

**PATERNAL UNSAFE HOME:
ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS OF SEIZING AND
CENSORSHIP IN IRANIAN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CINEMA**

**HOGAR PATERNAL INSEGURO:
ANÁLISIS DEL PROCESO POLÍTICO DE INCAUTACIÓN Y CENSURA EN EL
CINE IRANÍ SOBRE VIOLENCIA DOMÉSTICA**

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Abstract: Iranian filmmakers always try to fulfill their mission to raising awareness by showing hidden and unpleasant social issues in the family and presenting a real picture of domestic violence, but the traditional view of the Iranian society towards the family as a sanctified taboo has been associated with the Islamization policy of the Iran's regime. This petrified and biased view leads to the seize and censorship of films that break the taboo and show another side of family relationships. This article analyzes the view of patriarchy and cultural taboos of Iranian society in the banned films Friday Evening, he Paternal House and Girl's House ,by using the interpretivist criticism method. A critical look at Iran's politicized cinema can be effective to remove the barriers of raising awareness in the field of girls victims. The fusion of the Islamization policies of the Iranian government with the society full of cultural taboos and sanctification of the family has caused films made in the field of domestic violence to face censorship and banning in order to break this sanctity. Separating cinema as a source of inspiration in the field of domestic violence prevention, from politics, will help the process of breaking unjustified cultural taboos and thus women's immunity from domestic violence.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Iranian cinema, Taboo, Censorship, Seizing

Resumen: Los cineastas iraníes siempre intentan cumplir su misión de crear conciencia mostrando problemas sociales ocultos y desagradables en la familia y presentando una imagen real de la violencia doméstica, pero la visión tradicional de la sociedad iraní hacia la familia como un tabú santificado se ha asociado con la Política de islamización del régimen de Irán. Esta visión petrificada y sesgada lleva a la incautación y censura de películas que rompen el tabú y muestran otra cara de las relaciones familiares. Este artículo analiza la visión del patriarcado y los tabúes culturales de la sociedad iraní en las películas prohibidas Friday Evening, The Paternal House y

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Girl's House, utilizando el método de la crítica interpretativa. Una mirada crítica al cine politizado de Irán puede ser eficaz para eliminar las barreras a la sensibilización en el ámbito de las niñas víctimas. La fusión de las políticas de islamización del gobierno iraní con una sociedad llena de tabúes culturales y santificación de la familia ha provocado que las películas realizadas en el campo de la violencia doméstica se enfrenten a la censura y la prohibición para romper esta santidad. Separar el cine como fuente de inspiración en el campo de la prevención de la violencia doméstica de la política ayudará al proceso de romper tabúes culturales injustificados y, por tanto, a la inmunidad de las mujeres frente a la violencia doméstica.

Palabras clave: Violencia doméstica , Cine iraní, Tabú, Censura, Incautación

1. Introduction

There is no safer place than home, maybe we have heard this statement many times. Unfortunately, some homes are not safe and family members, especially children, are looking for a shelter to stay safe from insecurity at home, although this is deplorable, but it is true.

Domestic violence is reported all over the world. Until a few decades ago, sociologists considered violence in the family as an exceptional phenomenon in families that had material problems, low- level cultural and critical conditions such as divorce. Contrary to popular belief, research results have shown that violence exists among all families and socio-economic levels of society, and children are the main victims of violence (Illinois Protocol for Partner Abuse Intervention Programs, 2005). All members of the family could be victims of domestic violence, but girls are more vulnerable group, and this has prompted me to analyze this issue.

In many countries, including Western European countries; North America; Australia and New Zealand by using data, this issue has been scientifically analyzed, and domestic violence has been declared as a universal concern (Strategies for confronting domestic violence, 1993).

Although domestic violence is a hidden problem, in Iranian society the situation is a bit more complicated. In fact, the traditional view of Iranian society, which is tied to the restrictions and prohibitions are created by the Islamification policy of the Iran's regime, does not allow any negativity about the home. In Iranian culture, the home is always the safest place, and any other point of view is considered as a taboo that should be removed and censored.

When something is taboo, research and exploration about it is prohibited. So it is not possible to provide accurate statistics of domestic violence. What is the solution? Terminate the taboo. Yes, first of all, we must change the petrified view (people's view of the issue) ,and biased view (the government's view of the issue) ;and secondly, break the taboo. In this case we able to

investigate the gravity of the situation and find a suitable solution for it; otherwise, the way we are going is unproductive.

Prominent Iranian artists, especially filmmakers, are trying to break taboos by portraying the realities as influential people in the society's culture, but unfortunately the government's policies which try to Islamization all aspects of the society are barrier.

Cinematic works are also faced with the phenomenon of censorship, which sometimes applies to the subject, sometimes to the form, and sometimes to the content. Censorship is barrier to optimal communication with the spectator. This article tries to examine the cinematic works that depict domestic violence against girls, but those have been censored or seized. Obviously, if more work is done on this issue, the resistance of the government and the traditional view will be broken, and the way to show the truth to society and find a solution to subside the crisis will be easier.

2. Theoretical framework

Although there are many theories regarding the possibility or impossibility of portraying the realities of society including domestic violence in cinema, but in the over politicization country of Iran, analyzing the issue with the theory of patriarchy can be the best option. Webster's dictionary defines it as the principle or system of governing or controlling a country, group of employees, etc., in a manner suggesting a father's relationship with his children. Patriarchy which is derived from the Latin word father or spiritual father means, "to act like a father" or "to treat another person like a child" (Suber, 2003).

The patriarchal political system which mainly prevails in the third world countries and especially in the Middle East (Grand, 2022) means the management of the society based on paternalistic kindness and the imposition of supervision and domination of government on a poor nation under the guise of support (Benstead, 2020). This traditional authority helps the patriarch to interfere and limit the freedom of the citizens. According to this view, the individual's freedom is sacrificed for a higher power and self-interests (security and survival) and it causes freedom to be limited. Patriarchy is a monophonic discourse that it does not have well-listener, and the person appears to be submissive and satisfied, but inwardly he/ she does not hesitate to escape from the rules and structures wherever possible (Wayan and Nyoman, 2020). Patriarchal regimes try to deprive citizens of their fundamental and basic rights under the pretext of citizens' felicity and security and generally replace citizens' freedom with a one-sided agreement.

This theory has many opponents. Berlin, as one of the main critics of patriarchy, believed that patriarchal governments, even if they have good intentions, they eventually tend to view most people be incapable that their freedom is not possible. In practice, they want to say that

these people will never reach the stage of growth, and this is the method that humiliates human beings (Berlin,1969).

The regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran is formed on republic and Islamism (Aresta, 2012). The system of the Islamic Republic is based on the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist¹, and its political structure includes the Assembly of Experts for Leadership; the Leader of Iran; the executive branch; legislatur; the Islamic Council, the Guardian Council and the judiciary.

Some consider Iran's political system as a theocracy in which the religious laws and the spiritual person are given priority; "God" is the political basis of sovereignty and the government is run by those who claim to represent God at the head of affairs (Wastnidge, 2012),while the Islamic Republic itself believes that its government is a type of religious democracy. Religious democracy means that the administration and control of society in the political sphere is carried out by people's representatives in accordance with religious values (khoshbavar, 2022). In religious democracy, the goal is to preserve and promote the human and moral values of society. Where patriarchy meets to theory of moralism, both pursue the same goal which is to determine felicity for the society by something outside of the individual's own will by observing moral and religious boundaries (in Islamic Societies).

The system of the Islamic Republic has two main parties, fundamentalist and reformist (Abrahamian, 2021). The reformers who can be called Religious Intellectualism, a political trend that hopes to change the conditions in society through reforms with the least damage. This movement is realized with the transition within the system while maintaining it. This trend reached its peak in the 1990s and after the protests of the 10th presidential election in 2009², it has declined (nikbakhsh et al., 2021). Another well-known party is fundamentalists who are also known as Iranian conservatives. Fundamentalist were formed from the right party after 6th elections of the Islamic Council in 1999. The term radical that some western sources use in the political field of Iran usually refers to this party (kazemzadeh, 2008). This party, which can be called an Islamic extremism³, reached its peak for the first time in the 1980s and again in the 2000s. currently, their discourse has become the dominant discourse (Axworthy, 2016), and they have been accused to patriarchy many times, but they deny this charge⁴.

¹ According to the theory of Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist, the authority of all the affairs of the Islamic society is under the leader. After the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979., this theory was added to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Currently, the leader of Iran is Ayatollah -Sayyid Ali Hosseini Khamenei. The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, website of the Research Center of the Islamic Council, Retrieved on 12 October 2022. <https://www.parliran.ir/>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2009_Iranian_presidential_election_protests

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_extremism

⁴ <https://www.irna.ir/news/84237838>

The view of fundamentalists on religion is maximal and the view of reformists is minimal. Fundamentalists' defense of religion is basically done with a jurisprudential and philosophical approach, and reformists' defense with a pragmatic and rational approach. The fundamentalists believe that the domain of religion is not limited to religious issues that are directly related to God, but all our lives are included in the domain of religion (Mesbah-Yazdi, 2000). Regardless of internal factionalism, both parties agree on a common issue that is the implementation of Islamic rules in all aspects of society and in order to this the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance⁵ was established in the Islamic Republic of Iran which is responsible for limiting media access to any non-Islamic content. For this reason, many cinematic works and films have been censored under the pretext of violating Islamic values. According to the Islamic Republic of Iran, unrestricted freedom of the media and the presentation of an image outside of the predetermined framework leads to the destruction of the society and it takes people away from the path of felicity and this is not what a patriarchal government wants.

The family is one of the parts that Islamic government has a patriarchal approach on it; trying to present an image free of any filth in the media, and the display of violence in the family is considered a social danger that should be censored and removed quickly, even the image be a real image of what happening in the society⁶. Anyway, what determines the limitations⁷ in the life of the people, whether we consider as a result of the idea of religious sovereignty, whether we consider it a religious democracy or attribute it to patriarchy should not be used as an excuse to limit freedom because the media as a source of information and public awareness should not be limited to the dominant thinking and implement the intellectual policies of a certain party and group.

Films are affected by the social conditions of each society and represent social issues⁸. In Iranian society, there is a common understanding of social issues between the general public

⁵ <https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/1467508%20%20> and <https://www.isna.ir/news/8602-00145>

⁶ The regressive view of the government has caused the sanctity of the family not to be harmed by the censorship of the major parts of the film, The regressive view of the government has caused the sanctity of the family not to be harmed by the censorship of the major parts of the film, The regressive view of the government has caused the sanctity of the family not to be harmed by the censorship of the major parts of the film, The regressive view of the government has caused the sanctity of the family not to be harmed by the censorship of the major parts of the film,

⁷ In the Islamic Republic, the government considers restrictions and exceptions for the entire society, including the media, and these restrictions are called Red Lines, which are not allowed to be cross those. The Red Lines are wide and vague, and this wideness and ambiguity has caused the media in the last four decades in Iran to be far from its true philosophy, which is to clarify information. M. Saei (2020). Structural and professional obstacles of media monitoring of government action in Iran. *Culture-Communication Studies*, 50(82), 33-66. http://www.wjccs.ir/article_96357.html?lang=en

⁸ Rwomire defines the social problem with four characteristics of structural origin, being general, threatening and having a structural solution, and considers it an undesirable phenomenon that many members of society find intolerable, which requires collective action to correct it. John Mashounis considers it as a situation that disturbs the comfort of some or all people and is usually the subject of public debate. (Rwomire, A. (2001) Social Problems

and experts (Yousefi and Akbari, 2012). Social issues are represented in different ways. One of the most important field for representing social issues is cinema, and understanding social issues in the context of cinema can help a lot in reducing procedural ambiguities in the social issues, because films are an important cultural resource for understanding the nature of unpleasant social issues (Pehlivan,2016). In Iranian cinema, famous filmmakers such as Rakhshan Banietemad, Pouran Derakhshandeh, Kianoush Ayari, Asghar Farhadi and Jafar Panahi have always tried to depict social issues, but they are always faced with the problem of censorship in their films. Iranian cinema has been faced with the two limitations of tradition and religion for film production, and religious and traditional frameworks must be observed in the production; otherwise, the result of crossing it will be censorship and seizing of the film. Iran's patriarchal regime also intervenes in the field of cinema in order to fulfill its paternal duty to bring felicity to the society by monitoring the film productions, and this is the pain that Iranian cinema has endured for years as an obstacle to its mission of raising awareness.

2.1. Taboo

The oral culture of Iranian peoples is a mysterious world, the investigation of its content can open new perspectives to the world of anthropology and human sociology. Nations are symbols of cultural representation with which national identity is continuously reproduced through discursive action (Tabatabaie and Momeni, 2021).

The world we live in has always faced restrictions and prohibitions that some of which were unwanted and the product of nature, and some of those were made by humans. The limitations that humans have made for themselves are generally not out of three categories: It is due to the application of the law, or it is due to religious prohibition, or it is rooted in hidden and imaginary issues. Taboos are part of these categories (MacLean et al., 2020).

Taboo refers to the prohibition of behavior for a certain society at a certain time in certain contexts. Behavior to be prohibited; it must be considered harmful to an individual or community (Allan, 2018). In linguistics, taboos include expressions that should be avoided and generally should not be used in speech and action because those are socially unacceptable (Zandi et al., 2019).

Taboo is recognized as one of the fundamental concepts in most regions of the world and it is especially useful in understanding religious beliefs. Finding the roots of taboos among Iranian peoples and analyzing their dimensions can help to understand Iranian public culture. The family

in Africa: New Visions. Westport, Conn: Praeger ; Mashounis, J. (2016) Social Issues, Tehran: Research Institute for Culture, Art and Communication

is one of the sacred concepts and a safe place between Iranians that religious and traditional beliefs of the Iranian society and the government have always tried to depict a image of close-knit family; everything that disturbs this image is a social danger that must be removed quickly.

According to the belief of many social scientists, relationships within the family are more important than the family structure (Thomas et al.,2017),therefore living in a single parent family or with step-parents, etc. is not very important ,but the parents' supervision, control, participation, and sympathy with the children's needs is a sign better stability of family relationships.

In the Iranian society, which faces many religious and traditional taboos, the family is considered as a symbol of the stability of relationships and sanctified prohibition that hardly anyone dares to show another face.

Depicting the realities of relationships within families where there is domestic violence is considered a danger for Iran's regime, because the existence of unpleasant social issues in family relations indicates the inability of the patriarchal regime, which has been trying for years to make relations stable and free from impurity in the family with the approach of Islamization, but its efforts have backfired.

2.2. Censorship in Iranian cinema

Censorship is a limitation of expression that is considered a threat to the accepted religious and social norms in the time (Plutarch, 2016). Censorship in the sense of suppressing words, images, or ideas that are considered offensive; it occurs when some people succeed in imposing their personal, political or moral values on others. Censorship can be carried out by the government as well as private pressure groups. In fact, censorship is the attempt of the government or private organizations to prevent reading, seeing and hearing what is thought to be harmful to the government or public morality (Agah, 2022). Historically, censorship has been used to monitor public morality, control public awareness, and suppression of political oppositions (Abbasi and Al-Sharqi, 2015).

Art reflects in society. Artwork is a certain form of social consciousness and a precise reality. Films convey the content or message of the filmmaker to the consumers of art. Censorship is an obstacle to communication and is cause of disruption of optimal communication. In patriarchal regimes, media censorship is used as a tool to maintain order, but their real motivation is to keep the public ignorance.

The contemporary history of Iran also shows the application of censorship in various fields, and artists have always faced it. In media censorship, individuals or groups try to prevent others from saying, printing or depicting words and images. Censorship seeks to limit freedom of

thought and speech by restricting symbolic messages; books; art; music; movies; television programs and Internet sites.

In Iran, censorship is related to value concepts (Censorship is usually evaluated negatively) (Heilmann and Cook,2010); the requirements imposed on Iranian culture and the negative external view to censorship in the sense of removing and cutting an artwork (due to non-compliance with values) have changed the word censorship to supervision in the regime of the Islamic Republic. This does not directly mean removal, but it is checkout, although the ultimate goal is removal.

In Iran, the main goal of media censorship is to find a balance between permitted attitudes and the attitudes that exist. In the direction of the Iranian government's goals for Islamisation in media content, media productions must consider all these aspects before production and take self-censorship; otherwise those will definitely face censorship. According to Saeed Zeydabadi-Nejad 2011, Iranian cinema cannot act apart from the ideology of the Iranian regime because the Iranian regime seeks to create a society of "Good Muslims" in any way.

Censorship in cinema has existed after Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979(Azizi, 2017). Freedom of speech is considered as one of the elements of human rights, and the foundation of guaranteeing democracy in any country. Article 24⁹ of the Iranian Constitution tries to protect human rights and has declared any censorship prohibited, but at the end of the article with a general exception gives legitimacy to censorship, and this conflict goes back to the Islamisation policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran regime. According to the press law, it is forbidden to publish content that is against Islamic standards and to express opinions that harm for Islamic Republic. Article 2 of this law considers considers the mission of the press to advance the goals of the Islamic Republic which means violating the freedom of the media.

Also, regulations have been established to monitor the content of the media in Iran and the display of a artwork is conditioned to obtain a license. Checking the content produced for the show is done in the Vice-Chancellor of Artistic Affairs of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Three resolutions of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, "Policies of Performing Arts", "Performance Supervision Regulations" and "Supervising and Performing Arts license" show that there is not much trust to artists ;and the government after checkout gives permission to show the artwork. In these regulations, it refers to the religious, moral, political and social restrictions that the supervisory board checks a artwork to make sure that the red line has not been crossed, then the license is granted.

The family and its internal relations are also one of the red lines of the Iranian government, so showing any conflict and violent actions within the family is prohibited and will be

⁹ Publications and the press are free to express their content unless it disturbs the fundamentals of Islam.

immediately banned or censored, while the statistics show that the family in Iran today is faced with fundamental problems and some people refer to it as a crisis of family (Elyasi et al., 2007).

However, domestic violence is a reality that banning its showing in the cinema not only does not help to solve the crisis but also aggravates the crisis. In the following, the cinematic works that depict violence in the family, especially against children, but faced with censorship or seizure are analyzed.

3. Filmography

3.1. Friday Evening

Friday Evening is an Iranian film directed by Mona Zandi in 2006. This film is about a girl named Sougand who was raped by her uncle at the age of 15 and become pregnant. When her father finds out that she is pregnant, he expels her from home. Sougand is imprisoned for the crime of vagrancy and her child is born in prison. After discharge, she faces many problems that the director masterfully portrays the problems of a girl rejected from her family who becomes victim of the culture full of taboos of the Iranian society. This movie was never shown on the cinema screen and was seized.

This film received the best film award at the 24th Fajr Film Festival and won the silver statue of the 47th Thessaloniki International Film Festival, Greece. It was also selected as the best film from the University of Oriental Studies in Paris¹⁰. Friday evening movie is made in drama genre. Mona Zandi Haghigi is an Iranian writer and director who is familiar with the traditional views of women in Iranian culture and the taboos and sacredness of Iranian society. She has lived in the social environment of her film, so she knows very well that a girl who is pregnant out of wedlock cannot be accepted by her family, and the family is blamed by people, so for avoiding these blames, they are forced to reject the girl.

She starts her film with the scene of rejecting the girl. In the first sequence, the scene is dark and the sound of beating the girl (Sougand) is heard that her father shouts: *{you disgraced your family, you must leave home forever}*. These dark scenes are repeated in several sequences that the director masterfully achieves two aims with one action. This darkness is both a symbol of a black thought and culture and a symbol of taboos that cannot be easily shown.

The film creates suspense for the audience so that the audience follows the film until the end to find out who the girl is pregnant with. When Banafsheh enters the movie as Sougand's sister, the movie moves faster and the director's intention is easier to understand. Banafsheh comes to Tehran to find her sister and finds her address, but Sougand doesn't want to meet her and says that she can't forgive her father because he has imposed suffering on me for years. Banafsheh

¹⁰ Fajr Film Festival is held every year in Iran as the national festival of Iranian cinema.

reminds her of the society's culture and says: *{our father was right, people talked behind our backs and family was embarrassed}* .

In the final scenes of the movie, when Sougand confabulate to Banafsheh, she tells the truth about what happened to her: *{ When I was 15 years old, I went out with uncle Qadir, and in the middle way, he said become lustfully and raped me}*. In order to show all the scenes of this section, on which the foundation of the film is based, the director had to darken the scene again due to Islamic policies and only broadcast the dialogues between Sougand and his uncle, how uncle rapes her. However, despite all the limitations of filmmaking in Iran, the director managed to convey her intention to the audience with, which is rape by blood relatives. But there is also a serious criticism of the film, director by emphasizing too much on the girl's problems after being rejected she becomes involved in details and has moved away from the main issue which is rape by blood relatives and its taboo in Iranian culture.

Every year many girls are sexually abused in Iran by their father, brother and even uncle (Farajih et al.,2022). Rape and sexual harassment by blood relatives can be considered the most violent and hidden domestic violence(Goh et al., 2022) that remains hidden due to the cultural taboos of Iranian society. Ignoring this violence makes the aggressors more insolent, and also censorship of this issue causes the catastrophic consequences of this damage to remain hidden from view of the politicians and cultural planners, so that this violence is not considered as an important social risk and is not a priority for planners.

3.2. The Paternal House

The Paternal House is a movie directed by Kianoosh Ayari, produced in Iran in 2012. The movie is about a girl named Molook who her father wants to kill her because of losing virginity out of wedlock , and he told his little son named Mohtsham to dig a grave in the basement for killing Molook and bury her there. After being seized for five years, this movie was on the cinema screen on 23 October 2018, but after five days on 28 October 2018, it was re-seized by writ of the prosecutor's attorney.

The paternal house was nominated for the Venice Horizons Award at the Venice Film Festival in 2012 and was chosen as the best film of the 8th Festival of Iranian Cinema Critics Association. The paternal house in the drama genre was made by Kianoush Ayari as one of the best filmmakers in the after of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, who someone who has a style in Iranian realistic cinema. Ayari was born in Khuzestan province¹¹, wherever the most honor killings in Iran

¹¹ Khuzestan is a province in the southwestern of Iran, which is south of the Persian Gulf, where people live in a tribes. Honor crimes are caused by conceptualization of honor in honor-oriented societies. Culture of honor is more common among tribes, culture of honor is more common among the tribes, and they do honor killing to face saveing and remove the stigma (Heydari,A., Teymoori,A., & Trappes,R.(2021). Honor killing as a dark side of

are recorded every year in order to gender prejudices and taboos (Gholami, Sudani, Farhadi, khojasteh: 2019). Therefore, Ayari is fully familiar with the social environment of his film, so he does not exaggerate in sending the message.

In the first view of the film, the spectator is facing a wooden door, which is the door of paternal house. This door is locked with a big wood. At the beginning of the film, the director tries to clarify the atmosphere of the film for the audience, and door with large wooden padlock is a symbol of some false traditions and taboos in the culture of Iranian society, which is repeated several times in the film. When Molook, who is against the culture of the society has a romantic relationship with strange man; realizing that her father wants to kill her for breaking the taboo, she runs to the wooden door, but she cannot open the strong wooden padlock on the door and is trapped by his father and brother. With this scene, the director actually induce to the viewer that Molook has no way to escape from traditions and taboos.

In 24:17second the film, the professional viewer is faced with an special sequence. The house bell rings, the little girl of the family runs to open the door, the wooden padlock on the door is so strong and heavy that it makes the little girl struggle, when her older sister goes to help her, her mother does not allow and says: *{Let's see if she can open it or not}*. When the girl's effort comes to fruition and she pulls the padlock, her mother, who is a symbol of enlightenment in the family, smiles out of satisfaction. The director cleverly reuses the symbol of the large wooden padlock (as an indexical sign¹²). When the girly opens the lock and the mother smiles out of satisfaction, she is hoped that one day the girly will be able to cross the wrong cultural and taboos. At the end of the film, we see that the girly has grown up and how she stands against the patriarchal authority.

In another sequence to the girl's uncle come to the paternal house to make sure coup de grace by Molook's father. When he is sure that the Molook is killed, he kisses brother's hand and says: *{Bravo to your zeal, you wiped the stigma}*.

The taboos have sowhat an effect on the minds that Molook's brother named Mohtsham, who is a boy about 14-15 years old, cooperates calmly with his father in the murder of Molook and he proud himself that he has a part in restoring the family's reputation. When Molook begs his brother and says: *{Why do you want to kill me? Aren't I your sister?}* Mohtsham answers: *{No,*

modernity: Prevalence, common discourses, and a critical view. *Social Science Information*. 60(1). 10.1177/0539018421994777.

¹² The role of the study of signs is an influencer in filmmaking today. As filmmakers strive to engage audiences on a deeper and reflective scale. Thus representation. This is how film "represents" or reflects and manipulates this reality in order to convey their message or meaning. The science of recognizing signs in cinema is called semiotics Semiotics is a research method that has entered the field of science since the 1950s, and due to the wide range of topics, research have been conducted in the fields of philosophy, aesthetics, and communication. Index signs that there is a kind of semantic connection between the subject and the sign and sometimes also a kind of cause-and-effect relationship. for more study refer to: researches on cinema semiotic in Google Scholar.

we lost our face}. Ayari masterfully depicts Molook's effort to save her life and his father and brother's efforts to take Molook into the cave. In these scenes as if intellect no longer rule, something that happens in all honor killings, and feeling of frustration caused by the victim's by breaking taboos and trying to restore honor makes them more determined to kill molook.

Ayari also mentions the intergenerational transition of patriarchal culture in his film. In the 56:33 second the film, when Molook's older sister finds out murder, she tell her father and brother: {*Why don't you die?*}. The father says: {*Whatever we have is from cradle*}. This sentence has a metaphor for the transfer of patriarchal culture from generation to generation in the paternal house.

Although the paternal house is a masterpiece that should not be missed but can also criticize Ayari. He has not created suspense in his film, and the entire film is finished in the first ten minutes, and the audience understands everything that the director wants to say in his film in the first few minutes.

A father kills his daughter and buries her in basement due to tradition and a false belief. In the history of Iran, tradition has deep roots in Iranians's mind. Instead of moving from tradition and reaching modernity by maintaining their deep traditional beliefs, they have stepped into the post-modern world and involve tradition in their most modern behaviors.

The Paternal House screams patriarchal culture even in its name. In The Paternal House, the director tries to show that the patriarchal culture that Iranian women endure; it victimizes men as much as it harms to women. In the house depicted by Ayari, both men and women are victims of the secretive and honor-centered culture.

3.3. Girl's House

Girl's House is a movie directed by Shahram Shahhosseini and written by Parviz Shahbazi, produced in Iran in 2014. The film is about a girl named Samira who lost her mother and lives with her father and younger sister. She plans to marry a boy named Mansoor. One day before the wedding, Mansoor's mother informs Samira that she should visit a gynecologist to make sure of Samira's virginity¹³. Samira gets shocked, runs away from the doctor's office and commits suicide in the street. After that, two of Samira's close friends try to find out the cause of Samira's death. At first, the spectator thinks that Samira had sex with a strange man before marriage, and she could not accept her mother-in-law's condition for a virginity test; therefore,

¹³ Female virginity, accorded a great deal of value, is established as a normative societal guideline in Iran. It is a symbol of virtue and promise, it is a primary condition for a woman's first marriage. Virginity as the lack of sexual intercourse before marriage has been considered as a value and sign of piety in many religions for centuries. In the context of Iran, sexual relation outside marriage is prohibited by law and religion, and it is associated with punishments. Mehroliassani, M., Feyzabadi, V., Mirzaei, S., Zolala, F., Haghdoost, A., & Oroomiei, N. (2020). The concept of virginity from the perspective of Iranian adolescents: a qualitative study. *BMC Public Health*, 20, 1-8.

she committed suicide, but some dialogues and father's meaningful looks reveal the bitter truth that the person was not a stranger. Censorship of major parts of the film has made the spectator come to this conclusion by putting the puzzles together that the main theme of the film is domestic violence and the rape by father against his daughter, which ultimately leads to the girl's suicide. The regressive view of the government has caused the sanctity of the family not to be harmed by censorship of the major parts of the film, even though by hiding the facts.

Girl's House entered the Tokyo International Film Festival as Iran's representative. This film is a social melodrama and has a storytelling style. Storytelling may seem a little vague because of the amendments made to it, but with the progress of the story and its ending, spectator can guess the topic of the film. The main theme of the film is being a virgin or not being a virgin, the fear of revealing the truth of the past and escaping from an environment that hurts Samira, clues to a non-discussable issue (for the characters in the film) and a moral breakdown within the family, which can be easily proven by the target sequences in the film.

In Islam, virginity is one of the virtues of a girl at the time of marriage, and a girl's virginity is the reason for a higher dowry than a divorced or widowed woman (Borzoeyan & Zadsham, 2021). In general, in the traditional society of Iran, like other traditional societies, virginity is still the basis of a girl's purity and one of the criteria for marriage, and this issue sometimes causes a serious challenge for girls. In *Girl's House*, the director deals with the importance of virginity of a girl before marriage as a cultural, intellectual and social challenges, But in order to escape from the cultural restrictions in Iran's filmmaking industry, he has to indirectly mention this issue. In several dialogues such as "*I'm installing the curtain*", "*Let's write miss¹⁴ on the grave's Samira instead of deceased*", it refers to the importance of hymen in traditional Iranian culture.

On the other hand, subject of rape by father is a subject that was not directly addressed in the film, and it is not clear whether it was really in the original script or it was deleted later, however, this can be understood by putting some key sequences together. One of the reasons audiences guess that the subject is incest is father's fear from discussing this issue that he instead of defending his daughter, he wants to escape from the issue. When Samira's friends find out her death, they go to Samira's house (*Girl's House*) to understand about the reason. In the dialogues between Samira's friends and her father, it is clear that the father does not want anyone to know anything about the cause of Samira's death and he says: {*we do not write any obituary and we do not have a ceremony, I do not want anyone to come for the funeral ceremony*}. Glances that are exchanged between Samira's father and her little sister during the film show that the little girl of the family named Setara is also a victim of domestic violence.

In the end, it should be said that although "*Girl's House*" is a raw experience and only adding insult to injury of cultural and social, but it is a socially concerned film in its content.

¹⁴ In Iranian culture, "Miss" call a girl who is a virgin.

4. Conclusion

Social issues are the most important current issues of Iranian society. One of the hidden social issues is domestic violence. Domestic violence is a problem with epidemic proportions and far-reaching consequences for victims. Iranian filmmakers as a part of the society are rightly focus on social problems of their time and try to show the social realities in their films. They consider one of their duties to show the violent relationships within some families and they have produced eminent films, but unfortunately, the produced films are not safe from the sting of the policies governing the politicized country of Iran. Although Iranian society has made a leap towards modernity, it has not abandoned its traditional views. In the meantime, the regime of the Islamic Republic, as the ruling regime of Iran, which seeks to monitor and Islamize all aspects of society, has also entered the field of cinema and art, the intersection of tradition and religion has made it more difficult for Iranian filmmakers to make films while respecting red lines and taboos. For this reason, many films with the content of domestic violence have been censored and seized ,because in the opinion of the Islamic regime, showing violence in the family will broke the taboo of sanctity of the family as a safe place for its members, so it is condemned to censorship and seized, while violation of media freedom under the pretext of the felicity of society by patriarchal regimes leads to the blocking of access to information and awareness for all members of the society, which the victim will be the whole society.

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