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IMMERSION OF THE SPECTATOR

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MASTER'S THESIS

Submitted to the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Kadir Has University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's in the Discipline Area of Radio, Television and Cinema under the Program of Cinema and Television.

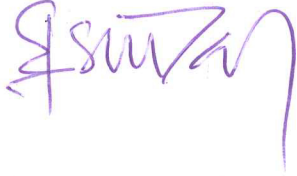
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I, MÜYESSER ESEN TAN;

Hereby declare that this Master's Thesis is my own original work and that due references have been appropriately provided on all supporting literature and resources.

MÜYESSER ESEN TAN

21/12/2018



ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This work entitled **IMMERSION OF THE SPECTATOR** prepared by **MÜYESSER ESEN TAN** has been judged to be successful at the defense exam held on **21/12/2018** and accepted by our jury as **MASTER'S THESIS**.

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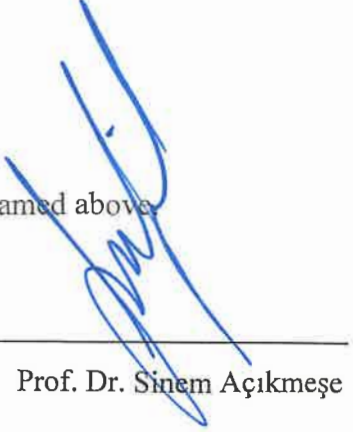
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

2D	Two Dimensional
3D	Three Dimensional
CCA	Communications Carrier Assembly
CGI	Computer Generated Imagery
DVD	Digital Versatile Disc
FPS	Frame Per Second
POV	Point of View
USA	United States of America



ABSTRACT

TAN, MÜYESSER ESEN. *IMMERSION OF THE SPECTATOR*, MASTER'S THESIS, İstanbul, 2018.

From the first cinematic screening to this day, the basic concern of the mainstream cinema had been its attraction from the audience. Cinema enlarged its frame, curved its screen, darkened its theater, used multiple projectors and screens, added sound and color, used surrounding system in sound, added third dimension by using additional glasses, in order to make the audience immersed in the narrative, and to create an impression of reality. In the digital era, cinema as many other art forms has come to a paradigm shift. The inevitable change in the production and distribution along with the screening techniques of cinema by the arrival of the digital technology, create new cinematic narration strategies. However, the desire for the immersion of the spectator in narrative remains. In this thesis, the aim is to examine the new immersive narration strategies from the perspective of the cinematic apparatus and its function by analyzing *Gravity* (Alfonso Cuarón, 2013) as a highly immersive narrative cinema example which regulates conventions of the invisible narration to digital era.

Keywords: Immersion, frame, apparatus, spectatorship, identification, invisible narration, post-cinema, virtual reality, *Gravity*.

ÖZET

TAN, MÜYESSER ESEN. *İZLEYİCİNİN DALIŞI*, YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ, İstanbul, 2018.

İlk gösterimden bugüne klasik anlatı sinemasının temel kaygısı izleyicisinin ilgisi olmuştur. Gerçeklik izlenimi yaratmak ve izleyicisini anlatı evrenine daldırmak için, sinema çerçevesini genişletmiş, perdesini bükmüş, salonunu karartmış, perde ve projeksiyon kurulumunu geliştirmiş, ses ve renk eklemiş, çevreleyen ses teknolojisini kullanmış, seyirciye gözlük taktırarak üçüncü boyutu eklemiştir. Dijital çağda, sinema diğer sanat formları gibi paradigma değişimine uğramıştır. Yapım ve dağıtım süreçlerindeki kaçınılmaz değişim yeni anlatım teknikleri ve konvansiyonlarının da oluşmasına yol açmıştır. Ancak izleyiciyi anlatı evrenine daldırma arzusu devam etmektedir. Bu tezin hedefi, yeni anlatım tekniklerini *Gravity* (Alfonso Cuarón, 2013) filmi analizi üzerinden değerlendirerek, dijital çağa göre yeniden tasarlanan görünmez anlatım konvansiyonlarını açıklamaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Çerçeve, aygıt, izleyici, özdeşleşme, görünmez anlatım, sanal gerçeklik, *Gravity*.

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I would like to dedicate this thesis to my grandmother Müyesser Balkan.

INTRODUCTION

“[A] new subject matter demands new form, and as good as any towards understanding what a film is trying to say to us is to know how it is saying it.” (Bazin, 1967)

“Every change in film history implies a change in its address to the spectator, and each period constructs its spectator in a new way.” (Gunning, 2006)

First time I went to see *Gravity* (Alfonso Cuarón, 2013) in an Imax movie theater with my 3D glasses on, I did not know what I was going to see. I refused to read the reviews on the film but instead chatted with some sci-fi film enthusiasts about the film's technical achievement on cinematography, and they held my expectations on a different level. By their comments, I expected to see something more than a movie since the comments were too abstract and always ended up with the same sentence: “I cannot explain, you need to see it.” Obviously, their cinematic background or jargon were not sufficient for the experience they had although they were very well versed in cinematic practice and technical aspects of cinematography, especially. So I went to see it. They were right, it was different than an ordinary cinematic experience. I was completely immersed in the diegetic space of the film unlike the experience that I have in other classical narrative films.

Although *Gravity* includes unconventional narration-wise strategies for a classical narrative film such as long takes around twelve minutes, actor's glances and direct movements towards the camera and constantly rotating camera movements which provide disorientation and cause spectators' distance from the diegetic space, the experience that I had buried me deeper in the diegetic realm than any other classical narrative film. There were two main reasons for the immersive experience: First, the film was projected on a huge Imax screen which covers all the eyesight of the spectators in the movie theater and more importantly it was a 3D presentation. However, 3D presentations are not always as immersive as they are intended to be since 3D technology can be disturbing and tiring for the eye of the spectator in duration of a feature film length. Yet, in *Gravity*'s case, the stimulation that 3D projection creates, functions on purpose by the help of the calm darkness of the diegetic space and slow camera movements. Secondly, unconventional narration-wise strategies for the classical narrative film which are the result of creative

cinematography. Even though the narration-wise strategies are unconventional and they could be disturbing for the spectator in a classical narrative, the arrangement of the very strategies was designed and used along with conventional narration-wise strategies for the spectator to be involved in the diegesis therefore they do not feel disturbed. First of all, the spectator is captivated by the darkness of the diegetic space and also movie theater. The long takes which could reveal the camera work and disturb the audience in conventions of narrative cinema are utilized as if they mimic the movement of an invisible observer in the diegetic realm. Therefore, spectator immerse in the movie as almost another astronaut rather than identify with them. Hence, the spectator encounters an unusual experience which can be considered as 'beyond' cinematic.

In the birth of the cinema, the illusion of twenty-four frames that run in a second so fast that human mind cannot realize that they were all still images, but perceiving the motion it creates was the fascinating discovery. To this day, cinema still leans on that fascinating attraction of its illusion. The spectator however, has been used to the illusion effect which once was the fascinating part. In the conventions of the classical narrative cinema, the fascinating illusion effect went further than the movement of the image. The montage/editing, the involvement of a storytelling, profound characters that the spectator can relate to and identify with, developed throughout the years and brought conventions to captivate the audience. Fascination, however, needs to be unique and surprising and always in need to renew itself. Eventually, new methods ought to be found in cinematography in order to keep the continuum of the attraction that cinema had for decades. Cinema mostly embraced the new technological developments in order to find new attractions for its audience. Cinema enlarged its frame, curved its screen, darkened its theater, used multiple projectors and screens, added sound and color, used surrounding system in sound, added third dimension by using additional glasses, in order to make the spectator immersed in the narrative, and to create an impression of reality.

Hence, in this thesis, the unconventional narration-wise strategies for the immersion of the spectator that *Gravity* provides are considered significant to be analyzed since I argue that they signify a paradigm shift in cinematic approach in the classical narrative film. In order to make a proper analysis of the unconventional narration-wise yet immersive strategies in *Gravity* which will be analyzed in the second chapter, firstly strategies and the conventions of the classical film narration must be defined. Additional to the

conventional narration strategies in the classical narrative film, in the first chapter, the cinematic immersion will be discussed by the help of film theory and the historical background of cinematic presentation. Secondly, the reasons of developments and inevitable change in classical narration will be elaborated.



CHAPTER 1

1. CONVENTIONS OF INVISIBLE NARRATION

In his book, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, David Bordwell explicates the classical narration as its function serves merely to the story which is called the invisible (or seamless) narration (1985, p. 163). The strategies and techniques of the invisible narration maintain the invisibility of the cinematic apparatus. In the invisible narration, the camera, film equipment, off-screen space, film projector, film theater, an obvious cut in between shots— any kind of reminder of film production that the spectator can catch while watching the film and realize the film is not continuum of real life but a recorded material, should be hidden from the spectator. Therefore, classical fiction films, in order to take the full attention of the spectator on the narrative, have created conventions for the spectator to follow the storyline easily by dismissing the visibility of the film production as much as possible.

A classical narrative film should not disturb or directly stimulate the audience with reflexive or self-conscious moments. Additional to reminders of the cinematic apparatus (for example abrupt cuts or long takes which would inevitably remind the act of the camera and therefore the camera itself), actors do not look into the camera, in other words directly in the eye of the spectator. The actors' look in the camera disarrays the attention of the spectator who is watching the film in a voyeuristic state in the dark movie theater. Although Bordwell underlines the presence of reflexive or self-conscious moments in classical narrative films, these moments often take place in the first or last scenes of the classical narrative films as the opening or the closing of the sequences (1985, p. 160). Therefore, the reflexive or self-conscious moments which can disturb the audience and distract them from the story are usually show up where the spectator already is aware that they are watching a film (in the beginning) or they should wake up and realize the film is over (in the end).

In his remarkable article "Cinema of Attraction[s]: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde," Tom Gunning divides the trajectory of film history in two periods: cinema of attractions and narrative film era (2006). The cinema of attractions defines the early era in between the years 1896-1907 in which films were exhibitionist. These films did not

intend to create a narrative. Their intention was more about the illusion of the movement (Gunning, 2006, pp. 383–384). After the films began to tell stories around the years 1903-1907, by the help of montage/editing, the journey of narrative cinema of today, begun. However, the division of the periods is not sharp since the illusion that the moving image creates is the mutual power of both periods and its power is still effective. Hence, the illusion of the moving image which captivates the spectator also is capable to stimulate its spectator.

Gunning suggests that the cinema of attraction had led the audience to direct stimulation since the films were free from the obligation of a narrative (2006, p. 382). This statement may lead to an argument on the possibility of distraction that narrative can cause in the illusion power of cinema. The attraction that the movement in the photographic image had created and even the cinematograph itself as the main technical apparatus were sufficiently powerful for the audience to be fascinated and amazed (2006, p. 383). The narrative was not needed. All the attraction of early cinema was centered in the illusion power of the movement and the apparatus itself.

The characteristics of the movies in the early cinema period included actors' exhibitionist attitude towards the camera. Gunning states that the strategies such as a character's glance at the camera or a direct movement towards the camera started to be considered as a taboo in the narrative film since these strategies allow the spectator to acknowledge that they are watching a film by realizing the existence of the apparatus (2006, p. 383). This shift carried out the narration-wise strategies of the movies on a different state and narrative based dominant cinema started to create its own conventions which is based on the concealment of the camera work –which is the definition of the term “invisible / seamless narration.”

The invisible narration is directly related to the position of the apparatus and the situation of the spectator. Therefore, conventions are mostly shaped around the camera positions (such as camera angles and camera heights) and the camera's relation with the spectator. In terms of spectatorship in cinema, perspectival instruments function in order to create an “invisible observer” (Bordwell, 1985, p. 9). Bordwell suggests that “a narrative film represents story event through the vision of an invisible or imaginary witness” and by referring to Vsevolod Pudovkin, he states that:

[T]he camera lens should represent the eyes of an implicit observer taking in the action. By framing the shot in a certain way and by concentrating on the most significant details of the action, the director compels the audience ‘to see as the attentive observer saw.’ (1985, p. 9)

Pudovkin, in this sense, also makes comments on sound “the microphone takes the place of the observer’s ears” (1985, p. 9). In order to situate the spectator as an invisible witness in the diegesis, camera should be in possible positions for a human body could maintain. Accordingly, in classical narrative cinema there are conventions such as 180° rule – the line of action which is based on the imaginary line in between to characters in dialogue. Camera situates in one side of the line as if the invisible observer turns their head to listen to both characters (Figure 1.1). This strategy creates a space for the invisible observer despite the frontal shot/reverse shot in which the camera replaces the characters instead of creating a space for the invisible observer (Bordwell, 1985, p. 110).

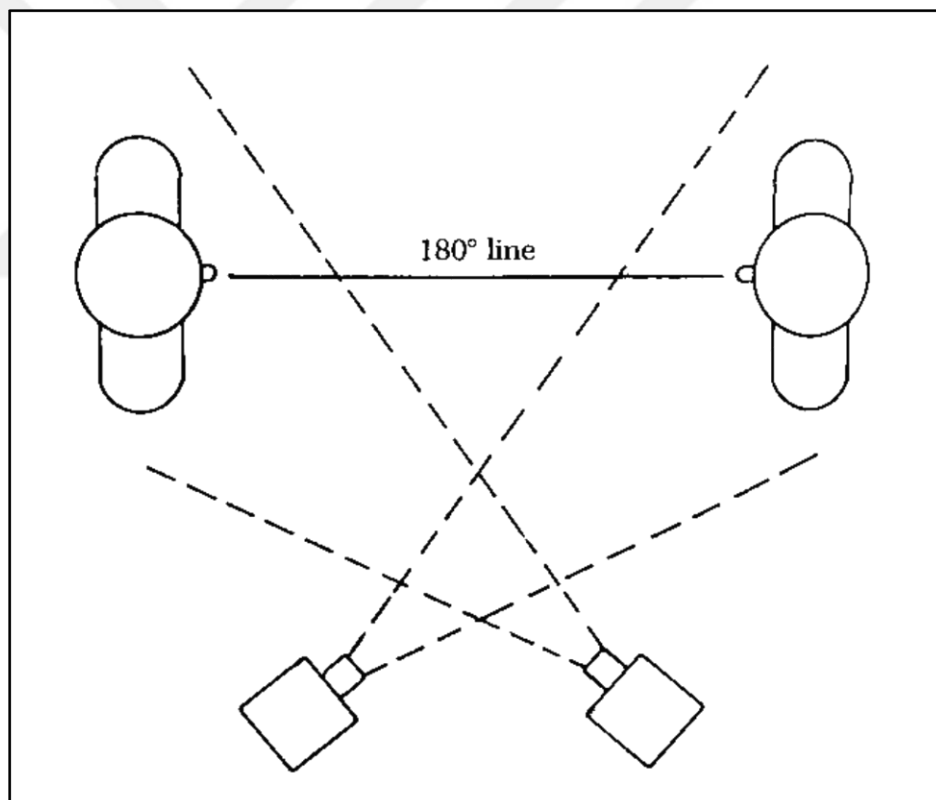


Figure 1.1: Top view of 180° rule from *Narration in the Fiction Film* by David Bordwell.



Figure 1.3: A line of action example from *Gravity*, character Matthew Kowalski (31' 07" – 32' 05").



Figure 1.2: A line of action example from *Gravity*, character Dr. Ryan Stone (31' 07" – 32' 05").

Another convention that makes a smooth change in between shots is the match on action. By the use of this strategy, the cut in between various shots ought to be concealed easily whilst the camera position or angle changes during one continuous movement of the characters or figures in the frame.

Hence, a glance into the camera that Gunning mentions which becomes a taboo in classical narrative film, is the result of the concealment process. Any kind of reminder, that there is actually a camera that actors are acting into, the places where the characters are in actually are set-up decorations, is inappropriate to be used in the narration. Hence, all the elements of mise-en-scene such as set decoration, costume, make-up, lightning, should be designed as natural as possible and most importantly the camera should not reveal its presence as a part of the technical apparatus.

In the manifesto of *Kino Eye*, Dziga Vertov also declares the omnipotent quality of the camera and cinematic motion. According to Vertov's statement in the manifesto, camera can be anywhere, can reach any place that human eye is not able to (1984, p. 5). This omniscience creates a view point for spectator that they cannot claim naturally in everyday life. By this power of the camera, spectator can see things in the way that they

cannot ‘witness’ in reality and the spectator has a ringside as an invisible observer. Considering that Vertov was pioneer among constructivist directors whose films were far from the ideology behind the invisible narration which is based on the concealment of production, the invisible narration in classical narrative film always demands the balance in between omnipotence of the apparatus and its concealment over itself.

1.1. THE (MAL)FUNCTION OF THE APPARATUS

The invisible narration and its concealment is based on the one technical principle: linear perspective. In his seminal article “Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus,” Jean Louis Baudry discusses that cinematic frame and its roots in Western painting (1975). According to Baudry, the traditional use of linear perspective in Western paintings from Quattrocento on, is directly in relation with the modern cinematic approach. Baudry argues the difference between Greco-Roman period and Renaissance in terms of perspectival work in concepts of continuity/discontinuity and states that Renaissance paintings constructed the perspective for the vantage point of the viewer. Therefore, the importance of ‘frame’ or in other words ‘delimitation’ i.e., ‘choosing a specific view’ is the ability to create an illusion of continuum of reality in another dimension in the frame by the help of linear perspective:

In focusing [the conception of space], the optical construct appears to be truly the projection-reflection of a “virtual image” whose hallucinatory reality it creates. It lays out the space of an ideal vision and in this way assures the necessity of a transcendence-metaphorically (by the unknown to which it appeals- here we must recall the structural place occupied by the vanishing point) and metonymically (by the displacement that it seems to carry out: a subject is both “in place of” and “a part of the whole”). Contrary to Chinese and Japanese painting, Western easel painting, presenting as it does a motionless and continuous whole, elaborates a total vision which corresponds to the idealist conception of the fullness and homogeneity of “being” and is, so to speak, representative of this conception (1975, p. 42)

In this statement, Baudry suggests that by the construction of linear perspective, and additionally, by the function of the invisible narration strategies, spectator becomes participatory in the narrative world. As Baudry claims, the image on the screen creates a spatial construction that the spectator perceives as the continuum of the room (the movie theater) that they are in. By the perception of the spatial construction as a whole, spectator relates to the imaginary world i.e. the diegetic space of the movie. However, it is a hallucinatory perception which leans on the illusion of perspectival functionality of the

cinematic apparatus. Nevertheless, the screen that creates this illusion of continuum is also the limit that sets a line in between the diegesis and the spectator. At this point, spectator experiences the interaction within the diegetic space as a transcendental subject – not bodily but by perception. Therefore, cinematic experience is far from an empirical experience that can provide a ‘full immersion’ in diegesis.

In the matter of the classical narrative film conventions, the work of frame functions as a delimitation of a specific view which frames the diegetic location (on-screen) and inevitably situates the spectator partly outside from the diegesis, physically (spectator is also a part of the whole which is made by the illusion of the perspectival elements of the cinema screen yet there is limits of the cinematic frame which creates an off-screen space). In cinematic aspect, the main subject is not a fixed frame of a still image but the illusion of movement (of still images that run at least twenty-four frame per second). Unlike the still image, motion picture contains time and movement (1975, p. 42). Resembling the Western easel painting, the work of perspective in motion picture creates a continuous stage beyond the real life. By the help of vanishing point in the screen and vantage point of the spectator (who would prefer to be in the center of the movie theater to have the best view due to Renaissance perspective principles¹) the cinema screen separates the diegetic realm from the movie theater and creates an illusion of depth as well as a location for a narrative in terms of classical narrative film. Therefore, the spectator does not participate in the diegesis, there is always a limit of the frame, the screen which keeps the spectator out from the diegesis.

Stephen Heath in the first and second chapters of his book *Questions of Cinema*, elaborates on the perspectival function of cinematic frame. Similar to Jean Louis Baudry’s statement in “Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematic Apparatus,” Heath states that cinematic frame has its roots in Western Easel painting. In this regard, Heath gives a statement of Leonardo Da Vinci to examine the importance and determinative existence of perspectival elements, such as frame. According to Da Vinci, Heath states, “Perspective is nothing else than seeing a place (or objects) behind a pane of glass, quite transparent, on the surface of which objects behind the glass are drawn” (1981, p. 34).

¹ This example was given by Asst. Prof. Defne Tüzün in her course Cinematic Narration at Kadir Has University, in 2016.

Heath's opinion of the pane is that its function as a frame which delimits and fixes a specific view, in the art of painting. It is possible to associate the function of pane in cinematic terms as the screen.

Therefore, cinematic frame has the same perspectival construction and the spectator as the vantage point needs to be situated in the appropriate proximity and angle in front of the screen to get the full view and the effectiveness of the narrative world (1981, pp. 27–28). According to Heath, the cinema screen creates the illusion of another window which opens to a narrative world is based on the perspectival functionality of the frame (1981, p. 28). In this case, the main argument that Heath focuses on is the comparison of eye and camera since the camera mimics the eye of the spectator in preferences that are made on the camera work of a film. However, the eye sees from the vantage point of a person while camera operator (or director) always aims to find an ideal position for the best frame composition. Hence, the camera work is a designed process.

Additional to the limits of the cinematic frame which is the tangible element that keeps the spectator away from the narrative world, Baudry also elaborates on the discontinuous matter in projection of the moving image. Briefly, he states that movement in cinema is the result of the differences of each still photograph in the film strip and in order to watch the movement effect, the spectator ought to disavow this information first. Once there is a “breakdown” in the projection of the film on the screen, the apparatus reveals itself and reminds the spectator “what they had *forgotten*”: the movement they are watching is actually an illusion of still images running fast on a film strip which is projected on the screen (1975, p. 42). Starting from this statement, he creates a bond in between the structure of cinematic apparatus and the psychic apparatus. He finds the discontinuities in the cinematic presentation as the repressed materials of the apparatus. These forgotten or in other words effaced, disavowed moments in cinematic experience of the spectator resembles the psychic apparatus and once they reveal themselves through technical malfunction, identification collapses (1975, p. 46).

However, Baudry does not create this bond as a mere analogy but also describes that the cinematic screen functions as mirror-screen by referring to Jacques Lacan's mirror stage (1975, p. 45). According to Lacan, child in between six – eighteen months encounters its own image on a reflecting surface, such as a mirror or even a reflection in

the eye of the mother, and at that point they recognize and construct the *I* function and the Other (Lacan, 1993). By the construction of the mirror image, the child can recognize that their own body functions as a separate being apart from the mother and the other beings. Baudry underlines Lacanian mirror stage as there are two conditions that must be provided and also their relation with the cinematic experience:

[F]or [the] imaginary constitution of the self to be possible there must be –Lacan strongly emphasizes this point- to complementary conditions: immature powers of mobility and a precocious maturation of visual organization (apparent in the first few days of life). If one considers that these two conditions are repeated during cinematographic projection - suspension of mobility and predominance of the visual function- perhaps one could suppose that this is more than a simple analogy. (1975, p. 45)

Beyond a simple analogy, Baudry claims that cinematic experience serves as a reconstruction of the mirror stage and cinematic apparatus is “sort of a psychic apparatus of substitution” (1975, p. 46). Before the mirror stage, child perceives itself as a part of a unified system, a part of the mother. This wholeness, fullness and pure satisfaction in unity resembles the cinematic spectatorship. At this point, the substitution that both psychic apparatus and cinematic apparatus cover, can be defined by the process of identification.

1.2. SPECTATOR IN AN INFANT’S SHOES

Christian Metz, a pioneer of psychoanalytic film theory, elaborates on the cinematic spectatorship with the consideration that cinema screen functions as a mirror and defines the identification process along with the sub-codes of identification in cinematic experience by referring to Lacan’s mirror stage in his book *The Imaginary Signifier*:

In the mirror the child perceives the familiar household objects, and also its objects par excellence, its mother, who holds it up in her arms to the glass. But above all, it perceives its own image. This is where primary identification (the formation of the ego) gets certain of its main characteristics: the child sees itself as an other, and beside an other. (1977, p. 45)

In the mirror stage, the infant recognizes its own body and therefore its being apart from the Other by the help of the visual construction. That recognition builds the ego, the I, the identification of itself and the other beings as well. The former, the recognition of the self apart from the world (yet in the world) is the primary identification. The latter, the empathy that the infant builds for the other beings by recognizing them in the mirror image apart from its own body and also as its surroundings is the secondary identification.

In terms of cinematic experience, screen functions as mirror yet the only thing that spectator cannot see is their own reflection on the screen (1977, p. 45). The spectator identifies with the camera on the construction of filmic elements which occupy a space for the invisible observer. Conventional rules such as 108° rule, i.e. line of action or eye line matches are basically designed for this purpose. For the spectator to become a witness in the diegesis, camera occupies the space for them and for this strategy to function precisely, camera angle situates on the eye line of the actors, -in return actors should not look into the camera not to dismiss the invisible witness effect - the voyeuristic state, in terms of invisible narration. In the occupation of the space for the invisible observer, the spectator also identifies with the other characters in diegetic space, which is related to the secondary identification. The cinematic identification process, as it is derived from Lacanian mirror stage, also a misrecognition of the ego. In front of the mirror-screen the self-recognition of the subject dissolves in order to identify with the diegetic characters (Allen, 1993, p. 142; Baudry, 1975, p. 45).

Additional to the basic identification process, camera also replaces characters or objects in the diegesis, therefore the spectator sees the events from their vision, in other words, from their point of view. At this point, the spectator's own look on the screen into the diegesis from the agency of the camera duplicates with the look of the character or the object which is situated in the off-screen. Metz suggests that this duplication over the look is a sub-code (1977, p. 54) of the cinematic identification process in which the character is in the off-screen and imaginably situates as if they are among the spectators (1977, p. 56). Not to confuse the shot with the spectator's own point of view, the shot (in which the character in the off-screen is imaginably among the spectators) that comes after the first shot which creates the meaning of the second one, is the character's look. Therefore, in order to duplicate the spectator's look (who captivates the space for the invisible observer) over the look of the character's, spectator needs the first shot. Otherwise the single shot would give the sense of primary identification. By the help of the first shot in which character is located off-screen, the spectator sees the second shot over the character's look. Thus the arrangement of the shots in juxtaposition can change the identification process for the spectator (1977, p. 56).

The main function of the cinematic image in the classical narrative cinema is to make meaning by the help of juxtaposition of the images. In the montage/editing of the images,

even in a continuous editing, there is a cut in between each shot which is the ultimate necessity of the meaning made for the narrative. The gap in between shots in terms of off-screen space made by the position of the camera for the invisible observer also functions as the main technique to create meaning. In this regard, conventions of the invisible narration utilized by the classical narrative cinema are based upon the editing strategy -to make meaning and create a space for the identification process.

Identification is the crucial process for the classical narrative cinema. By dint of identification, spectator builds an agency in diegesis therefore can immerse in the diegetic realm. Immersion is a term in cinematic experience that signifies the embodiment of the spectator in diegetic space. Jan Holmberg in “Ideals of Immersion in Early Cinema 1” elaborates on the “strong sense of presence” in early cinema that he defines as immersion and gives the definition by the literal meaning of the word at the first place:

Immersion as we know is something of a catchword these days. Literally, of course, it denotes a body sunken into a liquid of some sort. And as a metaphor of technologically simulated presence it is an apt one. Diving into water, for example, or sinking into a bath, we are not only in the realm of the audiovisual sensorium; all our senses, in fact all of our body, is encapsulated, surrounded. (2003, p. 135)

Considering the atmosphere of the movie theater as a dark space and with sound system surrounding all over the spectator who sits in front of a giant screen, the word “immersion” delivers itself as if the “sinking” in the screen that is already built in linear perspective on this purpose, is inevitable. However, the function of the screen only works with light –the opposite of the darkness that spectatorship demands. Additional to the limits of the frame, this is the other reason of the separation of the diegesis (made by projected light upon the screen) and the real state of the spectator (who is in the darkness). Therefore, spectator is almost condemned to be in voyeuristic state, hidden in the darkness of the movie theater. They immerse in the diegetic realm, they become an *invisible* observer –an invisible witness, yet, they can never be a part of the screen. The state of the spectator as an invisible being is a state that they cannot give directions to the story or control characters’ actions. Holmberg claims that immersive tendency is always desired but also in cinematic terms it is a limited possibility:

Regardless of the promises made by some cinematic technologies—promises of how the spectator is “actually there,” or “feels” the hands of a murderer, and so on—such sensory “presence” remains merely metaphorical (at best virtual). However, the *ambition* of an immersive experience remains the same, whether conveyed by joysticks, steering wheels

and data gloves (as in video games), or, in the case of cinema, by wider screens and surround sound. (Holmberg, 2003, p. 141)

Cinema is not an interactive art. As Holmberg clarifies, being a participant of a storytelling or interact with the diegetic characters by the support of cinematic technologies will not be a tangible or fully-empirical experience, rather it could create an illusion of an empirical experience and stimulate the spectator as they are in diegetic realm. The desire for a more immersive experience in cinema will always remain and its limits will be pushed.



CHAPTER 2

2. THE IMMERSION OF THE SPECTATOR IN *GRAVITY*

“You gotta admit one thing: Can’t beat the view.” (Matthew Kowalski, *Gravity*)

Gravity's (2013) director Alfonso Cuarón and cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki are well-known for their collaborations on progressive and innovative attitude in Hollywood mainstream film productions from the beginning of their film careers in USA. However, a science-fiction/thriller movie which takes place in space, such as *Gravity*, is an unusual genre choice for both of their filmographies. Yet, along with narrative-centered classical film style, both Cuarón and Lubezki are active film makers who concern on creative narration techniques. In this case, as the narration-wise strategies of the movie are progressive and pioneer for mainstream cinema, the story of *Gravity* is based on a plain narrative which can be named as a classical hero's journey. The main character Dr. Ryan Stone (Sandra Bullock) and her partner in space mission Matthew Kowalski (George Clooney) try to survive after an unexpected accident which is resulted in death of the rest of the space crew. Dr. Stone becomes the sole survivor of the chain of accidents who achieves each deadly challenges during her journey in space to get back on earth. As she manages to stay alive after each struggle, she gets closer to the idea that she is determined to live. The narrative of the movie ends in a classical way as the main character manages to survive and more importantly gets back to where she comes from (although the movie starts in space, Dr. Stone belongs to earth).

Yet, apparently in the making of *Gravity*, the main motivation for Cuarón and Lubezki is to create a narrative without the burden of old narration-wise conventions of classical narrative film system. Shot durations, camera movements, camera heights and angles throughout the movie are in conflict with conventional narration-wise strategies. More importantly, the relationship in between spectator and the movie is not a usual cinematic experience. The filmic elements which are unconventional for the classical narrative film yet immersive in terms of spectatorship will be elaborated in this chapter by analyzing the specific scenes from *Gravity* and the functionality of cinematic frame as a technical apparatus.

2.1. INTRODUCTION TO FORMAL ANALYSIS

Before the profound form analysis, the technical information about the movie ought to be introduced. The movie's duration is ninety-one minutes and the events in the narrative happen approximately in real time. Color pallet of the movie is highly in dark tones which are based on the darkness of the space and seldom bright tones which are mostly based on the white astronaut costumes, grey space crafts and satellites, actors' skin color and bright blue color of the earth. Additionally, the blue, green and orange tones at the end of the movie are among the bright tones. The dark tones are dominant over bright tones except the last twelve minutes of the movie in which the main character Dr. Stone lands on earth in daylight. Aspect ratio of the movie is 2:35.1. The locations, production design and most of the camera movements of *Gravity* were designed in CGI before camera shooting on production. For the scenes which take place in space digital camera was preferred. The last scene in which Dr. Stone lands on earth was shot with 65 mm analogue film camera. *Gravity* was distributed for both 2D and 3D presentations in movie theaters all over the world when it was released in 2013.

Gravity is set in space (except the last ten minutes which starts with Dr. Stone landing on water), which can be either seen as an example of one-location movie or as an intelligent use of space as an enormous cinematic location. Either way the main attribute of the diegetic location of the movie is its ability to grasp the attention of the spectator. Space as a dark location where neither gravity nor a horizon line exists, creates disorientation in terms of perspectival conventions of the cinematic realm. In the case of *Gravity* which sets in dark space, the continuum of reality on the screen gets strengthened since the location of real life where the spectator watches the movie, i.e., the movie theater, is a dark space as well. The continuity of on-screen and off-screen spaces brings a paradoxical use of frame since the solid borders of the frame do not function in the same way as they do in classical narration in terms of delimitation of diegetic space.

Gravity opens with a non-diegetic text on a dark screen and a theme music that mimics white noise. The audience learns that "life in space is not possible" with the information given by the non-diegetic text appearing at the beginning of the movie. The reason for giving this information which can be assumed that the audience already knows, might be to prepare the audience for the experience of being in the realm of the story: the space.



Figure 2.1: Opening of *Gravity* with elongated white font on black background.



Figure 2.2: A shot from *Gravity* in which Dr. Stone floats in space – (13' 02").

Right after that, the title of the movie appears in the middle of the screen with an elongated white font. The white letters on the dark background resemble the white astronaut figures in space (Figure 2.1 - 2.2). Non-diegetic elements of the movie such as the text of film credits or music which had been utilized as an image supporting material throughout the movie, resemble the diegetic elements and they merge into each other in ease.

At the point the title of the movie “GRAVITY” appears on the wide-screen, the tone of the strings (instruments) gets stronger and suddenly both the sound and the image are cut to the next shot. In the silence, camera is fixed on a part of the globe covers more than half of the frame as the rest of it remains off-screen. This shot is a familiar science fiction film opening. On the other hand, as the first image of the movie, this shot is a good example to explain how the cinematic frame works: spectator sees the world but not as a whole globe, only a part of it. The rest of the globe remains off-screen and that requires the imagination of the spectator to complete it (Figure 2.3).

This functionality of frame as a delimitation of a specific view, dissolves in later minutes of *Gravity*. The screen becomes permeable as the location of the movie, the space, matches on the darkness of the movie theater. By the support of 3D projection, the match



Figure 2.3: First shot of *Gravity*. (Aspect ratio 2.35:1).

of on-screen and off-screen spaces becomes even stronger. Therefore, by the use of permeability of diegetic space into the darkness of the movie theater, the narration techniques which can be considered unconventional for the classical narrative film, become functional for invisible narration and more intense immersion for the spectator to participate in the diegesis. Although Bordwell states that the darkness of the movie theater ‘reduces the distracting visual information and isolates the film for our concentration,’ (1985, p. 32) in the case of *Gravity*, the film utilizes the darkness of the movie theater as a crucial element which functions as more than just an isolator. It becomes the off-screen space of the diegetic realm at the same time.

2.2. THE INVISIBLE ASTRONAUT

In order to get more efficiency of a detailed form analysis to understand the immersive tendencies of *Gravity*, it would be appropriate to briefly examine the other formal elements besides the visuality of the film such as the utilization of sound and music. In the invisible narration, sound and music are considered as significant elements which are utilized to strengthen the effect of the image on the screen. Similarly, to the opening shot where the intense strings were cut to white noise, the utilization of sound creates a stimulating pattern that is based on the contrast between high and stressful to a silent and calm state in *Gravity*. While Dr. Stone drifts in space in the first long take, the sound of the strings as non-diegetic soundtrack, gets in high tempo and volume in order to give the tension of the scene.

The same high tempo and volume in sound strategy is used in the scene which another meteor stream occurs while Dr. Stone gets into Russian satellite. Once the catastrophic meteor stream ceases, soundtrack shifts from high to soft tones. In peak points of the narrative where the main character falls into danger, this strategy repeats. The use of high

tempo sound and music in tense scenes is not contrary to conventions of dominant cinema (Bordwell, 1985, pp. 162–163). Hence, the familiar use of sound and music, along with a plain narrative in *Gravity*, helps the spectator to digest the unconventional camera work. What sound supports in *Gravity* is the fluid camera work in long takes which are prevalent in the narration of the movie.

In *Gravity*, the strategies of the classical narrative film and specialty of perspectival function of the film frame work on purpose for the immersion of the spectator in the diegesis. During the first long continuous take, camera movements which slowly float in space, take place of an invisible, even almost a ghostly observer in the diegesis. The use of camera provides a flux movement in the diegetic space which mimics the eye of the spectator. The production of sound as well as the camera movements, function as the ear of the spectator. In the first accident scene, after Dr. Stone gets detached from the robotic arm, the second shot of the scene starts with Dr. Stone drifting in space. The camera catches her and starts spinning with her as it is fixed on her body. In this state, camera occupies the space of the invisible observer. Starting with the establish shot of space and Dr. Stone, the camera gets closer to her without a cut, and in a close-up, the camera shows the face of Dr. Stone. Her dialogue with Houston and the other astronaut Kowalski through CCA² can be heard as a muffled sound. During the shot, the camera turns slowly to replace the view with Dr. Stone's point of view (without a cut) and gets into her helmet. The change of the sound supports the change of the camera movement. Once the camera gets into the helmet, the sound of breath of Dr. Stone immediately changes into her clear voice as if there is no mediation such as CCA, and the spectator as the beholder of the space of invisible observer, gets into Dr. Stone's head.

This shot, along with its utilization of sound in conventional way, also signifies the identification of the spectator in primary form as the spectator identifies with the camera and becomes an invisible observer in the diegetic space (Metz, 1977, p. 55). Also, the omnipotence of the camera as it gets into the character's body, leads the spectator to secondary identification as well. The difference of this specific shot from the any other

² While wearing the current space suits, astronauts wear a Communications Carrier Assembly (CCA), or "Snoopy Cap" — a fabric hat fitted with microphones in the ear area for listening and boom microphones in front of the mouth for speaking. These caps are worn under the helmet and visor that surround an astronaut's head.

conventional POV shots in classical narrative films, is that the identification in primary form and secondary form combine in one continuous shot. Therefore, spectator whose presence in diegetic realm is held by the camera, identifies with another character in the diegesis without leaving its presence as an invisible observer (Figures 2.4 - 2.5 - 2.6).



Figure 2.4: Camera gets fixed on Dr. Stone's body (14' 12").



Figure 2.5: Camera gets into Dr. Stone's helmet (14' 24").

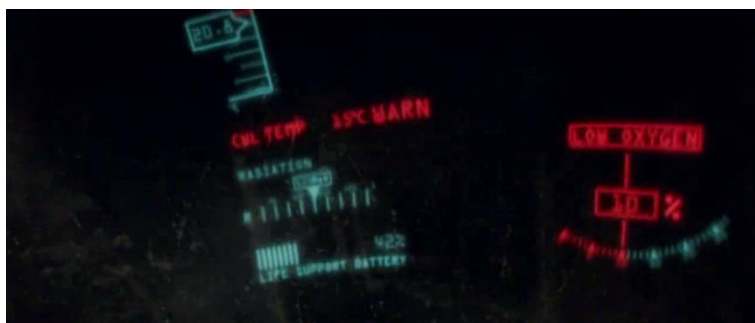


Figure 2.6: Camera gets into Dr. Stone's POV without a cut (14'36").

In the cinematic narration, the forms of identification shift according to the camera positions, camera movements and by the help of the narrative. In this very scene which the spectator identifies with the camera first and then gets into the character's point of view, the form of identification does not shift from the primary identification to secondary identification, rather, it combines. The spectator, after getting into the character's body with the mediation of the camera, does not leave its space and presence as an invisible observer. By this strategy which is pervasive in the narration of *Gravity*, the spectator

becomes a character in the diegesis as a ghostly being, and gets out of somnambulist state as becoming a participant of the narrative space. The spectator almost interacts with the characters, replaces them, follows them, watches them as if they are all in one unified space and there is no limit in between the on-screen space and the real life in the movie theater. *Gravity* gives the illusion of ultimate omnipotence to the spectator as if there is no spectator but a ghostly being – an invisible astronaut among the characters, by the ultimate concealment of the cinematic apparatus.

The experience that *Gravity* intends to provide is beyond the classical cinematic experience. Holmberg states that the classical cinema is not as immersive as it could be. Even though the invisible narration system is capable to hide the work of apparatus, the experience of watching the movie is the tricky position in case of immersion:

There is an ambiguity at work here: on the one hand, we are there when watching a film; on the other hand, we are not there enough. It seems as if cinema has always tried to meet this demand of presence, of a tactile experience, of being there, or, to put it another way, of actuality over virtuality. (2003, p. 136)

The immersion, as Holmberg states, is the ultimate desire of a filmmaker of the classical narrative, at least Cuarón's aim is, so. In an interview, Cuarón answers a question about the point of view (POV) shot after the first long take. Gavin Smith, the interviewer, makes a comment on the very POV shot that the objectivity switches to subjectivity during the shot as the camera moves slowly into Dr. Stone's helmet, and Cuarón replies:

When the film starts, it's as you're saying "objective," in the third person, and you're observing this mission from the standpoint of a witness. When disaster strikes, and she starts spinning, the camera keeps on following her objectively until it locks into her and starts spinning with her. And then the camera gets closer and closer until, as you say, it goes into her POV and switches the film's POV from third person to first person. But the goal of that is that once the camera comes back out of the helmet visor it doesn't go back to being third-person objective, it becomes the POV of the audience, floating in space. From that point on, the camera starts following the same rules of physics as the characters in microgravity, and the idea is for the audience to be taken into the journey. (G. Smith, 2014)

Cuarón, here states that, the aim of the POV shot was to re-arrange the situation of the spectator. The situation, however is in a complex structure for Christian Metz, as the filmic state differs from dream state since the filmic images belong to the class of 'real images.' The story, a fiction in motion, appears in front of the eyes of the spectator, as representations of things, yet these images are seen by all of the audience in the movie theater, unlike dreaming. Metz suggests that the filmic perception requires a stimulus while the imaginary perception does not (1976, p.80). Filmic perception, in this case,

includes real images but there is this line in between the spectator and the filmic images: the stimulus. The effectiveness of a dream is not as strong as the effectiveness of a filmic perception, since the spectator is awake in the movie theater and they know it (Metz, 1976, p. 80). In the very POV shot, Cuarón's claim was probably to step further and cross the stimulus. By situating the spectator as another diegetic character and by providing the immersion of the spectator in the diegetic realm, *Gravity* pushes the limits of cinematic experience of spectatorship.

In *The Imaginary Signifier*, Christian Metz, explains the forms of identification in filmic state by referring to Jacques Lacan's mirror stage. First, he refers to Lacan's mirror stage³ in order to create a bond in between cinematic and psychoanalytic approach. In the mirror stage, the reflection of the child's body in the mirror or in the eye of the mother provides the conditions of primary identification. According to Metz, cinema screen functions as a mirror. However, the one and only thing that cannot be reflected on the cinema screen is the body of the spectator (Metz 1977, p.45, 46). In *Gravity*, the primary identification and the conditions for the 'formation of the ego' of the spectator as another character in the diegesis, ought to be provided by an act which could remind the spectator an early memory, the mirror stage. That act is the look of the mother in the eye of the child. This act repeats twice in the narration of the movie by Dr. Stone. In the story, Dr. Stone is a single mother who lost his daughter in an accident. To put the spectator in the situation of her dead daughter as a ghostly being/an invisible observer in space could be overdramatized explanation, yet, it might be relevant to claim that the state of Dr. Stone as a mother, suits precisely for the spectator to recall mirror stage as her glance towards the spectator reconstructs the state of spectatorship (Figures 2.7 – 2.8).



Figure 2.7: Dr. Stone's first glance at the camera (21' 10").

³ The definition of Lacanian Mirror Stage have been examined in the introduction chapter.



Figure 2.8: Dr. Stone's glance at the camera (50' 30").

In twenty-one minutes and ten seconds of the movie, right after the accident scene, Dr. Stone and Kowalski return to the Explorer space shuttle to check the damage on the rest of the crew. They find out that both of them, Dr. Stone and Kowalski are the only survivors. While Dr. Stone catches and holds one of the dead astronauts, she slowly turns her eyes to camera and looks for few seconds. The reverse shot of Dr. Stone's first glance at the camera (21' 10") displays the burst face of the dead astronaut. At this point, when shot gets back to Dr. Stone once again, the spectator identifies with the dead body in space which is the first time that the spectator leaves the space that is occupied by the camera for the invisible observer. By the construction of the two shots in juxtaposition, spectator situate themselves as a ghostly being by replacing a dead body in the space, as this state is already supported by the fluid camera work and the dissolved edges of the dark cinema screen.

The second glance which takes place at the fifty minutes and thirty seconds, does not receive a reverse shot. Dr. Stone, all of a sudden, turns her head looks at the camera for five seconds and turns back and keeps moving on the spacecraft. This second glance at the camera reinforces the state of the spectator beyond a voyeuristic state, and by this look Dr. Stone recognizes the invisible observer as a ghostly being once again. Traditionally, actors' glance at the camera or their presentation to the camera is valid for the era of cinema of attractions (Gunning 2006). In a classical narrative/fiction film, glance at the camera is a taboo and can be used merely as a self-conscious strategy which is not very often preferred in mainstream cinema. Nevertheless, in this case, Dr. Stone's glances towards the camera do not disturb the spectator, furthermore, they support the primary identification rather than an alienation effect. Even though the spectator's own body is not possible to be reflected on the screen, Dr. Stone's glances in the eye of the spectator as well as the conditions of spectatorship of *Gravity* in the dark movie theater,

provide the spectator to be immersed in a wholeness of spatiality and to diverse their being as ‘an other’ character in the one unified narrative space. This immersion, differently from cinematic immersion in the narrative by the help of perspectival construction of the frame, is achieved by the help of the use of apparatus, i.e., the use of camera (long takes, fluid camera movements) and also the conditions of the movie theater. Hence, the unconventional strategies make different impact on the spectator than revealing the work of apparatus.

In *Gravity*, the strategies of unconventional narration are not intended to disturb the spectator. The main strategy of the movie is to re-organize the system of such strategies to keep the spectator in the narrative world since the classical Hollywood film spectator gets used to the conventions of the classical Hollywood film. Robert Stam remarks the conventional use of cinematic techniques and why they are in need of change:

In aesthetic terms, similarly, the old critiques of dominant cinema in terms of linear narrative, coherent diegesis, eye line matches, and invisible editing no longer quite “work,” since recent blockbuster cinema, for example, is less interested in verisimilitude and spatiotemporal integrity than in pure sensation. Music video, similarly, does not strive for believability; rather, its purpose is to immerse the spectator in a Heraclitan flux of images and sounds registered on the pulse rather than through purely cognitive processes. (2000, p. 228)

Here Stam defines the emerging formal tendencies as an alternative to the conventional strategies of invisible narration. He claims that degree of verity and consistency of space and time of the film are no longer the main issue for the spectator. Rather a flux that stimulates the spectator’s expectation from the narrative audio-visually is more effective because of its immersive power. The narration-wise strategies that are used by *Gravity* are in line with Stam’s prescription of flux to immerse the spectator in diegesis. The movie utilizes the stimulating power of sound and camera movements as it is described by Stam. Unlike fast and abrupt cuts between different shot sizes and angles, *Gravity* endows an immersive flux with long continuous takes and floating camera movements.

One of the unconventional narration-wise strategies along with glance at the camera taboo in the classical narrative film is the use of long takes because this strategy reveals the camera work and the presence of the apparatus, as well. James Udden, in his essay “Child of Long Take: Alfonso Cuarón’s Film Aesthetics in the Shadow of Globalization” which is specifically focused on the long takes in Cuarón’s filmography, explains different aspects and tendencies that can be utilized to understand the variabilities and functions of

long takes (2009). According to Udden, Cuarón is an *auteur* director and he uses long takes as a signature in his movies. Udden also claims that the use of long takes in Cuarón's films such as *Children of Men* (2006) is in regard of documentarian aesthetics. In Bazinian terms, Udden explains, long takes give the impression of real time (Udden 2009, p.34).

Considering *Gravity* as a digital cinema example in which CGI technology is used in every single frame and actually the whole movie was designed in CGI before camera shootings, long takes are not expected to serve the desire of marking the pro-filmic events but more of a desire of creating a realistic diegesis by the help of impression of real time. *Gravity* repetitively utilizes the long take which is not a convention in classical Hollywood narration (Udden 2009, p.35). The duration of the first scene which is twelve minutes can be considered as excessive but not a unique attempt in cinema history. Unconventional or self-conscious strategies are familiar for the first few minutes of classical Hollywood movies, for instance, Hitchcock's cameos, the long take in the beginning of *Touch of Evil* (Orson Welles, 1958) (Bordwell, 1985, p. 211). However, in *Gravity*'s case, long takes repeat throughout the movie which make a distinction.

Long takes around ten minutes which is considered beyond Hollywood standards (Udden 2009, p.27), create a real time effect and impression of reality in *Gravity*. The long takes include floating and shaking camera movements for long time periods, upside down display of shots and scenes, actors' glances and sudden movements towards the camera. However, the utilization of fluid camera movements does not avoid immersion, rather, the techniques that are used help the spectator participate in the diegetic realm. Additional to the impression of real time, long takes serve as a singular view of an invisible observer in the movie. Pier Paolo Pasolini, in his short essay "Observations on the Long Take," briefly analyzes a record of Kennedy's death moment which was recorded by a spectator in the crowd. According to Pasolini, the spectator-cameraman shot the whole incident from one point of view, which is his vantage point. Thus, Pasolini states, "a typical long take is subjective" (1980, p. 3). Referring to Pasolini, the long takes in *Gravity* can be considered as a subjective point of view (of a ghostly being, an invisible astronaut) even more likely than its direct relation with the reality. Therefore, along with its conventional utilization which signifies realistic effect, an impression of reality, long takes in *Gravity* are utilized in order to captivate the spectator and for the spectator to identify with the camera inevitably.

2.3. A MOVE TOWARDS THE CAMERA

Before the accident occurs in the first long take, the camera moves very slowly, almost floating like any other astronaut in space. While Dr. Stone and Kowalski were trying to fix the panel of the space telescope, a screw slips through Dr. Stone's hands and moves directly towards the camera. Just before it hits the lens, in other words, the eye of the spectator, Kowalski grabs the screw (Figures 2.9 – 2.10). This action creates a tension in the moment, as if the screw was about to hit the camera, the eye of the spectator. However, *Gravity*, from the very start, is constructed for the screw not to hit, yet the observer would always feel that possibility and tension because of the participation and embodiment in the diegesis. These movements towards camera are in function of a stimulating actions in order to make the spectator to feel as if they are in the space and share the experience of characters in dangerous situations.



Figure 2.9: A screw slips through Dr. Stone's hand and floats towards the camera (6' 30").



Figure 2.10: Kowalski reaches out to camera to catch the screw (6' 35").

Robert Stam in *Reflexivity in Film and Literature: From Don Quixote to Jean-Luc Godard*, describes the reflexive elements in cinematic and textual art forms. According to Stam, reflexivity, apart from the illusion effect in immersive art forms which can be experienced in novels or narrative cinema, reveals the work of production and breaks the

illusion upon the viewer or reader, furthermore, reflexivity reveals that the viewer or reader is not unseen. One of the most significant artists in history who uses the alienation effect on the spectator is Bertolt Brecht, and the term “Brechtian” takes its name after Brecht’s anti-illusionism and use of discontinuity as a strategy in epic theater as he aims to “wake the spectator up from the illusion” and make them aware that they are presented a representation as it is not the continuum of the real life (1992, p. 9).

The unconventional use of action of the character, a direct movement towards the camera can be seen as an alienation effect which is in regard of breaking the fourth wall⁴ in Brechtian terms (Stam, 1992, p. 9). The movement of the character towards the camera repeats in two other scenes where Dr. Stone is attached to the robotic arm which breaks during the accident. While drifting in space, Dr. Stone reaches out to camera (Figure 2.11).



Figure 2.11: Dr. Stone reaches out for camera (12’ 32”).

The other scene of an obvious movement towards camera is which Dr. Stone repeats what Matthew Kowalski did in the first scene. In this particular scene, a tool slips through Dr. Stone’s hands and she reaches out to grab it, towards the camera (Figure 2.12).



Figure 2.12: Dr. Stone moves towards the camera to grab the tool (51’ 30”).

⁴ The Fourth Wall is a performance convention in which an invisible, imagined wall separates actors from the audience. “Breaking the Fourth Wall” means the actors on stage turns to audience and interacts with them.

The spectator of the film ought to immerse in the diegesis completely to suggest that the strategies of invisible narration is successful. However, the movie provides security for the spectator in the diegesis. During the accident, while Dr. Stone is floating and drifting in space with the parts of the telescope, crushed and floating uncontrollably, the camera perpetually follows her, but it never hits any part of the telescope. The eye of the invisible observer is seated in such a place in the diegesis that they would not get any harm. The invisible witness is also an omnipresent one as “the camera can see an object or an occurrence from all and every side, angle, and distance” (Bordwell, 1985, p. 10). The omnipotence of the invisible observer is valid for *Gravity*'s spectator as well (since the camera as the eye of the spectator floats around the telescope during the accident and observes the accident from variant angles and distances in a continuous shot) however, the participation is not as limited as in the classical cinema spectatorship. The state of the spectator in *Gravity* becomes an interactive one by the help of the utilization of the cinematic apparatus and more importantly, the use of narration strategies to conceal the work behind the production.

David Bordwell's statement about the classical spectator is shaped around the idea that as long as the spectator is familiar with the story, they are well prepared and constructed by the common opinion (1985, p. 165). That means, a film which follows the conventions of a classical narrative has a very well-prepared spectator who already can predict the pattern of the story. In this case, a classical hero's journey, such as *Gravity*'s narrative, would be a secure zone for the spectator for an experimental narration. As a plain narrative *Gravity* gives the opportunity of prediction to the spectator. Following the patterns of conventional hero's journey pattern, a classical Hollywood film spectator can assume that Dr. Stone will survive in the end. In this respect, the spectator of *Gravity* is in a familiar realm in narrative-wise aspect. On the other hand, narration-wise strategies go beyond the classical Hollywood film conventions. In this sense, a glance at the camera or moving towards the camera do not disturb the spectator, moreover, these actions create tension for the full immersion of the spectator into the realm of the film. The spectator who becomes a diegetic character as a result of immersive narration-wise strategies in *Gravity*, does not practice a usual cinematic experience in terms of classical narrative, yet these strategies are constructed for the spectators who became interactive users in the digital era.

CHAPTER 3

3. VIRTUAL REALITY AND ITS PRESENCE IN *GRAVITY*

“Every new development added to the cinema must, paradoxically, take it nearer and nearer to its origins. In short, cinema has not yet been invented!” (Bazin, 1967)

In 2017, Istanbul Foundation for Cultural and Arts as known as IKSVA, released a teaser trailer for the up-coming Istanbul Film Festival of the year with the title “Raise Your Head” (in Turkish “Kaldır Kafanı”)⁵. The target audience of the video was film enthusiasts. Yet, the content of the teaser was directly about how the new video platforms and the mobile technology in the digital era captivate the audience and distract them from the cinematic experience during a film screening. The narrator of the trailer (Serkan Keskin) from off-screen, addresses to the spectator who watches the teaser, most probably, on their mobile phones or laptop computers. In a pejorative way, he lists a social media user’s daily routine such as watching cat videos with focus even while walking on the street, or sharing breakfast stories with others, watching films on laptop computers or mobile phones. Then at the end, he requires to “raise [the spectator’s] head up and put the mobile phone away” and “do not let ‘other things’ get in between the cinema screen and [the spectator].” The crucial point of the whole narrative of the teaser trailer is not the end part, as the trailer aims to inform the audience for the upcoming film festival at the end, but the pejorative attitude of the narrator about the other visual media forms and video platforms which recently hold attraction of the contemporary cinema spectator in the digital era.

Cinema from the beginning is known for its attractive being, the miracle that it has made by the illusion of the movement in the photographic image (Manovich, 2016, p. 23). Even in black and white era before technicolor, it created an impression of reality which fascinated its audience. The motivation behind the attraction of cinematic apparatus later brought developments in its technical and ontological aspects. However, by each development, conventions of the current system had to change, therefore, innovations had not been always accepted easily. Before 1930s, sound (specifically sound as the voice of the characters) was not a diegetic element, recently it is an inevitable process of film

⁵ The video of the trailer can be seen in the website <https://vimeo.com/210622719>.

production. Sound was even considered as the destroyer of cinema – “the cinema which puts its faith in the image” (Bazin, 1967, p. 24). Filmmakers such as Rudolf Arnheim, René Clair or Charlie Chaplin complained about coming of sound as “a threat” to the ‘purely’ image-based cinematic art (Belton, 2014, p. 460). Color has been added to motion picture –which again confused the film makers on the film production process as the color of the image was not a concern for the composition of the image in black and white cinema era. Screen size and shape changed - got bigger and curved decade by decade. The projection of film has got beyond the two dimensional cinematic frame and the third dimension has been added. Finally, in terms of contemporary cinema, the film shooting process and film distribution in the age of digital cinema almost created a new production system for cinematic narration. Eventually, new visual effects and technical capability to increase the impression of reality has improved.

In this scope, Robert Stam in “The Question of Realism” discusses on the realistic and reflexive tendencies in the trajectory of cinema (2000). After briefly defining and examining on realistic and reflexive tendencies in cinematic narration, Stam elaborates on filmic realism as in the new age, it ought to consider the new technologies and aesthetics (2000, p. 227). By saying so, he declares that the spectator in the new digital age is aware of the technical developments. The conventions of the dominant cinema as structured as narrative cinema which has rules such as eye line matches, average shot durations, editing techniques that conceal the camera works, might not work for the new audience since the impact of the realistic tendency does not function as it did in the first place. After a century, the spectator is well-informed about the technical aspects of the cinematic apparatus and the illusion effect of the cinema. Even with an engrossing narrative, films do not create the same effect that they did when Lumière Brothers first presented the Cinematograph. Therefore, the content and the form accordingly need to be re-arranged in order to create a new attraction.

The evolution of the medium of cinematic apparatus from the beginning to this day had created new conventions by changing or abolishing the previous narrative-wise and narration-wise conventions. Along with the apparatus⁶, the content also changed.

⁶ Cinematic apparatus is a combined concept that signifies both *l'appareil*: a basic technological machinery which records and projects, and *le dispositif*: as the basic psychological, social and ideological machinery which informs the relationship in between the spectator and film (Belton, 2014, p. 467).

Nevertheless, cinema always fascinated its audience with its illusion of the movement and of course its ability to create a realm, a space by the perspectival illusion in the two dimensional façade (Baudry, 1975, p. 42). One of the first cinematic machineries that is known as Cinematograph which was invented in 1890s by Auguste and Louis Lumière, was capable to record and project the movement. By the first film productions with Cinematograph which do not intend to create a narrative nor a profound character in the film, the capabilities of the apparatus started to get discovered. In 1896, *The Arrival of the Train* (Auguste Lumière, Louis Lumière) made an impact on the audience as if the train comes directly towards them. At that brief moment, the power of illusion of the movement in the photographic image had been proved as the image was able to stimulate the spectator and create a sense of continuum of time and space in a frame. After each discovery on the cinematic apparatus, a refurbished fascination from the audience came along. Talking characters, motion picture in color, a diegesis which is larger than life brought more and more spectator to movie theaters.

As Andre Bazin claims in “Myth of Total Cinema,” every new development brings the cinema closer to its origins (1967, p. 21). By every new additional technical quality, the cinema reconstructed its capability of projecting a movement – recreating a new realistic diegetic space by eluding the unprogressive conventions. By doing so, cinema got a step further rather than losing its power. John Belton in his essay “If Film Is Dead, What Is Cinema,” elaborates on the paradigm shift that cinema has been through. Belton suggests that the other media forms and cinema are in relation and they interact with each other:

Competition from other technologies, notably television and video, was expected to destroy [cinema]. During 1920s, William Fox saw radio and television as potential rivals to the movies, prompting both his interest in sound as cinema’s answer to the threat of radio and his development of a large-screen format (the 70mm Grandeur process) to challenge small-screen television. (2014, p. 460)

However, the technical process of the cinematic apparatus improved by the coming of ‘the competitive’ media devices. As the cinematic presentation techniques evolved by the coming of radio and commercial television, the evolution did not cease in the digital era.

The cinematic medium also negotiates with other ‘attractive’ mediums or media forms, such as virtual reality which differently from social media platforms and devices, sustains a virtual space that captivates the user and separates them from the actuality. Therefore, virtual reality is not specifically any other media apparatus which produce a content, but

a medium that can simulate reality. The basic quality of virtual reality is the immersive impact on its user. Even though the term ‘immersion’ is already used for narrative-based art forms, so to speak for ‘catchy’ novels or movies, the immersion in virtual reality is considered as an empirical experience by the perceptual observation of a 360 degree surrounding space and the interaction of the user with the space and the objects in the virtual realm.

The basic reason that cinema and virtual reality are -maybe mistakenly but also deductively, compared with each other, is their tendencies on immersion in terms of work of apparatus. In classical narrative cinema, mostly narration-wise strategies that conceal the work of the apparatus, create an immersive impact on the audience. The perspectival construction of the screen space in the movie theater which situates the spectator as a voyeur and somnambulist viewer in terms of classical narrative cinema, create a continuum in space for the spectator to immerse in the diegetic realm. Throughout the cinema history, along with narrative and narration-wise strategies, the technical aspects have improved in attempt to build more immersive and captivating cinematic experience.

3.1. A BRIEF HISTORY OF IMMERSIVE CINEMA TECHNOLOGIES

As a part of the apparatus, cinema screen and the construction of the movie theater had changed during the years. In this part of the thesis, the brief historical background of immersive technologies of cinematic apparatus will be listed in order to maintain the argument that cinema has aimed to be immersive. Along with very effective innovations, cinema never ceased its progress. In this regard, a very detailed book of Melanie Chan named *Virtual Reality: Representations in Contemporary Media* will be consulted. As Chan declares, in 1930s, for a different field than cinema and entertainment industry, a cinematographer named Fred Waller worked on the flight simulator displays. He later found his works on simulator as an appropriate design for cinematic presentation which is based on the construction of a surrounding screen and sound around the spectator. In his following studies, he created a 180-degree screen display which was a design for the films that was shot with three cameras. Fred Waller and Ralph Walker had the patent for this invention called Cinerama in 1942, and in the patent application they stated their invention will produce the illusion of being surrounded by the environment that scene provides as if the spectator is in the scene (Chan, 2014, p. 25). *This is Cinerama* was

released in September 1952 on Broadway, in New York city. Despite of running in one theater in a short period of time, the film reached the highest grossing in that year (Chan, 2014, p. 26). The technology of Cinerama was too hard to be applied for massive cinema spectatorship, therefore the Cinerama projection style had been out of use.

Developments on cinematic presentation increased following decades. In 1960s, Morton Heilig patented Stereoscopic Television Apparatus for individual use and Sensorama Simulator which was designed for entertainment purposes in arcades and cafes rather than cinematic experience in movie theaters (Chan, 2014, p. 26). Differently from experience of cinematic spectatorship that had been acknowledged by the time as a crowd entertainment, Sensorama was constructed for individual spectatorship. Sensorama is also known as the first Virtual Reality device. This attempt is also the first relation in between the ontological comparison of virtual reality and cinema.

Next decade, in 1970s, this time for technical development of camera instead of screen, Douglas Trumbull produced an innovative quality in which 65mm film runs 60 FPS and is called “Showscan”, an invention on increasing frame number per second on purpose to heighten the realistic effect of the motion picture. He gave an interview to New York Times about the new development as it “allows you to break the fourth wall of cinema, to allow performers to relate one-on-one to an audience” in regard of heightened realism that Showscan technology provides (Chan, 2014, p. 26). Differently from the previous ones, this technological innovation of cinematic apparatus has aimed to reinforce the photographic background of cinema ontology.

Melanie Chan suggests that by the 1990s commercial computers were more available and that was the base of creating “computer-generated virtual worlds and communication mechanisms such as email”, and during the period mainstream cinema and literature represented immersive virtual worlds regarding to the developing technology (2014, p. 3).

3.2. HOW TO INVENT A USER OUT OF A SPECTATOR

Somnambulist or in other words passive spectator is the term that is used for cinema spectator which came with the classical narrative film construction. Screen theory, apparatus theory and gaze theory discussed on the state of the spectatorship in cinematic experience by the influence of psychoanalytic approach, and as result, spectator of the

classical narrative film has been defined as an immobile, voyeur, passive, almost sleeping in the darkness like a baby in its mother's arms (in Lacanian terms of the mirror stage), satisfied by the visual construction and the narrative on the screen and by the stability and comfortability, totally under protection in the unified space of the movie theater. However, as the cinematic apparatus has transformed and evolved within digital construction, spectatorship also changed. Vivian Sobchack in her essay "The Scene of the Screen: Envisioning Photographic, Cinematic, and Electronic 'Presence,'" claims that digital era reconstructs the human mind and body by the shift in technological process of media, visual culture and cinema. She suggests that "in our now dominantly electronic (and only secondarily cinematic) culture, many people describe and understand their minds and bodies in terms of computer systems and programs" (2016, p. 91). If there is a reconstruction on the human mind and body in terms of digitalization, then there must be outcomes of praxis in social life, visual culture and eventually in practice of cinematic spectatorship. At this point, Richard Gursin gives examples from contemporary cinema and mentions of the reconstruction of spectatorship in digital cinema:

In today's cinema of interactions, the photographic ontology of classical cinema gives way to a digital ontology where the future, not the past, is the object of mediation – where the photographic basis of film and its remediation of the past gives way to the premediation of the future of video games and other digital mediation and networking. This logic of premediation imagines an interactive spectator in a domestic or other social space rather than immobilized spectator in the darkened dream-space of apparatus or gaze theory. (2016, p. 70)

In this context, Gursin does not directly focus on the interactivity in diegetic terms, rather cinematic presentation or screening process. However, Gursin's statement gives an idea of the new construction of spectatorship as well. According to Gursin's statement, the new cinema spectator is getting used to interact with the media forms. According to Gursin, movies of digital cinema are not made for merely movie theater screening, but also DVD distributions, television and even mobile devices. By using the sectional interface of a DVD or a remote control of television, the spectator in the digital era becomes more of an interactive user than a passive observer (Friedberg, 2000, p. 803; 2016, p. 72).

In current digital era, people are confined with multiple screens that are constantly producing image contents. In different sizes and scales, mobile or immobile devices

‘bring the world within one’s reach’⁷, and beyond that, they create an alternative social life forms by the support of videos, photographs, animations, in short: visual content that are created mostly by other users. Along with the image production which captivates significant time in everyday life, the interface structure of the visual content applications is based on interaction of the users. Needless to be a spectator of a specific spectacle, people in the digital age are constructed as interactive users in everyday life. This fashion also affects the spectatorship in cinematic terms. People of the digital era, who are mostly constructed as users of digital media interfaces would maintain their expectations from non-interacting media forms such as cinema. This is not a new fashion though; it has its roots in the first remote control of commercial television. According to Anne Friedberg, by the coming of commercial television and its remote control, the spectator had been constructed as a user:

Spectators are users with an interface – variable in versions of remotes, mice, keyboards, touch screens, joysticks, goggles and gloves and body suits. Just as the chemically based ‘analog’ images of photography have been displaced by computer-enhanced digital images; the apparatus we came to know as ‘the cinema’ is being displaced by systems of circulation and transmission which abolish the projection screen and begin to link video screens of the computer and television with the dialogic interactivity of the telephone. [...] The video cassette recorder (VCR), cable television, and the television remote control have prepared us for the advent of computer screens with wired (internet) connections – for interactive ‘usage’ instead of passive spectatorship – and continue to produce profound changes to our sense of temporality. (2000, pp. 803–804)

Friedberg defines the new media systems and their regulations upon cinema from a pessimist point of view as if the cinema is ‘displaced’ by the new media. As Friedberg suggests, the new spectator that constructed as a user demands an interaction therefore, non-interacting mediums, such as cinema, would eventually sink into oblivion as the title of her essay reveals her intention: “The End of Cinema: Multimedia and Technological Change.” However, from the historical point of view, as Belton suggests, digitalization in media and accordingly in cinema, could only be a historical line of technological developments in cinematic medium (2014, p. 462). As a progressive and innovative medium, cinema will not fade away as it adapts itself perpetually to the newest technology and the situation of the spectator.

⁷ Tom Gunning suggests that the motivation behind the invention of Cinematograph by Lumière Brothers is ‘placing the world within one’s reach.’ (2006, p. 381)

CONCLUSION

Cinema is a non-interacting art form. Nevertheless, in the era which the interactive media is dominant, and the spectatorship is reconstructed as ‘users,’ cinema would adjust its natural capability of accommodation. It will either accept and embrace the technical features of the other mediums, such as embracing sound as a cinematic element to its ontology, or it will reject and create ‘more,’ ‘bigger,’ ‘better’ features, such as enlarging the screen after coming of commercial television. Either way, cinema (especially mainstream narrative cinema) desires to prevail as keeping one crucial rule that does not change in the paradigm shift in digital era: the concealment of the apparatus.

Gravity (Alfonso Cuarón, 2013), as creating a significant example of immersive cinema experience, partly adheres to the rules and conventions of a classical narrative film, but in advance and more importantly, it welcomes the quality of a new medium as well as the opportunities of digital cinema. Narration-wise strategies and presentation techniques of the movie signify a relation to a virtual reality-like experience. Besides the profound formal analysis on the narration-wise strategies of *Gravity* in the second chapter of this thesis, a brief overview will be given in this chapter in order to determine virtual reality impact as a new attraction for the mass on the narration of the movie. It would be an appropriate alert the comparison will not be made in between the ontologies of cinema and virtual reality in total. Rather, the comparison in this chapter will be made to virtual reality ontology and specifically narration-wise strategies of *Gravity* per se.

First of all, before the comparison and relation, virtual reality ought to be defined in terms of recent utilization of the medium. In this respect, Jonathan Steuer’s essay “Defining Virtual Reality: Dimensions Determining Telepresence” will be consulted. Steuer defines virtual reality as an apparatus and in two dimensions of the word. One, as a *l’appareil*, virtual reality is a technological system which includes a computer capable of real time animation controlled by a set of wired gloves and a position tracker, and using a headset for visual output in order to experience a 3D environment with computer generated images that respond to human movements (1992, pp. 74–75). However, the technical quality of the medium improves, for instance, recent technology initiates eye-tracking headsets. It is also foreseen that instead of heavy and unpractical head-sets contact lenses will be available for the virtual reality users to utilize. In other aspect as *le dispositif*, Steuer claims that the medium of virtual reality can be defined in concept of ‘presence’:

The key to defining virtual reality in terms of human experience rather than technological hardware is the concept of *presence*. Presence can be thought of as the experience of one's physical environment; it refers not to one's surroundings as they exist in the physical world, but to the perception of those surroundings as mediated by both automatic and controlled mental process. (Gibson, 1979; Steuer, 1992)

The word presence could be the signifier of both 'being in the environment' and 'being in the moment' i.e., temporally and spatially. As many fictional – narrative-based virtual reality installations aim to create a sense of experience as if the user feels in the environment and in duration as almost of an actual event. The virtual space is constructed as a 360-degree environment that the user could wander and observe the place from their singular point of view. One of the most specific features of virtual reality is that the user does not leave their space as an observer, yet they experience the event from a singular point. The first-person experience is also the result of being the mere user of the headset as the headset is the vantage point in the virtual space. As cinema has the limits of frame which surrounds the diegetic space and situates the spectator –physically- outside of the diegesis (although perspectival function of the frame creates a continuum on the screen in cinematic terms, yet the continuum could be only on the one side of the room as the rest of the space is darkness, unlike 360-degree virtual construction of space) virtual reality embodies the user in one individual observer and immerse them in the virtual space by perception. As result, virtual reality is an interactive realm in which the user walks and moves – experiences the environment in real time.

To this point, basic features of virtual reality had been given in order to compare the virtual reality-like narration strategies of *Gravity* to ontology of virtual reality. To start with, presence is the appropriate concept. As Steuer suggests, virtual reality is based on the concept of presence. In *Gravity* the main aim is to give the sense of being in the space with the main character Dr. Ryan Stone. Unlike the ability to walk in virtual space, cinema spectator is stable in the movie theater. However, in *Gravity* the movement of the camera directly mimics of a possible human being in space as an invisible observer. These movements are fluid and they mimic the main characters speed and movements rather than a stable or fixed camera work. Therefore, the spectator who from the beginning to the end of the movie, identifies with the camera as a transcendental subject (primary identification), eventually embodies as the invisible observer and becomes a character, a 'user' in the diegetic space of *Gravity*. This strategy works precisely by the support of the duration of the story as it matches the real time that spectator spends in the movie theater.

Another strategy that the movie utilizes is the construction of the diegetic space as it becomes merged into the actual space where the spectator watches the movie. At the beginning, the script writer Jonas Cuarón designed the script as the narrative is based in a desert (Stern, 2013). Before the production Alfonso Cuarón and Jonas Cuarón decided to change the narrative location to space. Although Alfonso Cuarón claims that the basic reason is his will to make a space movie (Stern, 2013), the change of location directly suits with the immersive tendency of the movie. In most of the scenes, darkness of the space is dominant as it matches with the darkness of the movie theater. This creates a perceptual continuity of on-screen space, a higher level continuity than classical usage of cinematic frame as it permeates the whole movie theater and constructs a 360-degree virtual space.

One important feature of virtual reality is the interactive usage. Since the cinema is a non-interacting medium, the narration-wise strategies could only make an impression of interaction. For this strategy to work, in the first scene camera replaces with a dead astronaut and spectator identifies with the dead astronaut in space for few seconds. Before and after that shot, camera barely leaves the space of invisible observer in order to strengthen the identification process as the primary identification. Therefore, the spectator as the ghost of a dead astronaut, floats in space, following the main character Dr. Ryan Stone. Thus, the movie does not need to interact with its ‘user-spectator’ since the spectator is almost stated as a ghostly being (not a voyeur) in the diegetic realm which is an invisible being and impossible to interact. Yet, at some points, the main character Dr. Stone looks at the camera as if there is someone with her. By this look, the spectator gets recognized as an individual (although a ghostly one), another being in the diegesis. All these strategies create a sense of presence in the diegetic realm. Therefore, the immersion in the narrative space of *Gravity* resembles the construction of a virtual reality space. However, the interaction is limited as the Dr. Stone only looks at the camera as if there is someone else with her but her look is at the absence of a diegetic character. The spectator is not possible to be replaced in the diegetic realm totally, so the interaction process cannot be not as sufficient as in the virtual reality.

Besides *Gravity*’s innovative attitude in its utilization of narration-wise strategies, the basic desire of the movie is to call the spectator back in the movie theater. Rearrangements on the cinematic apparatus, such as utilization of cinematic screen as its frame becomes

permeable in the dark movie theater, and the experience that it provides as ‘it feels like in space,’ *Gravity* presents the very experience as the spectator cannot provide from DVD or laptop screen. That experience needs to be in the movie theater to be accomplished. The 360-degree spatial construction can only be made with a large screen and ultimate darkness of the room.

From the perspective of cinema history, the ontology of virtual reality as a new medium in the mass visual culture could bring specific opportunities for a storyteller: the idea of a frameless and limitless visual system where the narrative becomes an experience. In other respects, the challenge behind this new medium to collect more idea for a filmmaker to make possible an inner and profound film experience is that virtual reality is conquering the fields of cinematic attraction. In brief, conventions of invisible (or seamless) narration do not function in the same way that they were designed for. New cinematographic design for invisible narration or innovations on the cinematic apparatus are welcome in order to create a new experience of cinematic spectatorship. *Gravity* is in the pursuit of the conventional practices of typical invisible narration, but it also adds unconventional practices, so to speak, new grammar rules to a language that has been spoken for a century in order to renew the attraction on the cinematic medium. From this point, one can consider that these strategies which renew and reconstruct the narration-wise system of a movie are not aiming the impression of reality per se, but impression of control on the diegetic realm. By the consideration which this thesis aims to elaborate on that cinema is a medium which constantly renews and reconstructs its ontology. The main motivation behind the innovations and progressions is the will to be extended by the demands of the spectator. Whilst the spectator is reconstructed by the new technology and design of the visual content media, it is inevitable for cinema to rearrange its own capabilities.

Even though cinema is mostly considered as a storytelling medium, it has a non-narrative history as well, and due to the historical background of the cinematic medium the spectatorship had been developed as an experience more than a passive observation of the spectator on a story. So that all the alternatives (among the mainstream cinema examples) that situate the spectator beyond a passive observer are not against the basic capabilities of cinema, rather these alternatives also recall the possibility of the spectator as a volatile factor in terms of cinema industry. In the digital era, spectator of visual media

is mostly reconstructed as a user and the cinema spectator is not an exception. From the very beginning of the history of cinema, spectatorship has been developed as an active factor which is able to interfere in the technological aspects of cinematic medium as well as in the narrative world as result. This change in the digital era which created users, made an impact on the cinematic spectatorship as the somnambulist attitude of the spectator is almost invalid. Eventually, the situation of the spectator changed from “a witness” to a “participant.” Therefore, the impression of reality has been shifted to impression of control.



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EDUCATION

2016- 2019 Kadir Has University Faculty of Communication, Cinema TV Master Program (2016-2018 Khas Graduate Assistant)

2007-2012 Yıldız Technical University Faculty of Art and Design, Combined Arts Program B.S.

ACADEMIC RESEARCH ACTIVITY AND PUBLICATIONS

2018 – 2016 Teaching Assistant, CF 102 Communication and Art, Instructor Assist. Prof. Defne Tüzün, Kadir Has University.

2018 Participant in “VR Experience: Thinking in New Format”, IKSVCinema Talks with Carlos Hagerman.

2018 Organization Committee Member in TFAYY “Cinema and Yeşilçam” Conference 2018 Master’s Thesis: “Immersion of the Spectator: Into Gravity”, Supervisor Assist. Prof. Defne Tüzün.

2018 Publication: “Illusion and Cinema: Hokkabaz”, TFAYY “Cinema and Cinema” book, Bağlam Press.

2018 Translation: “Deciphering the Design Qualities of a 550-Year-Old Artisanry on an Interdisciplinary Platform: “Gem and Crafts” Exhibition” by Ayşe Coşkun Orlandi, in “World Day for AV Heritage” book, Bağlam Press.

2017 Organization Committee Member in UNESCO “World Day for AV Heritage” Conference.

2017 Research Assistant in TUBITAK Project, “Türk Dizilerinde Toplumsal Cinsiyet Rollerini”, Research Supervisors: Assist. Prof. İrem İnceoğlu, Assoc. Prof. Elif Akçalı.

2016 Presentation: “Sinemanın Cazibesi ve Cem Yılmaz Hikayesi: Hokkabaz” in TFAYY “Cinema and Cinema” Conference.

WORK EXPERIENCE

2016

• Vakıfbank commercial, dir. Hakan Yonat, (Art Assistant) • Shell, commercial, dir. Hakan Yonat (Art Assistant)

• Nescafe commercial, dir. Turgut Akaçık (Art Assistant) 2015 • Petlas, commercial, dir. Aytuğ Üngör (Art Assistant) • Vodafone, commercial, dir. Hakan Yonat (Art Assistant) • Kara Bela, feature film, dir. Burak Aksak (Art Assistant – Prop Master) • Ali and Nino, feature film, dir. Asif Kapadia (Prop Master)

2014

• Ein Fisch Namens Liebe, feature film, dir. Hansjörg Thurn (Art Assistant)

• 8 Seconds, feature film, dir. Ömer Faruk Sorak (Standby Art Director)

• Heineken, commercial, dir. Fredrik Bond (Art Assistant)

• Windhoek, Lager commercial, dir. Matt Bieler (Standby Art Director)

• Coca Cola, commercial, dir. Andy Fogwill (Art Assistant) 2013

• First Choice, commercial, dir. David Lodge (Art Assistant) • Pigeon! short film, dir. Önder Kuvvet (Art Director)

• Our Men, TV series, dir. Jeremy Webb (Art Assistant – Prop Master)

2012

• The Two Faces of January, feature film, dir. Hoss Amini (Art Assistant - Props)

2011

• Argo, feature film, dir. Ben Affleck (Art Assistant – Props)

2008-2016

• Dükkan-ül Hayal SFX Studio, Character Design and FX Makeup Artist