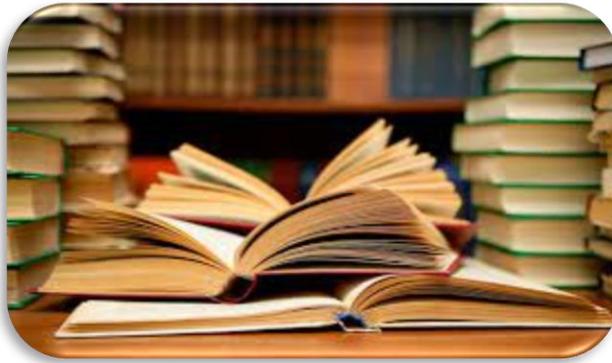


Review Paper



Watching Film Through Literary Theories: A Structuralist Reading of *Rocky*, *Kickboxer*, *Kill Bill I & II*, and *Southpaw* Movies

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Received: 08 October, 2023

Accepted: 10 January, 2024

ABSTRACT

Structuralist film theory focuses on how the meaning is conveyed through films, while the significant originates from the elements lying in the "system" or "structure" of a movie. Tzvetan Todorov introduced his narrative theory consisting of five main steps: equilibrium (happy beginning), a disruption (a problem comes up), realization (chaos), restored order (repair the damage), equilibrium again (normality). As Scholes noted that the study of literature must involve the study of communicative process in general—or semiotics—and in particular the development of the codes that govern the production and interpretation of the major kinds of literature, and the subcodes that inform the various genres that have developed in the course of literary history. This paper aims to investigate the narrative module, and the structure of action films finding some of the verbal and non-verbal codes in *Rocky*, *Kickboxer*, *Kill Bill I & II*, and *Southpaw* movies.

Keywords: *Structuralism, Tzvetan Todorov's Theory, Semiotics, Action Films, Narratology.*

بررسی فیلم براساس نظریه‌های ادبی: خوانشی ساختارگرایانه از فیلم‌های راکی، کیک بوکسر، بیل را بکش: قسمت اول، بیل را بکش: قسمت دوم و چپ دست

نظریه ساختارگرایانه فیلم به بحث در خصوص چگونگی انتقال معنا از طریق فیلم‌ها است، در حالی که اهمیت عناصر، در «سیستم» یا «ساختار» یک فیلم نهفته است. تزوتان تودوروف نظریه روایی خود را مشتمل بر پنج مرحله اصلی معرفی کرده است: تعادل (شروعی شاد)، اختلال (مشکل پیش می‌آید)، ادراک (هرج و مرج)، نظم مجدد (ترمیم خسران)، تعادل دوباره (به هنجاری). همانطور که شولز خاطر نشان کرد به طور کلی مطالعه ادبیات باید شامل مطالعه فرآیندی- یا نشانه‌شناسی - و به ویژه توسعه مجموعه‌ها باشد آگاهی از زیرمجموعه‌ها ژانرهای متفاوتی را در بستر تاریخ ادبی توسعه داده است که در نتیجه منجر به ساخت و تفسیر انواع عناصر ادبیات می‌شود. هدف از این مقاله بررسی روایت‌شناسی و ساختار فیلم‌های اکشن برای یافتن کدهای کلامی و غیرکلامی در فیلم‌های راکی، کیک بوکسر، بیل را بکش: قسمت اول، بیل را بکش: قسمت دوم و چپ دست است.

واژگان کلیدی: ساختارگرایی، نظریه تزوتان تودوروف، نشانه‌شناسی، فیلم‌های اکشن، روایت‌شناسی.

INTRODUCTION

This structuralist narrative theory begins with some introductory linguistic analogies and is the basic model of narrative law. The goal of structuralist narratology is to find universal and inclusive models to investigate different types of narratives in terms of structure.

Hawkes precisely explained the concept of 'structure' and the different approaches of 'structuralist'. He described the world which might collectively be called 'structuralism'. Structuralism is fundamentally a way of thinking about the world predominantly concerned with perceiving and describing structures.

This new concept, that the world is made up of relationships rather than things, constitutes the first principle of that way of thinking which can properly be called 'structuralist'. At its simplest, it claims that the nature of every element in any given situation has no significance by itself:

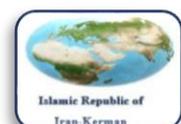
In fact, structuralist is determined by its relationship to all the other elements involved in that situation. In short, the full significance of any entity or experience cannot be perceived unless and until it is integrated into the structure of which it forms a part. It follows that the ultimate quarry of structuralist thinking will be the permanent structures into which individual human acts, perceptions, stances fit, and from which they derive their final nature. (Hawkes, 2003)

Structuralists believe that literary text can be examined in terms of different indicative systems, and therefore each text should not be given a single meaning. With the efforts of prominent researchers such as Vladimir Propp, Algirdas Julien Greimas, Gérard Genette, Tzvetan Todorov, and Claude Bremond, they have achieved some of the different types of narratives in terms of structure. One of the theorists in structuralism was Tzvetan Todorov (1939-2017) and he was a Bulgarian-French structuralist literary critic who studied the theory of narratology. He was also historian, philosopher, structuralist literary critic, sociologist and essayist. He explained that the appropriate focus of structural analysis is the plot of the story.

Todorov distinguishes three aspects of the literary work: the *verbal*, the *syntactic* and the *semantic*, making no secret of the fact that these were formerly known as style, composition and theme. But their invariants have traditionally and mistakenly been sought "on the surface" of texts; Todorov declares that:

we will look for structures on a deep level, as abstract relations. Northrop Frye, suggests Todorov, might say that the forest and the sea form a manifestation of an elementary structure. Not so these two phenomena manifest an abstract structure of the type of relation between statics and dynamics. Here we first come upon the fruits of spurious methodological sophistication, that congenital trait of structuralism, for it is plain to see what our author is seeking: oppositions which come to light on a level of high abstraction. Now, this one is wide of the mark, because statics is not opposed to dynamics but is a special case of it, namely a limiting case. This is a small matter, but a weighty problem lies behind it, since it is in the same way that Todorov constructs his integral structure for fantastic literature. (Lem & Abernathy, 1974)

Nowadays, less criticism can be found not to benefit structural functions. Development in contemporary literary criticism led to the creation of a school of structuralism inspired by linguistic theories. Structuralist study of cinematic works, due to the analysis of intertextuality elements and finding the pattern of their connection, provides the grounds for a more proper understanding of the nature of



those works and may help to expand the processing patterns by presenting methods of creating cinematic works.

In this research concentrates on Tzvetan Todorov's narrative theory in action films. Hence, Todorov's narrative theory can be applied in interpreting these action films or boxing films. These five main steps consisting of equilibrium (happy beginning), a disruption (a problem comes up), realization (chaos), restored order (repair the damage), equilibrium again (normality). It should be noted that the approach of this research is that boxing films are so popular with people because they are based on real-life figured. When people know it is real, they take it more seriously, and they cannot hide their emotions. Therefore, this is essential to study the structure (narrative) of a movie.

In addition to discussing Tzvetan Todorov's narrative theory, this article also uses the binary opposition to critique the movies. One of the most important and well-known theories is the theory of Levi-Strauss, which focuses on the structure of the "Binary Opposition". Binary opposition is very valuable in the final understanding of a story; Because what is clearly said in such stories is the opposition of the characters and places, and most importantly, the opposition of the events or actions of that story; It is worth mentioning that a reader or listener, understands these oppositions and can classify them consciously or unconsciously in good and bad forms; But in myths, logic and reasoning and the so-called system of cause and effect do not exist explicitly; For this reason, not everyone can give a clear statement of the final meaning in Binary oppositions; Therefore, they must be analyzed with new theories such as linguistic theories and their narratives, and their final message must be clearly stated.

DISCUSSION

Levi-Strauss's Binary Opposition

Levi-Strauss was interested in opposites and he believed that meaning made through oppositions; hence, he coined the term "binary opposition". Theorists have various opinions about the binary opposition. Binary opposition is one of the most fundamental concepts in structuralist theory. An attitude that determines language as a system and recognizes its components as elements seek to classify and categorize phenomena.

“The antinomy which some believe they have detected between history and system would seem to be present in the cases considered only if we were not aware of the dynamic relationship between the two aspects. There is room between them for a diachronic and non-arbitrary construction providing a transition from one to the other. Levi-Strauss also explained that:

Starting from a binary opposition, which affords the simplest possible example of a system, this construction proceeds by the aggregation, at each of the two poles, of new terms, chosen because they stand in relations of opposition, correlation, or analogy to it. It does not, however, follow from this that the relations in question have to be homogeneous. Each 'local' logic exists in its own right. It consists of the intelligibility of the relation between two immediately associated terms and this is not necessarily of the same type for every link in the semantic chain. (Lévi-Strauss, 1966)



Nearly fifty years ago, Claude Levi-Strauss published his book “The Savage Mind” using his all-embracing structural theory to describe hunters-gatherers’ systems of thought. Simplistically stated, Levi-Strauss argued that humans classify their surrounding world, as well as:

Human society and behaviour by using pairs of contrasting elements, the so-called ‘binary oppositions’, such as marriageable vs. unmarriageable, raw vs. cooked, hot vs. cold, soft vs. hard, wet vs. dry, edible vs. inedible, and so forth. Beyond the orderliness offered by this method, this classification is also a basis for organizing knowledge in a transmissible structure in both literate and illiterate societies. (Abbo, Shahal, et al, 2010)

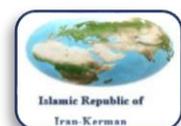
There are some characteristic features repeated in these films. The contrast concepts, as Strauss claims, make us understand things more fully. In all these films, we can see examples of binary oppositions, like “good vs. evil”, “black vs. white”, “boy vs. girl”, “young vs. old”, “East vs. West”, “weak vs. strong” or “ignorance vs. wisdom”. Heroes and villains are not hard to identify. Rocky Balboa, Kurt Sloane, Beatrix Kiddo, and Billy Hope are the heroes, they are all good, white, young, from the West, ignorant at first and strong. They all show their soft side, especially when they are with their family or beloved ones.

Among all, Beatrix is the only woman protagonist breaking the old social norm that women are protected. They are all physically strong at first, but not mentally for the wrong belief in which Rocky’s father had once told him: “You weren’t born with much of a brain, so you better start using your body,” while Tick Wills believed that “boxing is like a chess game.” Therefore, it is noticeable how all these heroes go under mental transformation to defeat their “enemies” since they are all undeveloped at first.

Billy is the one among all who can be called a tragic hero. According to Aristotle’s definition of tragedy in Poetics, who is noble at first having a comfortable life, but due to his tragic flaw, which is his running wild. He falls and loses his “paradise”; however, with the help of his trainer, he regains that paradise at the end. Apollo Creed, Tong Po, Bill, and Escobar are the antiheroes of these films. Apollo and Escobar cannot regard as villains for they are the kickboxers who are competing to win over the heroes, but in the case of Tong Po and Bill, they can be called villains who try to harm the heroes intentionally and out of the “ring”.

For a boxer, there is a necessary company consisting of a manager how is a strategist and all they care about is business, a trainer who takes care of the boxer’s body and soul, and a promoter who is interested in money, no less. Mickey Goldmill, Winston Taylor, Jordan Mains are the managers among whom the last one has proven to be unreliable. Mickey, Xian Chow, Pai Mei, and Tick Wills are the trainers who play a significant role in the hero’s success. They are all experienced and old shows, how the young heroes first neglect them but then find their trainers sentimental and wise. Xian and Pai Mei wear white, which signifies their purity. In Kill Bill, the Bride is wearing white in the chapel while Bill and the rest of his squad are wearing black signify their cruelty. Black characters while mention above appear as rivals in these films.

Apollo Creed, the guy who loses in the opening fight of Kickboxer to Eric, Vernita Green, and Jordan Mains are all defeated by Caucasians. The heroes, in other words, are all American, which makes the whole genre rather than racist towards the Black and the Asian. The family is in binary oppositions in these films with the individual’s will. Rocky told that “women weaken legs”, so he keeps his distance from Adrien. Kurt is a victim of his brother’s blind pride. The Bride finds her groom and friends riddled



for being an ex-member of an assassin squad, and Billy loses his wife for his emotion's clouds over his intelligence. All of these heroes share a lack of parents, and that is what motivates the Bride and Billy to worry about their daughters' lives not to become one like them. Putting *Kill Bill* aside, women usually are the victims in boxing movies. Adrien saved by Rocky; Tong Po rapes Mylee to drive Kurt mad, and Maureen killed because Billy took leave of his senses.

Rocky, *Kickboxer*, and *Southpaw* all begin with a boxing match in an arena with loud music, fast jabs, two boxers covered in sweat and blood, spectator's shouting, and the hero's winning. The repeated locations of these films are the ring, the gym, the training camp (in *Kill Bill: Vol. II* we see that), dressing rooms, and among crowds on the streets. The general instruments are boxing gloves, guns, cars, and belts. Rocky lives in slums; Kurt has no real "home" in Thailand, the Bride has no fixed address, and Billy loses his home. These are another example of "business vs. family" for these places provide no warmth as home does.

The endings are predictable in the last boxing match of the films, yet due to the empathy that the audience feel with the hero, the emotional reactivity is inevitable. That is why violence becomes satisfying in this genre of cinema when the villain is bleeding to death. There is not much shown after the hero's last triumph (the climax) to keep the audience astonished and impressed. The heroes' tears of joy are the means of catharsis for them and the audience. Losing or winning the endings are dramatic, for the audience find that no redemption is impossible, and only feel like one of the spectators in the arena since "[Dramatization] allows each spectator to submerge his or her interpretive identity in the collective reaction of an audience" (Scholes 118). The fact that boxing films begin and end in the ring may show how a boxer institutionalized there. The language that Rocky, Eric, *Assassination Squad*, and Billy use is full of F-words that frequently used in their daily lives, which is not condoned by any of the trainers.

Robert Scholes considered the significance of nonverbal elements declaring that "The word 'communication' may seem to open the way too far to non-verbal forms like mime and dance, which are communicative clearly, and even to all the visual and musical forms of expression" (Scholes, 2020, p. 107). Here, to mention some of the repeated camera techniques (iconographic), over-the-shoulder shots show intimacy between the characters:



Zoom shots used to show the seriousness in one's eyes by giving them a mysterious look, which highlighted in *Kill Bill: Vol. I & II*:



Slow motions are shown in all the films except in Rocky (this technique was not common in the 1970s) in the dramatic scenes when the hero beats their rival, so that breathtaking moment lasts a little longer for the waiting audience to enjoy. The soundtracks (programmatic) play a mighty significant role in action films. During the fights, loud music is signifying the characters' physiological mood. Significantly, one of the reasons why Eric loses in his battle to Tong Po is because he is not accustomed to the type of music played there. All heroes have got their nicknames by which they called when they are fighting as if its musical tone gives them energy enough to win. Rocky is called "Italian Stallion", Kurt is "White Warrior", The Bride is "Black Mamba", and Billy is "Billy 'the great' Hope".

In the final match, we hear Billy's heartbeat as if it is ours, and the camera becomes his rival's face so that for a second it feels like he is beating us, but we enjoy it. Frequency of the same music in Kill Bill itself as a sign of revenge arousing in the Bride becomes an element of foreshadowing her triumph in fights. The lyrics of the soundtracks are also significant. In Rocky, "flying hard now" is a part of the soundtrack foreshadowing his resistance against Apollo. In *Kickboxer*, "Doesn't matter where I go now; you know what they say about me; everybody loves a winner; everyone can see that I am; everybody follows a leader," reveals Eric's state of mind and his over self-confidence.

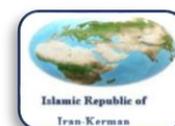
In *Kill Bill: Vol. I*, "Bang bang, he shot me down, bang bang, I hit the ground, bang bang, that awful sound, bang bang, my baby shot me down," tells what happened when Bill, once her "baby", shot the Bride in the chapel. In *Southpaw*, "With every ounce of my blood, with every breath in my lungs, won't stop until I'm phenomenal. I am phenomenal. However long that it takes, I'll go to whatever lengths," is part of the rap song when Billy is training just like Rocky, and that song motivates him and makes him pull through. Gorny (1994) discussed such a relationship among the texts (presupposing that everything is a text) as "intertextuality" in which "the procedure of finding a formal linguistic similarity (quotations, paraphrases, etc.) allows to conclude about a similarity or identity between meanings of the compared textual segments."

Tzvetan Todorov's Narrative Theory

The narrative is a knowledge which is evaluating the features of a work. In other words, it is a connection between the events of the story and a timing chain. So, the narrative is a sequence of events which is interconnected based on cause and effect connection.

"Narratology as a field of study is the ensemble of theories of narratives, narrative texts, images, spectacles, events – of cultural artefacts that tell a story. Such theory helps us understand, analyse, and evaluate narratives. A theory is a systematic set of generalized statements about a particular segment of reality. That segment of reality, the corpus, about which narratology attempts to provide insight consists of narrative texts of all kinds, made for a variety of purposes and serving many different functions". (Bal, 2017, p. 3)

Contemporary narratology finds its roots in the work of the French structuralists. We have more articles in this field. Some of these articles have acquired classic stature. This certainly holds for Roland Barthes and other contributions by A. J. Greimas, Claude Bremond, Umberto Eco, Gérard Genette, and Tzvetan Todorov have remained important as well. For more explanation about structuralist stated that: The structuralist distinction between the text as it appears and its underlying patterns also stems from the formalists. As we will see, these Russian literary theorists made a distinction between the abstract



chronology of events and their concrete sequence in a narrative text where they often do not follow in chronological order. Todorov explains that structuralism does not deal with the literary text as it presents itself to the reader but rather with an abstract deep structure. The science of narratology, rather than investigating the surface, should study that which is fundamental to the narrative. (Herman & Vervaeck, 2005)

In a narrative, some person, object, or situation undergoes a particular type of change and this change is measured by a sequence of attributions which apply to the thing at different times. The narrative is a way of experiencing a group of sentences or pictures (or gestures or dance movements, etc.) which together attribute a beginning, middle, and end to something.

The beginning, middle, and end are not contained in the discrete elements, say, the individual sentences of a novel but signified in the overall relationships established among the totality of the elements, or sentences. For example, the first sentence of a novel is not itself the beginning. It acquires that status in relationship to certain other sentences. Although being physically first in some particular way may be necessary for a beginning, it is not sufficient since a beginning must also be judged to be a proper part of an ordered sequence or pattern of other elements; the elements themselves are not the pattern. The narrative is thus a global interpretation of changing data measured through sets of relationships. We must now consider the nature of this overall pattern of relationships. (Branigan, 2013)

Todorov uses the term *narratologie* to refer to structural analysis of parts of the story to reveal the functions and relations of these parts. He defines the story as "what is told" (what is narrated). The story being told is usually a chronological sequence of themes, motives, and plot lines. The plot presents the logical and causal relationship of a story. Discourse is used to describe stylistic choices that determine how a narrative text or performance is presented to the readers or audience. (Taum, 2018, p. 92)

Tzvetan Todorov argued that "narrative in its most basic form is a causal "transformation" of a situation through five stages: a state of equilibrium at the outset , a disruption of the equilibrium by some action , a realization that there has been a disruption , an attempt to repair the disruption or restored order , a reinstatement of the equilibrium again". (Branigan, 2013, p. 4)

These changes of state are not random but are produced according to principles of cause and effect (e.g., principles which describe possibility, probability, impossibility, and necessity among the actions that occur).

This suggests that there are two fundamental kinds of predication in the narrative: existents, which assert the existence of something (in the mode of the verb "to be"), and processes, which stipulate a change or process under a causal formula (in the mode of such verbs as "to go, to do: to happen"). Typical existents are characters and settings while typical processes are actions of persons and forces of nature. But there is more: the changes of the state create an overall pattern or "transformation" whereby Todorov's third stage is seen-as the "inverse" of the first and fifth stages, and the fourth stage the "inverse" of the second since it attempts to reverse the effects of the disruption. (Branigan, 2013, p. 5)

Tzvetan Todorov introduced the five stages of his narrative theory. First, equilibrium (happy beginning), this stage state that the character is having a regular life and the character doing the daily activities in a regular way. Second, disruption (a problem comes up), this is a stage where the character has started to get disturbance in life. Third, realization (chaos), this stage is about the character has



realized the problem of disturbance that affects the character's life. Fourth, restored order (repair the damage), this is a stage where the character tries to fix and manage the whole problem that is happening in the story. Fifth, equilibrium again (normality), this is a stage where the character has fixed and managed all problems that happened in the story and in this stage, the character is having the regular life as in the first story or adjusting the new situation in the story.

“The minimal complete plot can be seen as the shift from one equilibrium to another. This term "equilibrium," which is borrowing from genetic psychology, means the existence of a stable but not static relation between the members of society; it is a social law, a rule of the game, a particular system of exchange. The two moments of equilibrium, similar and different, are separated by a period of imbalance, which is composed of a process of degeneration and a process of improvement” (Todorov & Weinstein, 2020, p. 75).

“Todorov and Weinstein explored all of the stories that can be entered into this very broad schema. From that point, the five movies which mentioned are examples of it. Here we follow a complete cycle: we begin with a state of equilibrium which is broken by a violation of the law. Punishment would have restored the initial balance; the fact that repairing the damage establishes a new equilibrium” (Todorov & Weinstein, 2020, p. 75).

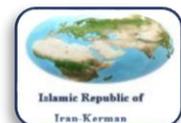
“Tzvetan Todorov, in a recent issue of *Salmagundi*, tackles the esthetic dimension and attempts to remind us that we live in a historical context that determines how we regard the very nature of art” (Molesworth, 2021, p. 31). Todorov also mentions that: “They contribute to a work which demonstrates the first sign of artfulness, if Todorov's definition of art as the seamless synchronicity of technique and ideas is accepted (143)” (Keaveney, 2024, p. 15).

Kickboxer is a martial arts movie about Kurt Sloane, the brother of the world champion Eric Sloane, both living in America. The phase of equilibrium on this movie can be seen where Kurt Sloane goes to Thailand and leads to the martial arts compound of Tong Po. So, each character has a normal life and they do the daily activities of their life.

The phase of disruption described where Kurt Sloane is met with resistance by doorman Kavi. When Kurt pays Kavi to let him in, Kavi begins a fight with Kurt. Kurt and Kavi are doing laundry when Kavi effort to steal Kurt's wallet. Kurt, mentioning what Kavi was up to, tells him to return the wallet but lets him hold the money. That night, Crawford presents Tong Po to the compound and, Tong Po proves his strength by using simple knees and elbows to break a stone statue. After a few battles between compound fighters, Tong returns inside to meet with his escorts. Later that night, Kurt wakes up and discovers Tong Po. To Discovering Kurt has pointed a gun to him, Tong Po tells Kurt that his brother was strong and a fighter where Kurt is a coward. Tong Po knocks Kurt out, and Crawford notifies Kurt that because of what he had attempted, the police have been called in to arrest him.

The stage of realization on the film described where Eric makes a blind decision on competing with Tong Po, Thailand's number one champion, resulting in him spending the rest of his life in a wheelchair. Kurt decided consequently to take revenge. He learns the art of *Muay Thai* to beat his rival inside the ring. Things get complicated when Eric kidnapped, and Kurt blackmailed into losing the upcoming match.

The stage of repair the damage on the film described where in the ring, Kurt finds Eric survived sitting among the spectators, so he gets the heart and puts his all into that fight; henceforth, Kurt outfights



Tong Po. So, Kurt wins the fight. Therefore, we see the equilibrium again. Kurt, Liu and Kavi to make a journey with a boat and the characters are having a normal life.

Kill Bill: Vol. I, is a martial arts film that does not follow Todorov's narrative theory, for the order of events is non-linear. So, the film starts with disruption's which is the stage two of Todorov's theory. The Bride, her groom, and the rest of the people in the chapel were massacred by the "Deadly Viper Assassination Squad" four years ago in Texas.

The stage of realization on the film described where The Bride, awakens from a four-year coma to seek revenge against Bill, the leader of the assassins. The Bride has a "Death List Five" and manages to kill O-Ren Ishii (nicknamed Cottonmouth), and Vernita Green (Nicknamed Copperhead). Murdering O-ren becomes more complicated since the Bride has to get her samurai sword. She manages to kill O-ren, but that is not her ultimate goal. The film ends with Bill making things more complicated asking his subordinate if the Bride is aware that her daughter is still alive foreshadowing the events in the sequel.

Kill Bill: Vol. II opens at the chapel before the massacre when the Bride meets Bill. So, at the beginning of the movie, we see that the stage of realization was describing. It is the first time that Bill's face shown vividly. Back to the present time, the Bride is going to kill the three left on her list. She goes for Bill's brother, Budd, a bar bouncer, but he shoots her in the chest. Things get more complicated as she is buried alive.

The stage of repair the damage on the film described where another flashback presented here when she remembers her master Pai Mei and manages to break out of the coffin. Things get facile for her since Elle (the fourth one on the list) kills Budd before the Bride arrives. There is a fight between the Bride and Elle, both trained by Pai Mei until the Bride plucks out Elle's other eye leaving her in the camper to die. The ultimate goal is for the Bride to kill Bill, although, when she finds him, she also finds her daughter, B.B., having a life with Bill. In the fight between the two, the Bride uses the Five Point Palm Exploding Heart Technique learned from Pai Mei and kills Bill at last. Therefore, we see the equilibrium. The film ends with her living happily with her daughter.

Southpaw is a boxing film about Billy Hope, the heavyweight world champion, who has a fancy lifestyle with his wife, Maureen, and his daughter, Leila. Maureen convinces him to retire due to his injuries after the fights. This is the phase of equilibrium on this movie can be seen, hence, each character has a normal life and they do the daily activities of their life.

The phase of disruption described where one night, after a charity donation ceremony, Escobar, a boxer, drives Billy nuts by hitting him where it hurts which, is his wife. The chaos results in Maureen's happening unexpected shot by Escobar's brother, Hector. Billy wants to take revenge on his own but loses all his money, fake friends around him, and finally, his daughter who, take away by the court.

The stage of realization on the film described where Tick Wills, a boxing trainer, helps him fight again, and find a job so that Billy can live with Leila again. He works 24/7 until he can have a match with Escobar to regain his reputation as the world champion.

The stage of repair the damage on the film described where the match started and continued Billy's left eye starts bleeding during the race. Although Billy does not give in; therefore, Billy wins the fight. Ultimately, we have a new equilibrium where in the dressing room after the match, he meets Leila, and this time they are both happy.



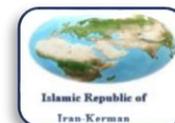
CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Todorov's concept of the transition between Equilibrium, Disequilibrium and New Equilibrium can be applied to these five films to map its narrative path and follows Todorov's theory five stages almost well. The study of Todorov's narratology proves that the narrative sequences in these films have covered the five stages of narrative development, namely equilibrium, disruption, realization, restored order, and new equilibrium. Although these films are densely layered thematically and visually, that the plot and story can be categorized to fit into Todorov's theory.

The opposition between the heroes and their rivals is not just limited to a genre, but it is a universal concept that people confront every single day; therefore, watching these films arouse our emotions, and (un)consciously make us empathize with the hero, and when the film ends, we feel relaxed for the hero is comforted now. As Scholes noted that the story is a description of situations and a narration of actions which are not present to us but are totally created by the discourse, requiring us to visualize and respond emotionally to events we cannot enter as persons, though we may well connect them to our personal experiences. We understand the real meaning of happiness when we witness the real life of these boxers behind the ring. When the films begin in the ring, we do not really care if the boxer is going to win, but as the plot reaches its climax, we feel ourselves united with the hero, for now we know his mentality; hence, their winning symbolizes our own winning over our inner conflicts.

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