

Greek civil war and representations of power in Greek cinema (1948-2010)

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But what do they think that Cinema is? -An asylum?
From Police Chief Mposinakis' interview in Vima-See Camera magazine,
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Abstract

Focusing on movies made after 1945 in the context of historic and cultural research we are interested in qualitative methods, terminologies, and tools needed for the critical analysis of film. Referring to the cinematic revolution signalled by the Italian Neo-Realism and the various other new wave movements of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s in this paper we focus on researching and analysing the communistic films about the Greek Civil War.

Attention will be paid to formal and stylistic techniques to the narrative, non-narrative, and generic organizations of film. Those formal features will be closely linked to historical and cultural distinctions and changes. Historically we are following Hobsbawm who preferred issues on workers' conditions as their standard of living, and varieties of political expression that were either archaic, or prosaically integrated into bourgeois politics (Hobsbawm, 1984). The research question derives from the area of historic studies in terms of the narrative categories of history. We collect and record films that have as their topic the civil war and, as senders-producers, Greek directors of the same time period. Thus, the Greek civil war can be read as a historic/social/political event through the channel of cinema. In the most historic discourses about the civil war the "winners" penalized the historic memory of that period characterizing and treating the defeated as national traitors. Semiotic classification of this material supports the documentation of the narratives, which may refer to the cinematic context as the contributors – senders (of a message), the film itself, the distribution and the film projection.

The aim of this study is to search the historiographical-narrative model in detail, as it is constructed on the specific films and as mediation on the actual referents. We also seek to deconstruct the filmic material and to highlight the political, communist, and anti-communist references to the Modern Greek political history.