Research Paper

Society at the Crossroads: Tradition, Modernity, and Urbanization in Asghar Farhadi's The salesman and Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman; A Virilian Analysis

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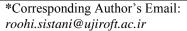
Abstract

This article offers a comparative analysis of the societal implications stemming from postmodern urbanization. It employs Asghar Farhadi's *The salesman* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* as dual narrative prisms, grounded in Paul Virilio's theoretical paradigm. The study intricately examines the interplay of technology, culture, and societal dynamics within evolving urban landscapes. Meticulously exploring this terrain, it uncovers the nuanced tension between tradition and modernity, shedding light on the erosion of traditional values in rapidly modernizing cities like Tehran and New York. Characters' responses lay bare the dissolution of familial bonds and shifting social roles, reflecting broader urban trends. Through the lens of Virilio's "critical space" concept, the investigation reveals the transformation of urban environments into "cities of the beyond," marked by a swift influx of information and communication technologies. Additionally, the research underscores the pivotal role of cultural production, spanning literature, art, and film, in revealing societal perspectives on postmodern urbanization. By dissecting the reverberations of these shifts, the study offers invaluable insights into potential policy interventions that promote sustainable, equitable, and innovative urban progress. This article provides a comprehensive perspective on the multifaceted repercussions of postmodern urbanization, adeptly bridging literary works, theoretical constructs, and real-world societal dynamics. The urgency of comprehending the consequences of technology-driven urbanization resonates within Iran's post-war context and extends globally. The findings illuminate the intricate process of reconciling tradition with modernity, serving as a foundational basis for interdisciplinary research aimed at forging more inclusive and sustainable urban landscapes.

Keywords: Postmodern Urbanization, Tradition vs. Modernity, Paul Virilio, Urban Transformation, Human Identity, Technological Impact

INTRODUCTION

The dynamic interplay between literature and critical theory has perpetually provided a fertile terrain for probing the intricate layers of human existence within swiftly evolving urban landscapes. This scholarly article embarks on a profound exploration, delving into the rich tapestries woven by *The salesman* authored by Asghar Farhadi and *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller. Despite their distinct geographic and cultural settings – one unfolding against the backdrop of modern Tehran and the other amidst mid-20th century New York – these works converge in their poignant exploration of the profound ramifications of postmodern urbanization on the human condition.

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The principal endeavor of this article is to intricately dissect the thematic harmonies and narrative subtleties that unite *The salesman* and *Death of a Salesman*, firmly anchored within the theoretical framework cast by Paul Virilio's concepts of speed, technology, and urbanization. These literary gems stand as emblematic case studies, casting light upon the challenges and dissonances that character's grapple with in the face of rapid technological strides and the convergence of tradition and modernity.

This scholarly journey commences by introducing the chosen literary masterpieces and their contextual tapestries, succeeded by a thorough exposition of Paul Virilio's theories and their application to the intricate tapestry of postmodern urban milieu. Thereafter, each work undergoes meticulous scrutiny through the lens of Virilian concepts, revealing the intricate nuances by which technology reshapes the contours of familial and societal dynamics. As the analysis unfolds, the resonance becomes evident: both narratives capture the delicate equilibrium between preserving cultural heritage and succumbing to the allure of progress.

Amidst the scrutiny of these literary pieces, this endeavor seeks to unveil parallels between the experiences of characters navigating the bustling streets of Tehran and New York, thus illuminating the shared threads of existential dislocation and the yearning for authenticity. This exploration culminates in an enriched comprehension of the multifaceted implications of postmodern urbanization upon the human psyche, societal structures, and cultural essence.

Ultimately, this research underscores the pressing necessity for an inclusive approach to urban development, a fusion of tradition and innovation, all while championing policies that uphold sustainability and mitigate the socio-environmental costs of urbanization. Through the amalgamation of literature and theory, this study aspires to contribute significantly to the ongoing discourse on the metamorphosis of cities into city-worlds, casting a spotlight upon the intricate choreography enacted by technology, culture, and the human spirit.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The convergence of literature, urbanization, and critical theory has led to an expansive exploration of the dynamic relationship between society, culture, and technological advancement. This literature review delves into the nuanced interplay between postmodern urbanization, the influence of technology on human interactions, and the philosophical underpinnings of Paul Virilio's theories, providing a comprehensive foundation for the subsequent analysis of *The salesman* and *Death of a Salesman*.

The discourse on postmodern urbanization is rooted in the shifting paradigms of urban development and their profound implications on the human experience. Scholars like David Harvey in *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (1989) and Fredric Jameson in *Postmodernism, Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) have meticulously dissected the spatial and temporal dimensions of postmodern cities, highlighting their fragmented nature, heightened consumerism, and the consequent erosion of traditional social bonds. The concept of "space-time compression," as elucidated by Harvey, underscores the acceleration of modern life and the dissolution of traditional geographical boundaries. Such urban landscapes are characterized by hyperreality, where digital interfaces and virtual representations intertwine with physical existence, reshaping the way individuals perceive and engage with their surroundings.

At the heart of this transformation lies technology, a pivotal force that has precipitated both innovation and disruption across societies. Zygmunt Bauman, in his exploration of *Liquid Modernity* published in 2013, underscores the fluid nature of contemporary life, where technology acts as a catalyst for rapid change and uncertainty.

The advent of information and communication technologies has dissolved temporal delay, rendering the concept of time as instantaneous and nonlinear. In *The Aesthetics of Disappearance*, a new edition published by Paul Virilio in 2009, this phenomenon finds resonance. Similarly, Virilio's concept of "critical space" is elaborated upon in *The Vision Machine*, published in 1994, where communication technologies redefine the parameters of human interactions, erasing physical distances and fostering a telepresent

reality. Virilio's thought-provoking notions of disappearance, where individuals become subsumed by cybernetic instruments and the instruments themselves dissolve into the environment they alter, encapsulate the complex dance between human agency and technological determinism.

Virilio's conceptual framework further illuminates the trajectory of contemporary urbanization. In *The Aesthetics of Disappearance* (2009), Virilio proposes the idea of the "city of the beyond," encapsulating the acceleration of information and communication technologies, heralding the emergence of cities as virtual entities tethered to the speed of digital transmission. This departure from traditional spatial anchors signifies a paradigm shift, wherein cities transcend physical geography to become nodes of instantaneity and ubiquity. *The city-world* emerges as a manifestation of this transformation. This perspective, as discussed in Saskia Sassen's 2005 work *The Global City: Introducing a Concept*, contrasts with her notion of global cities grounded in geographical centrality.

In light of these theoretical underpinnings, the analysis of *The salesman* and *act* gains resonance. The narratives intricately weave characters' lives into the fabric of their respective urban milieus, shedding light on the tension between tradition and modernity. Asghar Farhadi's *The salesman* (2016) navigates the labyrinth of Tehran's modernized landscape, offering a microcosmic view of the challenges faced by individuals in reconciling cultural heritage with the allure of technological progress. Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (1996) anchors the exploration in a mid-20th century New York, where Willy Loman's futile pursuit of the American Dream serves as a cautionary tale of the disillusionment that can arise in an urban milieu characterized by hyper-competition and societal pressures.

In synthesizing the discourse on postmodern urbanization, technological impact, and Virilian theories, this literature review forms a sturdy foundation for the subsequent analysis of *The salesman* and *Death of a Salesman*. The theoretical underpinnings unveiled here will serve as critical touchstones, enabling a comprehensive understanding of how literature mirrors and shapes the trajectories of contemporary urban landscapes.

Kaplan's insights (2004) into the cultural force of technology echo Sepinwall's exploration, inviting us to contemplate the intricate ways in which technological advancements shape society. Virilio's concept of "critical space" (1989), a realm where technology eradicates temporal delay in communication, underscores the transformative power of technology. This notion becomes increasingly pertinent in an era characterized by rapid connectivity, raising questions about the implications of instantaneity on human experiences.

The marriage of tradition and modernity is epitomized in Asghar Farhadi's film *The salesman* (2016). The movie portrays the tensions arising from shifting urban landscapes and their impact on individual identities. Emad and Rana's journey through a changing Tehran mirrors the broader discourse on modernization's effects on personal relationships and cultural values.

Arthur Miller's classic *Death of a Salesman* (1949) remains a poignant examination of the modern individual's struggle for success and recognition. Similarly, Jerz's analysis (2005) delves into the pervasive influence of consumerism on human identities. The play's protagonist, Willy Loman, represents the dissonance between personal aspirations and societal expectations, echoing the themes of Jerz's exploration.

Sterling's writings (2019) on digital landscapes expand our notion of urbanity beyond physical spaces. He contends that modern cities encompass virtual realms composed of data and networks. This perspective resonates with Virilio's notion of "critical space" and invites us to consider the digitized urban experience as a significant facet of contemporary human identity.

Navigating the intricate tapestry of modernity, scholars like Bigsby (2019) guide readers through the history of theater, offering insights into the evolving portrayal of human identity on stage. Marx (1989) continues this exploration by analyzing the Marxist interpretation of culture and its implications for societal identities. Rose (2001) delves into the intricacies of postmodernism, where fragmented identities mirror the fragmented nature of contemporary urban

environments.

Redhead's work (2006) on subcultures and resistance underscores the complexity of modern identity formation. His analysis of subcultural communities reveals the nuanced ways in which individuals navigate their identities amidst societal pressures. Etemad's study (2015) of urbanization in Iran further empha-sizes the transformative effects of modernity on cultural identity, as traditional communities adapt to urban spaces.

In summary, the interplay of literature, technology, urbanization, and cultural evolution presents a rich tapestry of perspectives on contemporary human identity. The insights of scholars such as Sepinwall, Kaplan, Virilio, Farhadi, Miller, Jerz, Sterling, and other contributors discussed in this literature review contribute to a comprehensive exploration of the intricate relationship between human identity and the myriad forces that influence it.

Navigating the intricate terrain of postmodern urbanization, the influence of technology, and the philosophical dimensions of critical theory, several pivotal questions emerge, each opening a path for in-depth exploration within the forthcoming analysis of Asghar Farhadi's *The Salesman* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. These questions represent the overarching themes that underpin this research and provide guidance for the inquiries to be addressed:

Q1. How is technology reshaping human interactions and influencing individual and collective identities in contemporary urban settings?

Q2. In what ways do Paul Virilio's theories, including "critical space" and "disappearance," provide a conceptual framework for under-standing the interplay between technology, urbanization, and human experiences?

Q3. How do narratives in literature and theater, like The Salesman and Death of a Salesman, reflect the multifaceted challenges of postmodern urbanization and technology's impact on human lives?

Q4. To what extent do contemporary narratives in literature and theater reveal the dissonance between individual aspirations and societal expectations in technology-driven urban

environments characterized by competition and societal pressures?

Q5. How can urban planning and policies effectively address the environmental and social consequences of accelerated urbanization while integrating technology and natural environments?

These research questions provide a compre-hensive framework for the analysis, offering clear directions for the examination of the nuanced relationships between technology, urbanization, and human identity. They encap-sulate the themes central to this study, guiding the quest for insights into contemporary urban dynamics, human experiences, and the role of literature in reflecting and critiquing these complex intersections.

In summary, the intricate interplay between literature, technology, and urbanization has been illuminated, shedding light on the dynamic relationship between society, culture, and technological advancement. The critical theoretical foundations laid here serve as essential touchstones, enabling a comprehensive under-standing of how literature mirrors and shapes the trajectories of contemporary urban landscapes. As the analysis of Asghar Farhadi's *The Salesman* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* proceeds, these insights will guide the exploration of the profound implications of postmodern urbanization on the human experience, both within and beyond the city's boundaries.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a robust and multifaceted methodology, encompassing textual analysis, theoretical inquiry, and comparative examination, to explore the intersections of *The salesman*, *Death of a Salesman*, and Paul Virilio's theories. The complex interplay of literature, urbanization, and technology necessitates a comprehensive approach that combines qualitative textual scrutiny with theoretical synthesis.

Textual Analysis

The foundation of this methodology rests on meticulous textual analysis. Drawing from close reading principles, the research dissects the narratives crafted by Asghar Farhadi and Arthur Miller. Every dialogue, nuance, and

contextual aspect undergoes scrutiny to uncover connections resonating with Virilio's propositions, revealing links between characters' dilemmas, urban environments, and technological influences.

Theoretical Framework

In tandem with textual analysis, Paul Virilio's theoretical framework serves as a lens. His ideas on urbanization, technology's impact, critical space, and disappearance illuminate intersections between literature, culture, and the urban context. This application of Virilio's theories unveils the symbiotic relationship between narratives and theoretical constructs.

Comparative Analysis

The methodology includes a comparative examination of *The salesman* and *Death of a Salesman*. This juxtaposition highlights parallels and disparities in urban portrayals, characters' struggles, and technological implications. This approach deepens analysis by accentuating cultural nuances and universal themes, enriching insights from both works.

Contextual Considerations

Integral to the methodology is contextual exploration. The research situates works within Tehran and mid-20th century New York, revealing how settings shape characters' experiences. This contextualization uncovers tradition-modernity dynamics against evolving urban landscapes.

Critical Synthesis

The methodology employs critical synthesis, fusing textual analysis, theory, comparison, and context. This approach constructs a layered narrative that depicts literature, urbanization, technology, and Virilio's concepts. Insights coalesce into a nuanced portrayal of the interplay.

This comprehensive methodology merges textual analysis, theory, comparison, context, synthesis, and iteration. Through this approach, the research explores the intricate dimensions of *The salesman* and *Death of a Salesman*, revealing the entwining of literature, culture, technology, and urbanization through Virilio's prism.

VIRTUAL ECHOES, ACTUAL SHADOWS: SHIFTING PERCEPTUAL DYNAMICS

According to James (2007), "Virilio's contention is that the accelerated speeds of transmission and communication afforded by modern technologies lead to a loss of immediate presence and a diminution of lived embodied experience" (p. 45). Virilio's perspective on the virtualization of experience in modern media is often presented in apocalyptic or catastrophist terms, wherein he argues that technologies of speed result in a decline of lived spatial existence and a crisis in our collective representations of the world. Despite the predominantly pessimistic tone of his writing, Virilio's ideas about virtual presence provide an opportunity for critical engagement with various forms of media images and communication.

Virilio's focus on the phenomenology of perception highlights the manner in which the images of cinema and television are 'telepresent,' present at a distance or in their absence. This telepresence brings with it a privileging of the instant of transmission at the expense of an experience of material or spatial extension. According to Virilio's account, the 'real time' of telepresence is one in which the being of sensible forms is altered: the virtual comes to dominate over the actual, and the exposure of the calculated instant dominates over the richness and diversity of embodied temporality or duration.

In modern vision machines, Virilio suggests that an entirely new way of seeing has been invented, one that is mediated through the transmission of radio waves or electronic pulses. This 'wave optics has the potential to transform the manner in which we are conscious of ourselves and of the world. According to James (2007), the world of vision machines and wave optics is one in which diverse aspects of cultural and political life can be altered in fundamental ways (pp. 45-46).

Virilio's account of telepresence and wave optics is often couched in apocalyptic or catastrophist terms. He contends that technologies of speed precipitate a decline of lived spatial existence and a crisis in our collective representations of the world. Despite this dominant note of pessimism, however, his writing about virtual presence does allow us to engage critically with

the nature of cinematic, televisual, and other media images or forms of communication (James, 2007, p. 46).

As has been indicated, the 'becoming virtual' of perceptual experience is one of the most persistent and repeated themes of Virilio's work. According to the phenomenological perspective which Virilio adopts, the 'presence' of lived experience is always viewed in terms of a primary spatiality and temporality which are constituted in, or along with, the appearance of phenomena to perception. What might be called 'actual presence', that is, the apparent immediacy of sensible objects within a field of vision and accessible to touch, usage or manipulation, can only be thought on the basis of this primary situatedness of the perceiving body. Virilio's contention is that speed machines fundamentally alter the way in which we perceive. (James, p. 45)

They alter the different spatial and temporal elements constitutive of 'actual presence' and therefore restructure our relation to the world of sensible appearance. This alteration in perception has already been described, in preliminary fashion, in the examples of train and car travel. Yet the impact of speed machines is, according to Virilio, in no way limited to the dromoscopic experience of rapid or high-speed travel. Far more importantly, he is concerned with the way in which a society permeated with speed machines leads to what is termed a 'teletopological' structuring of perception. This, again, is a neologism coined by Virilio himself and derives from a double root: from the Greek *tele*, meaning distant or far (as in televisionor telecommunication), and from the Greek *topos*, meaning place or common place. If the topological relates to the reality of a given place, its historical and geological form, then the 'teletopological' would relate to the reality of a place or form as viewed from a distance.

In *The Vision Machine*, Paul Virilio (1994) describes the impact of teletopology on the structure of actual presence, referencing philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty:

All that I see is, in principle, within my reach (at least within the reach of my gaze), it is registered on the map of what 'I can do'. In this important phrase, Merleau-

Ponty precisely describes that which is ruined by a teletopology which has become ordinary. The essentials of what I see are no longer, in effect or in principle, within my reach and even if it is within reach of my gaze, it is no longer necessarily inscribed on the map of what 'I can do'" (p. 7).

In *Paul Virilio*, James discusses Virilio's ideas on the notion of the 'I can' can be found in the work of both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, and describes the way in which perception is rooted in the situated possibilities and orientation of the physical body. According to Virilio, "teletopology" leads to a separation between what is perceived and the ability of our body to touch, use, or manipulate that which is perceived (p. 47). This separation is evident in experiences such as viewing a televised image or figures displayed on a screen during a live video conference. Although such images are visible and intelligible, they cannot be physically engaged with. Virilio argues that this separation results in a loss or reduction in the richness or density of sensible experience.

In *Negative Horizon*, Virilio (2005) puts it in the following terms, claiming that it is as if 'speed now attacks the very density of masses, as if the objective had suddenly become the durability and thickness of the physical body as a whole' (pp. 125–126). It is to this loss of density, durability and thickness of physical bodies that Virilio refers when he talks of teletopology or of virtual as opposed to actual presence.

This concern is most clearly reflected in his treatment of the cinematic image and what he comes to term the *aesthetic of disappearance*. The example of the cinematic image can offer a helpful means of understanding what exactly is at stake for Virilio when he speaks of virtual presence. In speaking about cinema, he draws a distinction between an "aesthetic of appearance" on the one hand and an *aesthetic of disappearance* on the other. The former describes the manner in which we encounter works of art such as painting or sculpture, the latter the manner in which we view the images of film (James, p. 49).

According to James, Virilio is interested in the way in which a sculpture or painting appears as a stable form which persists through time by

virtue of its materiality. For example, the Venus de Milo or the Mona Lisa both remain as they are, they remain unique and durable because of the stone, canvas, paints and pigments from which they are made. The manner in which the film image appears is quite different. No such stability exists, since its material support is not the fixity of carved stone, paint or pigment but rather the rapid movement of celluloid passed in front of a projection lamp. As viewers of film, we have a sense of continuity from one passing image to the other and therefore an experience of a moving image. Virilio explains the illusion of movement given to us by the cinematic image by reference to the now outdated theory of 'retinal persistence' (p. 49).

This theory was once used by scientists to explain why we see a rapid succession of still images as a moving image. The assumption was that visual stimuli were stored in the memory for a few hundred milliseconds after they had disappeared and that this retention allowed the intervals of darkness between individual film images to be filled in. Each new visual stimulus would register on the eye before the preceding visual impression had entirely passed and would thus give rise to a sense of continuity and therefore of movement. The illusion of movement given by film is nowadays explained with reference to what is known as the *'phi effect'*. It is now thought that certain neurons exist in the retina which specialize in detecting movement and that it is due to these, and not the retention of past visual stimuli, that a succession of still images can appear to give an image in motion. The exact mechanism by which the illusion of motion, or the phi effect, occurs is less important for Virilio than the fact that what was a stable, material presence in sculpture or painting gives way to an unstable, fleeting presence in the cinematic image (James, p. 49).

The duration of the cinema image is that of its passing or disappearance. This shift from an aesthetic of appearance to one of disappearance is described in Virilio's *The Lost Dimension* (1991) in the following terms:

> From the aesthetic of appearance of a stable image, present by virtue of its static form, to the aesthetic of disappearance of an unstable image present by virtue of its

(cinematic, cinematographic ...) flight, we have experienced a great transmutation of representations. The emergence of forms, of volumes destined to persist in the duration of their material support has been succeeded by images whose sole duration is that of retinal persistence (pp. 25-26).

Virilio (1991) also discusses the impact of virtuality on our perception of space and time. In *The Lost Dimension*, he argues that the emergence of technologies like television and the internet have compressed our experience of time and space, creating a "*dromospheric*" space-time where events occur instantaneously and at a distance. This, he contends, has led to a loss of depth and perspective in our experience of the world, and a blurring of the boundaries between reality and simulation (p. 21).

In *The Information Bomb*, Virilio (2005) argues that the increasing speed of information and the dominance of media and communication technologies are leading to a "*dromocratic*" era, in which speed is the determining factor in social and political life (p. 2). He contends that this shift towards speed is eroding traditional values of space, time, and territoriality, and creating a world that is dominated by virtuality rather than physicality.

Virilio's ideas on the impact of technology on perception offer a thought-provoking perspective on the ways in which modern technologies have altered our understanding of reality and the role of the virtual in contemporary society. His work raises important questions about the role of technology in shaping our perception of reality, and his ideas continue to influence contemporary debates on the impact of technology on society (p. 2).

In his book *Open Sky*, Paul Virilio (2008) explores the impact of immersive technologies on our perception of reality. Virilio contends that these technologies have ushered in a new era of spatiality, one in which the concept of "distance" has been redefined in terms of the speed of communication rather than physical proximity (p.7).

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the impact of technology on our perception of reality. As society increasingly relies on digital devices and immersive technologies,

questions have emerged about the ways in which these technologies are shaping our understanding of reality and the role of the virtual in contemporary society.

French philosopher and cultural theorist Paul Virilio offers a critical perspective on these questions. Virilio's ideas on the impact of technology on perception have been influential in contemporary debates on the role of technology in shaping our experiences of the world. His work emphasizes the importance of analyzing the ways in which technology shapes our perception of reality and highlights the need for critical engagement with technological changes.

In the subsequent section, Virilio's theories of the impact of technology on perception will be applied to analyze how Arthur Miller's play, *Death of a Salesman*, and Asghar Farhadi's film, *The salesman*, engage with themes of reality and perception in the context of modern technology. Drawing on Virilio's emphasis on the dominance of the moment of transmission and the loss of density and thickness in physical bodies, the analysis will explore how these works depict the challenges of navigating a world shaped by technology and how the characters grapple with their understanding of reality in the face of external factors such as social and cultural norms. Through this analysis, a deeper understanding of the ways in which technology shapes our experiences of the world and the implications this has for our under-standing of reality and society will be sought.

Ultimately, Virilio's ideas remain relevant and influential in contemporary discourse on the impact of technology on society. His work serves as a valuable lens through which readers can examine the ways in which technology shapes perception of reality. By engaging with Virilio's theories and applying them to the analysis of literature and film, a greater appreciation for the complex relationship between technology, perception, and society can be gained. This contributes to a broader understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital age.

VIRILIAN ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION
Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*
Miller's works portray the restrictions and flaws

of ordinary Americans as they navigate a contemporary city environment, while also dealing with the limitations imposed by their social circumstances. The play portrays the consequences of Populism's unsuccessful attempt to achieve collective aspirations in the 1890s. This led to the introduction of dehumaniz-ing forces like automation and standardization, which had a huge impact on the development of American society. Miller's play fundamentally scrutinizes the adverse consequences of technology on individual and communal identity, as well as the complex structure of human relationships.

Arthur Miller's formative years in a Jewish-American enclave of New York City during the Great Depression exposed him to the fundamental ideals of social justice and democratic principles that would later mold his literary oeuvre (Bloom, 2000, p. 7). Death of a Salesman effectively captures the preconceived cultural roles assigned to its male protagonists, thereby revealing their susceptibility to moral compromise within the rigid confines of societal norms. Their gradual slide towards failure, driven by increasingly implausible aspirations and the invisible labor they find themselves ensnared in, provides a disconcerting portrayal of their predicament.

Miller emerged as a prominent figure within the American theatrical realm during the mid-20th century, celebrated for his capacity to craft multifaceted and relatable characters (Bloom, 2000, p. 11). This accomplishment was achieved through situating his characters within a contemporary American backdrop, allowing for a meticulous dissection of the repercussions of familial and societal expectations upon their lives. By spotlighting individuals rather than merely impersonal influences, Miller deftly captures universal human emotions, such as disappointment, regret, and loss, that reverberate across temporal and geographical boundaries. Through his narratives, Miller not only dissects the limitations of a capitalist system and critiques the American Dream, but he also celebrates the unyielding fortitude individuals exhibit in the face of adversity.

In *Death of a Salesman*, a significant the-matic underpinning pertains to the futility of

the American Dream, underscored by the paramount importance of authentic human connections. The protagonist, Willy Loman's, unrelenting pursuit of material wealth and social status is ultimately hollow and unsatisfying, given his incapacity to attain the financial prosperity and social esteem he so ardently desires (Miller, 1996, Act II). This theme is accentuated when, in Act II, Willy urges his son Biff to steal a fountain pen from Oliver's office in a misguided attempt to establish his own value, starkly highlighting Willy's preoccupation with material success over genuine human bonds (Miller, 2013).

Willy's internal conflict in reconciling his personal aspirations with societal demands and familial obligations exemplifies a broader tension embedded within American culture — that between individualism and conformity. This internal struggle is crystallized in Willy's preoccupation with popularity and respectability, attributes he views as prerequisites for success. In Act I, Willy imparts his belief to his sons that achieving visibility in the business world, with the ability to generate personal interest, is the key to advancement (Miller, 1996, Act I). This sentiment underscores his conviction in the significance of adherence to societal norms and outward appearance.

The play serves as a trenchant critique of modern capitalism, a system fixated on profit and efficiency to the detriment of individual well-being and fulfillment. Miller adeptly underscores the boundaries of materialism and conformity while accentuating the pivotal importance of authentic human connections and personal dignity. Despite the burdensome trials and societal pressures endured by the characters, Miller concurrently celebrates their resilience and unwavering determination in the face of adversity.

Miller's (1996) vivid portrayal of Willy Loman's character accentuates the taxing toll, both physical and emotional, exacted by a life dictated by the ideals of velocity and material acquisition. Willy's poignant proclamation, "I'm tired to the death" (Miller, Act I), serves as an articulation of the exhaustion and detachment intrinsic to a life consumed by ceaseless work and perpetual travel. This motif resonates profoundly with the ongoing discussions regarding the American Dream, often predisposed towards material affluence and financial success, rather than the pursuit of genuine human relationships and individual fulfillment.

This very notion is embodied by Willy, whose ceaseless mobility and perpetual journeys engender an estrangement from his own family, ultimately contributing to his tragic downfall. His yearning for a more uncomplicated and gratifying existence, encapsulated in his declaration of needing to acquire seeds and cultivate a garden (Miller, Act II), underscores the concept that alternative avenues exist for discovering significance and purpose beyond the narrow pursuit of material wealth.

Intriguingly, the pursuit of affluence and prosperity could be construed as a manifestation of human defiance, catalyzing disruption in the natural order of society. This can be paralleled with the biblical narrative of The Garden of Eden, wherein an ideal world is marred by human disobedience — a metaphor mirroring the disruption wrought by human technology and industrialization on the natural order of existence.

A potent illustration of the modern pace's adverse effects is Willy Loman's lament in Act I, bemoaning the accelerated and constrictive nature of contemporary life: "the way they boxed us in here. Bricks and windows, windows and bricks" (Miller, Act I). This sense of confinement and consequent agency erosion resonates with Virilio's theory, wherein he posits that the breakneck pace of the modern era has precipitated the erosion of individual autonomy and the ascendency of efficiency over human well-being (Virilio).

Furthermore, the character of Howard Wagner, Willy's boss, epitomizes the dehumanizing implications of modernity, privileging technology and efficiency over personal bonds and the welfare of employees. Conversely, Bernard, Willy's son's childhood friend, embodies an alternate path to success that deviates from the pursuit of material gain. Bernard's achievements through diligent labor underscore the existence of alternative avenues to meaning and purpose that transcend the confines of material accumulation (Miller).

One such object emblematic of the intersection of technology and human connection is the tape recorder, employed by Willy Loman to preserve his thoughts for his sons. However, as Steve Redhead asserts in his book Paul Virilio: Theorist for an Accelerated Culture, the utilization of technology can inadvertently foster detachment and alienation. While Virilio acknowledges the potential benefits of technological advancement, he contends that there exists no utopian outcome beyond such progress. As Virilio articulates:

> I am definitely not against progress, but after the ecological and ethical catastrophes we have seen, not only Auschwitz but also Hiroshima, it would be unforgiveable to allow ourselves to be deceived by the kind of utopia which insinuates that technology will ultimately bring about happiness and a greater sense of humanity" (Virilio qtd. in Redhead, 2004).

Despite the temporal and cultural disparities between 1940s America and ancient times, the theme of essential labor and its influence on human existence remains an unchanging struggle. Willy dutifully adheres to societal norms and follows them diligently; however, his endeavors, even those tainted with dishonesty, prove perpetually insufficient. Tragically, Willy unknowingly falls victim to the very system he perpetuates, as his participation within it only exacerbates the cycle of discontent. Ultimately, Willy remains a "little man," relevant only within the confines of his family.

Exemplifying the family's battle against societal expectations, the Loman family contends with Willy's rivalry with neighbor Charley and the consumerism-driven pressures of materialistic culture. Paul Virilio, a prominent cultural theorist, contends that the surge of technology and media has contributed to a dromocratic society, where speed and efficiency reign supreme (Kellner, p. 2). This emphasis on haste and efficiency can evoke a sense of disorientation and a loss of control, as individuals grapple with the relentless pace of change and technological evolution within modern society.

Virilio further suggests that the ceaseless pursuit of consumption and material upgrades can engender insecurity and dissatisfaction. This is due to the perpetual failure to attain the societal archetype of success and affluence. Virilio's insights indicate that these pressures extend beyond Miller's characters and reflect a broader cultural phenomenon encompassing a spectrum beyond the play's world.

Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* has garnered significant critical attention, particularly in relation to its use of imagery associated with machines. Scholars have approached this theme from various angles, exploring how technological progress can impact human identity and interpersonal connections.

One reading of the play suggests that Willy Loman's struggle to operate the wire recorder in Act Two symbolizes the entanglement of individuals within a materialistic American society (Jerz, p. 126). Others argue that technological advancement renders humans obsolete (Sterling, pp. 100-102), while a separate interpretation posits that Willy actively resists societal mechanization, delineating between human agency and the machine's influence (Sterling 114).

Despite these varying viewpoints, a consistent thread within the critical discourse highlights the potential adverse consequences of technology on the human experience. By scrutinizing the machines depicted in the play, a deeper comprehension of the intricate dynamic between humans and technology emerges, offering insights into the characters' motives and challenges.

The core message of *Death of a Salesman* is a cautionary narrative about the perils of forfeiting control over one's destiny in a society that prioritizes profit and success. Arthur Miller disrupts the "us" versus "them" dichotomy by blurring the distinctions between the play's protagonist and his family (us) and the wider society (them). This blurring accentuates the interconnectivity of human experiences, asserting that societal and cultural shifts impact individual identities. Employing machine-related imagery, Miller delves into how technology can mold and reshape human encounters, delivering a profound commentary on the repercussions of cultural and societal transformations on personal identity.

Foremost among the technological devices within Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman is the wire recorder, representing the play's most intricate machine. In Act Two, Willy Loman's

pursuit of a desk job from his employer, Howard, reveals strained dynamics attributed to the presence of the machine. Ultimately, Howard's detachment leads to Willy's dismissal devoid of consideration for his well-being, illustrating power dynamics ingrained within the contemporary workplace. Miller's utilization of the wire recorder as a symbol for societal and cultural change underscores the hazards of prioritizing technological advancement over human values.

This theme of technology's adverse influence on human relationships is pervasive throughout the play. Willy Loman, the protagonist, feels isolated and detached due to his reliance on salesmanship as a mode of communication and affirmation. He staunchly upholds the significance of human connections, asserting, "You can't eat the orange and throw the peel away – a man is not a piece of fruit!" (Miller, 1996, Act II, p. 36).

Willy's employer, Howard, prioritizes his own satisfaction and amusement over Willy's welfare or livelihood. Yet, amidst Willy's struggles, his wife, Linda, underscores the essence of recognizing the humanity and dignity inherent in each individual, regardless of social status or material prosperity. She insists, "Attention must be paid" (Miller, Act I, p. 23).

This technological detriment to human relationships extends to the Loman family's interactions. Happy Loman substitutes material possessions and sexual liaisons for genuine human connections, in Act I stating, "I don't know what the hell I'm working' for" (p. 7). Biff's resistance to societal expectations and the pressures of superficial success further accentuates the hazards engendered by an excessive reliance on technology and consumerism.

The wire recorder emerges as a symbol of Willy's obsolescence within the contemporary world. Willy's struggle with innovation leaves him trailing behind the technological advancements of his era. This suggests that the rapid pace of technological evolution generates disorientation and instability within society, thereby detrimentally impacting human relationships.

Virilio (2006), in Speed and Politics contends that the proliferation of communication technologies fosters detachment between individuals and groups (p. 85). He posits that the relentless influx of information and stimuli from technology begets a kind of attention deficit disorder, undermining our capacity to engage in meaningful relationships and activities.

Furthermore, Virilio's *The Administration of Fear* proposes that technology has given rise to a perpetual state of shock, which is becoming a societal norm. This further erodes our capacity to foster stable relationships and construct a sense of community (Virilio & Richard, 2012, p. 78).

Ben's watch signifies time as a finite resource and the pressure to optimize its utilization. This propensity can detrimentally affect human relationships, breeding a dearth of focus and presence in the present moment.

Within the context of Arthur Miller's play, *Death of a Salesman* Ben's watch serves as a poignant reminder to Willy of his own mortality and the constrained timeframe he possesses to achieve success and provide for his family. This pressure to excel and capitalize on time plays a pivotal role in Willy's emotional detachment and strained familial relationships (Miller, Act II, pp. 63, 59).

Willy's car, another symbolic element, encapsulates the paradoxical and tragic facets of his character, as well as the intricate interaction between humanity and machines. Although Willy's demise is linked to his car, attributing his downfall solely to its role falls short. The car illuminates Willy's incongruities, as he mistakenly asserts that the new car's windshields are inoperative, a misconception promptly corrected by Linda. The vehicle also triggers Willy's nostalgia, prompting his yearning for his previous Chevy and recollections of the days when Biff would polish it. Hence, the car unveils a facet of Willy that seeks refuge in the past. Despite being 63 years old, Willy recollects the year he acquired the Chevy, underscoring the machine's pervasion into his entire existence and the blurring of the line between man and machine.

The dissolution of boundaries between humanity and machines serves as a central theme in Paul Virilio's *The Information Bomb* wherein he asserts that technology has fundamentally reshaped the human relationship with time and space, relinquishing agency and control (Virilio, p. 39). Willy's attachment to his car

and his reluctance to relinquish the past might be seen as a manifestation of this relinquished agency, imprisoning him within a nostalgic reverie that obstructs him from wholeheartedly engaging with the present (Miller, p. 19). The car, in this sense, transcends mere machinery, embodying the broader technological currents that mold human existence and self-perception.

Paul Virilio has often pondered the interplay between humans and technology in his discussions, asserting that "what interests me is their totality, the two of them" (Virilio & Richard, 2012, p. 53). Virilio posits the potential "disappearance" of the human body owing to emerging forms of sedentary lifestyle he terms "polar inertia" (Ibid., p. 41) m. This craving for immediacy and ubiquity, according to Virilio, stands as a defining hallmark of modern technology, fundamentally reshaping our notions of time and space (Ibid.).

Willy epitomizes the ordinary individual aspiring to carve a niche in society, yet he stumbles when faced with the formidable questions posed by the ascent of technology. The advent of machine power has precipitated a profound transformation in our entire way of life, affecting not only the tangible realm but also the intricate fabric of human-machine interaction (Marx, 2000, pp. 173-174). The ascendancy of technology impels us to confront intricate queries pertaining to the preservation of personal identity and safeguarding humanity from potential contamination by dispassionate machines.

Asghar Farhadi's *The salesman*

The post-World War II era in New York City epitomizes the "dominance of virtuality," where the virtual realm supersedes the physical, giving rise to new societal expectations. These prioritize material acquisition and status over the quintessence of the human experience. A parallel scenario unfolds in Tehran, Iran's capital, where rapid industrialization and modernization birthed analogous pressures, urging individuals to embrace the "*Iranian Dream*" at the expense of their inherent humanity. Similarly, technological advancement and industrialization perpetuated a fixation on efficiency and productivity, often disregarding human welfare.

The American Dream has commonly entailed material accumulation and social standing, whereas the "Iranian Dream" traditionally emphasizes education, familial bonds, and community integration. In Iran, accomplishment and prestige are intrinsically linked with acquiring education and providing for one's family, rather than amassing material wealth and status.

By contrast, the "Iranian Dream" germinated amid a rapidly modernizing society, where governmental intervention significantly influenced economic and social trajectories. Virilio's concept of the "dominance of virtuality" emerges as a useful lens to comprehend the ramifications of modernity on Iranian culture and society. The surge of telepresence and velocity, coined as "dromocracy" by Virilio, indelibly influenced Iranian cinema. Filmmakers harnessed realist techniques to instill immediacy and authenticity, mirroring the rapid cadence of social metamorphosis.

The oeuvre of Asghar Farhadi, particularly his film *Forushande* (*The salesman*), is emblematic of this paradigm. The title encapsulates multiple strata of meaning and significance, denoting the protagonist, Emad, who balances roles as a high school educator and a sales representative for a theatrical production company. However, metaphorically, the title holds a deeper resonance within the narrative.

Meticulously, Farhadi employs symbolism and nuanced shifts to underscore the trauma experienced by Rana and the predicament of many single working women in Iranian society. Amidst these, echoes of the past reverberate in the middle section of *The salesman*, conjuring parallels with *Death of a Salesman*, wherein Willy's son discovers his father's liaison with a prostitute, a revelation that contributes to the elder's tragic suicide.

The thematic underpinnings of both *Death of a Salesman* and Farhadi's *The salesman* align with the concepts posited by Paul Virilio, emphasizing that contemporary technology precipitates fundamental shifts in daily life, profoundly impacting experiences of time and space. This disruption to human identity and relationship with the world is palpable in both works. Through the incorporation of Miller's play within *The salesman* Farhadi adeptly highlights

the link between the two works, underlining the universality of their themes. Viewing Farhadi's characters through the lens of Miller's play permits exploration of their travails in Tehran, unveiling the tension between tradition and modernity within Iranian society. This exploration delves into the challenges of preserving personal identity amid societal pressures and technological metamorphosis. Just as *Death of a Salesman* delves into the ramifications of urbanization, social mobility, and the erosion of traditional values, so does *The salesman* highlight these factors' impact on individuals and their relationships.

In line with Virilio's belief that technology has the capacity to dissolve cultural and historical boundaries, Farhadi's *The salesman* accentuates this phenomenon within Iranian society. In parallel with this exploration is the theme of humiliation—a pivotal facet in *Death of a Salesman*—which finds resonance in both works. Willy Loman endures humiliation from his son, society, workplace, and family, culminating in his tragic suicide. A similar trajectory is depicted in *The salesman* as the character Emad is also subjected to degradation.

Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* presents post-World War II New York as a metaphor for the trials of contemporary Iran. The play's dissection of cultural shifts and capitalist brutality reverberates with the struggles of Farhadi's characters in films like *A Separation*, *About Elly The Past* and *The salesman* Farhadi's films intricately weave matters of conscience and consequence, delving into tensions encompassing past and present, deception and tradition, and conflicting desires.

The characters in Farhadi's works, while universal in their struggles, remain firmly grounded within their cultural milieu, emblematic of a young Iranian generation navigating the intersection of cosmopolitanism and age-old customs. Through their experiences, Farhadi's films unravel the intricate social and cultural dynamics of contemporary Iran, while simultaneously reflecting broader themes of human nature and the perils of maneuvering through an ever-transforming world.

In his interview, Farhadi aptly remarks, "I don't want to say the conditions in Iran are the same as those in New York at that time," adding, "Many people will be sacrificed in this change, in the same way Willy Loman's family was sacrificed at that time in New York" (Farhadi, as cited in Shabani, 2018). He aptly likens Tehran's transformation to Miller's fictional town, noting its frenetic and irrational metamorphosis. (Shabani, 2018)

The salesman - A Look Inside Life in Modern Iran further underscores the couple's middle-class life and shared affinity for theater. Their fascination with the West, paralleling Miller's themes, manifests through their participation in a staging of *Death of a Salesman* wherein they assume the roles of Willy Loman and his resilient wife, Linda. As the film unfolds, their theatrical roles meld with their real-life experiences, creating a "who-done-it" scenario as their on-stage and off-stage lives converge (Rose, 2017).

Upon relocating to a new apartment, the characters in *The salesman* confront upheaval after a traumatic incident. Farhadi's candid and realistic cinematic style immerses the viewer within the characters' dilemmas, fostering an intimate immediacy. The tension springs organically from the intricate scenarios they navigate, unearthing the nuances of relationships and cultural norms. Farhadi's expert direction unveils the fragility and turmoil within daily existence, demonstrating that even ostensibly steady lives can quickly unravel in the face of unexpected events.

Farhadi's cinematic approach within *The salesman* brilliantly melds gritty realism with emotionally charged scenes from Miller's play. As the protagonist, Emad's role in the play might inflate his self-importance and moral convictions. Willy Loman's anguished reflections upon his inability to provide mirror Emad's struggles to shield his wife from assault. Through Farhadi's masterful direction, viewers discern parallels between the two characters, subsequently challenging these assumptions in the film's climax, rendering a thought-provoking and emotionally potent narrative.

Farhadi deftly interweaves Willy Loman's essence with the character of the older man in *The salesman*, employing lines from Linda's dialogue to imbue the old man's wife with her words. Both characters, salesmen beset by

familial turmoil, mirror the crises experienced by their *Death of a Salesman* counterparts. Echoes of Willy and Biff's complex relationship resonate through the old man's statement to Emad, "You're like my son," evoking the father-son dynamics so prevalent in Miller's play.

While the comparison underscores parallels between the relationships, Farhadi's exploration also underscores pivotal distinctions. Unlike Willy, who succumbs to his illusions and missteps, the older man emerges as a more empathetic figure, scarred by a traumatic event that has rendered him fragile and isolated. Moreover, the contrast extends to their spousal relationships; where Willy's connection with Linda is marred by betrayal and disillusionment, the older man's rapport with his wife is marked by mutual fortitude and empathy against adversity.

Through this juxtaposition, Farhadi probes the essence of tragedy and the intricate facets of human connections. The director underscores that while the Loman family's struggles hold universal resonance, divergent individual experiences and circumstances engender starkly divergent outcomes. Through these comparisons and contrasts, Farhadi crafts a multi-layered narrative that speaks to shared human experiences while illuminating the distinct perspectives and trials confronted by individuals across different eras and locales.

The film's protagonist, Emad, straddles roles as a schoolteacher and actor in a local theater. Upon moving to a new apartment, Emad uncovers remnants left by the former tenant, prompting Rana's use of an intercom system to remotely unlock the door. This gesture illustrates Virilio's assertion that modern technology facilitates life without necessitating physical movement, relegating bodies to disposability. This poignant scene exemplifies technology's dual role: emancipating and constraining movement. While Rana physically possesses the capacity to exit the apartment and seek aid, psychological and societal factors curtail her mobility.

In another scene, Emad's drive to the theater confronts an obstruction by men blocking his path. His circuitous detour underscores how social and political factors can impede physical movement, even in a technologically advanced society. Later, Emad employs his phone to trace the apartment's previous tenant, aimed at unearthing information about Rana's assailant. This act highlights technology's capacity to bridge physical gaps, mediating movement through digital avenues.

Farhadi's *The salesman* embodies Virilio's contention that contemporary technology fosters a deceleration in movement. As individuals increasingly conduct their lives digitally, physical presence diminishes in prominence, with technology mediating movement and interactions. The film underscores technology's ambivalence, simultaneously offering expanded mobility and flexibility while constraining movement and social engagement. Thus, *The salesman* artfully aligns with Virilio's assertions, exploring the intricate dance between humanity and technology.

The salesman deftly encapsulates the challenges and prospects presented by a post-modern era where technology has revolutionized movement, communication, and human inter-action. Through its multifaceted portrayal of characters ensnared between traditional values and contemporary influences, the film beckons the audience to ruminate on the intricate dynamics between technology and human mobility within the modern society.

Upon their initial move, Emad and Rana harbor hopes for an improved life within their new apartment. Yet, the film's progression unveils a reality far from utopian aspirations. The intercom system's dual capacity to unlock the door for assailants, enabling Rana's assault, sheds light on technology's dual nature as both liberator and restrainer of movement. This sequence impeccably echoes Virilio's assertion that modern technology manifests a dichotomy, emancipating and constraining human motion.

Emad's retort, "That's the problem. We're becoming lazy," accentuates the precarious balance between convenience and physical engagement in a tech-empowered realm where individuals can manage life without departing their abodes.

In a different instance, Emad and his theater colleagues discuss the adjacent construction site. As the narrative unfolds, Emad gazes from his balcony and observes the evolving cityscape, remarking, "Look at these towers. They're taking over the city." Rana's retort, "They're not so

bad. At least we have a nice view," encapsulates Emad's conflicting stance on the city's swift transformation and its varying perspectives.

From his rooftop dwelling, Emad beholds the metropolis dominated by towering skyscrapers and sprawling complexes. These structures, emblematic of authority and ascendancy, cast shadows over Emad's modest abode. The unyielding march of progress leaves Emad and his family feeling helpless, shackled by modernity's overwhelming force.

A later scene has Emad voicing a wish to "raze" the city and rebuild anew: "What are they doing with this city? I wish I could bring a loader and ruin all of it" (Farhadi). His yearning to obliterate the existing cityscape signifies a quest for order in an urban milieu. However, as the plot advances, Emad's realization dawns— resolving the complex issues he faces necessitates subtler strategies. A discourse with Babak underscores this; the city's history of destruction and reconstruction did not yield transformation. Babak's response, "They ruined this city once, they built it again and now this is it" (Farhadi), signifies Emad's frustration with the city's hasty growth and its impact on his routine.

Emad's urge to "raze" echoes his yearning to establish a new, structured urban panorama. His evolving perspective highlights the challenges of rectifying deep-rooted problems. Babak's differing viewpoint can be interpreted as representing the pre and post-revolution generations, accentuating the generation gap.

In *The salesman* Emad epitomizes the tension between postmodernism and tradition. Simultaneously, he remains a husband and community member bound by tradition. His devotion to Rana and his pursuit of justice exhibit adherence to traditional values of loyalty and integrity.

In the aftermath of Rana's ordeal, Emad grapples with the dichotomy between postmodern and traditional aspects of his identity. His relentless quest for the assailant's identity strains his rapport with Rana, who craves solace and privacy. The climax manifests in Emad's portrayal of Willy Loman in a rendition of *Death of a Salesman* This iconic play scrutinizes the American dream and traditional masculinity's shortcomings. Emad's enactment of Willy's role can be perceived as his own struggle with identity and fitting into a postmodern society.

In congruence with prior discussion, Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* and Asghar Farhadi's *The salesman* both grapple with tradition versus modernity's interplay and modernity's effects on individuals and society. While Miller's work portrays a protagonist plagued by observational shortcomings, Farhadi's film follows Rana and Emad, whose beliefs confront challenges through a series of events. Paul Virilio confronts conventional technological paradigms, unveiling technology's essential impact on daily life. *The salesman* accentuates comprehending the implications of societal and technological evolution, urging a nuanced approach in maneuvering through these shifts.

David Kaplan (2009) posits in "*Readings in the Philosophy of Technology*" that technological constructs extend beyond mere tools, asserting their influence on culture, human activity, and identity. A mutual influence flows between technology and humanity, shaping one another's course in a dynamic circular connection. Kaplan contends that technology has fused seamlessly into the human sphere, becoming an intrinsic facet of existence (Kaplan, p. 1).

Through astute symbolization, Farhadi's *The salesman* crafts a poignant commentary on technology's subtle yet profound impact on human bonds and intimacy. Among the film's foremost symbols is the bed—an eloquent testament to Farhadi's nuanced storytelling. Its strategic employment allows Farhadi to express intricate emotions powerfully. The bed becomes a tangible emblem of the emotional turbulence plaguing Rana and Emad's marriage, bearing witness to both intimacy's tenderness and agonizing heartaches..

The bed's soft, golden luminescence envelops the scene, conjuring a sense of intimacy, while its intricate motif imparts sophistication and opulence. Remarkably, these scenes epitomize a central film theme, encapsulating the narrative's essence. The askew double bed draped in a crimson blanket signifies the unrest tormenting Rana post-trauma. The rich connotation of red amplifies the emotional turmoil, reflecting Rana's shattered tranquility. Rana and Emad's relationship mirrors this fragility, embodied by separate, yet perceptibly present, single metal

beds within their shared living space.

The film opens with a cacophony of screams, cries, and shuffling in darkness. In this scene, a building that belongs to Rana and Emad, the main characters, collapses due to nearby construction activity, symbolizing the disintegration of a society where values and morals are deteriorating, and people are indifferent to the destruction of their community. The collapse of the building is a metaphor for the potential collapse of the entire community, as the residents' apathy towards their surroundings could lead to its ultimate downfall.

Throughout the film, a recurring visual motif is the presence of glasses with dark frames, which are consistently worn by the male characters. Emad, the male lead, wears these glasses in various scenes, including the theater and taxi scenes. The elderly man who is a sexual predator also wears them. These glasses symbolize the objectification of women by men in society, a gaze that can be directed towards anyone regardless of age or status. It is worth noting that even the clear-framed glasses worn by the young actress who plays a child in the theater scene as they could represent the innocence and lack of awareness of a child, which stands in stark contrast to the objectifying thoughts of adult men.

The scene following the building collapse portrays a room filled with debris and cracks on the walls and ceiling. The large cracks above the bed symbolize the loss of stability and peace, which is a recurring theme throughout the film. The motif of chaos and disorder represents the psychological state of the main characters and the perpetual disarray of their home. The cracks on the wall can also be interpreted as a continuation of the narrow gap shown at the beginning of the film, featuring two single beds. This merging of symbols emphasizes the fragility of the characters' lives and their emotional connections.

The Iranian film *Gav*, directed by Dariush Mehrjui and written by Gholamhossein Saedi, is a significant work in Iranian cinema and literature. The film's influence is evident in Asghar Farhadi's movie *The salesman*, where a reference to *Gav* appears in a classroom scene where a student reads a passage from the story.

The passage describes a woman's cry and the cry of a cow from inside a lantern, symbolizing the challenges of understanding and navigating through life. The cow in Iranian culture represents a being that lacks awareness of reality and serves as a reminder of the fragility of morality. The symbolism of the lantern represents searching and navigating through life's challenges. The cryptic message in the scene adds complexity to the story and allows for individual interpretation.

According to an article in the *Etemad* newspaper, Asghar Farhadi, the director of *The salesman*, recognizes Saedi's influence on his teenage years and considers him the Miller of Iranian dramatic literature (Etemad, 2016). The article further notes that although there is no direct reference to Saedi's works in the film, The salesman, the reference to Gav emphasizes the cultural and literary significance of Saedi's work in Iranian society.

To conclude, the reference to *Gav* in *The salesman* sheds light on the cultural and literary significance of Gholamhossein Saedi's work in Iranian society and its influence on contemporary art. The symbolism of the cow and the lantern serves as a reminder of the importance of understanding and navigating life's challenges, while also highlighting the fragility of morality. The scene in the classroom adds complexity to the story and allows for individual interpretation. It also emphasizes the importance of self-reflection and the recognition that circumstances can change with a single misstep.

Virilio's ideas about the importance of perception in shaping our understanding of the world are also relevant to the analysis of Iranian cinema. The struggle between modernity and tradition in Iranian society is not a simple dichotomy, but rather a complex and nuanced process that requires careful consideration of the different perspectives and experiences of individuals. The symbolism in the films *Gav* and *The salesman* highlights the importance of individual interpretation and the role of perception in shaping the understanding of the world.

The consistent absence of smiles within both works, Asghar Farhadi's film *The salesman* and Arthur Miller's play *Death of a Salesman*, may signify disillusionment and a yearning for control within a society that seemingly abandons them.

In *The salesman* the absence of smiles among characters may epitomize their disillusionment with society and the modern world—an outcome reflective of the influence of technology on social dynamics, as posited by Virilio.

Much like Farhadi's film, Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* delves into themes of disillusionment and alienation in the contemporary world. Willy Loman, the play's central figure, grapples with the shifting world around him. Unable to adjust to evolving business realities and confronting identity loss, he inevitably meets his downfall.

While the smile's absence remains unaddressed in *Death of a Salesman* the persistent motifs of disillusionment and alienation underscore the play's thematic landscape. Characters, especially Willy, wrestle to imbue meaning into lives left behind by society's rapid transformations. Central to Virilio's theories, the discord from society and control forfeiture resonates within the play.

As communication technology advances, individuals increasingly favor self-initiative over traditional institutions, generating a society attempting to harmonize past and present. *The salesman* adroitly portrays the intricacies of navigating a society balancing tradition and modernity—a struggle encapsulating contemporary life's paradoxes. Emad personifies this tension, embodying the traditional world's hidden layer and modernity's activist facet, confronting intolerance's labels like zeal and honor while advocating for change.

The film deftly conveys forgiveness's limitations and traditional structures' insufficiency in confronting modern challenges. This relentless endeavor to harmonize tradition and modernity underscores the complexities of navigating a society torn between these realms. Themes permeating *The salesman* parallel Virilio's ideas about technological influence on human relationships and cultural norms' erosion. His concept of "critical space" alludes to technology's eradication of temporal delay, birthing a telepresent world.

In *The salesman* Farhadi explores the ruinous effects of character and social degradation, leading to family disintegration and role loss. Variances in response highlight Iranian men's conflict in harmonizing tradition and modernity.

Emad's dismissal of an old sock, symbolizing evasion of direct confrontation, contrasts Rana's resolve—a testament to Iranian women's dedication to reconciling the old and the new. The film suggests a paradoxical future for Iran's new generation, navigating tradition-modernity tension. The preference for technology in the postmodern era can erode traditional values, manifesting in globalized cities like Tehran.

Paul Virilio, in his interview with John Armitage titled *In the Cities of the Beyond*, underscores cities' dual identity as markers of both location and state (Virilio). As they transition to cities of the beyond, predicated on information and communication technology acceleration, Virilio notes the wane of geopolitical cities in favor of these technological constructs. This concept stems from meteo-politics—politics shaped by the swift flow of information and communication technologies' electromagnetic waves (Le Futurisme de l'instant: Stop-Eject).

Cultural production, encompassing literature, art, and film, can unveil society's perceptions and responses to postmodern urbanization. Ultimately, a holistic approach to postmodern urbanization is requisite for creating inclusive, sustainable cities for all residents.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the comparative analysis of Asghar Farhadi's *The salesman* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* within the framework of Paul Virilio's theories provides profound insights into the intricate interplay of technology, culture, politics, and society amidst the context of postmodern urbanization. By delving into the environmental implications of technology and its symbiotic relationship with speed, these works propel us to contemplate how humanity can navigate and thrive in the complex web of technological advancement. The fusion of families within modern urban settings, particularly in Tehran, underscores Virilio's notion of disappearance, where individuals become enmeshed in cybernetic instruments, ultimately absorbed into the evolving landscape they leave behind.

The application of Virilio's theories to Iran's postmodern reality and its aftermath of war unveils the unique challenges confronting the

nation as it grapples with the complexities of postmodern urbanization. While technological progress is not to be resisted, Virilio cautions against an overly optimistic perspective that suggests technology inherently leads to happiness and heightened humaneness, a viewpoint that the catastrophes of the twentieth century disprove. Instead, Virilio's concepts foster a deeper comprehension of the transformation of security dynamics and international relations, with the displacement of space by time emerging as a pivotal factor in this shift.

This analysis also casts a spotlight on the nuanced struggle between modernity and tradition within Iranian society, especially evident in the modernized urban fabric of Tehran. Despite being equipped with the latest technological tools and online platforms, the acceleration of transportation and communication distances and alienates individuals. This trajectory comes at a human cost, echoing the sacrifices witnessed in Willy Loman's New York family and Emad and Rana's Tehran household.

The implications of these findings reverberate within the realm of policy formulation, with the potential to nurture sustainability, equity, innovation, and social cohesion in urban development. Strategic interventions geared toward bolstering public transportation, cultivating green spaces, and ensuring affordable housing have the potential to counterbalance the adverse effects of urbanization on the environment and social disparities. Additionally, policies fostering entrepreneurship and innovation could usher in fresh avenues for economic growth and societal progress. Moreover, the examination of cultural expressions such as literature, art, and cinema within the context of postmodern urbanization offers invaluable insights into how society perceives and reacts to the urban transformation.

This research has significant implications for current urban development and policy planning. The obstacles and tensions portrayed in the works of Farhadi and Miller, when analyzed using Virilio's theories, reflect the predicaments encountered by numerous swiftly urbanizing places across the globe. The requirement for a careful equilibrium between technical progress and human welfare is of utmost importance.

Urban planning that is sustainable, inclusive, and egalitarian is not simply a topic of academic interest but also a crucial necessity in the actual world. This research provides valuable insights to policymakers, urban planners, and scholars by examining the consequences of rapid urbanization and the resulting possibility for isolation. The results presented here emphasize the significance of creating urban environments that prioritize the needs, values, and well-being of communities in the constantly changing landscape of postmodern cities.

FURTHER RESEARCH

This analysis is but a stepping stone. Future research could delve into specific social groups' experiences, providing a comprehensive understanding of urbanization's diverse impacts. Case studies of cities that have embraced sustainable policies could illuminate best practices for harmonizing technology with nature.

In light of the comprehensive exploration conducted in this study, several promising avenues for future research emerge, beckoning scholars to delve deeper into the multifaceted realm of postmodern urbanization. First and foremost, an intriguing trajectory lies in dissecting the gendered impacts of rapid urbanization, particularly within societies undergoing significant transformation. Investigating how women and marginalized communities navigate the shifting landscapes of technology-driven urban environments could unveil nuanced challenges and opportunities for social equity and empowerment.

Furthermore, an in-depth analysis of the psychological and emotional toll of disconnection, a central theme echoed in the works under scrutiny, could yield a profound understanding of the evolving human experience within cities. Exploring the evolving role of public spaces and communal areas in the digital age is another captivating path ripe for exploration. How do these spaces adapt to accommodate both the demand for technological engagement and the need for real-world social interaction?

Moreover, a comparative study of various cities worldwide that have implemented policies addressing the ecological and social ramifications of urbanization could offer invaluable insights into the effectiveness of diverse strategies.

Examining the interplay between urban aesthetics and cultural production, including architecture, literature, art, and cinema, could shed light on how creative expressions both reflect and shape societal perceptions of urbanization.

Finally, a longitudinal investigation tracking the trajectory of cities over time, dissecting their successes, failures, and adaptive strategies, could provide a dynamic view of urban evolution and offer lessons for cities on the cusp of similar transformations. These potential avenues for research collectively beckon the scholarly community to embark on a continued exploration of the intricate relationship between technology, culture, and society within the ever-changing tapestry of postmodern urban landscapes. By further delving into these topics, researchers can contribute to a more holistic understanding of urban dynamics, thereby informing policies and shaping the sustainable, inclusive cities of the future.

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