

George Potskhveria



LONDON MY FATE...

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Poetry, screenplays, essays

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We dedicate this book to Gia Potskhveria's friends in London: Miss Maka Baqradze, Mr Kahaber Abashidze; to Gia's godchildren: Nano Quirke-Bakradze, Daniel Sowter and Serafima Stonelake.

This book is in remembrance of dear friend late John Bazlinton who was inspired by Orthodox Christianity and was christened by Gia. We would like to dedicate this book to all people who were close to Gia and played a pivotal role during his London years. Sandra Bazlinton - The late John Bazlinton's wife; Teimuraz Mamatsashvili - The Georgian Ambassador to the UK (1995-2004), his spouse - Mrs Irina Arkhangel'skaya-Mamatsashvili and their wonderful family; Dr Tamara Dragadze, as Gia called her „his London Mother”; 105 years old Aleksander Bestavashvili known as „SashikoPapa” and his spouse Tora and the whole family; the Reverend Alexander Fostiropoulos; Archpriest Maxim Nikolsky; Priest Joseph Skinner; Deacon Vadim; a very dear Greek friend Dimitri; Guitar player Victor; David Mamatsashvili; Nino Rekhviashvili; Maia Iashvili-Nicholson; Lika Jaiani-Chambers; Roland Khmaladze; Gia Rapava; Khatuna Shavgulidze and Ed Welsh; Paul Murrey and Anna Kvernadze; Dato Kurua; Roland Kherkheulidze and Nino Kenia; Nini Seperteladze; Mzia Jgarkava; Ketii Kalandadze; Marine Tigishvili; Tornike Gabrava; Gia Lomtadze; Gia Raminishvili; Zviad Zviadadze; Ani-Khatuna Shanqishvili; Natia Bogveradze; Liza Nadareishvili-Sowter; Anya Stonelake; Larisa and Tolik; and Maya – From Russian Orthodox Church in Ennismore Gardens and many many others in Georgian and Russian Orthodox Churches.

Certainly this is a moderate list of George's (Gia's) friends and comrades in London, with whom he shared sorrows and joy in “Foggy Albion”.

We apologize... We could not remember all of them...

Parents:

Liana Iashvili

Jemal Potskhveria



Kakha, Gia and Maka



Nano



Serafima



Daniel

Gia, my son... believe me, it's impossible to calm down your mother and me, but to tell the truth your mother's deepest sorrow and mourning is more than mine. She is your mother and the word mother says it all.

Soon it will be seven years of your absence... you aren't with us and it's very difficult for us to get used to it, how annoying it is...

Unfortunately it's easier to talk to you with these letters I have written for your seven books which I have already published in Georgian and Russian languages. I couldn't imagine that I could live without you for so long but God gave me the strength and probably it's the examination of my existence or living. Now I'm going to publish your book in English.

There were so many various advices from specialists that to tell the truth I was even embarrassed and didn't know what to do. At last I decided to publish your book in the original way, without editor's corrections and editorship which are needed to publish books. I decided to leave everything as you had written in the original. If there are some literary defects, pardon me.

If someone decides to edit and promote your book once more I promise I'll reissue it as long as I'm alive. So let's issue this book in an experimental way, and let's see if this literary searching justifies my opinion.

Your mother's close relative and your lovely aunt – Larisa Kkvtsiashvili helped me to prepare your book for publishing. Thanks for her efforts to translate all Georgian text in English.

Your lovely, old friends Maka Bakradze and Kakha Abashidze helped me also.

Great thanks to everyone who remembers Gia.

It's the end of 1998 New 1999 is coming. University of Kent in Canterbury invited us to attend the Graduation. Old fashioned building of Canterbury. It's a brilliant day. Brilliant is the celebration itself... Gia has arrived to London initially for three months to study English and managed to overcome eight steps of English language very well. Now he is graduating with the master degrees in Cinema and Media Studies. Everybody congratulates and hugs us. Gia promised me that in

one or two years he would get the PhD degree. We are very glad and I'm very proud to hear the surnames of the graduating students on the radio and among them is my son, Georgian, from Georgia. Georgia - country destroyed and kneeled and little known as an independent state. I think and hope that the new generation, my son's generation who's graduated from Kent, Cambridge, Oxford, Sorbonne, Berlin and other famous universities of the world will return to Georgia highly educated and revive a new Georgia, as it happened in 1918, when famous sons such as Javakhishvili, Petriashvili, Melikishvili, Beritashvili and among them Gia's Grandfather Leonti Potskhveria, who graduated from the St Petersburg University and his grandmother Alexandra Chkhenkeli, who graduated from "Bestuzhev" Teachers' Institute of St Petersburg returned back to Georgia. We're so impressed by the Graduation Ceremony in Canterbury Cathedral.

...My son, it's May now. May is in your native town – Tbilisi, the sun is shining in your fatal city – London too, the nature and the ground are awaking. Spring encourages every creature, created by God and we're the children of the ground, aren't we? Everything depends on Spring, which revives the life.

I remembered your story about London Spring, about London May but some people couldn't understand your spiritual feeling. I'll try to retell the story which you had told me at the end of May of 1997. "In the afternoon I went out to the beautiful garden near my house. Spring flavour was blossoming around. Everything seemed awoken after London's fog and rainy weather. The sun was shining and everything was getting warm, squirrels of our yard were jumping and playing with some twigs. Many birds were chirping and piping as if they were dancing in a ring. I was very excited and charmed. I treated them with sunflower seeds. Some courageous birds even sat on my shoulders, and the squirrels as well! Tame squirrels ran around me like puppies and one of them jumped on my knee. I didn't know what to do. I looked at the brightened sky which was shining with sunbeams. It seemed to me that

I have become the part of the awoken nature. My heartened Soul were drowned and absorbed in this surroundings. The nature was enjoying and I was enjoying too, especially my soul. I was standing in

the garden corporally and my soul was in an unknown dream world. Afterwards a policeman came to me and asked politely: “Is everything OK Sir?” It was a voice from the real life which returned me to a real life. I was surprised and explained to him that I lived nearby... I gave some explanation that “I’ve come to London from Georgia, sometimes I write stories and poetries”. I tried to explain to him the admiration and excitement of my soul but I noticed that he couldn’t understand not only me but generally what was happening and why I was so excited. But again unfortunately he couldn’t understand me. He couldn’t understand my nationality and where I was from. I tried to give him some geographical and historical excursions. He listened for a while but then he lost the interest of me. At last he apologized and went away. But before he went, he said: “Your neighbours are frightened, they think that you’re a suspicious person and they rang to police station to find out who you are and what have you been doing here so long?” “He added that I had been in this “situation” for three or four hours”.

My son, I think that English snobs thought you were a strange and a crazy person but only God knows who was a crazy person that day, ... you, who perceived the regeneration of the nature, the celebration and the victory of the life or they, who couldn’t understand your feeling?...

Oh, my son, how happy were you and your parents that day...

“Don’t laugh at me” – you asked me when you were telling, the story. No, my son, I have never laughed at you and then when I remembered this episode of your life, I thought a lot about your feelings and I could say that you were an unusual person not only for foreigners but for many Georgians too. Generally people fight, for corporal victories; That’s why there’s so much careerism, jealousy, wickedness and insecurity. They have no time and desire for such inspiration of the soul!

When I was going back to the airport you asked me modestly: “Please, send me my grandfather’s binocular which he had in the war and your night binocular too. My English friend John Bazlinton and I need them for Bird Watching” as I heard bird hunting I have asked you: “Have you bought a gun?” I remember you started laughing and then calmly said: “You don’t understand me, we are not going to kill birds; my English friend and I have been “hunting” for 2 years, we’re made an ambushade

and going to watch how they live in a natural habitat. That's all, that's is our "hunting".

However, I have to recognize that you were "a strange" person. My son, you were "a stranger" then I thought and sometimes I couldn't understand you and your feelings because you didn't live like us. You had your chosen way (or the way and the world which God had gave to you)...

When you became an adult I understood that you would never be a Civil servant, you would never fight for your career. You served your people and your nation as your heart dictated to you.

Your chosen way was mastering of the cinema Art but this way was too darkenthronefor you. Someone who could fight, managed to consolidate himself in the modern society but you couldn't do that because of your moral rules and that's why you were conquered by a deep incurable sickness of depression which took you and your parents to the catastrophe...

“We have gathered here in remembrance of the honoured member of the Georgian Orthodox Church, the patriot of the motherland and a sincere person of our parish – Gia Potskhveria who had done a lot of work to found Georgian Church and Georgian chunts in London, Great Britain... God bless his pure soul forever... A-men!”

P.S. The extract pronounced by Georgian Patriarch, the saintiest and the most blissful Ilia the IIInd, during Gia Potskhveria’s requiem in Tbilisi, on the 4th of April, in 2006.

Gia was twice at the Queen Elisabed’s audience, when Georgian Patriarch Ilia the IIInd and the West European eparchy mitropolit Avraam visited her majesty.

Gia was a noble, Georgian intellectual person, a great patriot of his motherland. He tried to help Georgian emigrants in England, to make their existence and living difficulties easier there.

Oh, my God, bless my son’s pure soul!

Jemal Potskveria





Gia and Misha Tandilashvili



Gia with friends

MY HOME

It is my home,
Built with help of friends,
Each brought there warmth,
Their heart and their strength.

First toast for the meeting,
And for our girls,
Their smile will soften
Our rough words.

Blood is pouring,
So many deaths,
Winter is shaping
It's freezy flesh...

Someone is whistling
Buddy needs help,
knife is pointed
At my breast!..

But here you are,
Enemy falls,
I've been rescued,
What for are friends?!

Blood is pouring,
So many deaths,
Winter is shaping
It's freezy flesh...

Let's drink for freedom,
Remember history,
Liberation
Is our destiny!!!

Now our Songs
We'll roar them all
Night will wear out
With neighbours' calls.

Blood is pouring,
So many deaths,
Winter is shaping
It's freezy flesh...

So many graves
Brought the war factory,
My friends lying out there,
In the cemetery...

For me just memory...
With smiles and masks...
London could not mend
Broken hearts...

Blood is pouring,
So many deaths,
Winter is shaping
It's ugly breath...

MAY HELP US GOD!

That is not your home
And it never will be,
You are the total stranger
And we both know and feel it.

Sometimes in our dreams
We go back to our streets
With our childhood friends
Committing all common sins.

Girls of our youth
Laughing and playing with us,
We were so happy
To get date of the first love.

That's not your home
And it never will be,
You are the total stranger
And we both know and feel it.

Our trusting pals
Would've given life for us,
We lost them (those years) somewhere
Chasing our "The Chance"

Now we've got our success
Which we've desired the most,
Time has come to add
What's been the cost.

That's not your home
And it never will be,
You are the total stranger
And we both know and feel it.

Perhaps we should go
To our distant past,
To rebuild our hopes,
To fight there our luck.

Some of us may succeed,
Some of us may not,
Even dead will be there
May help us beloved (God!) Lord!..

That's not your home
And it never will be,
You are the total stranger
And we all know and feel it.

* * *

We are lonely man,
 We are,
You at the corner of the pub,
Me... at the table just opposite of you,
We can't make this, we can't grub...

So much so, it is obvious
We'll never be the friends.
You are old, you want to live,
I'm just trying younger stupid...

When it'll be over for me
And may be for you as well,
When nobody will remember us
 Then,
 Then,
 Then,
We'll really meet like the best
 Friends...

* * *

What is the death?!
They say we should have
 A pleasure,
We take that as the Gospel,
And then ask:
 Why we feel loneliness?!

Good-by,
 The lonely man,
Good-by,
 We'll meet after...
 Or then...
I'm definite,
 After or then!

Your Magestry,

*I do convey my condolences from the behalves of my
father general Dimitry (Djemal) Potskhveria, my mother
princess Lians (Lia) Iashvili, my brother David
Potskhveria and from myself.*

*I do apologize for mu arrogant behaviour and my
improper enough English. However, please, do be
assured, everything comes from the deep of my heart!*

* * *

For me it's different, why should I kid
I'm an alien; she was not my Queen,
I just feel that she was the very time,
When "duty" existed as well as "sin".

* * *

I demand that you kill me, please,
And evil could not torture me any more...
Or I'd smash my so called animies,
And will add to you one more sore.

It's so terrible,
 oh, my God and Savior,
I'm so tired,
 weak and even furious,
I may break finally
 promises to you,
And kill myself, like Judas, Your pupil,
 the envious.

Treason is just business,
They tell us Today,
We believe that with pleasure,
And carry on as we may.

* * *

I was picked up and killed again
In a fight which I ever didn't know,
But like a phoenix rised again..
For animies of mine that was a blow...

I'm tired, so I am
I'd like to go to my light house,
God help me escape this nightmare
Where can't reach me the evil mouth.

What do you want anything else,
I gave up my love and heart,
I can't give just my sole
Since whom I love most I can't hurt...

* * *

We die every day
And wake up again,
Until once we stay put
And our stase is plain...

We die when we lose friends,
Some betray us some we betray,
In fact then we kill our lives
And become like full of filters astray...

It's so alone the old man,
It's so alone to have solitary pain,
You are on opposite side of this pub
And we know each other's thought of main...

* * *

Hello, again!
 We've met after years.
In the gloomy night
We exchanged our fears,

You thought, you forgot,
Cleared your conscience,
I believed, I forgot.
Pain doesn't bothers...

You want to say something
But are scared to be wrong,
We both are afraid
To hear the final round gong.

Hello, my dear,
Hello, and good-bye?!
We still don't know
What happened and why.

Hello, my dear,
Hello, and good-bye,
Hello, my love,
Please, don't you cry...

* * *

Lonely poet, death and life,
Hello, my friend, give me your fives.
Haven't you seen the sinful knight
Wondering around, broken and cried?!

You never expected, he is so strong,
And nobody could do him resentful and wrong.
He is in armour, always ready,
He doesn't bleed, his feet are steady.

His heart is open and face smiles,
But give him away treacherous eyes.
Perhaps he's lost friends and thinks of graves,
Or he remembers his sinful days...

He may've also lost his love
And that cut his cheerful half.
Who knows, who knows, why does he cry?
Just leave him alone, tell him good-bye.

* * *

Do not lose your home, brother, do not!
Do not forget your old troubled friends
We are emigrant aliens here
And will never become English or French.

We came here to find our dreams,
To live freely in our blood and flesh,
But this is not our beloved mother,
Let's go, go back and start afresh.

I'm too old to believe in bullshit that
Home is there where dreams are paid the best,
Dreams are not for sale, it belongs
To our childhood, our place of birth.

Let's go, go home, brother,
Let's cry of graves of our friends,
Let's smile to our past and future,
Let's not have any invariable regrets!

* * *

I'll take in my grave
My past and present,
And it will not matter
How I suffered from events of resent.

But some of my friends
May be drunk and tired,
Will come to my place
To tell me: I'm still desired.

They will tell me
What's happened or is to,
Ask my opinion,
What they should do.

In the next day hangover
Will make them guilty
And they will wander
Why they are so filthy.

But again and again
I'll wait for you
Drunk or not drunk,
I'll miss you, I'll pray for you...

* * *

I'm sleeping,
The sky is red,
And all my dreams
Remind me friends,

I am in blood...
And soon have to die,
And they will shout,
Please, George, do try.

My flat, so empty
 Without our sins,
Graves are full,
The friendly smiles.

Take me, please,
 My imagination,
I want to go
In dream immigration.

Where loyal friends are
 Fully alive,
Where youth madness
 Was our drive.

It's so empty now,
Alone in the room,
And it will be always
So dum and gloom...

* * *

I have to love all people,

Even my enemies...

What I suppose to do?

Christ loved them...

The difference between me and Him is that He does love them.

But I have to love, since I want Him accept my love to God,

To Holy Trinity,

To Him.

I must, I have to love all humanthing...

Oh, my God, please, forgive upon me, sinner.

* * *

We should all go home
To meet our past and future
At the end of journey I'd love
To have love of my land so pure...

Let us pack bag
and say good-bye,
Stepmother was so kind
But in arms of mum is better to die.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY...

I'll make special prayer,
For the birthday of my country,
The ridiculous new date,
An excuse for a drunken party...

Today all Georgia drinks,
We say patriotic toasts,
Like nothing has happened,
We forger our ghosts...

Those full and sad graveyards
W'll remember only once...
And in the clouds of smoky rooms
We'll dissolve at nowhere pointed
the glance...

* * *

Still you'd begged with your eyes
And again dreamy night,
I love believing in your lies
And you'd got the pupper knight...

C▼

I do have to really go,
Disappear in this morning,
Will not stop me anyway
Your false cry, cunny mourning...

If you can't be really bothered,
Who you love or the love promised,
If you can't deal with me sadness,
My old pain and my madness...

I wish that it really were
My poor soul to prepare,
To meet you in the heaven
Lord, forgive and receive us there...

Before that day always would be
Our passions like two Jinnies,
In own bottles, private prisons
Two mad people two mad feelings...

▲C

D
I do have to really go,
Disappear in this morning,
Will not stop me anyway
Your false cry, cunny mourning...

D
If you can't be really bothered
Who you love or love the promised,
If you can't deal with my sadness,
My pain and my madness,
Darling!..

D
Still I will be always praying
For your health and your tomorrow,
Does not matter that you will be
My last wish, the killer sorrow.

D
I wish that it really were
My poor soul to prepare
To meet you in the heaven,
Lord, forgive and receive us there...

D
Before that day always would be
Our passions like two jinnies,
In own bottles private prisons,
Two mad people, two mad feelings,
Darling!..

D▼
No, I have to really go,
Disappear in the morning,
Will not stop me anyway
Your false cry, cunny mourning...

If you can't be really bothered
Who you love or the love promised,
If you can't deal with my Sadness,
My old pain and my madness,
Darling!!!

Again last Two singly

* * *

My candle burns at both ends
It will not last the night,
But ah! My foes and oh, my friends,
It gives a lovely light!

* * *

When the rain pours down
It is so obvious
We'll never meet again...
And I'll be famous...

And then you stupid
Will obviously think
That you missed the train
And that was my trick.

Then you'll love me
And cry a huge lake,
But you bloody bich,
What change that 'll make?!

* * *

Ken sarra Viva,
Ken sarra Viva
Was killed my friend.
But they don't care,
It's not their mess,
In oil and the wealth,
Believes the Common-Wealth.

Does it really metter,
The several bloody blocks,
When money comes to us
For economy's strength.

Some times in the dream
I see us the best friends,
And when the nightmare comes...
It's not us...
It's the rope that hangs.

* * *

Trouble,
 Trouble,
That was a trouble man,
I was in love with her,
She just used me like
 ... a slave,
and I feel terrible,
I know what is that well...

* * *

You, normal people,
I am sorry,
I'm hinder
and your worry.

I do that,
Not on purpose,
And my heart's just,
Sunday VESpars...

* * *

Summer comes too soon, John,
How to tell you that,
But I am happy to be here,
Grateful to the God that we've met...

Summer has heat, too, Much and steamy,
And English catles Look like us,
Lonely hills, lonely fortresses,
Abandones places of kinder past...

In our dreams, in our hopes,
This world perlures all human-beings,
Let me tell you, when I go,
you'll see me with my wings...

HUMENS

They kill each other,
They always do,
So crazy they are...
We don't care who is who...

Success,
 Only that matters now,
Failure,
Nobody would ask how...

I don't know what to do,
It's so sad and nasty,
I nail my coffin
And want to vanish hustly...

For you,
All of my friends,
I'll pray their,
May God help you,
Though can't tell you where...

* * *

I'll make special prayer,
For the birthday of my country,
The ridiculous new date,
Excuse for a drunken party.

Today all Georgia drinks,
We say patriotic toasts
Like nothing has happened,
We forget our (dead and) ghosts...

Those full and sad graveyards
We'll remember only once
(and with paid respect and duty,
We'll hide our glance).
And in the clouds of smoky rooms
we'll hide our treacherous
at nowhere pointed glance...

* * *

Summer is out,
Soon will be here,
Wait a minute,
You will hear...

Tuny Robin
Will jump a branch,
And the world'll be
Like the warm Church...

* * *

From the sky of Washington
Shouts the silly sun,
Billy go to your office,
Monika wants the fun...

And we are all the stupid
Judging the restless gun,
You should not be the president,
You should be Chingiz Khan!..

Billy we are all suggesting
Go to Springer's show,
Monika will fight Hilly,
Refery shoul be How!

Capitol-Hill'll be pleased,
If you again blow
Couple of countries around
Wise thoughts please at us throw...

Your heroic pathos
Always enjoys us,
Still some evil men say,
You are pain in arse...

We will not you forget,
When you even go,
Such a terrific chance,
The gun in library of show...

Hilly will stay at Washington
And will be the new senator
But don't you worry about
Press you always will monitor...

UNWORTHY

Your enemies
Are you enemies,
But that does not mean
I follow you!
Unfortunately
I am
One of the
“evils”

I am worse than that,
I am capable of hating...
I've been betraying you,
I can't stand the waiting...

Every year flowers come out,
And I feel so anxious...
I want it now, today...
I waist your love THE (most) PRECIOUS...

Should (must) here even
The word exist?!

MY GROUND CONTROL...

My ground control is not working,
I'm just liar,
I make that out that I am
Very clever high flier...

So many expectations
I arise around,
My friends don't know
I long ago lost a ground...

Skies are so beautiful
And I steer where it goes,
My plane, funny, is admired,
Since crash, you'll correct the flows...

I meet there the friend of maine, Antuan,
Really good pilot, not like me,
We cross-dive in different skies,
He leads us, CHRIST, Real He...

There are not "Just" wars,
And never will be,
You just have to do it sometimes...
I'm crashing, yet, I'm me!

* * *

We are after birds,
I and John.

* * *

Hallo, how are you, mate,
Tell me I look great, the best,
Please, pour my usual pint,
And I will assure the rest...

I will pay you money, you know,
Than I will get drunk,
My memory'll go weird
And my life won't seem so dark!..

My memory, dear frined,
Happy or not it's all mine,
Today is a poppy appeal
My frineds in heaven are fine...

Century of fakes?
No, end of Century,
Time of fakes!

* * *

He knows the future,
He is a superman!
“Life is boring,
I know what and when”...
He said desperately
And I understand...

He can't cheat the fate
That is his stand!
We have – he couldn't
He lost a hope
And the miracle
Becomes a rope...

We drink together,
His eyes are blue,
My fate should be...
Catch a flue...

But I will fight
And defy him,
God is my judge,
Love is my win...

“Goodbye, America,
Goodbye,
Goodbye, hollywood, goodbye,
I can not tale any more
Your dirt and lie...

He knows the future,
He is a superman...
Life is boring,
He knows what and when!

Very Serious Silly Poem

Baz-baz-baz, sings a bird
And I think what a world!
I can guess what it wants,
'baz' for me means – a friend!

* * *

Again meeting like we don't care,
And like thieves glancing at each other,
Unbearable pain, horrible day,
When that'll end, help us, o, God Mother...

It's so difficult to carry together
God-loving prayers and disturbed mind,
The peace we need, the love we beg,
In our cold war is hard to find...

* * *

Café ROUGE, café ROUGE,
Our waiter is being sarcastic,
It's such a lovely sunny day,
And even coffee seems fantastic!

* * *

My greetings from London, my friends,
I'll come back and kiss you,
Like eternity has passed,
And I so much miss you...

* * *

I'm drunk and enjoying
It is café 38...
They have the lovely toilet
You should piss there, mate...

* * *

Hellow consumer!
You are not being,
You just consume,
You're just feeling...

Look you bastards,
What you've done,
Look at my body, sole,
Don't you just run...

Ah, you just consumed
And it was tasty...
Hellow myself,
I'm just poustry...



The portrait of Princess Iashvili Liana.
In the costume of Viacheslav Zaicev.
The painter Igor Kamenev. 2000



Mother and Son. London. 2000

DUEL

*This film is devoted to the memory of my recently
killed or accidentally deceased friends:*

Levan Pitskhelaury

David Tsintsabadze

George Tseretely

Malkhaz Purtseladze

Badry Butskhrikidze

“Negative images of the”....

About 1920-23, London. The coach stops and one very well dressed gentleman gets out of it. With a sweet smile he meets a dark haired woman, hands over the money and says:

“Cate, you’ll get some more when everything is over...”

Cate: oh, Doctor Markstone, the best reward will be your friendship... and if you could help her... you know... be careful... gentle... she’s too stubborn... but she’s already dreaming for a man like you... if not, she would’ve given up seeing you... it will be you or someone else, she desires change... just she has to persuade herself she’s done it for love... I’m your supporter, you know... you know. “Faithful people”, they do not want to be seen dirty... want to feel higher than we are.

Doctor: “I will”

Cate: “You know... you could not get so beautiful, faithful, obeying girl here so cheaply... just be patient and gentle... first change her life philosophy, she’ll follow”.

Doctor: “Don’t worry, I told you... you’ll get more after... and I’ll introduce you to the society you want, to my circle... anyway, you are doing well, aren’t you?... your English almost is like you were studying at Oxford... unlike her you developed the civilized taste... don’t worry I’ll play with her... I’ll turn her from refugee into the”...

Cate: “Oh, Doctor... thank you”.

Doctor: “Ok, see you... my regards to your husband and David”...

Autumn, brownish-grey early morning in the forest. A thick covering of brown and yellow leaves on the ground. Interchanging shots: Wheels of fast moving coach; a young woman is having a bath (we see just her gentle hands and foot). Two horses rigging from the opposite direction. Shots interchange quicker and quicker. Finally coach and horses meet in the open filed on the edge of the forest. Two handsome young men get out off the horses. The two other handsome men get out of the coach. The third already seen, Doctor, from the coach carries doctor’s briefcase with him, walks behind them and at some point steps aside.

Four young men in the centre of the field. One of them has a wooden box with him. He opens it and offers pistols to duallants. After taking off their coats and choosing guns, two handsome young men slowly head to their positions. Finally, when at the marked points, they turn around, lift pistols and for a moment

both of them stare at the same direction. Just now we spot the wooden two storey house at the edge of the field. The light is coming out from only the second storey window. Slow zooming in, she... young, half wet girl covered in towel with sad eyes is gazing at the duel seen.

After command both men fire and deadly fall down.

Doctor indifferently checks duallants. Opens eye of first man, tries to find pulse of the first man, tries to find pulse of the second...

Doctor cynically: “Gentlemen, both are quite dead, I think”...

Three pairs of feet standing in triangle.

First voice: (with high class Scottish accent)... “Doctor Markstone, please, do us a big favour, would you be so kind as to inform Lady Anna what’s happened here... that Prince George Iachvili and her husband”...

Doctor: “but gentlemen”...

Second voice (high class accent): ... “Please Doctor... save us”...

Doctor: “Ok... I see, poor creature... sad isn’t it?... she’s left without any support, any means... How could she survive in this country?”...

Rough boots heading towards the house. Dark steps and finally the heavy fist of the Doctor knocks on the door.

Scottish: “What do you think Sir Arthur, will he get her?”

English: “Perhaps, if he won’t... he’ll push her to some of his

dirty friends...”

Scottish: “Bastard... new rich, naturalist bastard!”

English: “Milord... do you know he says he is a socialist?”

Scottish: “Hm... socialist and his father died from starving... bastard...”

The door opens. Wet, naked feel of young girl, sound of quiet screaming.

Doctor: “Hm... I’m afraid, both of them are quite dead my dear...”

Doctor in the dark. Sound of screaming gets louder.

Doctor: “Poor you. Unlike many here, you just need a good teacher... you definitely need a help... let me check you... I can give you what you do want... you as well”...

Doctor gets into the room and slams the door. Voice of the Doctor from behind the door... “Your former maid told me what those two bastards’ve done to you... we agreed you need someone to look after you... to teach you how to live, create your own new life. We may even marry each other if you promise to be a good learner, to have self esteem... Look at Cate, she is a village girl but she is doing so well here... be modern... I’ll correct your little bit rough uncivilised edges... your taste... look at that, what are you listening to? Is this music?... Don’t cry... you’ll see, you’ll be soon ready... for me...(angrily)... come here you stupid cheap refugee, come here... you should’ve prayed before if you wanted... We all die!... You’ll become successful woman... come here partner!..”

The sound of the girl screaming becomes quieter and then it turns into the sound of passionate sex.

Two ugly coachers throw bodies of the dead men into the coach. Other two young men get onto the horses and the procession slowly leaves the field heading to the deep forest.
Lightened window – sound of laughter and sex.

THE END

CLEANERS

The film takes place accompanied only by music and sounds. There is no dialogue.

Late autumn. London. Park. A young Mediterranean looking man, in yellow uniform in his middle 20s hovers the park. The dried leaves are flying all over the place. The man is mechanically doing his job and is deeply in his thoughts.

Slow, romantic music. Sounds of city, café, signboard: “Georgian Magic! The best but the cheapest food”.

Someone hangs a recognisable uniform over back of the chair, sits down on it and immediately begins greedily eating the food. He appears to be the young man we met in the park. After a while he slows the eating speed until he eventually stops. Music becomes louder and louder. The man lies on the back and closes his eyes...

Black and white picture. The same music. Well furnished large dining room. About 20 people are sitting around the table and are having a dinner party. One man, in his middle 40s, with a glass of wine in his hand, is standing and saying a toast. (Since whole scene is accompanied by music, we can't hear sounds from the room). The toastmaker points at the old photo, on the wall.

Zoom in, photo: we slowly recognise London, Big Ben. A young man in his middle 20s with a hilarious old fashioned pointed up, sharp-ended, moustache is wearing a French beret and a light jacket. he is standing near the easel and is painting something. Soon we recognise that he looks very much like our hero who we met previously and who we also then spot in the room standing just opposite the toastmaker at the other end of the table. The young man, with an enthusiastic smile, is nodding his head in agreement with the toastmaker.

Smashed picture, again black and white. Sudden energetic Georgian dance music.

Mainly drunk, happy people in the room are dancing Georgian dance, saying toasts, kissing the hero and occasionally pointing at the photo.

Again black and white. Sound of big city our hero enters the building. On the sign at the door “Royal College of Art”. Slowly the music fades in. The young man is confidently explaining something to a man in his 40s and to a pretty but elder woman. He’s pointing at the wall. Although we can’t see what is on it, we have an idea by seeing occasionally the frames of art picture. Silence, just sounds. The poorly furnished, tiny, cheap hostel bedroom. Our hero, in his underwear, is sitting on the bed with a devastated face. Sad, funeral music. Next to him we see the printed letter:

“Unfortunately at the present time there are no places left... we would be delighted if you tried again next year”.

The same music. Again black and white. Street. Our hero with disappointed face is slowly walking along the street with a middle sized bag on his back. He stops at the big bar window and stares

at it. Inside the bar happy young people are dancing, drinking and laughing.

Sudden energetic English country music. Our hero is inside the bar. He has a very happy appearance and is drinking, laughing, dancing and kissing a gorgeous young girl. He takes three £50 notes out of his pocket, gives it to the barman and points the finger around. The crowd cheers and applauds him and they are dashing to get a free drink.

A sudden change of music. Again the funeral tune. Airport. Our hero is desperately looking at the prices in the sandwich bar. He takes some coins out of his pocket and anxiously counts them.

Again sudden change of music. Energetic rhythm. Our hero confidently leaves the airport through the automatic exit door. The train stops at the station. Our hero gets out of the car. Croydon. Wide road. A huge building. Signboard: Mainor House. Immigration Office.

The young man enters the building. Very officially designed room. Our hero is talking with a man in uniform. On the table we see the document with his photo. Title of document: "Asylum seeker". Music slowly fades out.

Door. Return of colour. The door loudly opens. Stranger, an Indian looking man, in park cleaners uniform, in his middle 30s enters in the large room which is poorly furnished with 4 beds. Start of music. (Blues). The Indian looking man is cheered by our hero and two other habitants. All three of them are painting something and are deeply in their work. A black guy in his late 20s is painting the African jungle. A blond in his early 40s is painting the valley under the snow, Russian church. Our hero is painting mountains, ruins of an old castle and a church. The Indian looking guy begins

doing the same. In his picture we see Asian, Muslim architecture. The music fades away and then, one-by-one, at the face of each man, we hear their native songs.

Finally all four pieces of music are mixed up. The blond is lying on the bed and is sleeping. Our main hero is showing to others to be quiet by crossing his mouth with his finger. Just now we spot that next to each easel audio players are placed. All three of them switches the player off. The Georgian guy does it for the blond as well.

Slow panorama of the room. All the remaining painters are wearing walkmans. Just at each of them slowly comes in and fades away their native music.

TV box. Silence. TV is suddenly turned on. BBC 9 o'clock news. All four of them are watching TV. At each piece of news from their country each man becomes more interested. The news is not good. War in Georgia, a well-known playwright is sentenced to death in Nigeria. Dzirinovskiy is promising to occupy the West, a women civil rights activist is arrested in Bangladesh. Finally, at the piece of news where the sex scandal of the popstar is discussed someone switches the box off. all our heroes are sitting around the table in silence.

The morning light through the window. The sound of the alarm clock. The Russian wakes up, glances at the clock and rapidly in a rush, starts pulling his clothes on. He suddenly spots something on the wall: "Happy birthday Russian OCCUPANT! Below that we see a birthday cake. The Russian hurriedly sticks his finger in cake, tastes the cream and leaves the scene.

Park. Our three heroes are hovering. The Russian joins them.

Background sounds of the big city slowly are swallowed by hovering. Our heroes are walking in a row and doing their job. The dried leaves are flying all over the place and there are more and more of them, flying faster and faster. Slowly Schubert's song AVE MARIA enters.

Double vision. The flying leaves plus pictures from our heroes' countries: dictators, wars, politicians, nature disasters. Slowly music disappears and sound of hovering again takes over.

Sound of the big airport. Announcement. Flight N... To Moscow is" ... The black guy is at the check in desk. The Georgian is entering the Duty Free Zone. Sound of flying plane. Russian guy is leaving plane. Sound of train. The fast moving nature pictures. The Georgian is looking through the train carriage window. The fast moving nature turns into the news pictures where we spot our heroes inside them. Sound of moving train disappears and again fades in the song AVE MARIA. Pictures: the Georgian is fighting the war, the Bengali is distributing food, the Russian in the demonstration, the Nigerian at the wall and soldiers are aiming their guns at him, the wounded Georgian is being carried, under the fire, by his friends, the Russian in being attacked by men in Nazi and Communist uniforms. At some point there appear subtitles.

Finally the Georgian guy in train, music fades away. Double vision: moving nature and park hooverers at work. Loud sound of train and hoovering are mixed up. At the end of the picture the mass of the flying leaves takes over. The sound completely disappears.

Slowed picture of the flying leaves and the subtitle:

THE END...

ROOM N6

Room N6... How many our dreams and hopes are concentrated here... we often do not think about that, we just learn grammar or how to pronounce some particular word... or make jokes...

For example, English are very polite, I imagine a professional English hitman, killer.

Hitman: Sire, could I possibly defunct you please? To refuse directly is very impolite and the victim's answer should be: "Of course my dear, I'd love to, but could we have another appointment, since I've already arranged my meetings today and can't put them off..."

Hopes, hopes... I often look around and can't help thinking about them... Future... some of us would like to stay here forever, some study English in order to get better job, or for me... To use this language to make my films or... To do something for my poor country, which I at the same time hate, but could not escape from myself and love my memory, my sinful friends, my city...

What would this intelligent looking Macedonian guy like to achieve..? What are his worries?... or this Japanese girl, or this slim attractive, a little bit pale faced tall Croatian girl, who studies 'classics', loves Greek language, hates the idea of going back home, in war, hateret... I understand her so much... she is also a book addict as me and always feels cold... I often sit next to her

and want to give her my coat but... I always think that my sincere offer may disturb her mind and I never will....

Once, when I was child, someone swore at my mother... my dad wasn't there and I felt so insecure. I looked at my mother, she was young, gorgeous, (student with part time job), and helpless... After that day I always want to defend the female part of a human... it doesn't matter who they are, which life they've had... sometimes they are so vulnerable, even if they look strong or severe... that's just self defence... However, I haven't succeeded a lot in this, I'm often scared not to be wrongly understood... or my selfishness takes over me. Human being, how sensitive we are... All of us... In this room N6... outside of is... and... so lonely... often... and so often so severe to each other...

Room N6. so similar and so different backgrounds hops, wishes, and dreams we have here... including our lovely, hard working and pretty teacher... Ok. Let's carry on, we are ready, teach as Naomi, please...

P.S

It was in a market place. My mother always drives a hard bargain... If the price is £5 she will ask a reduction to 5 pence... It's crazy really. This man was selling eggs... I three them in his face... now I regret that. He was just a poor peasant. Who knows what had been going on in his life, what had happened before we came here and why was he in such a terrible mood or... He was confused, he apologised immediately...

I remember his sad eyes, perhaps he saw in us his child, wife, sister or... and he understood they were as vulnerable as we'd been... I really regret what I did... especially now, when I've seen

so much blood... mostly poured for “GOOD” or for “RIGHT THINGS”, for “JUSTICE”... so often we defend what we love by force, by hurting others and do more dreadful things than someone did to us in first place...

Does our English really matter, could it make us happier?! – Maybe not, but we all need to hang on to something, in order to create the new air ballons... feed our hopes, dreams.

Me: In former USSR there was one famous comedian, he said once... “Women are also pet-friends of human...”

A very attractive, pale faced girl, sitting next to me: George, he was too optimistic... can I borrow your coat, please?...

STRANGE DREAM

It's afternoon. I'm about 4 years old in my great grandparent's village. I'm wearing my dark blue shorts, which very often used to. Those were always too uncomfortable, loose on my waist and were continuously slipping down. On the other hand, when I tried to pull them up, since I would never have any underwear on, my male sign was on the spot. I used to be very shy, (I'm still but I manage to hide that now), and I always had a confusing feeling of shame. Sometimes whole day around was going on fighting against my shorts, pulling them up and down, trying finding right position for them. I can't explain why, but I never protested against wearing them. Perhaps, I thought that they were part of me, my life.... I don't really now...

Anyway, I'm staying at the railway line. This me, child, knows that the railway doesn't exist in his village. However he isn't surprised to be there. He's actually waiting for the train to pass. He also knows and is seeing what is going on there, who is he desperately expecting. It's second "me", the older man than I'm now. The child "me" is very confused. Although he (the child and dreamer) is absolutely positive the man in train is... grown up me, his face isn't familiar, it's very different from dreamer's appearance. The third 'me' is in his middle 40s, is dressed in a military uniform of a colonel and is sitting in the first class car. His scar on the right cheek, his wise but sad eyes, his confident

and slow but very precise movements impresses his 3 fellow travellers: a young woman in her early 30s, with dark long hair, the teenage guy in white shirt and wise looking elder man with grey hair and moustache. Elder also has two deep long wrinkles on his neck, which somehow makes him much more respectable.

Elder man talks to “colonel me”.

- You’ve experienced a lot in life, I suspect, haven’t you? – others are nodding their heads in agreement.

- Yes indeed, I have... perhaps – is the colonel’s answer – Let me introduce myself... retired colonel of The Internal Army Givi Potskveria... but friends call me George or Gia... It may seem strange for the internal army officer but I carried my duties mostly abroad...

- Oh, so exciting and matching name... (potskhveria in Georgian means: he is a lynx). Perhaps you were fighting a lot... – points out the young lady, looking with her frightened eyes at the “war hero”.

- Yes! – shortly cuts “colonel me”. He seems a little bit uncomfortable with this question.

- Perhaps you’d like to sing something... I know you are good at guitar.

“How does he know that?... And as far as I know, I’ve never played no it, I don’t have ear”, is surprised child “me”, but astonishingly reaction of the colonel is quick and polite – “Yes, if you’d like to”...

The colonel raises his hand and just now “child me” spots the instrument on the shelf.

The colonel after fairly short tuning starts singing.

The train noisily passes the child ‘me’ and turns out of sight, and

it's repeating time and time again, it looks like it goes round on the circle. However, child 'me' isn't confused at all by this. He is continuing his usual shorts pulling up-down and just only fears that the train once will not come back, will disappear forever.

- I'm going back to my childhood to find a peaceful retirement... who could've imagined that I'd be soldier nobody... says 'colonel 'me' and then carries on singing a very incomprehensible for 'child me', song. Suddenly pictures from this sad song appear in the imagination of child 'me' (I'll try to translate it from Georgian now).

Song

Yesterday, in a village [villiiig]

Yesterday, in the village, [villiiig]

In our stable, stable [steiibel]

Some people were doing something [somethiiing]

Grandmaaa,

Grandpaaa,

Some people are doing something.

Grandmaa, grandpaaa, help meee,

Some people are doing something...

In stable, in stable...

Help me, help meee!!!!

Child "me" actually sees the picture in stable through the hole in the wall; a young man and woman, probably the hot lovers are having passionate sex.

Child "me" is very confused. The colonel keeps on singing. Everyone is very pleased with him. And the more time goes by,

after the bigger interval the train occurs instead of the “child me”.

Confusion from pictures of the song adds on fear of losing the train with colonel and “child me” last time, after it’s disappearance out of the sight, pulls shorts up, quickly turns around and shouting “grandpaa, grandmaa”... insanely runs away from the scene.

“THE MAN WHO...”

A 30 minute documentary

Shalva is 80+ years old. Originally from Georgia, he has been living in the same flat in Shepherds Bush for the last 50 years.

Shalva has created a fantasy world for himself. He is intelligent, he has integrity, faith, humility and an excellent memory yet he chooses never to leave his house, to remain blind and to stay in London harbouring and forming his future plans.

In many ways he is a throwback to 50 years ago and to the values and ethics of a generation of people that no longer exist. Yet, rather than advancing with information from the real world, his visions of the present and the future come from his past knowledge and the time that he has to himself for his thoughts. The life that he has created for himself, including his blindness are not to him a cause of concern. Indeed quite the opposite, as he frequently will state, his life is perfect.

To me this film is about perspective, Shalva's circumstances, lifestyle and the story of his life fill me with a mixture of emotions. I am not sure whether I pity him, whether I think he is mad, but I respect him and am in awe of his integrity. For those of us who take what we have for granted, Shalva's joy in "life" that looks so lonely, must be something that we can learn from.

Shalva's Story

In 1930 Shalva was regarded as one of the most talented chemists in Georgis.

In 1938/9 the Soviet authorities asked him to go to Moscow to continue his research. This was blocked when they found out that he was of noble birth. That he was not immediately killed when this birthright became known is a testament to the fact that he must have been an extremely talented chemist.

Captured in 1942 by the Romanians during the war in the Crimea – Shalva was sent to a number of POW camps. He attempted to escape several times and in 1945 he found himself in a Western occupied zone... However, he wanted to return home and so he tried to enter the Soviet Zone with some documents that the Americans had given him. On the checkpoint a Soviet general ripped the documents up and told him to flee immediately. Shalva still hates this man though the likelihood is that the general saved Shalva's life. History has shown that the Soviet authorities sent millions of their returning POW's to Gulag's and consequently to their death. It may be that the general was exhibiting great courage in refusing Shalva permission to return to his homeland.

Forced to flee Shalva tracked down his brother in England. Together they shared a flat in Shepherds Bush where Shalva still lives. They rarely socialized. The two brothers only met a few Georgians, but no English or Russians.

Astonishingly Shalva never wanted to use his qualifications as a chemist in this country, instead he worked as a labourer and a miner. It appears that he always expected to return to Georgia and so he never sought to become established here.

Even now 50 years on, he expects to go home. His brothers died 3 years ago, but Shalva still rents the second room for him believing that his brother is in hospital. He has even saved money from his pension to fulfil the plans that he continues to make for their future.

He has learnt to speak some English, but he has done so from books and not from talking to English people, therefore he frequently uses his words in an unusual way as he does not know some of the different meanings of the same word in English.

No one quite knows where his fear of doctors comes from [maybe because of his past in camps, he was put in a mental hospital but was released because they could find nothing wrong with him] but it certainly has strong roots. He could be cured of blindness but he refuses to the operations. He says, “Do I need to see anything?”. He is also going deaf.

An old radio has been his only source of information but very often he misunderstands what is happening in the world. He knows Georgia is independent but he cannot understand that the soviet Union has disappeared. Despite this he will happily sit talk about his visions of the future for Georgia, mostly based upon his knowledge of the country when he was young. He says that Georgia should build it's country and economy, he expects that it is wonderful there now. He would not accept that there is a civil war in Georgia. It goes contradictory to his world.

FAMOUS VISITOR

Plot for a short film

The rural tiny town 'N' was packed with tourists and if you also add not only it's inhabitants but also people from neighbouring villages and towns you could imagine what was going on there.

Although such a crowded atmosphere had a visible disadvantages, the town certainly didn't have enough facilities to accommodate, at once the needs of everyone, nobody minded that. Fairly quickly, thanks to special charm, energy and organising talents of the pretty young Mayor, Lady Fatcat, everything settled down nicely. Not only did the citizens of 'N' gain economically, but also the surrounding villagers as well. The lack of hotel beds, (in fact there was only one and full of beetles), were filled by placing lodgers in private houses. Even a single bed without breakfast in 'X' which is on 30 minutes driving distance from 'N', cost £33.99 per night.

resident also were enjoying a big profitable selling time. Souvenirs linked with the coming occasion, food was traded like in a hugh open market.

- Great burgers, great burgers!!
- The tastiest hotdog in the world!!
- The cheapest American style special sandwiches, just only... (However, what could be special about sandwiches, especial if they were American?...)

Anyway, even before the main event went on town profited very much and was looking forward to getting more from selling TV rights, from the future tourist worship. Serious businessmen, financiers were already there with very interesting proposals and were lobbying hard to push their projects. Nevertheless, Lady Fatcat decided not to rush, to study all of them carefully, make all necessary expertise and only then make final move. But big business is big business and 2 important financiers had been already found dead in very suspicious circumstances. Yes indeed those two were too important to ignore their death but the local police chief Mr Dum Bloody had many more irritating worries: 82 stabbings (two lethals) hundred of minor fights, 120 rapes, (rapes were always a big problem there), 56 car accidents seemed only the beginning as people were trying harder and harder to get better place to see their hero. Extra police forces were arriving continuously, even special riot unit F.O.O.L. 5 were there. Yet, they were coping with tremendous difficulties. Surprisingly, what wasn't a problem at all was a theft since all thieves quite quickly realized that to be salesman was more profitable and safer occupation.

O.K. you wonder what was going on there, why a normally peaceful town, (except rapes), turned into such a huge mess. I tell you why... Hm... who ever could've imagined that I would become so popular and famous... I'd just wanted to have a quiet holiday. I just thought that on such a beaten track as England, this small town, nobody would know me, but... It's price we pay for our fame... Oh, Mamma mia... it's so difficult to be a glorious legendary spy.

That's it!!!

A very bright Summer's day. Field of wild flowers Romantic

music. A girl in her mid-twenties is wearing a very thin, white, baggy dress. Man also in his mid-twenties is wearing the white shirt and dark tight trousers. The usual, almost clearly scene of young lovers (Running after each other, hugging, kissing).

Suddenly into the music the sound of telephone ringing. Romantic scene freezes for a while, music disappears and we see the dark room, silhouette of the bed and someone in it. Light of the lamp goes on from the bedside table. The sleepy girl, slowly lifts herself from the bed and picks the phone up. We recognise her from previous scene.

Girl: “Hello... speaking... you! What time is it? ... you... idiot”...

Girl sits on the bed and carries on, “ ... you, why do you always do this to me?... Why?... It’s 5 o’clock now!!! ... Yes, yes, in Georgia could be 8.00, somewhere it could be 9, 10, 11 but here in U.K. it is 5,5 do you hear me, 5” – hysterically shouts the girl.

From this point she stands up, goes through the long corridor, opens the toilet door, switches the light on, goes into and closes the door. We hear the sound of water flush, water (hand wash). Then she makes the same way back to bed, takes a cigarette and from the bedside table, lights it, and sits on the bed, all this time she continues hysterical talk:

Girl: “... Why should you always disrupt my routine my life?... Create problems... ooh... ye, yes!... It’s me who makes problems, yes!... me... and you are just an angel... What is this?.. Tell me what is this?... Did I wake you up, did I?... or that was you!... out of nothing making fuss... what is this, why do I need this... Tell me, is that cultural difference between us or what? ... Is it usual in Georgia to wake up the most loved person at 5 am? And not

once, twice... always!!! Do you remember when you did that previously... you never did that before, ye!!... How could you lie like that... that's it! ... I do not care if you never call me again!!! Do you hear me, do you?... let's finish on that... Find someone else who will love to be waked up at 2; 3; 4; 5; o'clock every single day... Neither do I... I do not want to see you again in my life... wish you best luck!...

The deformed smiling face of the young man from the photo and the dream, zoom out and we see the case in his hand.

Loud scream of the girl. She jumps on the young man, hugs him the same time beating and kissing him. The happy screaming and laughing sounds. Slow motion. Romantic scene. We also hear cuts from their emotional conversation.

- you Georgian bastard... you made it again...

- I missed you very much... I was wrong... my silly jokes make always problems.... Ok... Ok... slow down... don't cry....

-You never leave me again.... never, I didn't mean that... I'm the English cow...

- I'm the silly Georgian bull...

At that point they close the door.

Voices disappear and we spot that the case was left out.

Titles on the empty scene.

Someone's hairy hand opens the door, grabs the case into the flat. The door loudly bangs.

THE END



Parents



Kakha and Nato



Nikoloz, Anna-Maria, Dimitri

PROPOSALS FOR PHD DISSERTATION IN FILM STUDIES

As you would see from my application the past year I have been reading MA in Media production at Canterbury Christ Church College, RFTV department. As part of assessment I am currently writing an extended essay in the authorship theory. Since undertaking the research and writing I more and more have been interested in problems of above mentioned theory. Unfortunately I feel, I have not had enough time to introduce myself material as fully as I wanted to. Nor gave me the opportunity to discuss deeper all in my opinion important points the format of undertaking research and essay. However, as far as I am concerned, from this point of my knowledge the announcement of death of an/the author is too big exaggeration. Having said so, I would also reject the definition 'an/the auteur' in the meaning of the human author-God and would suggest 'an author', 'the author'. I simply think that all artists as human beings are individuals. Also I would agree with A Sarris that a bad director could not be considered a great author or as I would call it 'the author'. Yet, as I already mentioned, everyone is individual and if we, according to our criterias think that a director for different reasons (professional unfitness or non-distinguishable talent) could not achieve above mentioned status, I would propose to call her/him 'an author'. That all means, first of all to establish that all artists in lesser or more scale are individuals, unique i.e. authors.

As for an industrial art like the cinema I also would be looking to

whom status of an/the author should be credited. From this point I strongly believe it is a director. However, that needs deeper analyses than that which I have been doing up until now.

To cover fully the problem, I think we also should, as E Buscombe proposes, (although I would not agree with him in his conclusions) study first; the effect of the cinema on society, second, the effect of society on the cinema and on an/the author; third, genre, more precisely relationships between a genre and an/the author. I would also propose to study cross genre selection. The best example of it I could think now is

Godard
Tarantino {
Scorsese

The next problem I would identify would be relationships between an/the author and a reader, or audience, or different audiences in different time, in different environment. To do so I think should be investigated reactions of critics, and audiences in different times in different countries. (I propose UK, Russia, Georgia)

The next what should be dealt with, I believe, is 'Author-Function' as Foucault calls it, though I would not agree with him that it is the only place for an/the author. To do so I suggest to look at cultures where the authors name was not important for audience. For example, early Christian painting. Even today, I as a Christian Orthodox, mostly never am interested in who built the church or who painted the icon. However does that mean an/the author does not exist. To be so, we should think that if we do not know existence of someone/something or are not interested in knowledge, this someone/something does not exist.

Although during the wider acknowledging of the subject there would be other problems to look at, here I just point out one last Ever Lasting Question of who is the author Plato or Socrates. That also, in my opinion, would contribute to better understanding of the authorship theory.

To look at above underlined problems and others which occur during the research if as I very much hope would be accepted at your university, I think I should be looking at wide range of origins, from classic and romantic art critics, philosophers to well known for the cinema world authors from both side of argument, like P Wollen, A Sarries, A Bazin, C Levi-Strauss, G Nowell-Smith, E Buscombe, B Henderson, P Marchevery, R Barthes, S Health, M Foucault and others including the eastern European heritage.

Finally, I think, I pointed out perhaps too many problematic areas and in one dissertation it might not be possible to deal with all of them. However on which of them to concentrate the most, I very much would be relying on my supervisors at your university.

OUTLINED THE LIFE AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

After graduating from a high school in Georgia in 1981 that specialises in mathematics and physics, I decided to devote my life to film making and writing. However, as a Georgian of my generation I knew that I should have somehow either adapted to the Soviet System or fought it. There was not point in my becoming a film maker and writer if I just wanted to have a quiet life, a good career, money and power. To achieve this I could have become an official communist party member and I was in good position to do so. My father was an upper middle ranking civil servant and my mother a university lecturer who had friends, powerful connection, especially after my father was given work in Moscow in 1982. All this could have helped me easily.

However, I loved cinema, literature. My imagination was full of ideas, stories and whole films from the beginning to the end. Sometimes even now, I see most of them which are not released, published, (I have about twelve publication in the Georgian and Russian languages), or made into films (I made two short films as a script writer, director art and music director). I knew that sooner or later I would have to confront life in the Soviet Union. I did not want to become a political dissident. I just wanted to create my own films and stories, but independence was not allowed there even if you were apolitical in your art. Showing freedom of expression was considered as a crime. In order to

have some means of existence and prepare myself for my dream, I decided first of all to gain other qualifications and become a graduate engineer.

In 1981, I took a full time engineering course in the Georgian Polytechnic State Institute (now the Technical University). I graduated from there in 1986. From 1983 to 1986 I also worked as an Assistant Director in the Georgian State Film Studio in the 'Old Georgian Films Reproduction Restoration Association' with George Dolidze also dean of Georgian State Theatre and Film Institute and my own faculty Dean.

From 1987 to 1992 I published my twelve short stories in Georgian literature magazines in both Russian and Georgian languages. However, after seeing the civil war in my country, I decided to stop publication, since stories which I wrote were either too painful and close in time to view with an objective eye or which I felt were inessential for every day life in modern Georgia.

From 1986 to 1991, I worked as an Assistant Director in Georgian State Television, in Film Studio, where I took part in making one two hour fictional and five documentary films.

From 1991 to 1993 I was on an intensive course, I was studying at the Georgian State Theatre and cinema Institute in the faculty of script writing and film directing. (Member of C.E.L.E.C.T) Although I was supposed to study there for five years (first three years theory and practice and final two years 50 minutes, 35 mm diploma film). In the summer of 1993 after successfully passing all my theoretical exams and finishing my course film (35mm; 20 min; black and white, own script, directing, music and art directing) my course master, many award winning film director George Shengelaia, my Dean George Dolidze and governing body of my university allowed me to leave university until there was

an opportunity to make my diploma film. Since I found a sponsor, they advised me to go to the United Kingdom to study English and if possible take a post graduate course in film and media studies.

In July 1993, I arrived in London and from then, until May 1994, I studied at the International House Language School in London where I begun English.

As a beginner I knew just five words; mother, brother, cat, dog, alphabet. I left International House with Cambridge First Certificate after nine months. Then, after a holiday, I returned to the United Kingdom and took on some British media courses in order to pick up some useful vocabulary. From January 1995 to June 1996 I studied at Princes College, a language school in Tottenham Court Road and successfully passed Cambridge proficiency exam in June 1996.

From September 1997 I have been reading MA in Media Production at Canterbury Christ Church College, RFTV department. As a part of assessment I have just finished 12 minute, 16 mm, colour film made with own original story and script in English language (Film now is going to laboratory stage).

At present I am writing extended essay in the authorship theory. Although I very much am interested in this theme, I feel I've had neither enough time nor format of the essay gave me the opportunity to study the subject fully, and I would be very glad if you give me the opportunity to undertake research project at your university.

From November 1994 until the end of December 1995 I also had a part time job as a Business Development Manager in one of the

British Small Company (East-West Cultural Exchange Limited) which was set up by Tritan Assids Ltd, (financial holding company), in order to research the market in cultural exchange between Eastern and Western Europe. In January 1996, due to the fact that my employers had enough information and I also decided to concentrate exclusively on English, I left my job.

Finally, that is all in my opinion, that I could outline about my experience. I would be very grateful if you could give me the opportunity of presenting myself and having an interview as soon as it is possible and convenient for you.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Givi (George) Potskhveria

NOTES ON NEOFORMALIST APPROACH

There is no such thing as film analysis without an approach. Critics do not go to films only to gather facts which they convey in pristine fashion to others. What we take to be the “facts” about a film will partly depend on what we assume films to consist of, how we assume people watch films, how we believe films relate to the world as a whole, and what we take the purposes of analysis to be. If we have not thought over our assumptions, our approach may be random and self-contradictory. But if we examine our assumptions, we have at least a chance of creating a reasonably systematic approach to analysis. An aesthetic *approach*, then, as I am being using the term here, refers to a set of assumptions about traits shared by different artworks, and about ways in which artworks relate to society. These assumptions are capable of being generalised and hence constitute at least a rough theory of art. The approach thus helps the analyst to be consistent in studying more than one artwork. I will consider *a method* to be something more specific: a set of procedures employed in the actual analytical process.

To analyse any artwork we first of all should define not only what we are looking at and for but also fully understand, as far as this is possible, relationships between it and society, i.e. show cultural and sometimes social, historical environment, where we and given entity are, operating. However, even when that is done, we should bear in mind that, since we are not dealing with exact sciences, we are going to get a result which is anyway more or less relative and cannot be taken as an ultimate truth. That itself

means that our reader her/himself should look at our analysis with critical eye, agree or disagree with of our conclusions, but first of all should clearly see the logic we are operating with.

The approach which a critic adopts or devises often depends on why he or she wishes to analyse films at all. There are, it would seem, two general ways analysts typically decide to work on a film-one centred on an approach, one on the film itself.

One can decide to look at a film in order to demonstrate an approach and its attendant method (since in most approaches there is generally only one method). This is currently a common strategy in academic film studies. The critic begins with an analytical method, often derived from approaches in literary studies, psychoanalysis, linguistics, or philosophy; she or he then selects a film that seems suited to displaying that method. When I first began doing film analysis in the early 1970s, this kind of impetus for film criticism seemed almost self-evidently the way to go about things. Method was paramount, and if one were not seen to have a method before beginning an analysis, one risked appearing naïve and muddled.

When using any artifax, in our case a film as a challenge or worse as a justification of a method from different sciences, we should first of all see whether an analyst is art/film critic or for example linguist, or philosopher and a film is just a tool, maybe very even the most important one, which helps to study their own subject and at the given moment assists the best to make one's own argument. If so, we should not seriously consider his/her work as an art and in our case film Criticism, even if directly or not she/he tries to present it as such, even when a film or group of them challenge notions in different fields of studies and obviously or not, in different levels awake feelings, and touch on subjects and

sets of values, and get logical conclusions from them.

Yet now such an attitude seems to me to present considerable pitfalls. The critic could, of course, truly use the analysis of a film as an actual test of the method, to challenge and perhaps change it. But all too often in the analysis written in the past fifteen years or so, the choice of a film simply serve to confirm the method. That psychoanalytic film readings can be done of films like *Spellbound* and *Vertigo* is hardly surprising: such an analysis offers little challenge to a method. But can a psychoanalytic method deal equally with *The Great Train Robbery* or *Singing in the Rain* - without forcing the films into a simplistic and distorted reading?

Yes, as Krustrian Thomson, would, consider such an attitude *a problematic and as I expressed above I myself am not able to call it 'Film Criticism'*. However, if we have already mentioned second situation, an important mistake, social and humanitarian sciences are very much relative entities and the terms or notion "Oedipal drama" or in other cases, for other methods for example "social" one, may not be the ultimate truth which exists always, from all points of views at all levels of understandings. Even if they do, we all do have at least slightly different ways to deal with and at least slightly different aims and solutions. Furthermore, it is always possible to use the same method in different ways. We could also analyse aesthetic features of an artwork and if and when that is possible to translate them into a language of a given method, of course, I do not think, the fact that application of a given method could be less interesting with some films than others, poses any problem.)

Here we encounter a second problem with the imposed-method tactic. Preconceived methods, applied simply for demonstrative

purposes, often end by reducing the complexity of films. Because the method exists before the choice of film and the process of analysis, its assumptions must be broad enough to accommodate any film. Every film must then be considered in some way “the same” in order to make it conform to the method, and the method’s broad assumptions will tend to iron out differences. If every film simply plays out an Oedipal drama, then our analysis will inevitably begin to resemble each other. The result is that the critic makes films seem dull and un-intriguing-yet I take it that the critic’s task is, at least in part, to emphasise the intriguing aspects of films.

I do not think that it... “well tend to iron differences”... precisely because one film is more applicable to a given method than other makes those differences often very obvious. The problem arises, as I have already said, when studies in different fields such as politics, sociology, philosophy or others are preconceived to be “art criticism”, “art (film) theory” as they use an artwork, in our case a film, as an observation object. In these circumstances I would fully agree with Krustian Thomson’s conclusion that a method becomes preconceived and often reduces, and robs the complexity of art/cinema as a phenomena in its own right. Almost the same could be said about political ideological methods. When a film is used as a often very clever justification, for one’s own views and method is “applied simply for demonstrative purposes”, we can not call it seriously “art theory” or “academic art criticism”. It could be at the best in the situation of faith for example “Theology of Art” or “Theology of Orthodox Christian Art” or in case of Marxism, “Marxist Art Criticism (Theory)” and so on... At the worst it is plain, sometimes well hidden, propaganda though often sometimes interesting in its own rights, for various reasons regardless of the fact we share or not similar views or not. (In both cases, for me, ways of arriving to conclusions, how a person reaches them, tend to be not a list important factor, since those

logical constructions, even if based, on my understanding, on a wrong ideology, often unintentionally may show important visions and tools. As to be used in future).

Here I do agree with Brian Henderson and Roland Barth, we all, more or less tend to be ideological and even the most pure academic piece of analysis can not be judged as really 100% as such.

If a single methods could not be applied to analyse all films or authors is it possible to find a largely universal way which could deal with all raised problems and questions? Although later in some aspects I would disagree with Krustian Thomson I think she presented a very strong case in identifying such an approach.

Neoformalist analysis has the potential to raise theoretical issues. And unless we wish to deal with the same theoretical material over and over, we must have an approach that is flexible enough to respond to and incorporate the results of those issues. This approach must be able to suit each film, and it must build into itself the need to be constantly challenged and thus changed. Each analysis should tell us something not only about the film in question, but about the possibilities of film as an art. Neoformalism builds into itself this need for constant modification. It implies a two-way interchange between theory and criticism. It is not, as I have already suggested a method as such.

Neoformalism as an approach does offer a series of broad assumptions about how artworks are constructed and how they operate in creating audience responses. But neoformalism does not prescribe how these assumptions are embodied in individual films. Rather, the basic assumptions can be used to construct a method specific to the problems raised by each film.

In 1924 Boris Eikenbaum stressed this limited meaning of the word “method”...

However here comes a problematic area:

By assuming an overall approach that dictates modification or complete change of method for each new analysis, neoformalist film criticism avoids the problem inherent in the typical self-confirming method. It does not assume that the text harbors a fixed pattern which the analyst goes in and finds. After all if we assume at the outset that the text contains something, we are likely to find it. Thus neoformalism sidesteps cliché and tedium by using analysis as a means to test itself against actual films...

Yes, we should not “assume that the text, harbors a fixed pattern “ despite the fact that over intellectual academics could, very often very cleverly insist that they found a black cat in a dark room especially when it is not physically there and even worse could believe they really have done that. Yet, we could find other perfectly legitimate ways round. We could consciously search whether those patterns are there and their existence or non-existence could become one of the aspects of the given films or an author system.

Neoformalism jettison a communications model of art. In such a model, three components are generally distinguished: sender, medium, and receiver. The main activity involved is assumed to be the passing of a message from sender to receiver through the medium (e.g. speech, television, images, Morse code). Hence the medium serves a practical function, and its effectiveness is judged by how efficiently and clearly it conveys that message.

Many approaches to artworks assume that art communicates in a similar way: the artist sends a message (meanings or a theme) via the artwork, to the receiver (i.e. the reader, viewer, or listener). The implication here is that the artwork, too, should be judged by how well it conveys its meanings. Moreover, the artwork should usually serve a directly practical purpose in our lives, since communication is a practical activity. As a result, many critical traditions have treated artworks as valuable only if they convey significant themes or philosophical ideas. “Merely entertaining” works are not as valuable, since they are seen as performing no useful service for us. From this basic assumption has come the traditional distinction between “high” and “low” art.

Much is to be said about communication model of art. Krustian Tompson identifies precise. Mature of mistakes, I would even call it the chronic disease of an academic art criticism.

While nothing is wrong to use linguistics as part of our analysis, in many cases it becomes like metric entity which strips art its complexity. Moreover, in a way it even robs linguistics as a science. There is no denial of “message”, “sender” and “receiver”, although quite often critics are terrified of, especially in my field of study Authorship, from both sides of the argument, any existence of message and the model is built down to a basic “sign”, “interpreted”, “object” level. True, any sign may be interpreted by receivers differently, messages received would be as many as observers plus artist are but in reality there may be only true one. In our relative world, our inability to identify it or find the formula to do so does not mean its in existence... 18th-19th century French Mathematician. Galya proved that, basically formulas with more than three unknown co-ordinates are unsolvable. Yet, that did not deny their existence even more, it determined their presence and most of the times a sign and message have precisely the same

nature. In art that is even more complex, since it has far more coordinates than simple communicative model and the most important one's are aesthetic: their unity, disunity, complexity or sometimes genius simplicity thus easier accessibility (which does not necessarily make it simple).

That itself shows, if linguistics as a science is going to apply its models blindly to all phenomenon's, it risks not only to over simplify nature of a communication model and reduce a human being to a computer but also it, will lose touch with reality. Nowhere else that is so obvious as in architecture. Despite the best intentions Carbusie and other modernists architects resorted largely to functionalism due to the above mentioned extreme simplification, with obvious results. To sum up my thoughts, I would partly disagree with Krustian Tompson, art has a communicative side, but not a simple one, or not the only one. Furthermore aesthetic features in it play the most significant role as they are more than other determine, constitute its nature as a phenomenon in its own right.

One way of avoiding a communications model of art traditionally has been the adoption of "art for art's sake" position. Art is assumed not to communicate ideas, but to exist for the pleasure we experience in our reaction to it. Beauty, intensity or emotion, and similar qualities would be the criteria for judging works. Again, a certain elitist distinction between high and low are would tend to inform this position, since the aesthetic experience becomes the province of aesthetes, with superior taste, who can appreciate the attractions of well-made works, while the average person can only cope with the crudities of popular art.

That does not mean that we should dismiss the communication model altogether. However, unless we are just researching in this

particular field, we should look at it as part of the reality which physically affects its place in our life and relationship with the surrounding world. If there is something we cannot communicate with, that does not necessarily mean that it does not exist. Yet, only when we do, we could only then are able to determine our relationship with it and its place in our emotional life. Moreover, everything that exists always have communicative nature, the other questions are whether we always sense that or not or whether that is clearly reachable, understandable, emotionally or physically important to us.

Nevertheless, it should also be obvious that we can not look at art as only a simple sommunicative tool or a technical device. Even propaganda films which are specially designed for the purpose to get across a message obviously have something beyond that and that is aesthetic features which could be analysed in restricted cultural, historical environments.

All above said means, of course, as everything existent, part of arts nature is communicative, and sometimes we could find situations when that purposefully is used as an aesthetic device, tool. Yet, it is also something non-practical, complex relationships between parts of its nature, which are represented in their own sophisticated features and at the end always have, understandable or not for us its rational logic which holds a given place together; makes it like a live cell, single unit, i.e. only aesthetic features make art as such.

The other point about pleasure is also problematic. First of all the word “pleasure” is wrongly used here. I do believe instead. Should be brought notion of “Reflection”, which may contain, as well as pleasure, other emotional states like for example “Irritation”. The

next point is about judgement, highs and lows. We do not consciously are not, always compared the observed film to our sets of values and I cannot see anything wrong with that as long as we do understand that our perceptions more or less are dependent on where we are coming from. That in itself obviously means our wrong or right judgments could not be taken as an absolute for always and for all cultures. So called “superiority” appears in extreme cases when somebody’s misunderstanding nature of art and takes a task to find a task everlasting formula. If that were possible art at the end would be stripped from one of its main attractions, such is it perception of changeability in time, space and even at a single human level.

Though it is frequently assumed that the Russian Formalists advocated an art-for-art’s sake position, this was not at all the case. Rather, they found an alternative to communications model of art-and avoided a high/low art split as well - by distinguishing between practical, everyday perception and specifically aesthetic, non practical perception. For neoformalists, then, as is a real, separate from all other types of cultural artifact because it presents a unique set of perceptual requirements. Art is set apart from the everyday world in which we use our perception for practical ends. We perceive the world so as to filter from in those elements that are relevant to our immediate actions. Standing at a street corner, for example we may ignore a myriad of sights, sounds, and smells, focusing upon a small traffic signal for the moment when it turns green, indicating that we may proceed towards our actual goal, an appointment a few blocks beyond. For such purposes, our mental processes must be focused down, factoring out other stimuli. If we noticed every perceptual item within our knew would have no time to make decisions concerning our most pressing needs, like not stepping out in front of a bus. Our brains have become well adapted to concentrating on only those aspects

of our environment that affect us practically, other items are kept peripheral.

Films and other artworks, on the contrary, plunge us into a non-practical, playful type of interaction. They renew our perceptions and other mental processes because they hold no immediate practical implications for us. If we see the hero or heroine in danger on screen, we do not leap forward to act as a rescuer. I agree Russian formalists escaped from simple “art-for-art’s-sake” position, but they did not find exactly what could be called as alternative. Imagine an object in simple three dimensional space. To determine its place we should measure all co-ordinates in all three dimensions. However, without denying that two others are in existence, may need for practical reasons, just only one. In our case, formalists consciously or not identified such that is aesthetic features. However, in the real world, even when we need to look at only the chosen one we should bear in mind the fact that positions in those two (or others many), often affect place of our object in our studied dimension. In others words art criticism should not be afraid to see that obvious fact, it just, if relevant, should be able to read this phenomenon through aesthetic point of view, as do other sciences from their own one.

Film-watching process as an experience completely separate from our everyday existence. This is not to day that films have no effect on us. As with all artworks, they are of vital importance in our lives. The nature of practical perception means that our faculties become dulled by the repetitive and habitual activities inherent in much of daily life. Thus art, by renewing our perceptions and thoughts, may be said to act a sort of mental exercise, parallel to the way sports is an exercise for the body. Indeed, individuals use of artworks us often comparable to their use of non-exercise games-chess, for example-and to the aesthetic contemplation of

nature for its own sake. Art fits into the class of things that people do for recreation - to “re-create” a sense of freshness or play eroded by habitual tasks and the strains of practical existence. Often the renewed or expanded perceptions we gain from artworks can carry over to and affect our perception of everyday objects and events and ideas. As with physical exercise, the experience of artworks can, over a period of time, have considerable impact on our lives in general. And because playfully entertaining films can engage our perceptions as complexly as can films dealing with serious, difficult themes, neoformalism does not distinguish between “high” and “low” art in films.

First of all, a mental, or for me even more emotional as well, exercise is very much a practical thing. Playing for example chess for its sake serves the same natural i.e. practical though emotional and mental purposes. That itself means making practical decisions and can not altogether exclude avoid a judgement factor.

Neoformalism’s assumption of an aesthetic realm distinct from (though dependent upon) a non-aesthetic realm goes against a major trend in contemporary film theory. Both Marxist and psychoanalytic film theory depend on large-scale explanations of how people and society work. These approaches are not concerned with the specificity of the aesthetic realm. Yet the Russian Formalists were “specifiers”, as Eichenbaum put it. They singled out the aesthetic realm as their object of interest, realizing full well that it was a limited - though important - one. They started from the specificity of art and then moved toward a general theory of mind and society that was consistent with their basic assumptions and helpful in explaining the work and how people reacted to it in a real, historical context. Marxism and psychoanalysis work from the top down, arriving at the artwork with a huge-body of major assumptions already made and

proponents of such theories must in effect find an ontology and aesthetic of art to fit.

This is not to say the neoformalism takes arts to be a permanent, fixed realm. It is culturally determined and relative, but it is distinctive. All cultures seem to have had art, and they all recognise the aesthetic as a realm apart.

Neoformalism is a modest approach, seeking only to explain that realm and its relation to the world. It does not seek to explain the world as a whole, with art as a corner of that world...

I agree Russian formalists were “specifiers” and that itself “singled aesthetic realm”, which itself means construction of sort of pantheon, even without purposeful usage of “high” and “low”. Yet, when critic finds film “challenging”, by that he/she already marks some “highs” and “lows”. The difference with “Marxism” (or any other ideological methods), or psychoanalysis, is that, when imagining themselves as art critics they are coming with ready assumptions, which determine their judgement. While in the case of neoformalist approach those conscious or sub-conscious assumptions should be understood as working starting points and must be constantly challenged as well.

Before neoformalism is condemned as conservative, however, it should be noted that its view of the purpose of art avoids the traditional concept of aesthetic contemplation as passive. The spectator’s relationship to the artwork becomes active. Nelson Goodman has characterized the aesthetic attitude: “restless, searching, testing-[it] is less attitude than action: creation and re-creation”. The Viewer actively seeks cues in the work and responds to them with viewing skills acquired through experience of other artworks and of everyday life. The spectator is involved in the levels of perception, emotion, and cognition, all of which

are inextricably bound up together. As Goodman puts it, “In aesthetic experience *the emotions function cognitively*. The work of art is comprehended through the feelings as well as through the senses.” Thus the neoformalist critic does not treat aesthetic contemplation as involving an emotional response that no type of object other than artworks can elicit. Rather, artworks engage us at every level and change our ways of perceiving, feeling, and reasoning. I shall usually speak of “perception”, a simplified formula in which I assume that emotion and cognition are also functioning.)

However, we must recognize straight away that those cues always will be interpreted at least slightly but differently in various cultures and times, that is why we cannot totally disregard ideological realities or personal preferences. One of the best qualities of Neoformalist Approach, I think is that capacity to expand and possibility to apply it to even in ever changeable cultural environments. The fact that readings may differ from culture to culture, person to person, is not so much important, they should, since starting assumptions, co-ordinates are not the same.

Artworks achieve their renewing effects on our mental processes through an aesthetic play the Russian Formalists termed *defamiliarisation*. Our nonpractical perception allows us to see everything in the artwork differently from the way we would see it in reality, because it seems strange in its new context. Victor Shklovsky’s famous passage on defamiliarisation probably provides the best definition of the term:

If we start to examine the general laws of perception, we see that as perception becomes habitual, it becomes automatic... Such habitation explains the principles by which, in ordinary speech,

we leave phrases unfinished and words half expressed... The object, perceived in the manner of the prose perception fades and does not leave even a first impression, ultimately even the essence of what it was is forgotten... Habitualisation devours work, clothes, furniture, one's wife, and the fear of war... And Art exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone *stony*. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived, and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar", to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged.

Nothing to disagree, especially since even in a basic level we should not forget that either physically or in meaning the stony is not the exact object where the image was taken from. It changes not only physicality but more importantly in the context, time, space.

Even in very familiar, automated pieces of artwork, that is very obvious. Of course when habitualisation takes place, if that is not used cleverly as an aesthetic device, challenge for the observer is lost. Here I would like just to draw your attention to a situation which is not considered in the above quoted piece.

What about favourite films, books, directors and writers. Obviously when we sometimes go over and over the same artwork we are bound to be very familiar with it, are we not? Nevertheless, that is not as simple as it seems. There are factors in there own right or most of the times combinations of them why we are returning repeatedly to one's own favourite. First of all our readings differ in time, space and surrounding cultural environments and very time we may be discovering an important

new detail. In other words, it becomes always a new challenge. Secondly, since art reflects on our emotions, we may consciously or not attach the specific pieces to our memorable time, personal or emotional state and that is why repeatedly to enhance one's own feelings, we, like a sort of drag, use them. Thirdly and lastly, (although others may be able to add something to this list), simply, some themes or aesthetic devices and their combinations may, for various reasons, be close to us and working for us better than others.

In all these three situations, although seemingly a high level of familiarisation has taken place, we repeatedly meet different complicated and familiarisation do not necessarily mean automatisisation, always, there, is at least a slight difference, as every time we feel, maybe the same emotion but differently.

Art defamiliarises our habitual perceptions of the everyday world, of ideology (“the fear of war”), of the artworks, and so on by taking material from these sources and transforming them. The transformation takes place through their placement in a new context and their participation in unaccustomed formal patterns. But if a series of artworks uses the same means over and over, the defamiliarising capability of those means diminishes; the strangeness ebbs away over time. By that point, the defamiliarisation has become familiar, and the artistic approach is largely automatised. The frequent changes that artists introduce into their new works over time reflect attempts to avoid automatisisation, and to seek new means to defamiliarise those works' formal element. Defamiliarisation, then, is the general neoformalist terms for the basic purpose of art in our lives. The purpose itself remains consistent over history, but the constant need to avoid automatisisation also explains why artworks change in their historical contexts and why defamiliarisation can be achieved in an infinite number of ways.

Often our favourite writer or director creates something which we may not find very challenging and although we may only recognize repeated aesthetic patterns from the past the level of our familiarity with them constitutes our specific reaction, response. Yet, identification of new aesthetic cues, contexts may shed a new light.

My supervisor John O. Tompson once drew my attention to Arthur M. Eckstein's article: "Darkening Ethan; Fords The Searchers (1956) from the novel to screenplay to screen".

He disagreed in some ways with Ekstein and, as I also do, thought that sometimes the very complexity of Ethan's character not only oversimplified but also the motives of John Ford to darken it where largely misunderstood. He is the only one who sacrificed his love, who fought till the end for his convictions, who pursues kidnappers, who with enormous personal internal struggle at the end takes X home, his is also only who pays a price not only for his desires and mistakes but for others as well. He is sinful but a lonely knight who ends up like a ascetic monk in a desert. His animosity towards Indians, especially towards the chief, is ridiculously explained as simply racism.

Extraordinarily I have not yet found somebody to look at X's age. Could she be his daughter, could it be that his secret love has something more in it than it seems at first glance!! And maybe his anger, hatred comes more from his own guilty conscious and also or if she is his daughter, she, his only the inheritance from his cherished past love, the only icon, the one he wanted to protect the most, he could not and was in his eyes, and understandably so, stamped on?!

Moreover, he is the only one who has to put up with some unproved accusations, hints in which we, since his character, past is so deliberately mysterious and darkened, we believe so easily. However, the small but very important clearly disguised detail scene, where he does not shoot, when in guard, their attackers, since it was not necessary at the time, is easily disregarded and is not taken on account.

The other very important change from familiar pattern is the very clever usage of John Whein in. John Tompson precisely spotted that the powerful hero star image, which draws immediately huge attention and sympathy from the audience right at the beginning needed to be darkened to work properly. In other words Ford defamiliarised him, cleverly stored surprises, mine fields for us and that effect must have been even more powerful for spectator when the film first appeared on the screen.

Defamiliarisation must be present for an object to function for the spectator as art; yet it can be present to costly varying degrees. Automatisation may nearly wipe out the defamiliarisation may nearly wipe out the defamiliarising capacities of ordinary, unoriginal artworks, such as B westerns. Such ordinary works tend not to defamiliarise the conventions of their genre of classical Hollywood film making. Yet even an unoriginal genre film is, in its subject matter, minimally different from other, similar films. Thus it is slightly defamiliarising in its use of Nat and history. Indeed, we ca assume that all art at least defamiliarises ordinary reality. Even in a conventional work, the events are ordered and purposeful in a way that differs from reality. The works that we single out as most original and that are taken to be most valuable tend to be those that either defamiliarise reality more strongly or defamiliarise the conventions established by previous art works - or a combination of the two. Yet if we single out an ordinary

film and submit it to the same scrutiny that we afford more original works, its automatised elements can shed their familiarity and become intriguing - as we shall see when we examine such a film in the next chapter.

Defamiliarisation is thus an element in all artworks, but its means and degree will vary considerably, and the defamiliarising powers of a single work will change over history.

These assumptions about defamiliarisation and automatisation allow neoformalisation to eliminate a common feature of most aesthetic theories: the form-content split. Meaning is not the end result of an art-work, but one of its formal components.

For authorship theory the fact that even ordinary works are at least slightly different hold the most important point, even, I would say, justification for its existence. As I already mentioned in previous chapters I do have a problem with usage of terms in “Auteuz”, since it represents mostly some of highest authority. Instead there may be more useful to use *an author* in cases of high level of automatisation and *the author* in cases of high level of defamiliarisation. Here we should also recognize that often we may use during the analysis of the same author both notions depending on the aim. We may for example come to a conclusion that somebody’s overall work pattern deserves to be identified as *the author’s* work. Yet, for a particular film or groups of films in his/her career directly opposite could be more appropriate.

However, the situation on the other way round is more complex. We could find a very high level of defamiliarisation on a single particular film and argue it to be *the authors* film, but for various reasons that may not be the case in other works, either because time and time again no significant changes were made, or for the

outside reasons, pressures the particular artist was not able to defamiliarise convention enough and his/her films very much may look like text book, ordinary creations.

At this point I would like briefly to return to a judgement argument. Although Krustian Tompson is very keen to assure us that in neoformalist approach “high” and “low” motions does not have place, it is obvious that there is no escape from some sort of value systems. The other question is what meaning, she or we put into them. Intentionally or are not there is always the pantheon, bulding is going on not see any problems since neoformalist approach as Krustian Tompson shows herself, when cultural environment is thoroughly identified or clearly seen, would deal with that easily due to its changeability, expandability and flexibility and value systems are not arbitrary, are as objective as it could be.

The artist builds a work out of, among other things, meanings. Meaning here is taken to be the works system for cues for denotations and connotations (Some of those cues will be existing meanings that the work uses as its basic material; clichés and stereotypes are obvious examples or pre-existent meanings brought in by the artwork, though these may serve a variety of functions within the work). We can distinguish among for basic levels of meaning. Denotation can involve *referential* meaning, in which the spectator simply recognizes the identity of those aspects of the real world that the work includes. For example, we understand that *Ivan the Terrible's* hero represents an actual tsar who lived in Russia in the sixteenth century, and that the plot of *The wizard of Oz* involves a lengthy dream. Beyond this, films often state more abstract ideas outright, and this type of meaning we may designate as *explicit*. Because the General in *The Rules of the Game* keeps lamenting that upper-class values are becoming

rare, we may assume that the film explicitly sets forth the notion, as one pattern in its formal system, that that class is in decline. Since these types of meaning are laid out in the film, we comprehend them or not, according to our prior of artworks and the world.

Connotative meanings move us to a level where we must interpret to understand. Connotations may be *implicit* meanings cued by the work. We tend to look for referential and explicit meanings first, and, when we cannot account for a meaning in this straightforward way, we then move to the level of interpretation.

Nowadays when directly or not, many modern, so called avantguard, artists declare meaning as the end result, the correctness of the neoformalist approach becomes so obvious. Even if other formal aesthetic components like colour combinations, composition represent the main challenges, i.e. the situation when connotative, implicit meanings become the most important feature, the understandable but totally wrong assumption that art is primarily and only there to communicate one's own political, or other ideas, strips artworks from its main attraction, diminishes it to just a technical machine. This desire often comes from the artist's practical inability to express him/herself and clearly serves as an excuse. Very clear contrast examples would be Picasso's paintings. We do not need to invent artificial, non-existent cues to deformalise his works. The other good but a bit different example is Sally Potter's "Orlando". The same unfortunate desire to see meaning as an end result, which is represented in the film in Orlando's direct eye contact statements the spectators ruins its unity, brings an unbearably high level of automatised and turns otherwise very interesting work into basic propaganda statement, however, politically correct it may be its own rights. To paraphrase Krustian Tompson that is not what

makes art arty.

When we speak of a film's non-explicit ideology, or of the film as a reflection of social tendencies, or of the film as suggestive of the mental state of large groups of people, then we are interpreting its *symptomatic* meanings. Siegfried Kracauer's discussion of German silent films as indicative of the population's collective desire to surrender to the authority of the Nazi regime would be a symptomatic interpretation. All of these types of meaning - referential, explicit, implicit, and symptomatic - can contribute to the defamiliarising effect of a film. On the one hand, familiar meanings may themselves be defamiliarised by striking treatments. Indeed, most meanings that are used in films will of necessity be existing ones. Truly new ideas rarely appear in philosophy or economics or the natural sciences, and we can hardly expect great artists to be great and original thinkers as well. (Of course, some critics do expect the artist to be a sort of philosopher, with a vision of the world; this assumption underpins auterist criticism in particular. The Russian Formalist, however, viewed the makers of art as skilled crafts-people working at a particularly complex craft). Rather, artists usually deal with existing ideas and make them seem new through defamiliarisation. The ideas in Ozu's *Tokyo Story* boil down to one explicitly stated them. "Be kind to your parents while they are alive". This idea is hardly earth shaking in its originality, yet few people would deny that this film's treatment of it is extremely affecting.

How true indeed. In Georgia we have a joke about a European explorer's fascination when told basic native wisdom like, "do not kill your mother", or "Babies come from mummies tummies". Does in "King Edip" main attraction "boil down" to its basic wisdoms?! Of course not.

Meanings do not exist in artworks only to defamiliarise. They can help defamiliarise other elements. Meanings can play the part of justifying the inclusion of stylistic elements which themselves will be the main focus of interest. The rather simple, almost clichéd notions in Tati's films about how modern society affects people serve in part as pretext for unifying a string of highly original, perceptually challenging, comic bits...

Furthermore, it could work in both ways in the same time and an excellent example of that is Quenton Tarantino's "pulp fiction", where meanings defamiliarise other stylistic elements and they themselves do the same on the other way round.

Because neoformalism does not view art as communication, interpretation becomes one tool among many for the neoformalist critic. Each analysis uses a method adapted to the film and the issues at hand, and interpretation will not always be used in the same way. It may be crucial or incidental, according to whether the work concentrates on implicit meanings. Depending on the analyst's purposes, interpretation may emphasize meanings within the work or the work's relation to society...

Here again I would not to dismiss art's communicative nature so easily, as that so obviously physically is, though as I also already mentioned that is not what makes art art, this should not bother us unless that itself is played as one of a formal component, since: In this way neoformalism differs considerably from other critical approaches, most of which stress interpretation as the analyst's central - often only - activity. Interpretative methods usually assume that how one interprets meanings remains constant from film to film. Such a method may have to be quite general, since it will need to force all films into a similar pattern. Tzvetan Todorov has differentiated between two broad types of interpretive

strategies in common use: “operational”, which places constraints on the process of interpretation, and “finalist”, which places constraints on the results of the interpretive process. As example of the latter, he cites Marxism and Freudism:

The problem occurs exactly when preconceived methods seem to claim to be art criticism itself, misunderstanding that art is a totally different phenomenon. Constantness of interpretive meanings, for example from the point of view of psychoanalysis does not even really matter even though I believe it as science is yet in baby stage and need frequent changing of nappies, since that does not in itself constitute nature of the art.

It's like, I, as everyone all human beings have a name, but regardless of that fact, I as all others, including the British Queen, need a ticket when travelling in a London to bus. Moreover, that just is not an issue. Art criticism, especially so called academic one to be such, as in any other field, should identify those issues trying to deal with them and since only the neoformalist approach recognizes the constant changeability of interpretative implicit meanings from work to work, film to film, seems so far the only right way to do so.

Such pre-determined patterns have become quite common in film studies for example, recently some critics have claimed to find a “family romance” (based on Freudian notions of the Oedipus complex) in all classical narrative films. Another interpretive template dictate that the analyst sort out eyeliner directions for the various characters, determining through them who has the “look” and therefore is more powerful. Such seductive schemata are tautological, sine they assume that any film will fit these patterns, and the patterns are simple enough that any film can be

made to fit them (Or, if a film seems not to fit, the analyst can find its meaning ironic). Alternatively, many Freudian critics deal with symptomatic meanings, finding in a film symptoms of psychic repression or ideological conflicts. Such a method, while more complex, still ends up dictating a narrow range of meanings ahead of time, which the analyst will necessarily find present in the films. Such systems are impossible to attack or defend, since no conceivable evidence could confirm or deny them.

I mentioned the highly unlikely daily routine travel of the British Quinn in a London bus not so much as a joke, but, more importantly for purposeful points, as it is very much comparable to ‘discovery’ of Oedipus complex. It's like a situation if we saw the Quinn's public engagements to open a new maybe be in itself important bus route and to make assumption that Her Majesty is happy because without a new route she would have had difficulty to cover the given destination.

Another problem with an exclusive concentration on interpretation is that even if the film makes its meanings very explicit or symptomatic-otherwise, what would he or she have to talk about?

Nothing indeed, though, at the best, sometimes they way an explicit meaning is turned into a non-existent implicit or symptomatic, i.e. cleverly but artificially deformed in itself may be a state of art.

Neoformalism assumes that meaning differs from films to film because it, like any other aspect of the film, is a device. The word *device* indicates any single element or structure that plays a role in the art-work-camera movement, a frame story, a repeated word, a costume, a theme, and so on. For the neoformalism, all devices of the medium and of formal organisation are equal in their

potential for defamiliarisation pointed out, the older aesthetic tradition treated the elements of the work as the “expression” of the author; the Russian Formalists looked upon these elements as artistic devices”. The structure of devices is seen as organized not solely in order to express meaning, but to create defamiliarisation. We can analyse devices using the concepts of function and motivation.

Here it seems Krustian Tompson nearly falls in a trap of theorists like Ronald Barthes. The problem is not usage of the word *expression* but the meaning we put in it.

Certain of these critics even went on to distinguish between the personal attributes which an author projects directly into his work and those which distinguishes and distorts in order to hide certain facts from his readers, or from himself. As a result we find the division of a work of literature into a surface reference to characters, things, and events, and more important covert symbolism which is expressive of elements in the nature of its author.

Furnished with the proper key, the romantic extremist was “confident”. He could decipher the hieroglyph, penetrate to the reality behind appearance, and so come to know an author more intimately than his own friends and family; more intimately, even, than the author, lacking this key, could possibly have known himself. Of course this pre-psychoanalysis and far too emotional belief is very problematic. Nevertheless, every author successfully or not, invents or reinvents elements of artistic devices and despite the above quoted fact that it does not exist only to express meanings but more importantly functions as a defamiliarisative tool that in that contest, since every films, author at least slightly differ, could or even should understood as a form of expression

as well. She herself recognizes that:

Function is crucial to understanding the unique qualities of a given artwork, for, while many works may use the same device, that device's function may be different in each way.

However, she also very rightly points out that:

It is risky to assume that a given device has a fixed function from film to film. For example, to use two of the clichés of film studies, bar-like shadows do not always symbolize that a character is “imprisoned”, and vertical in a composition do not automatically suggest that characters on either side are isolated from each other. Any given device serves different functions according to the context of the work, and one of the analyst's main jobs is to find the device's functions in this or that context. Functions are also important in relation the work to history. Devices themselves become automatised quite easily, and the artist replace them with new devices that are more defamiliarising. But functions tend to remain more stable, since they are renewed by a change of device, and they persist longer historically than do individual devices. We may call different devices that serve the same function *functional equivalents*. As Eikhendaum pointed out, the function of the device in context is usually more important for the analyst than is the device as such.

Exactly this endlessness of functional equivalents and more or less uniqueness of a given author's personal usage of them should be in Authorship Theory, defined as personal “*expressions*”.

Devices perform functions in artworks, but the work must also provide some reason for including the device to begin with. The reason the work suggest for the presence of any given device is

its motivation. Motivation is, in effect, a cue given by the work that prompts us to decide what could justify the inclusion of the device; motivation, then, operates as an interaction between the work's structures and the spectator's activity. There are four basic function types of motivations: compositional, realistic, transtextual, and artistic.

Briefly, *compositional motivation* justifies the inclusion of any device that is necessary for the construction of narrative casualty, space or time. Most frequently, compositional motivation involves the "planting" of information early on which we will need to know later...

Often motivation does not promote plausibility, but we are willing to overlook this for the sake of have the story continue...

Indeed, compositional motivation act to create a kind of set rules for the individual artwork. Plausibility falls within the realm of *realistic motivation*, which is a type of cue in the work leading us to appeal to notions from the real world to justify the presence of a device...

Thus realistic motivation can appeal to two broad areas of our knowledge: on one hand, our knowledge of everyday life gained by direct interaction with nature and society, on the other, our awareness of prevailing aesthetic canons of realism in a given period of an art form's stylistic change. We shall see both types of realistic motivation at work in *Bicycle Thieves* and in *The Rules of the Game*.

Since realistic motivation is an appeal to ideas about reality, rather than an imitation of reality as such, its means can be extremely varied, even within a single work...

Transtextual motivation. The third of four types, involves any appeal to conventions of other artworks, and hence it can be as varied as the historical circumstances allow. In effect, the work introduces a device that is not motivated adequately within its own terms, but that depends on our recognition of the device from past experience. In film, types of transtextual motivation most commonly depend on our knowledge of usage within the same genre, our knowledge of the star, or our knowledge of similar conventions in other art forms.

Our expectations about transtextual conventions are so pervasive that we probably accept them fairly automatically in many cases; yet it is also easy for the artworks to play with our assumptions by violating genre conventions, casting actors against type, and so on.

Artistic *motivation* is the most difficult type to define. In one sense, every device in an artwork has an artistic motivation, since it functions in part to contribute to the creation of the work's abstract, overall shape - its form. Yet many, probably most, devices have an additional, more prominent compositional, realistic, or transtextual motivation and in these cases artistic motivation is not particularly noticeable - and though, we can deliberately shift our attention to the aesthetic qualities of the work's texture even if it is densely motivated. Yet in another sense, artistic motivation is present in a really noticeable and significant way only when the other three types of motivation are withheld.

A justification for presence of devices very much determines spectators reaction to artwork, film. In already mention example of "Orlando" compositional, realistic, transtextual motivations of heroine's/hero's declarations is very clear, but due to its such

a simple directness, artistic one suffers tremendously. Unnecessary repetition of what we already are able to grasp destroys well balanced and presented justifications for presence of other artistic, aesthetic, functional devices. Since nothing is withheld we are just plainly told a simple wisdom, I perfectly understand where Sally Potters this desire comes from, and agree with the statement but if anybody from spectators does not agree with, it would not make any difference anyway.

The other example I would live to bring is the “Lock Stock and Two Smoking barrels”. Despite some interesting scenes, the film seems so unjustified disunified for two reasons. First of all it is a very weak realistic motivations for some episodes.

What purpose does the scene in the car fulfill, when the main hero is released from the police, with his father and their conversations serve? So far that remains a big puzzle for me. The only explanation, since it does not do anything from aesthetic point of view, could be that the author suddenly in the process of writing a script or filming, discovered that he wanted to show the relationship of a son and a father and or the heroes motivations for his actions, discovered that he has not done anything about that so far and hurriedly invented the scene.

The other inadequacy is a crippled artistic motivation, which comes from the blind usage of different types of devices taken from for example “pulp Fiction” or “Shallow Grave”. That does not mean that a transtextual motivation does to exist there, it does. However, the ridiculous situation appears because Guy Ritchie neither is aware of that (his interviews are further proof of it), not makes a strong any explicit or implicit references.

Totally different situation do we have in the “Usual Suspects”.

We do not care that the story itself is unrealistic, at the first glance we just cannot spot that, our senses are very skillfully channeled into other directions. Especially the plotting device, together with others, turn the seemingly inadequate story into its strength. It does not matter that nobody in this real world the real person, would specially dommit crime, go to prison for another crime, spend their years to make up a legend, in order to solve this problem from the original specifically targeted crime by a bunch of people, who he did not know in the first instant. Nobody, but the real... yes, indeed to destroy any good in a human spirit.

Some aesthetic modes - for example, non-programmatic music decorative and abstract painting, abstract films - are almost completely organized around motivation, and their audiences will be aware of that fact. Yet even in a narrative film, I would argue, artistic motivation can be systematically in the foreground. When this happens, and artistic patterns compete for our attention with the narrative functions of devices, the result is parametric form. In such films, certain devices, such as colours, camera movements, sonic motifs, will be repeated and varied across the entire work's form; these devices become parameters. They may contribute to the narrative's meaning - for example, by creating parallelism or contrasts - but their abstract functions exceed their contribution to meaning and draw our attention more.

A highly original art the work will tend to bare the device a good deal to help cue spectators as to how to adjust their viewing skills to cope with the new difficult devices in use.

The excellent example for the usage of a combination of colours and camera is in my poinion in one of the scene of in "The Godfather I", right at the beginning, following the long camera shot we enter into the Don's office during the wedding reception

and see a bright red flower on his chest.

The concept of varying the device should become clearer in the course of this book, since we shall encounter it often. Thus formal devices serve a variety of functions, and their presence can be motivated in one or more of the four possible ways. Devices can serve the narrative, can appeal to similar devices familiar from other artworks, can imply verisimilitude, and can defamiliarise the structures of the artwork itself. Meaning, as a device, may also serve any of these function. Some artworks foreground meanings and invite us to interpret them.

The other good example of excellent combinations of different artistic devices is Scoccizes London when repeated activity of building up a colourful send a picture, its development, not only cues us to emotional state of the main hero in a specific time, not only defines well the essence of Tibetan culture from the point of view of a director, but very much intensifies the spectator's aesthetic and other emotional feelings, unifies the scenes in a whole balance entity, dictates a rhuthm. It is used as a multi-air multi-functional rightly defamiliarised yet very specific cue.

The works of Ingman Bergman, especially those of the 1960s and 1970s, contain obscure imagery that cannot be understood without considerable interpretation. In a different way, Jean Luc Godard's films elicit interpretation as a major viewing strategy, as we shall see with *Sauce que peut (la vie)*, in which even the film's basic referential level is made obscure so as to guide us toward implicit meanings.

Yet, as I have suggested, meaning in a film may be very simple and obvious; it may serve as a motivating device around which defamiliarising systems of style are structured. Films as Play Time

and Late Spring. The analyst, in formulating an appropriate method, must decide what type and degree of interpretation is appropriate to the overall analysis. But analysis of function and motivation will always remain the analyst's central goal, and it will subsume interpretation.

Determination of appreciativeness of type and degree of analysis comes in a forefront but sometimes, even in a situation when the film has a very wide implicit range, I believe, we could restrict ourselves pending a specific task. For example we want to draw our attention to just camera work, or acting and so on... of course, when such a thing is done, interpreter should, right at the beginning, clarify the aim and if that is done, it would or should not contradict deeper or more correctly fuller analysis.

Given that film sets up a renewing playfulness for the spectator through defamiliarisation, how can the analyst determine what method is appropriate to a specific work? Neoformalism resolves this question in part by insisting that the film can never be taken as an abstract object outside the context of history. Every viewing occurs in a specific situation, and the spectator cannot engage with the film except by using viewing skills learned in encounters with other artworks and in everyday experience. Neoformalism therefore grounds analysis of individual films in historical context based upon a concept of norms and deviations. Our most frequent and typical experiences from our perceptual norms, and idiosyncratic, defamiliarising, experiences stand out in contrast.

Furthermore each film is produced and viewed in the context of specific historical period and interactions between those two always build a new ground for analysis. I.E. spectator's reaction more or less is dependent on his/her knowledge and perception

of social, cultural, political aesthetic environment when the artwork was made. Through this the viewer is able to relate her/himself to an observed object either socially or aesthetically or both. I used “more or less” because not always political, historical social knowledge, *background* is vital or primary for defamiliarisation experiences. This varies pending on aesthetic nature style of a given film.

Neoformalism calls norms of prior experience backgrounds, since we see individual films within the larger context of such prior experience. There are three basic types of background. First, there is the everyday world. Without a knowledge of it, we could not recognize referential character behaviour, and other basic devices of films; moreover, we need everyday knowledge to comprehend how films create symptomatic other artworks. From a very young age we see and hear a great many artworks and come to understand their conventions. We are not born understanding how to follow plots, how to grasp film space from shot to shot, how to notice the return of a musical theme in a symphony, and so on. Third, we recognise how films are used for practical purposes (advertising, reportage, rhetorical persuasion, and so on), and we see the artistic use of cinema as something apart from such usage. Thus when we watch an aesthetic film, we perceive it as deviating from reality, from other artworks, and from practical usage in certain distinct ways. The film’s adherence to and departure from its background norms are the subjects of the analyst’s work, and the historical context provided by the backgrounds gives the analyst cues for constructing an appropriate method. Those methods that privilege interpretation, on the other hand, often have no way to treat differently films of different periods and sources; all will be forced into the same pattern of meaning. For neoformalism the film’s functions and motivations can only be understood historically.

All of those backgrounds in conjunction I would call *cultural environments*. I think it is important to identify them as a whole phenomenon, since, first of all, they do not exist just separately from each other and always share man of the same, if not all notions, from a different angle, like a three dimensional figure. Secondly, as the latter is the very case they can not even exist on their own. Without acknowledgment of *cultural environments* as a whole the determination of primary *background* becomes very much a faulty exercise.

For simplicity I would call identified *backgrounds*: *Reality background*, *Artistic Referential Background* (which includes itself aesthetic, cultural, historic, ideological, social references from other artworks) and last *Practical Background*.

Here, I would like to demonstrate all three separately and as a whole in action, bringing very famous stupry of one of the earliest films: “Entersense of Train in the station, when almost the whole audience panicked and ran out from the cinema.

Reality background: Spectators in the place were familiar with the existence of transport medium such is a train could easily recognize it and were aware of the danger of standing on its way.

Artistic Referential Background. They also knew that an exciting new experience which they were about to embark on, was some visual sensation. I.E. it bore some references to the phenomena of art, even in its every populist meaning. Nevertheless at least most of them were totally unfamiliar with the medium and that is why their referential point was non-existent.

Practical Background. By showing the same film time and time

again to a different audiences, willingly or not, existence of medium of rail transport has become more widely known and understood. We do not know, its unlikely, but possible, that even in the audience where a famous incident occurred, there was a person who had never before seen a train.

It is obvious on that example that all backgrounds, exist as part of one whole cultural environment not only and each of them separately, and combination of them contribute to the reaction of the audience. That is why even when using a new formalist approach we cannot and sometimes must not disregard any of them, although the specification “artistic use”, by krustian Tompson, clarifies the situation and focuses our attention to a primary aim.

This is not to imply that neoformalism simply reconstructs the viewing circumstances of the film’s original audiences. The work does not exist only at the moment of its creation and first screenings. Many artworks continue to exist and are seen in different circumstances. Indeed, it would be impossible to reconstruct fully the original viewing circumstances of most films. We shall probably never know precisely who saw pre-1909 films and under what circumstances. We can still find primitive films interesting and enjoyable, but we can never be sure we understand them in at all the same way as their first audiences did. We no longer have access to the original backgrounds, and critics and historians almost invariably must analyse these early films against the background of later, classical film-making (I am not suggesting that we should avoid historical research into the original contexts of films, but we should realize that our perspective inevitably will be coloured by more recent developments). To take another example, many Japanese films made in the 1930s and early 1940s contain implicit or explicit militarist propoganda. Western

audiences looking at these films today do not accept this ideology in the way original audiences would have in Japan; indeed, modern Japanese viewers, particularly those living in the United States, seem to find such films difficult to enjoy thoroughly. Yet, because they present striking similarities to and differences from the more familiar Western films of the same era, and because many are skillfully made, with interesting narratives, these films still intrigue audiences for whom the original backgrounds are irrecoverable.

I would like to draw my attention here just to one point. Although there cannot be arguments that readings differ in different *cultural environments* and even on a personal level, we cannot say that all maybe, especially implicit ones, are justifiable. For example allegory of the film “Invasion of the Body Snatchers” (directed by Don Segal) could indeed be read as a specific reaction on antagonism between USSR and the Western world, or as reaction on McArthurism, or even combination of both, but would any rational be there, if somebody argued that it was specially directed towards Cromwell’s rational be there, if somebody argued that it was specially directed towards Cromwell’s terror era in England? Yet, even those who may not be familiar with time when the film was produced, its historical political surroundings, together with those who are in more abstract way could take the same allegory, and rightly so, as a reaction against any totalitarianism. Even more ridiculous situation may occur when at the best may very clever but totally phony readings are produced out of the desire to justify one’s own political views.

In an over intellectualistic way, often using the same arguments, it is possible to get diametrically different results. To “prove” nonsense may be difficult but often more and more possible. Especially when using, the moral relativity theories out of any

sensible context. Nowadays, an economic systems uses that confusion very well, since it is very good for the sales and increasingly a larger number of short-term “alternative” virtual realities dull our senses and take over. That is why on the one hand we should even must avoid “a method that pre-determine the meanings” and on the other try to identify limits of interpretations.

The notion of backgrounds does not mean that neoformalism is doomed to complete relativism. For one thing, appropriate backgrounds are not infinite in number. Because neoformalist analysis depends upon an understanding of historical context, some backgrounds will clearly be more relevant than others. For example, there has been a trend in the past decade to look at primitive (pre-1909) films against the background of modern experimental cinema. As a result, analysts sometimes ascribe some sort of radical form and ideology to these early films. Yet, such a procedure is arbitrary, since it ignores the differences in norms between the two periods. Early film-makers were experimenting with a new medium in which norms did not exist, except as borrowed from the established arts; over the first two decades, specifically cinematic norms were themselves established. But norms had been in existence for a long time, and the film-makers were reacting specifically against them. Hence to equate two types of film supply remains an intriguing game, not an historically valid method of comparison. The notion of backgrounds does not legitimate any whim of the analyst. The current fashion (resulting from a historical approach to analysis) of an “infinite play of readings” cannot be justified by using a vast group of different backgrounds for the same film. Since there are a finite number of reading conventions at any given moment, we may assume that they can produce a variety of “readings”, but not an infinite number of them.

The finiteness of possible reading and recognition of their own limits does not necessarily mean that there is always the possibility of precise identification of them. Even when it sometimes seems simple and clear cut case, we cannot be absolutely sure.

Precisely because backgrounds give neoformalist analysis a historical basis, they make possible an examination of how defamiliarisation occurs. Defamiliarisation depends on historical context; devices that may be new and defamiliarising will decline in effectiveness with repetition. *Our Bonnie and Clyde* example has already suggested how this happens. Highly original artworks tends to foster imitation, and devices are introduced, used, and dropped. As the original backgrounds becomes more remote, an older artwork may once again seem unfamiliar to a new generation of audiences. We constantly see examples of artworks going through cycles of popularity, being revived as norms and perceptions change. Nineteenth-century American realist painting, for example, was long considered of little interest; yet recently it has become more “respectable” through major exhibitions and publications. Film serials provide an interesting example of a form that has gone through cycles. In the teens, serials were taken quite seriously; they were the equivalent of “A” pictures. During the 1920s and 1930s they declined in status and become cheap “B” products. Finally, in the 1950s, television took over the function of providing continuing narratives, and serial production ended. But in the later 1970s and the 1980s a number of film-makers who grew up watching “B” serials have revived some of the conventions, and we see very popular and prestigious classical films - *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* series, and so on - once again drawing upon the tradition. Similarly, French and intellectuals of the 1920 held such popular film-markers as Louis Feuillade and Leonce Perret in utter contempt;

yet decades later, the works of these two film-markers have garnered increasing respect. The concepts of defamiliarisation, and changing backgrounds can help account for such cycles in film viewing.

One way of need of distancing sometimes from these cycles is to concentrate as far as that is possible on pure aesthetic formal features, as they are less dependant on time perceptions, and they not only present a challenge in their highly defamiliarised state but also often can be seen as part of the whole historical aesthetic “genetical” code and that is apparent, as I previously argued, in the situation of favourite artwork. The individual variation of them is what I would call a taste and for the very reason, I would be wary to call even neoforalist approach totally objective. Yet it’s ability to expert itself, determine if needed even at individual levels existence of some visible cultural environments, equips it with tools to deal sensibly with the problem of taste the most successfully, strips it predetermined methodical chains the best and only after that I am not afraid if somebody finds it necessary to test artwork’s aesthetic formal favourites against their own variations of “genetic” aesthetic code.

As is indicated by my frequent refrence to the classical cinema, both here and in the individual analysis, I consider it one of the most pervasive and helpful backgrounds against which we can examine many films. Historically, this type of film-making associated with Hollywood from the mid - 1910s to the present has been widely seen by audiences and widely imitated by other films-making nations all over the world. As a result, vast numbers of viewers have developed their most normative viewing skills by watching classical films. Moreover, many film-markers who have worked in original ways have set up formal systems that play off an challenge those normative skills.

Referential backgrounds of classical cinema are so helpful, since, consciously or not an artistic motivation of a film, always is considerably based on its predecessors. While right at the beginning of film-making era the same role were played by their artforms. Today, it is pointless to argue that cinema as an artform medium already has developed its own complex aesthetic “language” and that itself is one of the deformatising devise an artist always uses and plays with.

Because the work exists in constantly changing circumstances, audiences perceptions of it will differ over time. Hence we cannot assume that the meanings and patterns we notice and interpret are completely there in the work, immutable for all time. Rather, the work’s devices constitute a set of cues that can encourage us to perform certain viewing activities; the actual form those activities take, however, inevitably depends on the work’s interaction with its and the viewer’s historical contexts. In analyzing a film, therefore, the neoformalist critic will not treat its devices as fixed and self-contained structures that exist independant of our perception of them. The film exists physically in its can when we are not watching it, of course, but all those qualities that are of interest to analyst - its unity; its repetitions and variations, its representation of action, space, and time; its meanings - result from the interaction between the work’s formal structures and the mental operations we perform in response to them.

Indeed, constantly changing the cultural and historical environments produce different reading. I would like to bring here one story which I heard during my studies at Georgian Film and Theatre Institute for Film Directing Course, from George Shengelaia, whose masterclass I attended. In the 1960s at the

press conference in Italy, during the Venecian Film Festival he was asked if he could explain what his was about. George pointed at a well known Georgian Critic, also one of my tutors, Nataia Amiredjibly who accompanied him and declared that such a king of questions should be directed at he, since she would know better.

Here I would like to make two points, first of all, there always are the initial impulses of and patterns, since they very much are closely linked to the initial motivations of an artist to produce any kind of artifacts, although during the process even that quite often changes significantly. Good luck to everybody who would like to find them but that seems to me a mammoth task, is ever virtually possible. They may be interesting as a historical phenomena and this kind of research is more art/film historians job (which unavoidably would include some art/film criticism notions), than ours. In my field of study from the romantic art critics to the modern structuralist Authorship Theoretics, the linkage, up to a certain degree of those two desire, led to a dead end and made their thesis very vulnerable for attack. For example, understanding that Peter Wollon tried to distance himself from the author's personality and came up with the notion of author as more or less fixed structure, but without clear explanation of what does that constitute. Even the dismissal of any comprehensive meaning any rightly so in work made matters more complicated and ambiguous, as willingly or not he also totally dismissed and initial impulsive motivational meanings as well, which are always the cause of any artwork to be produced. I have already pointed out that the discovery of them is not our job and academic art/film criticism, authorship theorists should be concentrating largely on aesthetic devices, on their cues which produce in ever changeable historical cultural environments different different meanings and patterns. Despite that we should also bear in mind that we are able to do owing to those initial impulses. There cannot

be any structure without them, if there were, our exercise would be totally pointless or even would not exist. If and only when clearly we can establish that facts we could try to explain what an the author as structural notion constitutes, that must be finite number of changeable but systematic aesthetic devices, their combinations which enables observers in their historical cultural environments to interact. Number is finite but reactions are uncountable. As I have already made comparison, like a genetic code, its functions and activity, result of them, is very much dependant on the given environment.

As we have seen, perception, emotion, and cognition are central to the neoformalist critic's view of how film's formal qualities function. That view does not treat the spectator as being wholly "in the text", since this would imply a static view; backgrounds changing over time would be incapable of affecting our understanding of films if we as spectators were constructed entirely by the work's internal form. Yet the spectator is not "ideal" either, since that traditional view also implies that the work and the spectator exist in a constant relationship untouched by history. But in accounting for the effects of history on spectators, critics need not go to the opposite extreme of dealing only with the reactions of actual people (They need not resort to audience surveys, for example, to find out how people watch films, or plunge into complete subjectivity, taking their own reactions as the only accessible ones). The notion of norms and deviations allows the critics to make assumptions about how viewers would be likely to understand a given device.

Only as spectator is touched by history this constant relationship is possible, otherwise, logically, either existence of the observed object or observer, or both of them would be questionable. Any reading takes place in a given time and space and changing

backgrounds of them make a possible constant interaction phenomena to take place.

In the neoformalist approach, viewers are not passive, “subjects”, as current Marxist and psychoanalytic approaches would have it. Rather, viewers are largely active, contributing substantially to the final effect of the work. They go through a series of activities, some physiological, some preconscious, some conscious, and some presumably unconscious.

The active spectator in its primitive consumer - demand has become Hollywood’s one of the most useful tool. The endless audience surveys what Krustian Tompson advises un not to conduct, has become a high leash on the neck of the cinema as art since there is basic understanding that changes historical, cultural background shift spectators responses and that itself affect box office revenues.

Physiological processes involve those automatic responses that viewers do not control, such as perceiving movement across a succession of static film images, differentiating, colours, or hearing a series of sound waves as sounds. Such perceptions are automatic and mandatory; we cannot determine by introspection how we are aware of them, nor can we by conscious willing make them otherwise (e.g. we can never see the motion-picture image as a series of all still pictures separated by black moments). The medium of film depends upon these automatic abilities of the human brain and senses, but in many cases in film criticism, they can assume them as givens and go on to the preconscious and conscious activities (some films, and particularly modern experimental genres, play with our physiological responses and make us aware of them; for example, Stan Brakhage’s *Mothlight* draws our attention to the flicker effect and the perception of apparent

motion).

Preconscious activities are of more general interest to the analyst, for these involve easy, nearly automatic processing and information in ways that we are so familiar that we do not need to think about them. Much object recognition is preconscious, as when we realize that the same person appears in a shot A and shot B (as in a match on action) or that in a crane upward it is the camera that moves, not the landscape that suddenly “falls away” (even though the latter may be the perceptual effect on the screen.) Such mental processes differ from physiological activities in that they are available to our conscious mind. We can, if we think about it, realize how we went about recognising continuous action over a cut or the stability of the ground in the crane shot. We can at will think of these stylistic devices flourishes as abstract patterns. Much of our reaction to stylistic devices may be preconscious in that we learn cutting, camera movement, and other techniques from classical films, and we learn them so well that we usually no longer need to think about them, even after only a few visits to the cinema (It is instructive, by the way, to watch intended for children and listen to young audience members asking their parents questions; they are, in effect, in the process of learning skills that will later become preconscious). Object recognition and other activities will be preconscious or conscious, depending upon the degree of familiarity involved. Familiar objects will be recognised without conscious effort, while we may have to struggle to cope with the novel devices with which a film may confront us.

Conscious processes - those activities of which we are aware - also play a major role in our viewing of films. Many cognitive skills involved in film viewing are conscious: we struggle to understand a story, to interpret certain meanings, to explain to

ourselves why a strange camera movement is present, and so on. For the neoformalist critic, conscious processes are usually the most important ones, since it is here that the artwork can challenge most strongly our habitual ways of perceiving and thinking and can make us aware of our habitual ways of coping with the world. In a sense, for the neoformalist, the aim of original art is to put any or all our thought processes onto this conscious level.

I do agree that *conscious* processes are one of the most important... most of the times... Krustian Tompson herself mentions modern experimental films which make us aware of the physiological processes of understanding art, film. Also, I would argue, that playing with preconscious activities challenging them their defamiliarisation becomes the most important aesthetic feature, which even may define the style of the director, author. We do not have to go far away for example jump editing in Godard, Tarantino's "Pulp Fiction", where he bluntly and cynically exploits our familiarity, knowledge of Hollywood, Vietnam and gangster films, or example of Orson Wells "Citizen Kane", where not only story is told from different perspectives but also combinations of usual camera angles, even today, constantly challenge audiences learnt watching skills and preconceived ideas.

Much is said about violence in films and often Tarantino and Scorsese are brought up as one of the most horrible examples. Is that so? Just simple "body count" would demolish this myth.

Their stylistic devices challenge our familiar understanding of them and that what in itself break our knowledge how death should be represented in gangster movies. The problem here lies in the simple fact that critics, when speaking about *conscious* processes, about why camera movement are cut appeared in that place do not link them to *preconscious* activities. In simple terms, to answer

why we must look into *how* our perceptions and watching skills are manipulated.

There is a fourth level of mental processes, *the unconscious*. Much of the recent film theory and analysis has been devoted to an application of psychoanalytic methods of various stripes, in an effort to explain film viewing as an activity primarily carried on in the viewer's conscious. For neoformalists, however, the unconscious level is largely an unnecessary construct. For one thing, the textual cues that psychoanalytic criticism points to—the repetition and variation of motifs, the use of glances, patterns of symmetry in narrative structure - are wholly available to neoformalism as well. The psychoanalytic argument hinges upon the interpretations that can be produced from these cues, but these tend to be of the cookie-cutter variety, whereby every film enacts the castration complex or the rule “he who has the look has the power”. Moreover, it can be argued that contemporary psychoanalytic criticism, despite its claim to offer a theory “spectatorship”, is in fact not particularly concerned with the viewer. Most psychoanalytic studies of films simply employ a Freudian or Lacanian model of the text's internal operations (in which the film is taken as analogous to the discourse of the psychoanalytic patient) in order to interpret the film as an isolated object. The viewer becomes a passive receiver of textual structures. Furthermore, psychoanalytic criticism has poited that viewer as existing largely outside history. If the spectator performs no significant conscious activities in viewing, then he or she is not using experience gained in the world and from other artworks. Hence there can be nothing comparable to what I have been calling backgrounds, and historical circumstances cannot affect the viewing. One could posit that perhaps backgrounds affect the unconscious - thought how could we ever know this? - but in the practice of film analysis, categories used to characterise the

viewer's unconscious have been general and static ones. If the experience of movie going perpetually replays for us the mirror phase of entering into the imaginary, or imitates dreaming, or reminds us of the mother's breast in our infancy (all explanations put forth in recent theory), then it presumably does so in the same way for all viewers and in the same way at all viewing throughout the individual spectator's life. We would have to assume, therefore, that all the effects of the film are created by structures within the film itself, and that it exists unchanging, outside history. Certainly many psychoanalytic "readings" treat the film as just such an historical object (This is not to say that psychoanalytic concepts can never be used by the neoformalist critic as part of method for analyzing a specific film. What worries me is that psychoanalysis especially its Freudian and Lacanian models, have become like a dominant religious sect, which is used, especially the most powerful sexual imagery very much purposefully by the media and through it forced to every segment of our life. Even those of us, not followers, or those who never looked or heard of Freud, unconsciously, methodically or taught iconography of it and I would argue that much what is described as *unconscious* or for me more precisely a *tremis subconscious* activities are not as such but *preconscious*, or at the best combination, a mixture of *presubconscious*).

A merger with other versions of Marxism is more conceivable, since Marxism is basically a socioeconomic theory, not concerned with the aesthetic realm at all. Marxists concerned with analyzing how artworks relate ideologically to society might well use neoformalist analysis as a basic approach to the formal properties of art objects, concentrating on those functions of formal devices that link art to society. But those breeds of Marxism that are tied to a psychoanalytic epistemology would seem not to be compatible with neoformalism.

I would not be so sure that a merger is possible... If that were a case why should Marxism be an exception, what about Fascism?! It also is *concerned with analyzing how artworks relate ideologically to society*... No wonder the official propaganda art of the Nazi German and USSR are so similar aesthetically. The only difference would be several tens of millions of more lives Marxism managed to inspire to take. Of course neoformalist analysis could use the relation of an ideology or ideologies to society and its conception of art but if we do that from the prospective of preconceived theory of right and wrong would not we fall in the very trap *of the paramount method, when a film simply serves to confirm the method?*

In addition to the already mentioned legitimate ideological exploration, I would argue, that here for an academic art film criticism the most important case, when that is justified by stylistic nature of certain films, is to look into how art films sometimes may explore political, sociological, economic tensions; how themselves those tensions could affect ideology of some films or authors and also how they as a historical background could change audiences reactions.

Neoformalism posts that viewers are active, that they perform operations. Contrary to psychoanalytic criticism, I assume that film viewing is composed mostly of nonconscious, preconscious, and conscious activities. Indeed, we may define the viewer as hypothetical entity who responds actively to cues within the film on the basis of automatic perceptual processes and on the basis of experience. Since historical contexts make the protocols of these responses inter-subjective, we may analyse films without resorting to subjectivity. David Bordwell has argued that recent Constructivist theories of psychological activity offer the most

viable model of spectatorship for an approach derived from Russian formalism (Constructivist theories have been the dominant view in cognitive and perceptual psychology since the 1960s). In such a theory, perceiving and thinking are active, goal-oriented processes. According to Bordwell, “The organism constructs a perceptual judgement on the basis of nonconscious inferences”. For example, we recognize that shapes on the flat cinema screen represent three dimensional space because we can rapidly process depth cues; unless the films plays with our perception by introducing difficult or contradictory cues, we will not consciously have to think about how we have to grasp the spatial representation. Similarly, we tend automatically to register the passage of represented time, unless the film uses a complex temporal layout that skips over, repeats, or otherwise juggles events, in which case we begin a conscious sorting - out process.

We are able to understand such aspects of most films because we have had experience in coping with similar situations. Other artworks, everyday life, film theory and criticism - all provide us with countless *schemata*, learned mental patterns against which we check individual devices and situations in films. As we watch a film, we use these schemata to form hypotheses continually - hypotheses about a character’s actions, about the space off-screen, about the source of a sound, about every local large - scale device that we notice. As the film goes on, we find our hypotheses confirmed or disconfirmed; if the latter, we form a new hypothesis, and so on. The concept of hypothesis - forming helps explain the constant activity of the spectator, and the parallel concept of schemata suggests why that activity is based in historical: schemata change over time. In effect, what I have called “backgrounds” are large clusters of historical schemata organized by the analyst for the purpose of making statements about viewer responses.

According to Bordwell. “The artwork is made so as to encourage the application of certain schemata, even if these must eventually be discarded in the course of the perceiver’s activity”. This is why we can say that the work *cues* us in responses. The analyst’s task becomes to point out the cues and on the basis of them to discuss what responses would reasonably result, given a knowledge of backgrounds on the part of the viewer. The neoformalist critic thus analysis not a set od static formal structures (as an “empty” formalist or “art for art’s sake” position might dictate), but rather, a dynamic interaction between those structures and a hypothetical viewer’s response to them.

Because we are realing with aesthetic films, we must remember that the viewer’s skills will be employed for non-practical ends: Often we may be even totally aware how our schemata is formed. Perfect exemplary of that is how we constantly “rediscover” thought archeological finds new cultures and are fascinated by them. Even before Renaissance era finds of Greek and Roman Classical art its cultural aesthetic legacy already were present in different shapes and ways. Culturally, aesthetically nothing significant is lost without a trace and that makes our learnt, patterns even wider and more significant complex than that could be imagined at first glance.

What is non conscious in everyday mental life becomes consciously attended to. Our schemata get shaped, stretched, and transgressed: a delay in hypothesis-confirmation can be prolonged for its own sake. And like all psychological activities, aesthetic activity has long-range effects. Art may reinforce, or modify, or even assault our normal perceptual-cognitive repertoire.

If an artwork largely reinforces our existing viewing skills, we

are not likely to notice how we employ schemata and form hypotheses. Thus certain films seem simple to watch, and we may assume that we are “naturally” able to view such films. (Even while watching the most familiar films, of course, we go through very complex operations in order to understand structure of casualty, time and space). Other films, however, challenge our experience more strongly; if we are unable to account for what we see on the screen, we become aware of being puzzled and of having our expectations delayed, or even permanently frustrated”...

The notions of historical cues and backgrounds enable us to specify the goals of the films analysis. The viewer can respond actively to a film only to the degree that he or she notices its cues, and only if he or she has viewing skills developed enough to respond to these cues. The analyst can help in both areas: by pointing out the cues and by suggesting how the viewer might cope with them. Such an approach would work on everything from complex, challenging works to ordinary, highly familiar ones. The viewer may find an original work incomprehensible because he or she lacks familiarity with the viewing conventions appropriate to it. On the other hand, faced with a film that sticks closely to the norms, the viewer may employ familiarised skills automatically and thus, through the lack of interest, coast over many of the film’s cues.

Uncovering of historical cues, background and pointing at ways of dealing seems not to be always enough in our post-modern era when everything could be declared as an art. Sometimes even when the incomprehensible is explained and understood viewers and not less critics could find themselves aesthetically indifferent. It is undeniable that new avantguard art try and *sometimes* find new application forms of expression, yet, that’s to be a case first

of all they should exist at least. Clever explanations by a creator or critics could not substitute aesthetic features or lack of artists professional ability.

Any artifax/film should most of all rely on itself to make “stone stonier”. We do not have to go very far to find a very clear example, we may be puzzled by or comprehend Picasso’s paintings, graphics, sculptures, may share his aesthetic and/or ideological concepts or not, but one thing is for certain, the cues and features are there at the first place.

A different chemical mixtures are as important as they could give and artist various shades of colours i.e. a tool for expression. The knowledge and fact that somebody chose to use the elephant dummy as a paint cannot be the concern of an art criticism, since, a physical material itself is not a formal aesthetic feature and at the best it is primarily or a blunt propaganda, ideological statement and should be validated as such.

All the above said means, although neoformalist approach is able to incorporate in itself many methods, there is the danger of as test sometimes happens, wrong assumptions that we could look at everything and rest with the notion of a art, as that for example happened with the psychoanalytic critics in the their desire to confirm their own scientific models.

In order to avoid such a kind of situation sometimes academic art critics first of all should define if the given aesthetic experience of a viewer is primary or just a secondary catalyst to help some other practical activity.

Secondly, we, should, when relevant and answering the practicality question *how*, analyse whether it itself could amount

to a formal aesthetic feature and affect the viewers experience as such.

For these tasks of pointing out cues or suggesting new perspectives, on films, the critic need not have more refined tastes or greater intelligence than the reader. Rather, the analyst seeks to uncover the historical circumstances that would suggest viewing skills relevant to the films. The analyst also tries to become as aware as possible of how he or she applies those skills in the expended viewing upon which analysis is based. The resulting discussion can then point out additional, less noticeable cues and patterns within the work-things that more casual viewers might find of interest but have not been able to ferret out for themselves. Such an approach can be equally valuable for familiar, less original sorts of films. Neoformalism often deals with highly original, challenging works, but its goal is also to take familiar, even clichéd films and create a new interest for them - to “re-defamiliarise” them. As Shklovsky put it, “The aim of the formalist method, or at least one of its aims, is not to explain the work, but to call attention to it, to restore that “orientation towards form” which is characteristic of a work of art”. In this sense, the neoformalist critic can take a familiar film and point out its underlying strategies - strategies usually camouflaged by motivating devices. The analyst can thus encourage the viewer to perceive the film in a more active fashion than the film would deem at first warrant (As we have seen, the film may also have been highly original at one point, but become automatised by many imitations or repeated viewings. This, I think, is to some degree the case with *Bicycle Thieves*, for example).

From the point of view of Authorship Theory suggestion of relevant engagement skill is not enough, a critic should also look into designing of formal aesthetic features and seek a repeated systematic pattern and of them differences from film to film.

Hence not only changing backgrounds and historical circumstances of audiences are relevant, but also previously or after made films become themselves part of the complex background.

We secondly also should acknowledge that although reaction of audience always change, because of shifting cultural environments design of formal aesthetic features technically are static and therefore once and for all and only interpretations of readings them are circumstantial.

Thirdly, the ability of neoformalist approach to deal wit highly original films and also with very familiar ones and their co-operation gives the Authorship theory the best and ways of originality in, of course, the defined or understood cultural environment.

At first, the neoformalist approach may seem rather “elitist”, in that in favours those highly original films that may be inaccessible to mass audiences. But I would contend that this is not the case. For one thing, as we shall see in Chapter 2 with *Terror By Night*, neoformalism can and does concern itself with popular oriented films. (we take popular films seriously, not by taking the fun out of them, but by treating them with the same respect we would accord any other film.) But, more important, neoformalism treats audience response as a matter of education about and awareness or norms, not as a matter of passive acceptance of norms imposed by the makers of popular films. Much of contemporary theory treats the viewer (read “ordinary spectator”) as a passive subject taken in by whatever ideology and formal patterns the popular cinema cares to impose upon the public. Such an approach implies that the critic should be an arbiter of tastes by pointing out the advantage of avant-garde cinema, and by treating the classical

cinema as an ideological machine that uses conventional approaches to seduce a mass audience.

I am not so afraid to use the word 'elitist' as Krustian Tompson does. The problem is only what we understand under it. We are in one way or another members of different elite's Inaccessibility for aesthetic purposes but not just for its sake, of certain works/films, desire for finding new forms of expression contexts always has been one of the most important driving force of art. Also, often very popular films themselves may not be so straightforward or less complex in close look.

In addition, to the desire of a critic to analyse any, even very familiar artwork/film, "re-defamiliarise" it is upto a degree elite itself, as it tries to stimulate different audiences to get active responses at another educated level, thus to make inaccessible-accessible 'Elitist' becomes a problem only when audiences are treated as a passive object and instead of additional encouragement of "awareness of norms" imposes ideological or other notions of interpretation.

In such cases film critics willingly or not are seen as special beings, members of "special groups", carriers of knowledge and truth.

In the sence, the current notion of "infinite readings" is again shown to be inappropriate to the neoformalist critic. Some analysts would say that we can use mental to generate more and more readings, more meanings, without limitation, Again, this is an a historical claim, making the untenable assumption that we could o on dealing with the same film forever without its becoming automatised for us. But impractical terms, the film would necessarily become automatised we simply went over and over it with the same goal each time, of doing a different "reading".

As we went on, the memory of the sum of previous readings would make new ones more and more difficult to find. Moreover, each new reading would have to resort to less appropriate schemata to explain devices in the work, and the later readings would seem increasingly silly and far-fetched and ultimately uninteresting.

The only way to keep a work reasonably fresh upon many repeated viewings is to look for different things in it each time—more subtle and complex things, seen in new ways. And this means developing new viewing skills that will allow us to form different kinds of hypotheses about all formal relationships—not just meanings. We do this, as we have seen, by studying films themselves, forcing ourselves to expand and modify our overall approach on the basis of the method demanded by each new work.

I already touched on the problem of finite's of possible readings at a given moment and their own limits and agreed with Krustian Tompson, that there cannot be an infinite number of readings, although, argued that to determine the number is also impossible. The problem arises when they are produced just for their own sake as a mental exercise, without development of a new kind of viewing skill which they themselves must encourage formation of new readings and hypotheses.

Neoformalism makes two broad, complementary assumptions about how aesthetic films are constructed: that films are artificial constructs, and that they involve a specifically aesthetic, non-practical type of perception. These assumptions help determine how the most specific and localized sorts of analysis are carried out.

First, films are constructs that have no natural qualities. In terms

of any absolute or permanent logic, the choice of the devices that will go toward creation of the film will inevitably be largely arbitrary...

In every work, then, we must expect a tension between the convention that preexist in that culture and whatever degree of inventiveness the film-maker brings to the individual form of the film..."

Although chosen devices are arbitrary and are products of cultural and individual tensions artists always knowingly or not construct structure which in itself present a balanced, seemingly 'natural' aesthetic unity.

This specify unity or purposeful disunity, which only makes sense for a given artificial film and can not be blindly repeated for any other, amounts to the most important formal aesthetic feature since it justifies usage of any other conventions and devices. That only purity on its own self constitute a degree of the personal inventiveness of an author but must be taken under a very serious consideration of a critic and it determines overall analytical logical validity of used formal aesthetic features. For example I already mentioned Sally Potters "Orlando". In spite of her highly recognisable and personally unique aesthetic "signature" which is very obvious in her formal devices as framing, photography, lighting, narrative construction of story and their combination Orlando's direct patronizing ideological statement to audience diminishes to none their logical roles and thus damages aesthetic unity of the film.

In passing, I want to make it clear that neoformalism's stress on inventiveness and originality does not place us back in the "Great Man" theory of history, which would assume that the individual's

inspirations are the source of all innovations in art. Neoformalism assumes that artists are rational agents, making choices they judge appropriate to an end they have in view. Artists have intention, even if the results they achieve are often unintentional. One step in judging those results (not the intentions themselves) may be the reconstruction of the artist's choice situation. As one step in that judgment, we should realise that inventiveness is itself a convention in many modern aesthetic traditions. Our culture values originality, and some artists do create highly innovative works. Yet those innovations cannot come independent of all cultural influences. This is true of a highly distinctive artist like Godard as well as of a conventional one like Lloyd Bacon. Yet at any given moment, any artist will have a broad range of possible choices open to him or her, within the limitations imposed by the cultural context. Of course, "Great Man", especially in its most snobbish understanding can not be the key of analysis but I would not so easily dismiss the notion of individual inspiration up to a point. Problem here lies in misuse, misinterpretation of two philosophical conventions. We must clearly distinguish between "Individuality" and "Personality". The first is primarily focused on individualism and surrounding historical, cultural environments society play secondary role if any. The second is primarily focused on relationships between individual and historical cultural environment, society. In the first instance distinctiveness is self originated within. While in the second, without dismissal of one's own qualities, takes on consideration their limitations and understands the convention as a never ending, life-long interaction, its uniqueness and intensity. In other words, "Individuality" means "I" am as distinctive as "My" own personal qualities allow me to. In comparative, personally no "My" relationship with surrounding work determines "My" distinctiveness, "My" own personal qualities are one of the active factors of it and "I" exist as a rational agent only as "I" am able to interact.

The other point I would like to clarify is about “rational agent”. Yes! Artists are as such, but so are members of the audience and it would be highly illogical to assume that perception is totally non-practical but creation is wholly practical activity. An artists intuition summed up with intentions, are more precisely aesthetic side of them should be viewed as a non-practical one, although with its unified internal and interactive external logic.

Since films are made in response to cultural rather than natural principles, the critic should eschew a notion of analysing films according to a set of assumptions about mimesis. It is never “just natural” that a film-maker would put any given device into a work, no matter how realistic a film may seem. Here the concepts of motivation and function become central. We can always ask why a device is present; usually we will find that a great many of a film’s devices function to create and perpetuate the film’s own structures. Repetition may foster call attention to a stylistic flourish. Any film’s first task is to engage our attention as forcefully as possible, and many, if not most, of its motivations and functions will serve that purpose, among others. Art’s main concern is to be aesthetic.

Generally, any artifaxes and in our case the film’s life, some more some less is not restricted to a short period i.e. produced. Time and time again different audiences, in different historical, political, social and cultural circumstances return to a previous era in the cinema. Of course one reason for that is the present cultures, even when that is not so obvious, are rooted in previous ones. However, without disregarding that, or may be due to other factors are made more and more in the forefront, that is aesthetic and becomes the most important bridge between time gaps, since pure ideological backgrounds take on a secondary role sometimes even almost

disappear. Formal devices, film's "stylistic flourish" become the main focus of attention. That is where the "Authorship theory" must seek "author" as a notion, formulate it, as a formal, more or less original, interactive aesthetic pattern. Patterns with a tendency of formal devices their relationships within ever changing contexts from film to film, justified their existence by their functions, relationships and tensions between different kinds of motivations, unified by artistic motivation, expressed artists conscious by or unconsciously, or both by more or less the original manner through their practical and non-practical, complex, interactive activities, balance of their tensions, their functions, solutions, based on their experiences, skills, knowledge, cultural environments i.e. ever developing beings where an original intention of an artist is a transformed form once read, comprehended, understood and interpreted by the audience in types of different referential connotative, symptomatic, explicit and implicit meanings, their unity; which itself is non-practical aesthetic activity and is based on a changing cultural environments through defamiliarisation process.

Genre "patterns" should be understood as a complex aesthetic "tendency", which takes on account not only similarities but also sometimes even unique, logic of differences from the given artist's film to film; moreover, from artist to artist, genres, forms of art where author's "signature" may be identified, when looked over a period of time, in commonly used construction of formal devices, or/and their interactive manner (tendency) of manipulations, or/and his/her more or less original *roughened forms delays*, or/and in existence and sometimes even an absence of identifiable unified logic balance of tensions between given strategies. Their functions and artists intentions.

For the purpose – despite the fact that almost any method could

be explored for analysis, only carefully chosen one or definite combination of some, which define cue to an aesthetic understanding comprehension of a film or groups of them, “author patterns”, could be used as a test and is justifiable for its own legitimate logic for academic out/film criticism at any given moment.

However, we should bear in mind, upto a point that does not close a room for a critics interpretation of an author’s motivations, functions of device or devices their logical unity, balance and the validity testing *point* hence should aesthetic nature of art in general or artifax or groups of them in particular.

I used and defined the term in “patterns” but identification of a given artis’s one is only possible over a period of time when looked at a group of works, yet, often for different reasons, for example the situation of a direction first film debut, the critics have to analyse a single film. When that is the case, “patterns” become singular “pattern” which implies existence’s are not banalced aesthetic of unified logic of a given film and through it its creator as a notion and although that means we do not have yet more clear, identifiable notions of a “tendency”, (since only “patterns” equals “tendency”), critics even there could raise a question of more or less personal originality of an author and film by comparison to other know artists and accrued similiarities and differences of aesthetic devices, their blind or transformed usage and their functions and justifications, existence are not of a balance unified aesthetic logic.

Hence I would like to draw your attention to a problem which I have already previously touched and is often confused. The high degree of personal recognisablity of the authors “pattern”,

“patterns” or “tendency” does not automatically equal to a high degree of originality. The latter for art/film criticism must be viewed in a context of function justification i.e. inter-relationship if each element with other and with whole statements and only is true when balanced unified aesthetic logic exists, achieved. That is where the tension between notions of “pattern” and “patterns”, “tendency” may accrue and we must distinguish them. We could interpret “tendency” in three ways:

1. As sum of all pattern’s of different works/films of an artist.
2. As some of only those “patterns” of a high degree or originality.
3. Which seems for me the most proper, as a combination but not a blind edition of the first two, thus means a higher degree of originality of “patterns” (if there are or is), would act as a signpost of comparison or even I am inclined to think their sum as interpretation of “tendency”, while the lower degree ones could clarify motivations behind different strategies of the notion.

The other question will be basically notions of “like” or “dislike”. I do not see a reason why should we be afraid stating them clearly if we give clear defined reason. Some may hate that fact but tastes exists in real life and to dismiss it as unscientific is at the best foolish. Here historical, cultural, ideological, even moral backgrounds get another significance and in that right context academic art/film criticism often has to deal with the problem and the way to do that will be an allowance of appropriate degree of interpretation’ as Krustian Tompson calls it and which of course significantly values in different circumstances and for different art works.

Finally I must press and remind us some key points in order to establish a clear relationship between neoformalist approach and “Authorship Theory”.

In order to have *reasonably valued* analysis, (and the key word here is reasonably), we must first of examine our assumptions and we should not employ self-centred where the method itself is paramount. Not only the watching of film is non practical, totally different, *aesthetic experience attitude*, but for an artists making of the mix upto a point also as such, and such experiences could be described as creational for artists and recreational, for the audience. However, non-practical does not mean irrational and dismissal Great man Theory artist, as members of the audience are rational agents, thus allows interactive processes of the creational and re-creational relationships between them to occur.

Artists have intentions, for that reason they employ different strategies and aesthetic devices perform as cues for perception of the audience. Aesthetic devices cold be various of alarms like meaning, colour, light, frame the composition and many others and their compositions.

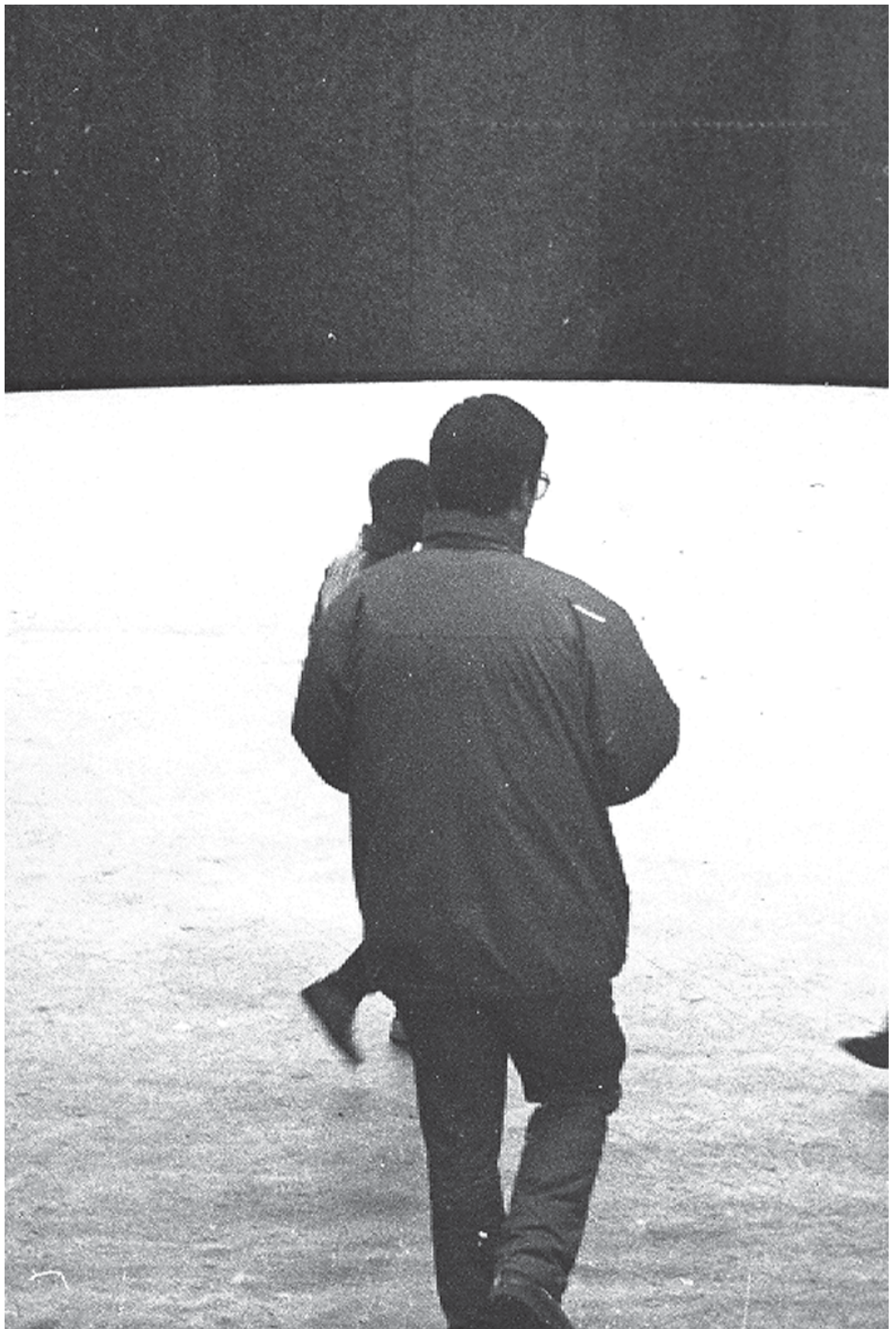
Meaning is or could be one of the formal aesthetic devices, and could be explicit or implicit, referential, connotative, symptomatic and as with other devices, could have various degrees of defamiliarisation or automatisisation.

Some aesthetic devices often perform different functions. To paraphrase Sally Potters Orlando: Some devices, are different functions equals functions equivalent (Although in her/his case would be different devices but the same functions)... Devices must be looked at always in a context of function which they perform in artificial but with a logic of its own creation like any artifact/film and overall balances the unity and dictates the reasons for their motivational existence. From all morivations: compositional, realistic, transtextual, artistic, the latter is what differentiates and

distinguishes art from most as phenomena of its own and the higher its degree is the higher is anartifax/film defamiliarised.

Creation and viewing i.e. re-creation occurs in constantly historical, social, cultural background and I would argue to define them as a “restricted cultural environment”. “Cultural Environments” in context of a historic continuation always interact in different often not so obvious way and thus allows aesthetic devices open for comprehension interpretation.

I agree viewing recreational experience goes through different process, such are: psychological, preconscious, conscious, unconscious, moreover the same experiences are involved in creational one and artist him/herself has countless “schemata” against where she/he performs balancing act between defamiliarisation and comprehensibility and through that artworks/films relate to the audiences. The conception of degrees of originality must be understood in the context of interactive relationships an artist and through is surrounding works, universe, through his/her work, thus distinguishes understanding of “personality” and “individuality” as notions. Artist as a notion of the “Author” is a formal, more or less original, interactive aesthetic *pattern or patterns i.e.* cultural environments. Inevitably in time points of stress and attentions shit the audiences would produce different interpretations of the author pattern, patters, tendency, nevertheless a pattern of given film an artist as patterns i.e. tendency exists on its own as an aesthetic phenomena as a divisive challenge for the engagement, discussion and arguments.



And... He was gone...

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George (Gia) Potskhveria (1964-2006) was born in Tbilisi. He graduated from the Polytechnic University of Georgia, the Film Production faculty of Tbilisi Theatre and Film Academy, studied at the Moscow International Cinema Academy (VGIK). From 1993 to march 2006, he lived in London, from 1999 to 2002 studied at the University of Kent, Canterbury, from where he graduated with the MA degree.

George was a scripter and a producer of three short films. "Requiem" - 1992, "Rubbish" - 1993 and "Love in London" - 2000. In 2007 were published his two volumes: 1. Poetry, 2. Prose and Selected works. In 2008 his prose called: "I'd like to Look at the World from the Top".

In 2011 his poetry collection "God, pardon me", in 2012 his father's (Jemal Potskhveria) and his poetry collection: "God Help us, please".

George was one of the initiators and founders of the Georgian Orthodox church in London and the first chair-man of "The Georgian Church Council in London".

