stage. To follow a simple line of thought, it could be said that the materiality of any matter is defined by the volume it occupies in space and everything matter and it is necessarily in connection with the environment it is surrounded with. The light rays and sound waves travel through the space and hit or are slowed down by anything described as matter. Depending on the strength of its tangibility, the rays are either impeded and given another course to follow or decelerated. The rays are in the process being shaped endlessly as to the surfaces on their path. From this basic physical observation, it could be asserted that the world is visually sensed because it is initially tactile and these two sense data are strictly interwoven. Everything that we see at the same time touches our body's surface.

At this point, I would like to continue with "the gaze" through which Lacan implicates a similar mutuality between vision and tactility in the field of pre-consciousness. Lacan's insights would be beneficial in setting the affects of this theatrical play on the formation of subject and the importance of symbolization/representation taking place in various stagings throughout it. From the psychoanalytic stance, the subject is claimed to be forever torn apart and is in a constant state of lack due to its corporeality out of his sight, touch and most importantly control which used to be "one" with its surrounding in the mother's womb. Lacan discusses this lack and the tension it brings about in vision as:

> [T]he interest the subject takes in his own split is bound up with that which determines it - namely, a privileged object, which has emerged from some primal separation, from some self-mutilation induced by the very approach of the real, whose name, in our algebra, is the *objet a*. In the scopic relation, the object on which depends the phantasy from which the subject is suspended in an essential vacillation is the gaze. From the moment that this gaze appears, the subject tries to adapt himself to it, he becomes that punctiform object, that point of vanishing being with which the subject confuses his own failure. Furthermore, of all the objects in which the subject may recognise his dependence in the register of desire, the gaze is specified as unapprehensible (Lacan 1973: 140).

The gaze could be marked by its incommensurability in the consciousness which at the same time provides a basis for the subject to keep desiring. Lacan goes on with claiming that all objects to different degrees are constructed as correlative images for the absent body of the subject which in total amounts to a chiasmic picture. Merleau-Ponty paraphrases this visual/tangible picture where -in Lacanian terms- the gazes of different bodies or objects interlace:

> My perspective and that of the other intertwine in mutual validation, while never quite coinciding. The reality of the world is secured via its presence to other eyes, other hands, than my own. Even my own body is brought to fruition only through this gaze of another; "For the first time, the seeing that I am is for me really visible; for the first time I appear to myself completely turned inside out under my own eyes" (Merleau-Ponty 1968: 143 cited in Leder 1990: 202).

This translucency of gazes between the self and the other may generate two possible results on the part of the subject: either the subject-self by way of excess engulfs in the object-self (as in the case of certain mental illnesses[iii], or at the moments of excessive stimuli that the organism cannot cope with), or trough entailing symbolization/representation, the subject-self alienates itself from the object-self and tackle with the anarchic affects of the gaze. I will now elaborate

upon how the organism with the aim of continuing its existence as a separate subject, achieves a distinction between itself and its environment.

Throughout the clash or rather the intercourse of gazes at their very encounter which makes up the aforementioned "opaque picture" (or theatrical play), the subject becomes distracted, decentred, de-anchored due to forces exerted against itself. Here in this battlefield, we cannot yet speak of a decent, conscious subject to entail cultural codes and mimesis-representation - as already implicated by Merleau-Ponty's term "flesh". It is only a simple organism, a convulsive flesh which by way of mimicking its environment tries to become a "stain" in this total picture[iv]. But meanwhile (during the intercourse of gazes) the organism as an active party (organism and its surrounding) cannot remain virgin. The rays and attacks of the counter gaze exert force on it, just like a foot walking on sand. And the heavier the foot, the deeper and the sharper its trace becomes. The flesh at the same time has to seek a way out to split off itself from the picture, tackle with the gaze and give rise to the subject. Then while it keeps doubling the environment and allotting itself a place in the "picture", it at the same time operates diligently on this being-familiarized picture. These changes of state on itself are taken as stimuli and reacted against as to the law of impact bodies (in the same way that a billiard ball does after having been hit by another moving ball). For the opening of the subject to the world, the sensory happenings on the surface of body must be processed in the name of re-adjusting the organism. To render the formation of subject possible, afferent nerves condense these stimuli which are immediately followed by a motor reaction, shaped by the tracking down of similar visceral traces left by former perceptions and the summoning of the associated meaning from consciousness allotted to them by habit. Upon the receipt of sensory input,

past memories accumulated in the consciousness and their related affections are summoned to match with the most resembling ones.[v] The object is grasped and retained from within by citing. Thanks to the recollection of past memories; the associated affections and psychical meaning are embedded in the experience as well and the sensory-motor schemata fulfils its task. But as Henri Bergson states, "many other actions were possible and will remain inscribed in a virtual state. This is how perception stops being 'pure', i.e. instantaneous, and how representational consciousness can be born of this reflection (in the optical sense), of this 'echo', of the influx on the set of other possible - but currently ignored - paths which form memory…" (Bergson cited in Lyotard 1991: 42) By the intermediary of certain conscious memories, the picture is transformed into an image as a meaningful gestalt, containing familiar forms that are cited, quoted from the memory and repeated in the becoming object. The flesh in this way turns into a proper subject which has accomplished to anchor itself in space. Counting on the safety of the centralization (owing to which "the beams were no more falling") the subject then has re-adjusted "herself to them not falling" - in other words announced her authority over stable objects that she now could act on.

But still, some traces elude and remain unprocessed, excluded from the conscious experience and remain on the very slate awaiting, ever ready to threaten the "anchoring" subject. Freud compares their strength to the voluntary memory's by saying:

> [C]onsciousness arises instead of a memory-trace…memory fragments are often most powerful and most enduring when the incident which left them behind was one that never entered consciousness… [I]nvoluntary memory is composed of contents that were never experienced consciously; they somehow managed to bypass the level of consciousness (Freud 1955: 25 cited in Doane 2002: 13).

The process of voluntary memory is followed by the operation of cultural, social and linguistic codes. The linguistic counterpart of these symbolizations, such as "The girl is sleeping" or "This is a powerful Michael Haneke film" constitutes the phase where consciousness tries to veil the previous experience and rationalize it as much as possible. And interestingly, the intensity of these mimesis-representations depends heavily upon to the degree that the encounter made the involuntary memory work instead of the other. In other words, the more the encounter forces the subject to stumble (the more de-anchored it becomes) the more she entails codes of various kinds in the aftermath of the encounter and acts as if it has never happened. And naturally language serves as the most established cultural code during such rationalization, as stressed by Lacan below:

> The percipi of man can only be sustained within a zone of nomination. It is through nomination that man makes objects subsist with a certain consistence… The word doesn't answer to the spatial distinctiveness of the object, which is always ready to be dissolved in an identification with the subject, but to its temporal dimension. The object, at one instant constituted as a semblance of the human subject, a double of himself, nonetheless has a certain permanence of appearance over time, which however does not endure indefinitely, since all objects are perishable. This appearance which lasts a certain length of time is strictly only recognizable through the intermediary of the name. The name is the time of the object. Naming constitutes a pact, by which two subjects simultaneously come to an agreement to recognize the same object (Lacan 1953: 222-3).

During nomination, previously encountered contexts, words, sounds, letters are resorted to capture the percipi and render the experience meaningful and communicable but while they come along, they also carry within themselves the sensational, meaning-defying traces of the former experience(s) as well. Language, no matter how much mental, consciousness-related and non-physical it

may sound, is a part of subject's bodily orientation to the world and inevitably encompasses the inscriptions of this "already began" and "never-ending"[vi] phase (if the word "phase" could still sustain its meaning).

> Nietzsche's thinking... helps us understand how the most sophisticated achievement of humans, the linguistic, still has the animal body at its base and so may rely on it... "language itself... is at base corporeal. Words are doubly metaphorical: they are transcriptions or transpositions of images, which are themselves transpositions of bodily states. For Nietzsche, bodily forces underlie language and its possibility of representation." (Grosz 1994: 126 cited in Hauke 2000: 184).

Depending on the rigor of bodily experience, of the specific context where the subject and the world confront; the sensuous referents of words and utterances entailed may arise that much obviously beyond their semantic content. Susan Buck-Morss' quotation from the impressions of a field doctor, named Sir Charles Bell who worked a decade later at the Battle of Waterloo in the 19th century may render this claim more legible:

> It is a misfortune to have our sentiments at variance with the universal sentiment. But there must ever be associated with the honours of Waterloo, in my eyes, the shocking signs of woe: to my ears, accents of intensity, outcry from the manly breast, interrupted, forcible expressions from the dying and noisome smells. I must show you my note book [with sketches of those wounded], for… it may convey an excuse for this excess of sentiment (Bell cited in Buck-Morss 1993: 130).

Above excerpt from the drafts written by a doctor visiting battlefield -rather than describing the environment- bears the physical acuteness that the writer had gone through to its reader. But his experience in the physical space against the dead bodies have been so intense that despite having recovered from the shock, the

words the doctor uses, the sketches he draws still expose the once-incomprehensible experience. Buck-Morss unfolds Bell's situation as:

> Bell's excess of sentiment did not mean emotionalism. He found his mind calm amidst such a variety of suffering… The excess was one of perceptual acuity, material awareness that ran out of the control of conscious will or intellection. It was not a psychological category of sympathy or compassion, of understanding the other's point of view from the perspective of intentional meaning, but, rather, physiological – a sensory mimesis, a response of the nervous system to external stimuli which was 'excessive' because what he apprehended was unintentional, in the sense that it resisted intellectual comprehension. It could not be given meaning. The category of rationality could be applied to these physiological perceptions only in the sense of rationalization (Buck-Morss 1993: 130).

The previous discussions made under this section, the above quotations from Lacan, Grosz and particularly Buck-Morss's elaboration on Bell's writings may help in shedding light on the essential role language plays throughout perception; its strict connection to physicality and the resistance of once-occurring contexts (where we resort to language) against totalization (because of the uncontrollable bodily forces lying under them). Though the situation Bell was in is an extreme case, it still proves that certain confrontations with the physical world (including the artworks) can cause the consciousness to stumble. And "the category of rationality" that could be applied to these physiological perceptions only as fortiori representations (language, drawings) cannot fully cover the former experience. They cannot either help but re-animate the inexplicability, indeterminacy of intentions and effects formed to prevail it.

2.4 Aesthetic Theory: Film as an Experience

2.4.1 Corporeality and Context in Filmic Encounter

> Aesthetics: Gk. aisthetikos "sensitive," from aisthanesthai "to perceive, to feel" (www.etimologyonline.com).

> The original field of aesthetics is not art but reality – corporeal, material nature... As Terry Eagleton writes: "Aesthetics is born as a discourse of the body". It is a form of cognition achieved through taste, touch, hearing, seeing, smell – the whole corporeal sensorium (Buck-Morss 1993:125).

Differently from what its meaning denotes in modern times (as a branch of philosophy dealing with the nature of beauty), the etymological root of aesthetics concerns sensuous perception. The original use of the word pinpoints the initial sensory experience generated by physical proximity of an artwork to the subject. This phase precedes the involvement of a rational, critical mind that conceives form, contemplates on content of an artwork.

Roland Barthes, in his seminal work *Camera Lucida*, refers to the same case by coining the terms "punctum" and "studium" involved in the viewing of a photograph. As to Barthes, studium is "kind of education that allows discovery of the operator and refers to the interpretation of the representational and photographic or filmic codes" (Barthes 1981: 28). But Barthes then draws attention on small details within a photograph that are completely unintended both by the photographer and the subject. These details, which Barthes designates as punctum, escape from the grasp of the logos and defy it by soon filling the whole picture (Barthes 1981: 45). Yet the important point is that rather than differentiating these two terms, Barthes stresses their arousal to be a matter of co-

becoming. As in the case of Sir Charles Bell's sensuous depiction of the battlefield, the sensuality governing the experience (of aesthetic or of war) comes about only within representation. And in tight connection to Roland Barthes's terms, Roger Cardinal speaks about two modes of viewing in cinema which he postulates as:

> A distinction thus emerges between two divergent strategies of viewing. The first is the 'literate' mode in which a single-minded gaze is directed towards the obvious *Gestalt* or figure on offer; where the artist has centred or signalled his image in accordance with the conventions of representation, the viewer's gaze will be attuned to the focal message and will ignore its periphery. [. . .] The second mode is one which focuses less narrowly and instead roams over the frame, sensitive to its textures and surfaces--to its ground. This mode may be associated with 'non-literacy' and with habits of looking which are akin to habits of touching. The mobile eye which darts from point to point will tend to clutch at fortuitous detail or to collect empathetic impressions of touch sensations (Cardinal 1986: 124 cited in Keathley 2005).

In line with the above elaborations by Barthes and Cardinal, it could be claimed that together with the perceptual and cognitive constitution of images, cinematic codes, plot, narrative; the encounter of an audience with the film is also characterized by a vague degree of corporeality. Any single image, before being perceived as a meaningful gestalt, first touches its viewer's eyes as ray of lights in the very same way that soundwaves sweep into her ears. The external stimuli bursting out of the apparatus (screen, speakers, the movie theatre, other audience and the ambiance) towards her flesh, distract it, force it to adopt itself to the incessantly flowing images. The flux of lights and sound, physically strikes the surface of her flesh, leaving behind imprints not any different from the ones on filmic strip. The remnants of reciprocal gaze - that of the flesh and the image - are concretized as physical sensations on the surface of body. Thence the body mimics the gaze of the filmic image through wearing the cloth of that gaze. Here we

cannot speak of a thinking mind, capable of differentiating or comparing but rather it is flesh as a vegetative life form in its most basic sense, acting merely for securing itself through amalgamating with the surrounding. Mikhail Bahktin, in *Towards a Philosophy of the Act*, traces back the conscious subject making sense of aesthetic experience and speaks of a preliminary phase of empathy realized by its body. Bakthin designates this phase as a unitary act with "two-sided reflexion" and continues,

> From inside this seeing, there is no way out into life... An essential moment ...in aesthetic contemplation is empathizing so into an individual object of seeing it from inside in its own essence (Bahktin 1993: 14).

Accompanying the process of empathizing or wearing of new clothing, sensory motor apparatus activates within the flesh in order to anchor in a safe setting by familiarizing the unfamiliar texture of garment. In response to the stimuli; afferent and efferent nerve fibres vibrate and pass them through one specific path which is among the many possible paths that could have been followed. All the previous experiences of the body are taken as reference to tackle with new stimuli and a specific route to act upon it is chosen according to the recollection of memories against similar stimuli. The below quotation refers to the pre-verbal relation of the image to its viewer with reference to Freud's sensory-motor schemata:

> [I]mages are pre-linguistic, semiotic signs. They can only be theorized as relations of visibility, as intersections of light and sound, not as freestanding pictures or representations (the product of linguistic organization). Visibility is constituted by the movement of images from the worldly aggregate of matter-as-light to a body possessing memory capacity... According to Bergson, we start from the aggregate of images of which our body is a part. We then limit these images to adopt our body and brain as centers based on the sensory-motor power of certain images. However, certain percepts escape motility and action and become internalized as mnemic traces, affects and concepts (Gardner 2005).

The initial adjustment is carried out by the surface of flesh which is always in the process of interweaving with its ever changing surrounding via mimicry (or in Lacanian terms, via becoming a stain in the picture) and this adjustment is now acted upon by the chiasmatic other of the flesh, namely the sensory motor schemata. The ruptured flesh, oscillating between the outer and inner of its boundary is at the same time an uterus pregnant for the subject and the world. It both acts as if it was an extension of the outer and meanwhile operates diligently to resist it. The schema operates in order to hinder the penetration of external stimuli and this resistance synchronously objectifies the empathizer by giving form to its intertwining surface with the outer. Previous encounters of the subject are called upon to make sense of, to objectify, to embed meaning into the present one. The subject gradually sets itself apart from the surrounding and perceives the object-world according to the way that the body has acted upon it. Though the birth of subject and the world out of the flesh has been presented here as if it were linear, it is actually not the case. There are no clear-cut steps to this delivery but the phases - if they could be nominated as such - are entwined into each other as put forth by Bakhtin below:

> [M]oment of empathizing is always followed by the moment of objectification, that is, a placing outside oneself of the individuality understood through empathizing, a separating of it from oneself, a return into oneself. And only this returned-into-itself consciousness gives form, from its own place, to the individuality grasped from inside, that is, shapes it aesthetically as a unitary, whole, and qualitatively distinctive individuality. And all these aesthetic moments… have meaning and are actualized by the empathizer, who is situated outside the bounds of that individuality… One should not think, of course, that the moment of pure empathizing is chronologically followed by the moment of objectifying... Both of these moments are inseparable in reality (Bahktin 1993: 14-5).

The viewing subject (or "the literal mode of the single-minded gaze" as called by Cardinal) can only come about by stripping off the empathized self (illiterate, mobile eye). Because only by way of creating a distance, the rational mind can make sense of the form, contemplate upon the object. In order to wipe off the threatening affects of her initial confrontation with film, the subject employs consciousness to work like a buffer against them.

The time that empathizing of the flesh with the external world takes, depends on the success of sensory apparatus in matching the sensuous data with previous memories piled in consciousness. The more endowed the memory with similar experiences, the faster the objectification happens. And correlatively the less the memory is trained, the more the affect of external stimuli indurates on the body. Therefore in the second case, the persistence of engulfment within the outer world would elicit more powerful affection and psychical meaning in the subject. Their strength would be to such degree that, despite the rationalization of the event afterwards, some part of the speaking subject would still be driven by the persevering imprints of outer world (flowing images) on its surface that it has failed to reign (the writings and drawings of Sir Charles Bell stand as archetype for such a case). These inscriptions are what Gardner refers above by "mnemic affects that escape motility" and in the below citation, Susan Buck-Morss indicates the challenge they (an extended pregnancy) pose for the consciousness making full sense of the outer world (the children to be delivered):

> [W]ritten on the body's surface as a convergence between the impresses of the external world and the express of subjective feeling, the language of this system threatens to betray the language of reason, undermining its philosophical sovereignty (Buck-Morss 1993: 129).

As in the way that "impresses of the external world" are unanticipated and fortuitous, the affections felt against them are also erratic and beyond the control of thought. For instance, while watching the film, confronted with an image containing a certain colour in abundance, one could inexplicably feel nausea while another person could shudder instead. To proliferate the chain, a similar shivering affect may occur in a third individual as response to another feature of image, such as a sudden zoom-in. Or a recurring pattern in sound may arouse the taste of bitter in one's month, the reason of which neither we nor her would know… These simple constellations may be enough to reveal the unpredictability, lack of causality governing the bodily relation of audience to film.

In *The Third Meaning*, Roland Barthes, "argues for a 'theory of the still' that would disabuse us of the notion that the essence of cinema is the movement of images." (Culler 1989: 109) Rather than starting from a holistic approach to cinema where syntagmatic relations, narration and movement of images are prioritized or the intentions and effects are rendered transparent, Barthes highlights the complex ontology of the image lying beneath all of them and its potential for excess, unruliness and "obtuse meaning".

> Barthes asserts that 'the still is not a sample (an idea that supposes a sot of homogenous, statistical nature of the film elements) but a quotation...: at once paradic and disseminatory (Culler 1989: 109).

The preference to use the word "disseminatory"[vii] for the proliferation of unpredictable meanings or effects (another term for the unruliness of affection) is of great importance since Jacques Derrida uses the same word, in "La Dissemination" to stress upon the impossibility of closure of a text:

> The title term, dissemination, refers to the multiplicity of meanings

spawned by the modern text… disseminated meanings remain fragmented, multiple and dispersed… 'Dissemination affirms endless substitution'… One of the most striking features of dissemination is the occurrence of 'undecidable' terms which radically unsettle a text, and make a final decision as to its meaning impossible… (Howells 1998: 79).

The disseminatory quality of an image, or text could also be explained with the concept of jouissance[viii] which Barthes distinguishes from plaisir. Both concepts designate the pleasures taken from an artwork but quite in different fashions. The latter concerns the content, is governed by language of reason and "does not break with culture" (Hauke 2000: 218) whereas the former unsettles subjectivity and "refers to the female experience of orgasm, waving, weaving and polymorphous" (Hauke 2000: 218). The "waving and weaving" affection, psychical sensation that enchants the flesh also eludes from the grasp of consciousness (whenever tried to be seized, it disappears swiftly). Defined by their unruliness and disarray with rationality, these feelings are very powerful and enduring because they are palpable and registered on the flesh in the most concrete sense. On each new trigger, they bring about the accompanying sensations but they never iterate as the same.

2.4.2 Editing and Narrative: Mimesis-representation in Filmic Encounter

In the specific case of cinema, the access of rationality fully into its throne again, takes place through the intermediary of editing and narrative. The two create a certain field for the operations of the thinking mind that are in the form of building causalities and connections. With editing, the real time and space of each unique image, bearing contingencies and ungovernable elements is followed by another image. The immediacy and firstness of the former image is warded off by the latter that renders it as a meaningful time-unit that could be contemplated

upon. In Lacan's reading, language was operating to alienate the subject from the world of objects through making objects persist in time and make "the two subjects simultaneously come to an agreement to recognize the same object". Similarly, editing and narrative fulfil the same function in cinema. Thus Lacan's thoughts on the employment of language could be adapted to cinema as below:

> The object [image], at one instant constituted as a semblance of the human subject, a double of himself, nonetheless has a certain permanence of appearance over time, which however does not endure indefinitely, since all objects [images] are perishable. This appearance which lasts a certain length of time is strictly only recognizable through the intermediary of the name [editing and narrative]. The name [editing and narrative] is the time of the object [image]. Naming [editing and narrative] constitutes a pact, by which two subjects [director/viewing subject] simultaneously come to an agreement to recognize the same object [image] (Lacan 1953: 222-2).

This might offer an explanation for the obsession on the analyses of narrative that is peculiar to film interpretations. Their focus on narrative provides them a safer ground since that editing and the way that narration is constructed are taken by them to be expository of director's "specific intention" or to be disclosing the film's "hidden" meaning.

Cinema was a groundbreaking invention that served to record the ever-flowing, thus unrepresebtable time to the people of modernity, driven by this newly introduced concept. In her book *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, Mary Ann Doane dwells upon the rise of photography and cinema in connection to the modernist context. As to Doane's reading such media aroused in a period where time together with its representation became problematic in response to the needs of industrialization, urbanization and technical developments.[ix] The initial

examples of cinema simply recorded real life events, such as the workers leaving factory, arrival of train, etc. These recordings did not represent life but visualized the time that was embedded in real life. Such attempts were very much motivated by the belief in the incommensurability of time (that being the basic point of Henri Bergson's concept of "duree"). With this conception of time another problem came to surface gradually. All the moments shot (in the first recordings) embodied the ontological problems of image and bore within many contingencies. None of the images had the power to operate upon the other and succeed to persist long enough to be contemplated on (in the aftermath of viewing). They perished away, instead. The cinema then had not yet developed narrative and editing which would make the images endure in time.

> [T]he cinema embraces narrative as its primary means of making time legible. Despite the dominance of the actuality in the first decade of the cinema, despite the extensive fascination with the camera's relation to "real time" and movement, narrative very quickly becomes its dominant method of structuring time. Born of the aspiration to represent or store time, the cinema must content itself with producing time as an effect (Doane 2002: 67).

With the arrival of narrative and editing, images were endowed with specific space-times and were made to stay there not any different from the way that percipi of man is forced to reside in voluntary memory by the entailment of language. Thus the basic filmic language (editing and narrative) has emerged through cinematic apparatus's mimicking of the way that language operated in life:

> [N]arrative functioned as a displacement of unanswerable questions about the ontology of the image… narrative would constitute a certain taming or securing of the instability of the cinematic image (Doane 2002: 158).

For Pasolini, what makes a filmic discourse past tense is not its repeatability but something interior to the discourse itself-the cut that coordinates two separate presences and reconfigures them as a historic, that is, meaningful, present. He goes even further, to claim that the cut is equivalent to death, which, on the individual biographic level, converts "our present, which is infinite, unstable, and uncertain, and thus linguistically indescribable, into a clear, stable, certain, and thus linguistically describable phase (Doane 2002: 105).

Just like language that sustains the objects as percipi by preventing their slippage in the aftermath of pre-verbal adjustment and rendering them rationally legible, linguistic units required for communication; editing and narrative in film could be claimed to be the most salient tools of mimesis-representation.

[F]ilmic mass - this unexpressed expressible of a language without signs - is transformed... into a kind of speech (parole) that never stops collecting, citing, situating, and repositing, in short, which never stops expressing and enumerating that which is innumerable and unnamable in the cinema.' ...[C]inema is not a language, but is inevitably transformed by language: 'the language system only exists in its reaction to a non-language-material that it transforms. This is why utterances and narrations are not a given of visible images, but a consequence which flows from this reaction. Narration is grounded in the image itself, but it is not given' (Gardner 2005).

2.4.3 Locution, Illocution, Perlocution Reconsidered in Filmic Context

In the theoretical framework of this study, by focusing on Austin's theories in *How to do Things with Words*, I have tried to pinpoint language not as a stable formula posterior to the conception of the world but as a decisive deed within the perception of outer world. Such a starting point required a deeper elaboration on the contexts where the subject and the world interacted. Hence I resorted to certain philosophical arguments on the physical relation of the two which also exposited the viscerality residing in language. Now in consideration of this line of thoughts, I will return to Austin's study and try to rehandle his terms of locution, illocution and perlocution within filmic encounter and criticisms.

Before that, let me first briefly remind and highlight the analogy between function of editing and narrative in cinema and that of language in perception-communication again (both of which are fundamental to the emergence of subject): an image and the body of an audience co-exist on a spatial plane. Their relation to each other is established physically. The body of audience processes the sensory effect of flowing images and in turn adapts itself to them by way of mimicry. Since the actor here is not a rational human subject but an organism, this phase is convulsive and undisciplined. The organism breeds a growing desire to merge with its surrounding, yet it cannot "break through the boundary of its skin". So instead, consciousness interrupts and wears off this skin by way of objectifying the organism's once-occurent experience. The subject builds form and appropriate gestalts in images, constitutes its surrounding rationally and confirms it via language to another subject. The percipi of the subject is packaged so as to be communicated to another mind. Whereas in cinema, this confirmation -the point where two subjects agree upon recognizing the same object, the point where mimesis-representation appears most prominently- is achieved through editing and narrative. Through their intermediary, the filmic image containing contingent details (punctum) is enclosed as an operatable and communicable "past" as to certain possible intentions. Whatever is disseminatory in the image is thus delayed, left in abeyance and this mechanism addresses to the "literate mode of the single-minded gaze". With the arrival of proceeding scene, the former scene is packaged, limited because it is attributed to a specific space-time, accordingly to a "specific" intention which inbreeds "specific" effects on the viewer.

As to the above semblance, the whole film, then becomes a communicative medium thanks to editing and narrative which fix scenes to certain space-times, in the very same fashion that constative utterances fix the events, actions and states to certain space-times. But in both cases this fixation is not a secondary process; rather it is a substantial deed in perception. To apply Austin's theory of illocution and perlocution to cinema: illocutionary force is the director's intention which could be presumed to expose itself most obviously through editing and narrative. I use "most obviously" because framing, camera angles, lighting, acting, etc are symptomatic of director's intention as well but editing and narrative draw spatial, temporal and/or spatio-temporal boundaries between scenes and meanwhile confer unique contexts to each of them in accordance with the illocutionary force. Were there no cuts, edits (more than one) or narratives used, just like the first examples of early cinema (composed of a single cut), then all the moments recorded would remain equal in strength. Though generating an illocutionary force to a certain degree, it would fail in becoming a powerful one. The images flowing together with all their contingencies would not be acted upon, controlled and tamed. As to my reading, this is the reason why Tom Gunning designates first films recorded as "cinema of attractions" (a name referring to the engulfment that an audience goes through against the attack of unruly images). And Henri Bergson solidifies this characteristic defining the early cinema by comparing it to the ancient sculptures. As to Bergson, these artistic products are also based on the isolation of moments as in filmic recordings, but unlike the recordings, they achieve to bestow a singular moment with an aesthetic significance. Cuts, editing and narrative arrived in cinema for the sole reason of dealing with this problem and integrating a more apparent illocutionary force. Because in the end, not any different from the ancient

sculptor who privileges one specific moment over the others, the director also, through editing, narrative hierarchies the images among themselves.

The perlocutionary force in cinema on the other hand refers to what the encounter inbreeds for the audience. It refers to the affect that the film is pregnant to engender on her. By these I mean; the affections that have persisted both thanks to and despite the rationalization of her initial visceral encounter with images through editing and narrative.

What I will do in the further part of this study is that, I will try to give an account of my own experiences with two films by utilizing their perlocutionary forces which have actually found their possibility of existence within my rationalization. Still since they emerge from visceral relations, they would not be confined within the illocution of writings and aim at undermining its domination and constantly showing its limits.

3. PERFORMATIVE WRITING ATTEMPTED

3.1. Writing on *Possible Worlds*

16.11.2005

Anything extra that went along with all the changes, with each new viewing? Any unity that makes them all one? Any consistency?...

A blue spot is swept by white… A white one by blue… Although not distinct to my naked eye, it's very probable that a red spot is wiped off by green, or pink by yellow, or brown by orange, or… Neither evening nor morning, either dusk or dawn but it's impossible to tell apart… I can almost feel the weather… Splashes of water regress, splashes of water progress... Moments of indecision define their path. Shifting tones of blues let the tides wave along while a meditative melody repeats same two notes over and over... I could neither speak of figure nor ground, yet I cannot either keep myself from feeling the two in an indistinct way. It is as if I am within both at the same moment, if there is any moment as such… It was a freezing movie theatre. The mids of another freezing November day with no heating on. Shivering as if I were wearing wet clothes that never dried. Sticking on me, covering me all over… Other than that nothing much remained. But the clothes are/were on me again. Maybe it were the I, through whom the one at the theatre revived, when it was watching the same scenes again at another November day at its warm house. Or maybe it is the I now, through whom both came along without ever making themselves clear and I therefore cannot strip them off…

Responding to the lack of anchorage in flowing, waving images, the titles of movie arise out of blurriness by rendering themselves figures… The letters are dark blue and I can easily differ them from background. Still, their inside is translucent and let the movement in the background pass in and out of them… "They are so passive like smoke… one can even put hands through them"

There was only grey waiting patiently. Such patiently that it could have stayed there until the word patience stopped making sense. But I know/ then knew, it would not do so. It is/ was going to give in and surrender… The opening scene slowly gets invaded by what it has inbreeded which in turn makes me now recall a line belonging to the protagonist: "I love summer evenings by the water… I like it as dusk when water has that grey tint that seems to contain every other colour." (George Barber). Not in vain for sure...

Various tones of orange, brown and yellow superimposes both the prologue and each other until the arrival of an irritating sound of squeeze which soon appears to be diegetic. Colours explicitly reveal that it is dawn. From inside a flat, I happen to be watching an old man cleaning the window, out. Remaining foams slide through the glass elegantly. Gathering and becoming tiny islands, once expanding then dispersing. Floating, gliding down with no rush, worry or aim. Then sweeps the squeak. Then sweeps the squeak. Now there is only the old man and me… The following long shot invites the plaid glass window together with another man lying on a sofa inside. The caretaker drops his bucket as a token of shock, the reason of which I already know/knew. But I now cannot exactly figure out how I knew what I knew. Both because in that cold movie theatre, I have seen a couple of films, all

of which were about loss, all of which were about death… Believe her, I really did. Once, I travelled through the reminiscences of a schizophrenic who killed his mother (*Spider*, David Cronenberg), once I rewound a dead boy's life (*Donnie Darko*, Richard Kelly). All around me were familiar faces, worn-out places, worn-out faces… And because the scene dissolves into next depicting a homicide, the death of man lying on sofa. A stolen brain. Pinky blood… A policeman takes the photo of the deceased in a close-up over his face with a sudden flash of light and sound. Both are reiterated in the proceeding scene by the flashing of thunderclap. Lighting again and again. Rain, photograph, thunderclap, photograph… The same man, which happened to be dead a scene before, is now alive, standing and holding a tray in his hand. In a fully crowded yet not a chaotic restaurant, he calmly walks towards the only free seat left. Sitting across a woman, he forces her to into conversation during which he intuitively happens to know small details about her life. From Barber's eyes, I see his plate of white soup with green small pickles inside. Long enough, closed-up enough. Details scattered all around, waiting to be picked, eaten, digested, shit, eaten again…. Circular plate becomes a huge and heavy iron tab being pulled off by a man. This is a dark, damp, gloomy studio of a craftsman filled with rusty, dirty equipments. Invisible insects are wandering around. Tiny dots everywhere, not yet eaten but defecated already. The soup has flowed along studio and dried. Chief inspector's assistant is interrogating the man about a glass vase that he gave to the dead man's wife… Same vase reappears lying among chemicals, where a police photographer is developing pictures of the objects related to homicide. Camera slowly moves over the table and wanders upon each photograph floating in water. Soon they stop being photographs and turn into objects themselves: a glass, a thermos, a pencil… The petrified objects of

moment-ago de-petrifies. No thunderclap. I don't expect one either. I feel kind of a distraction lasting till the emergence of George Barber's reflection. It is a perfectly polished table.

Now I realize why I didn't anticipate the lighting.

The huge screen of cinema let my eyes catch sight of the boom clearly. Somehow managed to enter the frame by accident. Like a pendulum it suspended over George's head, swinging carelessly, about to fall down any moment… Translucid, plaid window behind. The black contours of squares. Old man, the squeezing sound of blush… Hairy pendulum, slinging, swinging…

A group of businessman are conducting an interview with Barber around the very table, its left and right edges overlap with the frame's. Cutting it into two through the over-reflective surface which doubles whatever lies over it. A deadly serious silence reigns only to be interrupted by the executive's voice, intonating like a masculine lullaby, encapsulating whoever happens to be hearing it. Even the silence, even me… A close-up over a glass of water is passed to Barber by a woman in a seducing way. And water slowly gets replaced by wine. The meeting room gets replaced by a noisy, crammed, smoky bar and Barber's front gets replaced by the camera. He holds, moves the glass up and sips. Middle-aged businessmen everywhere, chatting, muttering, gibbering fervently in order to swallow the diegetic music playing… Joyce as a different person yet with the same physical body and the same name approaches him and forces him into conversation. Barber starts narrating how come he found that he existed in an

infinite number of possible worlds to her. Standing behind Barber's right shoulder, camera slowly pans left, then right, first goes to past, then goes to past. In both Barber is a child solving the same problem in two different possible ways. And these pasts do not belong to him as "pasts". Neither do they belong to him as sometime else. At least I don't mean that. For the time being, they are only mine. Barber lies as a reflective surface between them. It doubles whatever stands in his left/right and right/left. Couple leaves the overcrowded bar and the chief inspector breaks through a group of protestors, shouting, yelling, screaming: "Ban animal testing!", "Ban animal testing!",… Within the building, I see him behind a black ladder in deep focus which shifts to the ladder as soon as an off-screen voice asks "Would you like to see the animals?". The voice is followed by his black shoes first, then black trousers and lastly his face in close-up. I remember this face. He was the uncanny scientist. He is the man in the rapid close-up of previous business interview scene. All around me are worn-out faces now. Thunderclap, rain, photo, soup… Cafe scene reappears again without any change: Barber is holding a tray, people are murmuring in background. Another familiar scene again. But to whom?... He again sits across Joyce, now the only difference is that camera sees them from left, leaving the window behind. Eternity of love, about talk they and I overhear again, again…

A shooting deep-voiced narrator softly murmurs: "Imagine a cold wind when it's raining."… Pouring rain is splashing the windows of a flat. Occurs to be the same flat with George lying on the sofa in the same position of his demise. I cannot figure out if he is alive or not. The voice continues: "Picture the eyes of someone you love… Hear their voice…" Words become the air. George's chest gets filled

with it. Joyce's off-screen voice shouts him to wake up. He stumbles a little, in a state of distraction as if he was not there physically. Enchanted by a three-dimensional tabloid hanging on the wall, together with a spiritual hymn ascending in the background… As I pan and slide until reaching the front, the once convex tabloid gradually turns to be concave. The hymn alleviates and alleviates… Thunderclap! Picture becomes the scene: a wooden house in pouring rain probably situated by the sea. Then I see from inside the blurry house, whose woods are a mixture of white, blue and grey and on its wall hangs two yellow raincoats. A dog barks incessantly as if someone was outside waiting to come in and abruptly rushes towards the door. George sighs deeply and leans on the wall of flat as if he was about to but somehow couldn't enter the house. While recovering, he murmurs: "…shifts. I feel my properties melting… Everything I've ever known, or felt, nothing holds… …a few moments. I because adjusted. I take on that new life." The spiritual hymn reoccurs. The hymn rises in tone binding the shot with its successor which re-enacts the same uncanny house scene but this time with George in it. He solemnly climbs the stairs. A man all covered in dark opens the door. The squeezing door. As he walks in, all the objects, including the doorkeeper's body and face, blur. The only clarity is granted to George's face from where I can feel the anxiety, discomfort and tension caused by being there, among all those meaninglessness which is far too hard to bestow any sense. George moves along or rather moves through white and translucent walls whose boundaries are almost gone, into a space enclosed by grey, sharp-edged metal. Circular holes around allow light within. Beams flow through not for lighting… Thunderclaps… A bird, a painted bird flutters inside. Its wings hit the metal and it gets anxious, flutters faster. The holes entice and ridicule it. I helplessly watch the

seagull which fell into the light hole of my flat. I am standing behind the plaid window enframed by metal. But the hole is so small that it cannot fly but only flutters. Someone has to get out…

The chief inspector reappears. This time half-drunken, he recites some lines: "Every thought you can think existed before you did. And those thoughts... they affect us. Possibilities swarm about us." While he is uttering these words, the assistant inspector within the same room is busy with chasing flies that are swarming around the rat's brain in a vat. He tries to dispel the flies and says, "Brain seems to be attracting flies. It smells awful."

From this moment on, I stop writing. Because I don't feel the cold anymore. The clothes must have dried. I know where I am now. There is only one world and I have been writing. Therefore the rest is purely "me" rewinding the film backwards.

A white spot is swept by blue... A blue one by white… Although not distinct to my naked eye, it's very probable that a green spot is wiped off by red, or yellow by pink, or orange by brown, or… Neither evening nor morning, either dusk or dawn but it's impossible to tell apart… I can almost feel the weather… Splashes of water progress, splashes of water regress... Moments of indecision define their path. The tides let shifting tones of blues, wave along while a meditative melody repeats same two notes over and over.. I could neither speak of figure nor ground, yet I cannot either keep myself from feeling the two in an indistinct way. It is as if I am within both at the same moment, if there is any moment as such… Enhancing this

lack of anchorage in flowing, waving images, the titles of movie start dis/appearing out of blurriness… The letters are white which obscures their belonging to back or foreground. Still, their inside is translucent and let the movement in back/foreground pass through them… The scene slowly turns into a clear image of ocean. Various tones of blue, grey and white superimpose each other. The colours explicitly reveal that it is dusk. I then overhear George and Joyce, in a state of worry, discussing over what to do about the red light they see at far distance which might be a signal for help. With the fading away of the red light, they relieve and lie back down over the blanket on the shore… In the close-up taken above them, George holds Joyce tightly while she mentions him about her childhood memories, trying to depict the incapability of depicting them... The ocean scenery dissolves to a brain held in a vat, filled with liquid and fibres which seem to carry some sort of impulses to and responses from it. Joyce, this time covered in black, probably mourning for the loss of someone, stands silently, looking at the vat without any express of emotion on her face in a seemingly over-hygienic place, probably a laboratory. A sharp-edged glass texture appears and slowly dissolves till becoming turquoise tone of blue accompanied by a half off half on-screen man's voice depicting the way sky looks underwater. George whose face appears with the ending of dissolve, continues talking in soliloquy: "I used to think that there was something extra that went along with all the changes but now I don't think so... I felt I should be consistent among my lives. But now I realize, they are all different and I enjoy them all. And if there is a unity that makes them all me, I don't know what it is.... I can hardly say I have a memory... It would be more accurate to say that in the collection of people I call me, memory occurs."

From this moment on, I stop rewinding. Because I cannot feel "me" anymore.

Therefore I continue writing.

Arseli Dokumacı

3.2 Writing on *Vanilla Sky*

20.11.2005

I started watching *Vanilla Sky* (Cameron Crowe, 2001) knowing that it was the remake of *Abre Los Ojos* (Alejandro Amenábar, 1997) which I had already seen. And as in any case of viewing a remake, I was endowed with a prior experience or rather data, if you prefer, wondering whether they would be too much of a reference point that could drag me into making comparisons. The possible questions to float in my mind were: "more what?", "less what?" and "why again?"… I would say that it is a pity that each remake is doomed to be experienced with such prejudice if it weren't for the fact that their directors have not also been aware of this inevitability prior to shooting the film.

So let me mention my priority or drawback I had against the audience that hadn't formerly seen *Abre Los Ojos*. And before it, let me set forth something else more important than that. What you are to read below may not be what it aims to be because I will be writing them, as a person who after having seen both films is trying recall the former before experiencing the latter.

"Abre los ojos!" Upon hearing them, Cesar awakened from his sleep. Wandered around the empty streets of Madrid. In short time their emptiness stroke him as a blast of shock. Was it real? Could not be. Or could it?... "Abre los ojos!" Upon hearing the answer, Cesar awakened from his dream. Got into his car and drove into his enviable life as a handsome womanizer living in extreme luxury. At one

side, there was his recent fuck-buddy whose face I barely remember and at the other lie, Sofia with whom he met at his birthday party and immediately fell in love. His recent affair jealously desired him while his best friend was the one who had brought Sofia to the party. Jealousy of the former party ended in an attempted murder. In the morning after the party, the girl drove her car to death with Cesar in it. As things revealed, I realized that the course of past events was not the real filmic time but I had been watching series of flashbacks inserted into the sessions between a psychiatrist and Cesar. Cesar's baby face was then terribly disfigured and his body was not any different from an outcast's. His lifetime chance of love had been destroyed by a simple decision to get into the car.

Half-lit, gloomy shots of later flashbacks… In a way operating to shed light on the reason why Cesar had ended in a cell, accused of murdering Sofia and sitting against a psychiatrist. And the psychiatrist diagnosed Cesar's case with psychological derangement which caused him to pass Sofia off as the other girl. Successive close-ups of a face: one moment beautiful as ever and the other moment unrecognizably wrecked… Were I to see the dead man's face smashed by the incessant strikes of a fire extinguisher pulled by the philosopher in *Irreversible* (Gaspar Noé, 2002) it would not be any different than Cesar's. Once he relieved by awakening from the nightmare and found himself fully recovered from the traces of accident and had his love back next to him. At next moment the former occurred to be a dream within his wrecked life. Again dream and again nightmare… And I followed him oscillating between the two during his talk at the prison. But meanwhile, unlike him, I found a reality to anchor which he was

incapable of doing. This imbalance between us lasted until the relevance of another reality.

Darkened places, desolate, distressing memoirs kept coming. In another way this time. Operating to overshadow what they had tried to lit; to disturb the real course of events, to blur the given explanations. From the bits of memories scattered in Cesar's mind, it turned out that, after having gone through the accident and endurable days of loss, he decided to sign a contract with a company that offered people the chance to halt their lives in practice but continue to exist in an ongoing dream state. Then was Cesar able to anchor himself in his own dream where everybody and everything were the reflections of his own mind. He climbed the roof of company's building and was ready for the moment of choice. He was given the chance to return his real life but that necessitated him to confront his life-time fear, fear of heights. Having had decided, he jumped into a total darkness…

All of them flying over the roofs of aligned houses in New York with different angles and at closing distances, abrupt shots follow each other… And another scene occurs to me now, booming the harshness of cuts. *American Beauty* (Sam Mendes, 1999). I only see a white plastic bag drifting through the wind in harmony with the movements of leaves all around. So light, so soft that once they rise and the other they fall yet never touch the ground… But my flight is not an un-piloted one. Falling for the mere sake of falling and falling to find the right place to hit! An inaudible woman's voice whispers some words as if arising from a subway tunnel and towards which I move as fast as a train. Getting closer and closer… Till I hear the exact words: "Abre los ojos!"... Then absolute darkness covers

everywhere. Leaving me with no clue whether the past sonic moments were diegetic or not.

A bedroom flashes together with the words, "Open your eyes!" repeated a couple of times. Upon hearing them, David awakens from his sleep. Everything is in its right place, murmurs Tom York. And I wander through the room decorated with utmost technological luxury. David has reached the bathroom where he stands across the mirror and picks off a single, tiny white hair that seems to spoil his gorgeous appearance. Puts on his dark coat and trousers, gets into his black Ferrari and steps on the gas…

An uncanny void is surrounding the streets of New York. The weirdness strikes him and he slows down. Still no clue of a single living creature around. Peeps at this wristwatch. 9 a.m. Sky covered with some sort of colour between blue and pink. A red traffic light but no other car than his. Tickling, muttering, whispering voices ascend in the background and the strange feeling of subway arises in me again. The watch is not enough, a further check is needed. Stops the car in the middle of Times Square. Now the voices gradually turn into a rhythmic music; at the moment of watching the scene, I would definitely call it diegetic but now I am sceptical on the issue. Could be both. Music continues and David gets out. Starts running along the huge buildings embellished with colourful billboards. Music gets louder. The camera rises high above with a fervent desire of encapsulating the running David. A swift 360 degree pan around David's face. Along which the familiar awe on it intensifies. And into this intensity momentary cuts to vivid

billboards interfere. More and more instruments join the music. I might be watching a perfectly shot video clip. But it doesn't end with the VJ's comments.

Open your eyes! David awakens from his dream. Gets into his car. Everything is now in its right place. Fetches up his friend on the way. They start chatting, talking over who David's most recent fuckbody is and burst into laughter on and on… Everything is now in its right place. Right place, right place… Ascending laughter's. Hysterically giggling faces. "We sometimes sleep together"… Suddenly, David fails to catch sight of the truck in front. The car Cesar is in crashes into the wall, its sound echoes. But David reflexively breaks.

David's non-diegetic voice narrates the couple of men he calls "seven dwarfs" in the executive board of the media company, he has inherited from his father. The same voice comments on the photographs of his past, childhood and father. Petrified photos from his past follow each other rapidly. Some worn out, some black and white, some coloured. Meanwhile, cuts from a prison appear and I become anchored with the narrator's voice arising from those cuts…

Sudden zooms and rapid cuts chase each other with the beating tempo of club music. David, his face blasted, is suffering from the loss of Sofia in the club where they have promised to date. In her Spanish accent, Sofia re-improvises the words of their first encounter "The saddest girl to ever hold a martini."… Mourning for the past, re-animating it in a hopeless nostalgia. Rings a song in my head: "All around me are familiar faces… Worn out places… Worn out faces… Bright and early for the daily races… Going no where… Their tears are filling up their

glasses… No expression… Hide my head I wanna drown my sorrow… No tomorrow….” Eyedrops cover Sofia's eyes yet they do not fall… Nothing in its right place where they once used to be. David stumblingly runs after Sofia through a cold, dampish, dark street. Camera rises above him with the fervent desire of encapsulating both inside. Music ascends in the background. Another scene embellished with mtv aesthetics. A song lasts just a couple of minutes and during its visuality feelings have to be condensed into moments of extremity. Cries, laughter's, screams, all the possible margins of human expressions… No foreplay but purely orgasmic instants, superimposing each other. Instead of the songs themselves, these thoughts invade my head…

As if lying on the ground of a pave way, I look at the Vanilla Sky lighting the picture. Arises between two grey buildings like an aisle but does not limit itself with their borders, surpasses their contours, invade their surface. Hangover from the other night, David is sleeping on the sidewalk... And he is gently making love with Sofia. Elegantly moving back and forth… He hugs her and his body closes her face. The vanilla sky gets replaced by the white lamps of the prison that light its desolate gate. Some other woman's hands enfold David's shoulders… David starts moving faster and faster… He feels the weirdness.. Eroticism is erased by pornography. David sees his fuckbody's face laughing, giggling with the pleasure of orgasm. He now literally fucks the girl harder and tighter as if taking revenge. Her laughters hit on David's face like the car. Smash it. Tear it. Gloomy holes of the prison falls upon his dreadful face… At the roof of Life Extension company building, he keeps screaming for help. A 360 degree pan draws a circle around the frantic-gone David. Technical support provided by the company, arrives and

informs on the past scenes. I now hear the VJ commenting on the recent video. Frozen in a tube, David has been dreaming for 150 years, living within the same dreams, nightmares plunged in each other… Tech support claims that the company has erased the rest of his real life after his meeting with Sofia at the club and he started living in his imagination the next morning where all the sky was covered in vanilla. While the tech support is going on with his explanations and several shots from David's life taking place within his imagination re-appear. They are superimposed by various inserts such as: Vanilla sky tabloid of Monet, a scene from "Jules et Jim" (François Truffaut, 1962), an album cover, another scene from another movie… His halted real life is exposed to be the associative debris of the current one. Together with the roof scene, the moment of decision comes. Some part of him still persists to stay in the dream. The psychiatrist, who is also the reflection of his own ego, helplessly says: "I am real. You know I am." But David is not in the dream where one might think. The character who strives to prove his reality, Sofia who has died, the tech support man who is with him, they are all David.[x] I remember David on the stretcher singing the song "What if God was one of us? Just a slob like one of us. Just a stranger on the bus… Trying to make his way home".

And David has no idea about when the dream has actually started. Neither do the other audiences who haven't seen Abre Los Ojos. As in they way I do now. Therefore I am one step ahead of him in terms of anchorage, unlike me who was equal with Cesar during the corresponding scenes.

Insert 1: Lucid dreaming is a phenomenon that is explained by "dreaming while you know that you are dreaming". The dreamer can control and alter the course of events taking place thanks to the awareness of her own state which is being in a dream. She literally takes on the role of God. Meanwhile, she consciously encounters her deepest fears residing within and tackles with them. Should she fail in doing as such, similar dream pattern reiterates. With each success, she feels an expansion of the feeling of power; a process which is assumed to end in with reaching a higher level of consciousness; to become one with god.

David choose to go ahead with his "real" life and is ready to face his last fear left, fear of height. He jumps into a total brightness. I see David's eyes wide shut and overhear with him the words: "Open your eyes!". The eyes obey them. In the end, David succeeds anchoring. The very last scene destroys the previously established imbalance between me and him. He enters into his real life and I leave the movie theatre.

Insert 1.2. Taken in this sense, David's dream could have only started with the beginning of Cesar's whose fears had been left half-resolved. Moreover, the illogic within the chronology of Vanilla Sky, namely the placement of Sophia's voice uttering "Abre Los Ojos" (with whom David had not yet met) within the opening scene, could only be explained in this way. As a reminiscence from his imagination.

And now Vanilla Sky doesn't make any sense to me as a remake. It becomes sequential to Abre Los Ojos and only together they do make up a single movie.

The imparity between Cesar and me in terms of awareness expires with the course of disclosures at the roof scene and I experience the catharsis through Cesar's dive into darkness. Cesar and I both de-anchor. Whereas the opening scene of "Vanilla Sky" scatters the cathartic quality of the former scene in order to create its own play space. And in the end, David and I both delve into brightness and open our eyes. We both anchor. And I experience the full sense of catharsis which has once been destroyed. And more importantly, any chance of another sequentially is wiped out by this very last scene where David settles all the dilemmas of his mind and takes on the figure of god.

And I start wondering if I might not be the only one to come to such awareness. I feel as if Abre Los Ojos could have been followed by anyone's own ending. I could have the "David" of my own imagination but I was made to watch someone else's. Yet I realize this only now after having seen that someone already created the god of his own through me.

The rest of the song David was singing keeps reverberating in my head:

"If God had a name what would it be?

And would you call it to his face?

If you were faced with him

In all his glory…"

Arseli Dokumacı

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Criticizing Film Criticism

> The problem with… criticism is not [the critic's]… rebellion, not the violence or desire to possess, but that all too often we see only the aftermath of the rebellion, when the critic is instated in his superiority over the needy work of art… [T]hat moment [can be called] 'interpretation'….But what has been forgotten, what has been covered over, is that the interpretive gesture with its assumption of superiority over a mute object is always based upon a prior rebellion against the object's power. It is the aggression and the desire in that rebellion which constitute the most authentic encounter with the object's power, where we experience not only the object's force but equally our own powerful derive to understand, to possess, that which moves us so intensely (Jones 1998: 39).

In the theoretical framework of this study, I mediated on a carnal experience establishing all human relation to the world and it's processing by the consciousness. Aesthetics, particularly filmic experience, was explored within this context during which the mutual performance of film and its viewer was emphasized. Since all bodily experiences reach us through their rationalization, it was impossible to speculate on them by excluding the interference of consciousness. Accordingly, what is at stake in film criticisms is the degree of interference, which may easily turn into superiority over the film as an art-object. Navigating around this degree, I would like to make a rough categorization of film criticism together with a number of citations ranging from popular film reviews to scholarly written criticisms:

1. The way the film is composed; i.e. its stylistic and communicative aspects, how they function and their related perceptual, mental or emotional effects are set forth

in a cause-effect chain. In this way, the film is handled as more of an aesthetic object that embodies certain formalist qualities.[xi] The assessed features of the film are seen the salient reflections of director's "precise" intentions.[xii] The below excerpts from different writings could be exemplified as the extensions this tradition.

> The reconstructed past in Lepage's films is essentially a de- or unauthorized one, lacking an identifiable narrator, in the sense that the edits used to evoke the past on screen …cannot be tied to a diegetic character's actual sensory-motor recognition but (belong) only to extradiegetic, or virtual representation… Neither these (virtual representations) be tied to a stable point of view, other, that is than that provided by the omniscient camera (Dickinson 2005: 134).

> [V]isual imagery itself is often unstable and simultaneously multiple in Lepage's productions, so that visual meaning is itself in flux, polyvalent, and requires active interpretation (Girard 1995: 160 cited in Harvie 2002: 226).

2. Rather than emphasizing the formalist qualities and floating on aesthetical aspects of the film, critic may adopt an interpretive attitude through a certain semantic field such as structuralism, psychoanalysis, feminist theory, gender studies, sociology, etc. Specific filmic features belonging mostly to the level of narrative and its construction are picked up in an exhaustive and absolutist manner and assessed to be symptomatic of the adopted semantic study. In most of the cases, these textual features are ascribed either to the specific film, its director, the genre, its presumed place in film history or to auteurship. David Bordwell in *Historical Poetics of Cinema*, designates this tendency as "the interpretative school" and exemplifies it as:

> [T]he psychoanalytic critic posits a semantic field (eg, male/ female, or self/ other, or sadism/ masochism) with associated concepts (eg, the deployment of

power around sexual difference); concentrates on textual cues that can bear the weight of the semantic differentiae (eg, narrative roles, the act of looking); traces a drama of semantic transformation (eg, through condensation and displacement the subject finds identity in the Symbolic); and deploys a rhetoric that seeks to gain the reader's assent to the interpretation's conclusions (e.g., a rhetoric of demystification). Every recognized "method"--phenomenological, feminist, Marxist, or whatever- can be described along these lines. They all aim to produce interpretations--that is, the ascription of implicit or symptomatic meanings to texts (Bordwell 1989).

Below are a series of citations from various criticisms which may be exemplary of

such inclination:

Some of the formal characteristics of the film might also be considered feminist. These include the "open" ending of its narrative, the fact that Erika's torso is never "fetishized" — framed in close-up — by the camera, the fact that much of the "work" of viewing the film consists of trying to read Huppert's exquisite but always ambiguous face, and the film's almost total withholding of characters' nudity combined with its inclusion of graphic scenes from actual porn films. Most of Huppert's acting occurs through her face, the film placing us in the position of the porn spectator who searches for visible evidence of female pleasure and the reassurance that men can provide such pleasure. The casting of Huppert also creates a feminist subtext, as she is considered one of France's most intellectually gifted actresses. Appearing to wear almost no make-up other than lipstick, dressed often in somber clothes, her freckled complexion is lovely in a way that is not typical for an actress in her forties, as there is little attempt to turn her beauty into an eternally youthful femininity (Champagne 2002).

The Piano Teacher is graphic in what it suggests is happening onscreen but, as the camera rarely focuses on the heart of the action, gives the audience only glimpses rather than full-on close-ups. In this sense, Haneke constructs a position for us as voyeur, a third party to Erika's frenetic descent, following her at a distance and never allowing us to come to grips with her in any satisfactory way. Coupled with the lack of voiceover or internal dialogue, Erika's inability to express what she wants directly means that we are resolutely kept at the surface. In contrast to mainstream narratives, the audience cannot engage or sympathise with Erika and, moreover, does not want to. Erika is therefore doubly alienated... Haneke's directorial tone fits perfectly with Erika's relationship with her life... Haneke adopted the same approach in Funny Games (1997) where he laid bare society's obsession with screen violence with his own foray into mindless, inexplicable acts of brutality. Typically, it is difficult to see where the critique begins and Haneke's contribution to the body of violent films ends. The same ambiguity is true of The Piano Teacher. Is the violence there to shock — and it undoubtedly does shock — or to force us to question why audiences love horror and violence? (Dijk 2002)

Semiotic analysis of 2001 film Vanilla Sky could engage how Cameron Crowe's film presents a remake of a 1997 Spanish film, and how the use of celebrity stars Tom Cruise and Penelope Cruz, involved in a real-life romance, provides a spectacle of modern icons of beauty, desire, sexuality, and power. The science fiction thematic and images present semiotic depictions of a future in which technoscience can make everyone beautiful and live out its culture¹s dreams and nightmares... (Kellner 2005)

No matter what else they lack, Crowe's movies… have a core of feeling: You can discern the writer-director's struggle to spin his fear of loneliness into doleful comic gold…. But Crowe is like a Method actor whose talent is proportional to how much of himself he can draw upon. It speaks well for him that he can't identify too closely with the dream life of Tom Cruise… The problem is that Crowe and Amenábar come from opposite vantage points on popular culture. The Spaniard …dips into his literature's rich tradition of subjectivity-as-reality… to portray fantasy as a solipsistic dead end. Crowe, on the other hand, has built his aesthetic on the belief that passionate fantasy… is the best way to transcend the self and make contact with other people. It's no wonder that Crowe can't generate any real feeling. The narrative is alien to him on every level… (Edelstein 2001)

Vanilla Sky edges into David Lynch territory, toying with the ontological issues of identity and perception explored in Lost Highway (1996), but these themes are a red herring, as Cameron Crowe's film lacks the profundity to go anywhere quite that dark or interesting. Instead, Vanilla Sky attempts to be a morality tale of loss and redemption. The problem is that through a paradoxical mess of projected realities and actual events there seems to be only loss, complimented by the suggestion that money and narcissism are more life affirming than love… Vanilla Sky seems to presume you'll be watching it twice from the start. Accordingly, it makes no qualms about completely alienating the viewer from the narrative, and the resulting confusion creates a sort of Brechtian distanciation, preventing either an easy engagement with the film or empathy for David Aames… (Hunt 2003).

The science fiction aspects of this movie may place Crowe in unfamiliar territory (he is clearly at his best when dealing with character interaction), but he rarely seems lost (Berardinelli 2001).

Aslında film ikinci yarısında başlıyor ve ilk yarısındaki 'şımarık playboy belasını bulur', 'Fil Adam Külkedisi'nin Kalbini Kazanır' gibi hikâye başlangıçlarını görmezden gelmek lazım. ('Vanilla Sky', 'Aç Gözlerini' adlı bir ispanyol filminin Holywood çevrimi. İspanyol filmi, o mükemmel 'Diğerleri' filmini yapan yönetmenin çektiği Borgesvari bir 'thriller', bir 'rüyasında rüya gördüğünü gören adam' masalı.) Vanilyalı versiyon ise, sanal âlemde geçen bir 'Vertigo', içinden hayat dersi geçen bir 'Matrix',

hatta çağdaş tüketici sorunlarına radikal bir yaklaşım… Film, esas itibarıyla zengin çocukların da dramları olabileceğini, onların da gözlerinin önünden film şeridi gibi geçen iyi, kötü bir hayatları olduğunu lütfen kabul etmemizi rica ediyor. Bir de belki, daha insani bir planda, insanın, seçme şansı varsa, her zaman mutluluğu seçeceğini ima etmek istiyor - bu mutsuzluğuna yol açacak bile olsa. Ama bu ikincisi, 'gürültü'den duyulmuyor (Özgüven 2002).

Gerçeküstücülüğün dayanak noktalarından biri olan rüyalar, 'Vanilla Sky'ın da böylesi bir çizgiye oturmasına neden oluyor. Gerçekle gerçeküstünün adeta savaştığı bir yaşamın kilit noktalarını açmaya çalışıyoruz film boyunca. Yönetmen Crowe'un, günümüzün en sofistike Amerikan sinemacılarından biri olmasının da etkisiyle, benzersiz bir dramın ipuçlarını birleştirme uğraşı içine giriyor, öte yandan da kelimeler ve imgelerin arasında bir oraya bir buraya koşuşturuyor, yorgun düşüyoruz. Düşlerine hükmeden insanın Tanrı rolünü üstlenmesinin de altını çiziyor 'Vanilla Sky'… 'Vanilla Sky' filminin anlattıklarını, düşle gerçeğin çakıştığı noktayı, çağlar öncesinden bu yana çözmeye çalıştık, sürekli kafa yorduk, 'yorumlar' getirmek istedik. Peki sonunda ne oldu? Düşlerin hayatımızı yönlendiren unsurların en başında geldiğine, bizi bilinçaltımızın yönettiğine karar verdik. Son söz olarak, Cameron Crowe'un 'Vanilla Sky'ını 'yoruma açık bir rüya' diye nitelemek mümkün, çağdaş insanın kâbusa çevirdiği güzel bir düşün yanıbaşında duran... (Özer 2002)

Though overstuffed and burdened with a surfeit of style over substance, Open Your Eyes... is powered by two expertly interlocked stories that, taken together, probe the limits of paranoia and desire in a corporate culture (Taylor 2001).

3. There may be cases, where the writer rejects the above exemplified strands and go for a totally subjective style that may be in the form of jotting down the experience in various methods such as associative, impressionist or surrealist writing. Texts shaped in this way, aim at destructing the codes of culture, structures of signification and defy representational tools. These attempts (which there are only a few) by focusing solely on the eventhood of experiences and contemplating a space that escapes representation, fail in making much sense to their readers and however diligently done, they still stay within representation which they have attempted to reject totally.

It's necessary to admit that the above classification is not ultimate and that there may be cases where the boundaries may blur. But nevertheless a common problem of limiting representation - which is tried to be resolved by foreseeing a closure for it or by its total rejection - shades into all (in the further parts of the project, I will be mediating with the first two traditions since that the criticism of the last one is already stated). This bordering around representation (film) by criticisms (which is actually another representation) is actually generated by the strivings of the critic's logos. After having confronted with the artwork corporeally, the critic entails her logos so as to make sense of the previous experience by objectifying the other party (film) involved in it. Thus writings turn into the documentation of a process at the end of which the critic's experience is submitted in a reasonably de-individualized form. The film whose raison d'etre is to offer each audience a subjective happening, to endow them with jouissance - in the name of being interpreted - is objectified and dissociated from its prolific quality. The very consciousness of the writer, whose authority has been challenged at the filmic encounter, tries to veil this "deficiency" through making incessant interpretations and analyses once the film is over. When the codes of culture start to be entailed, the film becomes "cultural enjoyment of identity" and writing accordingly turns into "a homogenizing movement of the ego" (www.answers.com). Any jouissance that may have been experienced during the above stated challenge (by the film), is dismantled within the realm of logos. Via such writings, abundant in totalizing remarks, the film as a text is enclosed and saturated because its deadly silence invokes all the possible saturations.

Picture yourself, 'writing on film': you become an extra. To be an extra is to be in some sense outside (from the Latin preposition extra, 'outside'), an outsider or foreign body, an apparently unnecessary addition. Critical

writing on film will always be a supplement, coming from outside, leaving the film untouched and untouchable. Which is doubtless what drives the desire to write' on' it: the desire of the impossible (Royle 2003: 81).

The critic, by enclosing the film as a text, also confines the criticism within certain borders inside or outside of which its reader is doomed to remain. Neither the critic nor the reader is given a space to perform except than borders to agree or oppose. But such a redundancy does not have to capture either the critic or the reader. If this approach is taken as default, then it would only result in an inexhaustive operation of logos to prevail the experiences of both writing and reading. It would only reach an impasse where critics consume films and readers consume critics.

4.2 Films and Criticisms as Speech Acts

After having written two texts on two different films, I feel the need to ponder upon the experience of writing those texts and reconsider Austin's theories within film studies. Austin's designates his own studies as "linguistic phenomenology" and rather than transfer of content, he focuses on "communication as a matter of bringing about certain effects" (Halion: 2005). Speech acts theory handles language not as an inert formula through which certain content is carried but as an active deed that highly depends on its entailment within specific situations. "It is by comparing the *constative* utterance… with the *performative* utterance… that Austin has been led to consider *every* utterance worthy of the name… as being first and foremost a *speech act* produced in the *total* situation in which the interlocutors find themselves" (Derrida 1988: 13). Focusing solely on the content of any utterance requires its analyses be focused on its truth value as well but from the stance of a speech act, the affect of parties (within the context that binds them)

on an utterance are involved into the analyses (To exemplify, "I pronounce you man and wife" could not be analyzed by its value of truth as in the way "They are married.") This involvement means that certain forces reside in the enactment of language that give rise to visible change of states and/or invisible effects. Therefore Austin frees "the analysis of the performative from the authority of the *value of truth,* from the opposition true/false, at least in its classical form, occasionally substituting for it the value of force, of difference of force *(illocutionary or perlocutionary force)"* (Derrida 1988: 13). The significance of speech acts theory lies, as also posited by Derrida in its shattering "the concept of communication as a purely semiotic, linguistic, or symbolic concept" (Derrida 1988: 13) and its emphasis on physical contexts, once-occurrent situations and dynamic interaction. I believe that consideration of language from an Austinian aspect, may provide us with a less implicit access to other forces at work in communication that may be resisting the sovereignty of logos. In the case of cinema, Speech Acts can let films be seen not as inert art-objects embodying "pure" meanings but as part of an aesthetic experience that has performative features.

While focusing on filmic experience and writings on them, I tried adopting an Austinian standpoint since that it offered a way out of the saturation of film as an object. Within the two writings, I didn't have the intention of seeing films as communicative tools that conveyed a pure semantic content embedded by the director and waited for its relevance by the critic. In other words, while writing I deliberately avoided from deriving meanings and making interpretations which would attribute films a virtual inertia. Taking contexts into consideration during

viewing and writing required dealing with the terms locution, illocution and perlocution. In the end of viewing a film, what a viewer has in hand are some images that have stricken her, the plot and certain affections. The common path to be followed by a critic with this material in stock, is to present a backwardly built cause-effect chain between illocution and perlocution (as exemplified in the former parts of the current section under the categorization of criticisms. Bazin's writings and the recent cognitive approaches in film studies stand rather on this side). Such a route then ends in with acclaiming the transparency of intentions that only waited for being paraphrased by criticisms. In other words, despite their moving from the effects produced in an individual (results of perlocutionary force), this path by focusing merely on the filmic conventions and by treating them as empirical data to reach objective deductions (objectification of illocution) just aim at totalizing the film. Yet perlocution is a force that resides in the utterance and gives rise to certain effects on the viewer in its enactment. For instance, the viewer may be frightened or sad while watching a scene but this consequence depends on how she reacts against this force. And she may only have a possible idea about the illocution of the director since that the route to it starts from her individualistic experience. The film does not take place between the director, as the sender and the audience as the receiver who exist within the field of communication as separate interlocuters. But the film as an utterance is shaped by the different forces animating it. The encounter with an artwork does not only mean the non-presence of its artist but also the non-presence of its viewer as it is posited in the below quotation which is taken from an interview with Jacques Derrida about 'spatial arts'. As an answer to the question of Peter Brunette and

David Wills whether a viewer's body is given away to a Van Gogh painting, Derrida makes the following comment:

> I am given over to the body of Van Gogh as he was given over to the experience. Even more so because those bodies are not present. Presence would mean death. […] If all these experiences, works, or signatures are possible, it is to the extent that presence hasn't succeeded in being there and in assembling there. Or, if you wish, the thereness, the being there [*l'être-là*], only exists on the basis of this work of traces that dislocates itself (Brunette and Wills 1994: 15-16).

I would like to pursue the argument by saying that, only thanks to the non-presence of both parties (director and the audience) that a film can come about. And with the quotations from life, reference to repetition which makes up representation, could both parties set out from a common ground to reach each other but in the end when the film comes to exist that ground is already breached. A new territory starts becoming which cannot be simply reduced to representation (the film that has been seen) itself. The film by basing itself on iterations in the form of filmic language opens itself to the audience and at the same time performs an action, does something to the audience which yields certain affections. These affects could in no way be equalled to the "pure" and "immediate" intentions of the director which are assumed to have been conveyed as self-coherent through the representational system. Any correlation as such "camera rarely focuses on the heart of the action, gives the audience only glimpses rather than full-on close-ups. In this sense, Haneke constructs a position for us as voyeur, a third party to Erika's frenetic descent, following her at a distance and never allowing us to come to grips with her in any satisfactory way." cannot be determined. Jo Smith in her article "Film Criticism after Grand Theories" draws onto the same point by quoting from Deleuze and Guattari:

There is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book / the film) and a field of subjectivity (the author /the director). Rather, an assemblage establishes connections between certain multiplicities drawn from each of these orders, so that a book has no sequel nor the world as its object nor one or several authors as its subject (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 23 cited in Smith 1998).

The above referred assemblage implies that the illocution is reachable only through the effects created on the viewer therefore exposes the impossibility of a pure, unchanging intention.

In order to elaborate on the issue in more detail, I would like to resort Derrida's focus on the general iterability in language within his criticism of Austin for the distinction he maintains between serious and non-serious acts (this criticism despite seemingly irrelevant to the issue, actually proposes a helpful explanation to the indeterminacy of illocution and perlocution). Instead of rejecting citationality and trying to retain an uncontaminated lure of language, Derrida proposes that a "different typology of citations" should be constructed. And he continues as,

In this typology, the category of intention will not disappear; it will have its place, but from this place it will no longer be able to govern the entire scene and the entire system of utterances. Above all, one then would be concerned with different types of marks or chains of iterable marks, and not with an opposition between citational statements on the one hand, and singular and original statement-events on the other. The first consequence of this would be the following: given this structure of iteration, the intention which animates utterance will never be completely present in itself and its content. The iteration which structures it a priori introduces an essential dehiscence and demarcation (Derrida 1988: 18).

Considered in the light of the above quotation, the significance of contexts is preserved whereas they are not enclosed and saturated. The "category of intention" exists yet is not allowed to authorize the whole experience. The intention of

director which has animated the film would never be completely present *in itself* and *its content*. The repetitions (in the filmic language) which structure the intention of a director a priori, introduce essential dehiscence and demarcation. The film, standing for the non-presence of its utterer is already enough to defy any self-present, conscious, totalizable intention. If it were to be as such, then there would be no reason for the film to exist as constructed within a repeatable formula. Thus any effort to fix the illocutionary force of a film would be a vain effort. Because it would be coming forth only within a territory where I am as an individual audience is included. But this indeterminacy does not mean an impasse instead it becomes the only possible route to the illocutionary force as posited below by Derrida:

> Différance, the irreducible absence of intention or assistance from the performative statement, from the most "event-like" statement possible, is what authorizes me, taking into account the predicates mentioned just now, to posit the general graphematic structure of every "communication." Above all, I will not conclude from this that there is no relative specificity of the effects of consciousness, of the effects of speech (in opposition to writing in the traditional sense), that there is no effect of the performative, no effect of ordinary language, no effect of presence and of speech acts. It is simply that these effects do not exclude what is generally opposed to them by term, but on the contrary presuppose it in dissymmetrical fashion, as the general space of their possibility (Derrida 1988: 18-9).

Following the deconstruction of Austin's theory, what needs drawing attention is the fact that speech acts/constatives, ordinary language/non-ordinary language, and finally presence/ absence of intentions are matters of co-existence. Yet the more important question is the relation of this co-existence to criticism of film criticisms and performative writing. Let me posit an answer to it through a self-reflexive glance at the texts I produced and re-think the criticisms I was disturbed about.

Initial consideration of *Possible Worlds* as a speech act and picking up *Vanilla Sky* against it as a constative utterance was in line with the first chapters of Austin's study where he developed the distinction between the two. As I have formerly noted in the Introduction chapter, this study didn't have a linear path and I kept oscillating between the theory and practices of writing and viewing as well. I first wrote a text on *Possible Worlds* which soon sounded both to me and my advisor as far irrelevant to what I have intended. But a broader focus on the later chapters of Austin's study - where the division between performatives and constatives were removed and the terms illocution and perlocution were proposed - smoothed the process of writings. The two different experiences of writing were not much different from the viewing experiences in terms of the convulsiveness of each film's affects on me. But upon their completion what stroke me was the fact that they stood at the same stance with Austin's later thoughts in that both performed yet to different degrees. A self-reflexive consideration of the two texts revealed what actually mattered to be the terms of illocution and perlocution. Still another issue of debate aroused together with these terms which made me resort to Derrida's deconstructive analyses. This time Derrida's critical views upon the reduction of intentions to immediate and coherent presences shed light on the basic problem of film criticisms and how performative writing could be considered as an alternative to it. The real question was not that those criticisms failed or succeeded to perform, they all performed whether explicitly or subtly. But of concern was that how these criticisms deal with illocutionary and perlocutionary forces. Their possible disturbance on any reader such as I, was caused by the endorsement of illocutionary and perlocutionary forces of the film as self-present and valid for anybody to view the film. By these I do not mean that performative writing would

be the miracle tool to get rid of such problematics, yet it might pave the way for another sort of relation with films and even with other texts. And the degree of its success or failure is totally an unprecedented issue. Bearing these point in mind, I would now like to expatiate on the paths through which performative writing might offer a way out of the problematics dwelling in criticisms.

4.3 Film Criticism as Performative Writing

A director's stylistic preferences (camera angles, lighting, acting, mise en scene on the level of image, camera movements on the level of shots and editing techniques on the level of narrative level) are presumed to be "the means to transfer his intention". And these intentions come to the surface more on the level of editing and narrative than they do on the level of images. Within the previous chapters, the role of editing and narrative during the formation of a more apparent and holistic illocutionary force of a film was stressed. But as have already been debated, "the means to transfer a message or intention" is not a subsidiary quality that can be assigned neither to language in general nor filmic language in specific. These means dwell upon a history of repetition which has caused them to become communicable. And similarly the self-presence of an intention, managing to withhold its integrity during the transfer is also an illusion. Because resorting to iteration already shatters totality of intention. Iteration delimits the intention, splits it off any boundary and renders it porous, absent and present at the same time. Absent because it has once been demarcated, represented and synchronously present because it is being re-animated within representation.

At the end of watching a film, the critic is not authorized to determine certain illocutions, offer descriptive sentences for them and how they moulded the film. Because in the end of viewing, what one will have been left with is a once perlocution of hers that have taken place thanks to and despite repetitions. And the writing, instead of turning into a celebration of its writer's ego, should be capable of re-animating the filmic experience on the reader. For preserving the prolific texture of the film, the writer should also impede the emergence of an immediate textual voice with whom the reader may easily identify and be imprisoned to her. Therefore in performative writing "[D]istance between the performer and her text is always visible" (Etchells 2002: 186). Etchells elaborates more on that distance as follows:

> [W]riting was often about collecting, shifting and using from bits of other people's stuff – copied language like precious stones. Authentic has not been in it... [W]riting (or even speaking) as a kind of trying on of other peoples clothes – a borrowing of power. I speak for a moment like my father. I assume the language of a teacher. I speak for one moment like they do in a movie. I borrow a phrase from a friend, a sentence construction from a lover. A writing that's more like sampling. Mixing, matching, cutting, pasting. Conscious, strategic and sometimes unconscious, out of control. I'm quoting and I don't even know it. Perhaps it's best to think of one's relationship to language like this, as the novelist Michael Moorcock once described a character 'skipping through fragments of half-remembered songs like a malfunctioning juke-box.'... A broken text. A discredited text. A text to be disowned by all those that perform it (2002: 182).

The critic should be aware of the fact that she is no longer the person watching the film, living through affections. That was another person whom she now merely remembers. And she must know that as soon as she starts typing what she intends to write will also be structured by the repetitive quality of language that marks its "dehiscence". Not the writer but the language will be owning the intention. And only through the writer's awareness of this dispossession, the evasiveness of any

lucid intention that the other person's experience (writer watching the movie) may be re-animated on the reader. As long as the perlocutionary force the film on her is followed with a necessary distance and spacing, as long as it is not factualized by an intended writer, the illocutionary force of her writing might repeat the illocutionary force of the film. Della Pollock in her article "Performative Writing" reflects on the possible features of it and emphasizes the shifting voices arising within as,

> Reworking the self in its enunciation... requires two preliminary moves: first shifting from positioning the self ... to articulating the motive, shaping relations among selves in an ongoing process of (self-) production; and second shifting from documenting "me" to reconstituting an operative, possible "we". The self that emerges from these shifting perspectives is, then, a possibility, a figure of relation emerging from between lines of differance, moving inexorably "from her experience to mine, and mine to hers," reconstituting each in turn (Pollock 1998: 87).

In accordance with the contingent and visceral figure of relations that arises within, performative writing aims to destroy any full presence of meaning that words, sentences in the text or images and editing in film might create due to their mimetic-representational feature. Therefore it allows for their prolific and disseminatory side to emerge. The associative debris from previous contexts, involuntary and/or voluntary memory that comes along, sensations of all kinds that arise within mimetic-representation both during the filmic and the writing experience are not split off. Because the once perlocutions of film for the writer as an audience and the now illocution of the writing for her as a writer will not be in full reach as well. They would not be confined within locutions: be that the limits of an image, edited scenes or "solid" referents of words. But rather they will be penetrating these locutions, constantly displacing, delimiting and rendering them in a state of flux. Della Pollock, again in the same article boosts this claim as,

> It (performative writing) moves *with*, operates alongside, sometimes through, rather than above or beyond, the fluid, contingent, unpredictable, discontinuous rush of (performed) experience – and *against* the assumption that (scholarly) writing must or should do otherwise. It requires that the writer drop down to a place where words and the world intersect in active interpretation, where each word pushes, cajoles, entrances the other alternative formations, where words press into and are deeply impressed by "the sensuousness of their referents" The writer and the world's bodies intertwine in evocative writing, in intimate coperformance of language and experience" (Pollock 1998: 81).

Rather than an identicalness between a sign and the object it stands for, an irreducible difference between them is appreciated. Because in a symbol, word or image, the limits of what will be summoned forth cannot be drawn. In order for them to make sense, many other associations would be entailed by the interlocutors and thus no absolute presence can withhold within illocution and perlocution. The citational quality of language must be allowed to delve any discursive power that it might claim. Images and words, the locutions should be let delimit themselves and be given their real power instead of the logocentric one.

Still moving along with affections and imagination, flowing along a flux does not either stipulate a totally unguided experience of film or writing as in the case of surrealist, associative attempts. It is not defiance against consciousness, a plea for surpassing and excluding mimetic-representation entailed by logos. It is not a burst of feelings in the neurotic sense and drowning in an ocean of indeterminacy. Because the field of representation is the only space that one can find itself in. In other words, the affective and communicative aspects within film and writing are not exclusive of each other. Also neither of them is prioritized over the other. Both

the formal aspects, critical points and stylistic issues in film and writing are still entailed. But differently from the traditional criticisms, they are not all-governing and imperious.

> What I want to call performative writing collapses the distinctions by which creative and critical writing are typically isolated... It does not entail "going over" into creative writing or excorporating the resources of the creative writer for criticism per se, but hybridizing the very terms by which such claims might be made... [T]o make absence present and yet to recover presence from structuralist, realist mimesis for poesis (Pollock 1998: 80-1).

It is the same case when Roland Barthes, in *The Pleasure of the Text* refers to the pleasure of reading Sade's texts where the writer at one stance uses language in its mode coded, cultural-bounded sense and then ruptures them with purely pornographic, inhuman scenes. Barthes comments on the power of these texts as, "Neither culture nor its destruction is erotic; it is the seam between them the fault, the flaw, which becomes so. The pleasure of the text is like that untenable, impossible..." (Barthes 1975: 7). The referred text foresees the reader's integration, "involves the reader not as a subject/object of persuasion of a given reality claim but as a co writer, co-constituent of an uncertain, provisional and normative practice" (Pollock 1998: 95). As in the case of "I pronounce you man and wife" in wedding ceremony requires the co-existence of hearers to create a new state of affairs, the performative text also depends upon the reader who will activate it.

And finally, utilizing performative writing in film studies could leave the film in its muteness as awaiting for all the possible saturations, instead of itself becoming a single saturation defying all the others. Because in the end, what is it there but to watch and what is it there but to write?

Notes

i New Latin cōnstatīvus (translation of German konstatierend, present participle of konstatieren, *to indicate as factual*), from Latin cōnstāre, *to stand firm, be fixed* (influenced by third person sg. present tense cōnstat, *it is manifest, it is a fact*, and statīvus, *stationary*). Relating to or being an utterance that asserts or states something that can be judged as true or false, such as *The cat is on the mat* (www.dictionary.com).

ii My right hand touching my left hand could seize its materiality but it is now not merely a toucher but is also touched: "My hand could not touch unless it itself were tangible, installed in the same world as its objects" (Leder 1990: 201).

iii Schizophrenia is one example for such cases which causes the organism to "depersonalize by assimilation into the space." Roger Caillois, in his study *Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia* shed light on the condition of such patients by quoting their answers to the question where they were: "I know where I am, but I do not feel as though I'm at the spot where I find myself. To these dispossessed souls, space seems to be a devouring force. Space pursues them, encircles them, digests them... It ends by replacing them. He tries to look at himself from any point whatever in space. He feels himself becoming space, dark space where things cannot be put. He is similar, not similar to something, but just similar" (Caillois 1984: 30).

iv By borrowing the term "pre-rational" from Mihai I. Spariosu's study on play (Spariosu 1989), and mimicry from Walter Benjamin (1978), Çetin Sarıkartal designates this happening as "pre-rational mimesis" which becomes interwoven with mimesis-representation during the encounter with an artwork. Sarıkartal narrates this occurance as: "What is sensed by this subject is its own 'opacity' that is touched, which remains as a 'stain' in the 'picture', which, in turn, refers to the totality of that ambiguous space-time of the event. Yet, this subject can engage in a pre-rational mimesis. The first stage of it is in the form of camouflage in the ambiguous environment. During this stage, the imaginary can be assumed to oscillate between the 'stain' and the 'screen'. The second stage of the pre-rational mimesis is 'intimidation', in which, the opacity of the stain is used as a mask, or a shield, to ward off the gaze. Now, the subject of pre¬rational mimesis shows itself to the gaze… I assume that the oscillation of the imaginary acquires a new character at this stage of pre-rational mimesis. Although it is not yet possible to mention a symbol formation, it can be observed that the imaginary retreats from the screen-body in the form of a doubling so as to play between the two. It is only after such a play in split that the imaginary becomes able to ally with the symbolic so as to form a gestalt of the object on the one hand, and to identify an image of the self, on the other… I think, it is only at this last stage of mimesis¬representation that the cultural reserve, or the visual code intervenes" (Sarıkartal 1999: 120-1-2).

v Freud designates this mechanism as sensory-motor apparatus and Susan Buck-Morss explains it with the concept of synaesthetic system, as to which an incoming stimuli is translated into motor reaction that calls past memories and meets it with the associated response and appropriate meaning.

vi While using these adjectives, I was inspired by Derrida's arguments in the article "The Theater of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation" (1978).

vii "Derrida plays on the illusory appearance of a relationship between 'seme' and 'semen', and uses the mirage of this link to provide a way of discussing the generation of meaning. In so far as dissemination cuts a text off from its author's intentions it can be described, he maintains, as a form of castration: Dissemination figures what does not come back to the father. Neither in germination nor in castration. Dissemination affirms endless substitution" (Howells 1998: 79).

viii "Something that gives the subject a way out of its normative subjectivity through transcendent bliss whether that bliss or orgasmic rupture be found in texts, films, works of art or sexual spheres" (http://www.reference.com/browse/wiki/Jouissance).

ix When time was taken as a criterion for labor in the industrialized era, it was at the same time presented as a standardized, rationalized and homogeneous concept composed of separate divisible

units. Time in modernity "became palpable, felt indeed as an anxiety" (Daone 2002: 4) which accordingly aroused in people a growing urge to seize and rationalize its incommensurable quality by way of visualization, representation.

[x] I was inspired by Freud's own depiction of his dream: "I'm not in the dream where one might think. The character who just died, this commandant who is with me, it is he who is I" (Freud cited in Lacan 1973: 222).

[xi] In contemporary film criticism, the cognitive studies, entailment of pragmatics and audience reception theories are the prototypes of this tradition. In these writings, the filmic encounter and the role of audience's social and cultural background in the perception and cognition of film are prioritized so as to reach objective conclusions about the effects that a film could bring about. Whereas its roots could be traced back to Formalists and the Realist approaches. David Bordwell in *Historical Poetics of Cinema* where he scrutinizes film studies, evaluates Andre Bazin's (spokesperson of realism) effort in *Evolution of the Language of the Cinema* as "The essay relies upon some fundamental conceptual distinctions, such as inter-shot effects vs. intra-shot effects, types of montage, distortion vs. fidelity, spatiotemporal unity vs. discontinuity, shallow space vs. depth. Bazin holds these to be principles determining the stylistic construction of any film whatsoever. They yield categories which permit the analyst to correlate devices with particular effects--eg, a linearization of meaning with "visible" montage versus a more natural conveyance of meaning through Welles' or Wyler's depth of field" (Bordwell 1989).

[xii] Bordwell continues with his elaboration on Bazin's writings as "Finally, Bazin presupposes that the phenomena he studies are the results of filmmakers' choices. (Welles could have cut Citizen Kane as if it were It Happened One Night.)… be concerned to reconstruct the options facing a filmmaker at a given historical juncture, assuming that the filmmaker chooses an option in order to achieve some end" (Bordwell 1989).

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