

A Comparative Semiotic Study of “Power” in Abbas Kiarostami’s *Taste of Cherry* and Heiner Muller’s *Hamletmachine* Based on Pierre Bourdieu’s Theory of Literary Anthropology

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Received: June 8, 2019

Accepted: September 11, 2019

Abstract

According to Pierre Bourdieu’s Theory of Literary Anthropology, there are common signs of Independent Art in *Taste of Cherry* by Abbas Kiarostami and *Hamletmachine* by Heiner Muller criticizing mind control and isolation of the artist in the machinized world. Both withstand the field of power through some dialectics in-between: cultural capital versus social capital; fancy versus reality and text versus transtextuality which are discussible from three aspects including social act, aesthetic act and transtextual act. Having an outstanding placement in the world’s independent art movement, American School of comparative literature is used in this study to compare the common themes, modes, images and performative techniques between the two selected works. In addition, a descriptive method is used for the content analysis of “power” and the study of the interactive relations among contextual signs. The results show both works raise consciousness in the audience and change her/him into an active human subject. Opposite to Hollywood or popular art, these works do not imitate realities reflected in the media, but they discover the truth through intercultural dialogues and discussions made for the audiences. Their semiotics signify the ability of pure art in the conversion of media language and deconstruction of stereotyped realities. However, it signifies the influence of reflexivity dialectic on socio-economic structures to moderate the power field through the development of values in the conceptual art. Therefore, both postmodern works put the contradiction between objectivity and subjectivity in Symbolic violence under question through the application of cultural capital and postdramatic techniques.

Keywords: Pierre Bourdieu’s Theory of Literary Anthropology, *Taste of Cherry*, *Hamletmachine*, Independent Art, Postdramatic Techniques, Transtextuality.

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