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Original Research Article

Reality and Fiction in Abbas Kiarostami's Cinema with the Focus on Close-up and the Koker Trilogy

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Abstract

“Abbas Kiarostami” is the best-known figure in Iranian cinema on the international stage and he has received numerous awards from prestigious festivals and film organizations throughout the world. As a leading and innovative filmmaker, Kiarostami, in his documentaries and feature films, specially produced in the 80s and 90s, seeks to show the commonalities and distinctions between the real and the fictional matter in cinema. His cinema has attained a distinguishable authorial style in the world by utilizing a new method of narration and defining a new approach in the film production cycle. Kiarostami through his work establishes that cinema can imperfectly record reality and fiction in a fusional and compositional atmosphere. Films such as “Close-up” and the “Koker trilogy”, “which includes where is the Friend's Home”? Life and Nothing More, and Through the Olive Trees, are successful instances of Kiarostami's conscious manipulation with the quasi-fictional narration in a documentary-like background.

Keywords: *The reality, Fiction, Abbas Kiarostami, Close-up, Koker Trilogy.*

Introduction

Traditionally speaking in the history of cinema, there's a clear distinction between reality and fiction. Documentaries are formed inside Reality's territory while almost all the other types of films are made in the territory of short or long fiction.

Through a glance at different eras in the history of cinema in countries known for having a strong cinematic tradition, one can find exceptions that do not comply with the contractual paradigms mentioned above. There are many film-makers who despite having worked based on an actual

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or historical event, have distorted and freely made artistic and creative changes in their cinematic representations. Some documentaries have drawn elements from the fictional cinema. Such films have rightly challenged the assumptions of originality and trueness of an event and created a sort of conceptual gap between that what is seen and what has happened or exists. Non-fictional cinema is trying to replace the authentic reality with that what it shows as reality. So about reality, two types of cinema can be identified; one is the cinema of the reality (which directly records reality) and the other one is fictional cinema (which conditionally records reality). To reach a more accurate understanding of these two types of cinema, we need to reinvestigate some definitions. The traditional and conventional understanding of documentary is that the camera is inactively placed in a fixed corner so that a train passes by and the role of the documentary filmmaker is solely to decide where to put the camera and when to start recording. When the audience viewer is presented with such films, he or she is inclined to assume that the film-maker has recorded the event without manipulation or tampering but the very placement of the camera is representative of the film-maker's visual aesthetics as well as the fictional disconnect. One of the questions that can give a fictional role to the documentary above is why the film-maker has decided to film the entrance of the train rather than the exit.

Accordingly, we can consider Kiarostami's *Close-up* and the *Koker* trilogy, which includes *Where is the Friend's Home?*, *Life and Nothing More* and *Through the Olive Trees*, as sterling examples of the division of the world of cinema into real and fictional spaces.

Research background

After review of the exiting published books, articles, dissertations, and reliable sites in the field of cinema and specifically Kiarostami's cinema, independent

research on the exact subject of (Reality and fiction in Abbas Kiarostami's cinema with the focus on *Close-up* and the *Koker* Trilogy) was not found. However, among those works both in Persian and English we can name some instances that have sporadically and briefly tried to define reality and fiction and the role of Kiarostami's cinema in processing them: *The Evidence of Film* (Nancy, 2001), *The Realist Film-maker* (Karimi, 1986), *Abbas Kiarostami's Cinema* (Safarian, 2016), and *On Close-up* (Cheshire, 2010).

Research Hypothesis

Abbas Kiarostami as a filmmaker has managed to revolutionize the narrative style and the performance of reality and fiction in cinema. This study is based on the hypothesis that Kiarostami through his multifaceted knowledge of the arts, has ventured to create a uniquely nonconformist atmosphere by the methods he applies to arrange the narrative elements in the representation of reality and fiction and in doing so he has made use of several cinematic techniques and elements.

Research Questions

1. What are the characteristics, patterns, and features of Kiarostami's cinema in creating the fictional world and the reality?
2. What are the compositional techniques of reality and fiction in Kiarostami's cinema?
3. Why are the films *Close-up* and the *Koker* trilogy, which includes *Where is the Friend's Home?*, *Life and Nothing More*, and *Through the Olive Trees*, successful instances of removing the border between reality and fiction?

Methodology

The methodology of the present study is based on a descriptive-analytical approach and the data has been collected through library research. This study tries to express the generality of the research and

Abbas Kiarostami's innovations in his films, as well as analyzing his unique way of thinking in the combination of the ideas of reality and fiction in cinema.

Real or fictional cinema?!

Close-up is one of Kiarostami's most important movies which is highly rated in several world ranking systems as well as in the manuscripts of internationally acclaimed critics. This film was made based on a news story which was printed in an Iranian newspaper. In the film's plot a man named Hosein Sabzian who looks a lot like "Mohsen Makhmalbaf" – the well-known Iranian filmmaker – introduces himself as Mohsen Makhmalbaf to the Ahankhah family and is welcomed into their house to make a film. On the first day, Sabzian who is now pretending to be Makhmalbaf, asks Mehrdad – the family's son – who is interested in acting to play a role in his film and also use their house as a filming location. The second day at the request of the fake Makhmalbaf they rehearse the scenes of the film. The father who has been suspicious of Sabzian since the beginning with the help of a friend, Ahmad Reza Moayed Hoseini, who is a composer on television and through Hasan Farazmand, a journalist at Soroosh magazine, reveals Sabzian's true identity. On the third day, the fake Makhmalbaf is arrested and goes to a court trial. In court after the investigation of the dossier and signing a pledge by Sabzian, as well as Ahankhah family's consent, the case is dismissed. The day Sabzian is released, Mohsen Makhmalbaf goes to visit him and they go to Ahankhah's house to clear the air.

In this film, Kiarostami by focusing on a social event, ventures into a new narrative representation that was unprecedented in Iranian cinema. The film is an intelligent fusion of fiction and documentary cinema (*ibid.*), and from a neutral viewpoint portrays Hosein Sabzian's character and communicates his intentions for posing as Makhmalbaf to the audience.

In Close-up Kiarostami opts for an anthropological and philosophical approach which is to repeatedly deny the reality of what has happened to get to the intended reality. By presenting an event that was originally designed to fool people in the film, the audience is also involved in the hustle and sometimes believes it. The manipulation of reality and the creation of ambiguity is also seen in the Koker trilogy, which includes *Where is the Friend's Home?* (1987), *Life and Nothing More* (1992) and *Through the Olive Trees* (1994). Generally speaking, all these films are considered fiction films, and all of them contain a sign which points to the previous film. At first, we can talk about *Where is the Friend's Home?*. The film is about a rural local student who usually writes his homework on any piece of paper he finds rather than in his homework notebook. The film takes place on a day when he is threatened by the teacher that if he does it again he would be thrown out of the classroom. After school, his classmate who lives in another village realizes that he has taken his notebook by mistake because the notebooks look the same. So to prevent the punishment of his friend he decides to get the notebook to him, and he goes to the neighboring village but he can't find the house while it's already dark and he hasn't bought bread for their own house yet. Moreover, he's worried because he hasn't done his homework. In the meantime, he meets a kind old man who helps him get back home and also asks his father not to punish him. The next day, he gives the notebook back to him right before the teacher is going to check their homework, and he has done his friend's homework too as it was the only solution.

In this movie which follows a storyline, important stylistic and narrative elements have found a documentary-like role so that Kiarostami can reach his fusional tone of reality and fiction. For instance, all the roles are played by non-actors and the indigenous residents of those places. Also, the appearances of the actors and their accents make

the whole atmosphere more plausible and drag the audience into the documentary-fiction space. In the background of the linear narration of the film, there are many signs of the atmosphere that the story takes place in. Things like the presence of village children, the natural scenery of the village, the lifestyle and relationships of the local people are some of the things that help the audience believe the documentary-like quality of the film while effortlessly and spontaneously buying into the story. The second film from the Koker Trilogy is *Life and Nothing More*. The plot is somehow related to *Where is a friend's home?*. Three days after the big earthquake of Khordad 1990 in Gilan Province, a dad and his son who lived in the city travel to the village to find out about the well-being of Ahmad and Babak Ahmadpoor, the actors of *Where is a friend's home?*, who live in a village near Roodbar. Because of the blockage on the main road, they are forced to take detours and ask about the Ahmadpoors from anybody they see. In every ruin, there is a huge effort for survival and rebuilding. The father and his son cannot find the Ahmadpoors but are informed that they are fine. It has been filmed in the ruins of the earthquake a few days after it happened which makes it even more documentary-like, although Kiarostami had written the screenplay before. Kiarostami through taking a different viewpoint combines reality with his fictional world and in a space where nothing but sorrow and death can be expected, he's advertising life. It is obvious that what the audience expects when observing an area which has been devastated by an earthquake is to see the devastation and suffering of the locals, However, in this film, there are no images that convey that kind of message and the present reality has changed in favor of Kiarostami's intended reality. In the film some people are dragging out their furniture from under the ruins, some others are trying to set up a TV antenna so they can watch the Fifa World Cup Final and some are planning a wedding. These

instances particularly surprise the audience in the way that they treat reality and the way they portray the conflict between imagination and the image challenges the presuppositions of the viewers.

The last film of the Koker trilogy is *Through the Olive Trees*. This film is about the life of Hosein and Tahere who are acting in a movie and you can also see the same thing here. Kiarostami once again shows that he's not recording an event that is happening right now, but he has designed a specific storyline for it. One of the most important parts of the film is the final scene. In this scene through a long shot, we see Tahere who is descending from the farm up the hill to the Olive tree jungle in the valley. Hosein is hastily following her. The camera doesn't move throughout the scene and is observing the two characters. Finally, just before the Olive trees, Hosein catches up to Tahere. Consequently, without the audience hearing anything the scene is managed. In the midst of all that in a shot we see the face of Mohammad Ali Keshavarz playing the role of the director following Hosein with a smile. Kiarostami's emphasis by involving a shot of the director is a symbol of his presence and influence on the outcome of the events meaning he's looking to create a conditioned reality rather than an authentic or original one.

The Koker Trilogy and *Close-up* are true indicators of Kiarostami's style in breaking the line between reality and fiction. This kind of cinema in redefining all the narrative and stylistic aesthetic elements is solely concerned with Kiarostami's cinema.

Expressing reality in the Koker trilogy and Close-up

John Grierson says: documentary as an anti-aesthetic movement has existed since the birth of cinema (Ward, 2012, 44). Kiarostami by defining his new style highlights the role of the audience in conscious understanding of the path of his works a lot more than before. According to Grierson,

aesthetic elements should not be considered at the battlefield of producing documentary-like or pseudo-documentary pieces, but Kiarostami by creating a new reading in cinema improves the aesthetic qualities of the documentary-fiction works. The greatest aesthetic feature of Kiarostami's cinema is in the way he recreates reality in the context of fiction. For example, *Close-up* starts with a scene where two policemen and a journalist are on the way to Ahankhah's house to arrest Hosein Sabzian. On the road, the journalist tells the story of how Hosein Sabzian managed to cheat Ahankhah's family for the driver. This beginning creates a general image for the audience. When they arrive at Ahankhah's place, the camera instead of following the journalist and the two policemen on their way to arrest Sabzian stays outside with the driver who is watching a pile of trash in front of a house. A few moments later the driver approaches the pile and grabs a handful of flowers that were sitting on top of the pile. This beginning does not reveal the storyline but informs us of the way Kiarostami is going to interpret reality. There is no documentary value in this scene but there is an aesthetic quality within the scene that finds greater significance in his later films. The driver does not play an important role later in the story but finds a unique role here. If we were dealing with a simpler documentary, the camera would have almost definitely followed the policemen to capture the moment that Sabzian was arrested as evidence. Considering Sabzian had already been arrested before the shoot, rather than directly enacting the event, Kiarostami prefers to go to the driver and design a meaningful act for him. The driver's long wait outside the house for the journalist and the policemen to come out creates an ambiance that is very attractive for the audience who is deprived of information. The creative beauty of this scene points to a separation from reality while the audience thinks they're watching the actual event. Kiarostami has very intelligently placed

Sabzian's arrest somewhere else in the film and through such a trick he intervenes in the classical narration of the story. This challenges the linear and traditional way of storytelling and constructs an atmosphere of uncertainty for the audience by making a composition of real and unreal images (Onala, 2011, 36). This technique creates an ambiguity for the viewer which results in them doubting the credibility of what they're watching and what has happened. This approach determines that this is not the evidence of reality but is the process of manufacturing reality by the filmmaker. On the other hand, *Close-up* mostly follows the structural and aesthetic elements of artistic and storyteller cinema rather than a classical documentary. There are completely documentary scenes in the film such as the courtroom scene but even in that same scene, there are signs of the artistic storyteller cinema. Kiarostami has deliberately intervened with and manipulated the conversations that have happened at the court. The relation between the beginning and end of the film is also another pointer to the fact that *Close-up* is a storyteller film in a documentary setting. In the beginning, the driver picks up a bunch of flowers from the trash and in the end, Sabzian is seen with flowers in his hand going to Ahankhah's house. You can say that this is just a coincidence but considering Kiarostami's approach to filmmaking, the existence of an intentional relationship seems more convincing, hence creating a symbolic expression for the film. This deliberate approach in the way reality is chosen and painted is also indicated in the Koker trilogy.

David Obina believed that: each film from the Koker trilogy carries a sign from the previous film and simultaneously becomes an element for the next one. Kiarostami in this trilogy has constantly moved between fictional and documentary atmospheres and manages to design a different system for storytelling in cinema (Elena, 2005, 108–109).

Abbas Kiarostami is not aiming to distort reality,

and this gives a new characteristic to his films. He has a special knowledge of how to create a gap between what has happened and what is being recorded through his camera. As an example, the movie *Life and Nothing More* in the context of the sad catastrophe in Roodbar creates a fictional space that takes us further from or brings us closer to the original reality. The search for the two missing boys from the film *Where's a Friend's Home?* is fused with the struggle of the people to survive in the devastated quake-stricken area and this results in a deliberate delay in the progression of the film. In one scene the director has a conversation with a recently married man. The young man and his wife have gotten married in the aftermath of the earthquake and this moment indicates that even in a time of great suffering and devastation caused by the earthquake there is still a will to survive and live. That's how Kiarostami refrains from presenting a radical and superficial report of the crisis and through adding a hint of life establishes storylines in the context of a documentary. All the real elements of *Life and Nothing More* have been revisited and reconstructed based on the will to live. Kiarostami has said in an interview: I have made some parts of the film five months after the quake and some eleven months after the earthquake but the result looks like a documentary (Saeed-vafa, 2003, 14).

Although the film looks like a documentary that has been shot exactly in the aftermath of the earthquake, Kiarostami has rightly implemented some techniques to distance the film from the devastation and misery caused by the earthquake and has made a gap in reality by creating subtle lines of fiction. Through keeping his distance from the tragic disaster, Kiarostami has refrained from recording images that are designed to play with the audience's emotions. Yet you can accept the film as the real evidence for the things that happened after the earthquake. Kiarostami in *Life and Nothing More* is targeting our perception of time and space

and conveys another aspect of beauty and livelihood in the aftermath of the earthquake in a documentary context.

Kiarostami's other film called *Through the Olive Trees* has a documentary-fiction approach to the events that occurred behind the scene of the filming of *Life and Nothing More*. The story takes place in Koker where Hosein proposes to Tahere and asks for her family's permission to marry her but is rejected because he doesn't own a house. The same night the earthquake makes everybody homeless. Hosein in this situation sees himself as equal to others and feels happy about it. Seven days later, at the graves of the "passed away", Hosein finds out that Tahere and her mother have survived. A film crew enters Koker to make a film. Hosein works with them. The Crew chooses Tahere to play the role of Hosein's wife. In the end, Tahere agrees to act alongside Hosein but does not say a word other than her written dialogues to Hosein.

Kiarostami's role in the film is played by Mohamad Ali Keshavarz – a well-known Iranian actor. At the beginning of the film, Keshavarz tells the audience that he's playing the role of the director and is looking for actors in Koker. At this point, his female assistant interrupts him and says that a group of girls are ready for the audition. From this point on the movie deviates from being a documentary and gets closer to being fiction and Keshavarz changes from someone playing the director to the actual director. The presence of the actors for the audition is another witness to the fact that this film is going to have actors and is supposed to follow the rules of storyteller cinema. This composition causes the audience to constantly question which part of the film is real and which part is reenacted.

Kiarostami through implementing certain techniques equips his film with a sort of ambiguity so that the audience subconsciously forgets about the line between reality and fiction. He recognizes no boundaries between the two and his films are

brimming with a certain kind of belief in mixing reality with fiction. In his films we cannot distinguish between documentary and fiction, maybe because to himself, the line is obscure and blurry which has very significantly contributed to his films being globally acclaimed.

In *Through the Olive Trees* by adding the director from a fictional world to the real world, a new cinematic expression of reality and non-reality is formed. In Kiarostami's cinema, there's a philosophy which says that although he is removed from the real setting that his films have, but everything non-real in his film, is created as reality and this is a completely new expression in the history of cinema. It is always hard to determine what is documentary or fiction in Kiarostami's films, and the aesthetic elements of his films are designed while having the same paradigm in mind. In *Through the Olive Trees*, the confusion between the different levels of reality and fiction is exaggerated compared to his other films. The lack of proper marks between documentary and fiction spaces and also giving great significance to the space outside the screen including the conversations of the people behind the camera hugely contributes to the blurring of lines between reality and fiction. These techniques have caused Kiarostami's audience to completely lose any kind of clue to when reality stops and fiction starts and wander freely in the world created by the film. As Michael Forodon writes: cinema is based on the recording of physical objects. Objects such as body, face, light, etc are recorded and in that way tell a story. Documentary cinema is not the uninterrupted recording of reality but it is always dependent on the director's choices and this is a kind of storytelling. Even CCTV cameras in a shopping center have angles, lenses, and frame sizes which is particular to them (Forodon, 2007, 18).

Considering Forodon's interpretation one can say that Abbas Kiarostami in his films such as *Close-up* and the *Koker* trilogy as well as his other films,

never defines his films under the emblem of either documentary or fiction cinema. He takes a different approach in his cinema and as a result, his films are floating between reality and fiction and he has very well blurred the line between those things.

Playing with reality and fiction in Kiarostami's cinema

Abbas Kiarostami and his relationship with how to portray reality are the important concerns of his fans as well as cinema experts and critics. He has always implemented novel techniques to approach reality and interpret it from his viewpoint. In *Close-up* Kiarostami introduces Hosein Sabzian as a director. Sabzian who is a double for Mohsen Makhmalbaf in this movie gradually thinks of himself as being more and more like the original version. Moreover, the use of this narrative technique of fluctuation between documentary and fiction convinces the audience to accept fiction as the reality for half of the film, and take the reality for fiction for the other half. To properly perform this narrative procedure, significant details and scenes have been designed. Most of the word that Sabzian says in the court is written by Kiarostami although he claims these are Sabzian's words. Also, some questions in the court are asked outside the frame of the camera which is Kiarostami's design. Kiarostami's smart presence in the film represents the uncertainty of the things Sabzian confesses. Kiarostami's voice is heard in several parts of the film. When the judge is speaking, in *Ahankhah* family, when Sabzian appears in court and the ending where the real Makhmalbaf and Sabzian meet. In all these moments the audience is aware of the filmmaker's great presence. A filmmaker who sometimes takes up the role of a judge and sometimes intervenes in the process of representing the reality. These scenes show that Kiarostami is not a passive observant to the things that happen in front of his camera and he guides reality and its representation so that

the audience would dare to choose in the cycle of comprehending the events. His voice acts as one of the most important elements of fiction in the background of a documentary. If this film had been made according to the traditions of documentary making, Kiarostami would have been forced to observe things from a distance and wouldn't have been able to give new meanings to them through close manipulation. That's where he works as an intermediary between what has happened and what is presented to the audience. Through this kind of structural strategy, getting to the original or authentic reality becomes very difficult.

Is Sabzian telling the truth? This question becomes a recurring phenomenon that always stays with the audience throughout the film. Kiarostami considers honesty as an introduction to reality and challenges it. He provokes us to ask ourselves if we are honest people and that defines our relationship with reality and the nature of our judgment towards Sabzian's actions. In the ending scene when Sabzian and Makhmalbaf meet, there happens an accord between reality and fiction and the audience realizes that sometimes fake versions of things can be a lot more plausible than the original ones and in a lot of cases one can sympathize with the fake one much better.

In *Life and Nothing More* and *Through the Olive Trees* there's another technique applied by Kiarostami to play with reality and fiction in the narration of the film. He replaces himself with a fake actor who specifically belongs to the fiction cinema so that he can face the pseudo-real scenes and situations of the film. In each film, the character of the director encounters corroborations from the environment and acts accordingly. One cannot proclaim that all the actions of the director's character are Kiarostami's decisions or his designs for the plot (Bransford, 2003, 22).

The subtlety of Kiarostami's work regarding the manipulation of reality and fiction is not limited to the narrative structure of his films but is also visible

in the stylistic features such as the location and the ambiance. The selection of rural environments in Kiarostami's films is another factor that helps make the documentary atmosphere. His films unlike mainstream cinema which are mainly produced in urban settings and are pursuing the traditional relationships between the narration and the familiar buildings and the structures take a different route. Kiarostami has boosted the fictional creation of meaning through his ideas by the choice of the locations. He makes documentary-like features in his films by implementing local people. The presence of an urban director in a rural environment can be considered a pointer to his effect and intervention in the process of narrating reality and fiction.

Kiarostami always in his film by highlighting his presence, intelligently creates a distance so that he can intrigue the audience's intellect and involve them as an actively thinking viewer. Through this technique, although we are watching a fluent film on the screen in our consciousness we are aware of the dialectics that is going on between reality and fiction, and in the end, we accept both together and this is the most authorial aspect of Kiarostami's cinema.

The break-in reality in Kiarostami's cinema

In the final scene of *Close-up*, Hosein Sabzian is riding with Makhmalbaf on his bike. They buy a flower vase and go to Ahankhah's place. On a narrative level, this scene can be interpreted as a peace-making between the real Makhmalbaf. The unreal one and on a non-narrative and metatextual level it can be read as an association between reality and fiction. Throughout the scene, Kiarostami and his crew follow Makhmalbaf and Sabzian. The real Makhmalbaf is wearing a wire so they can record the conversation. We hear Kiarostami and his crew talking backstage about the glitch in the recording equipment. There is also a shot from behind a cracked window which shows those two.

These characteristics clearly show Kiarostami's deliberation in choosing reality and giving a story to it. By weakening the conventional aesthetics of cinema through interfering with the sound and image of this scene, he presents a new aspect of cinematic language and the way reality is represented. At first impression, one might think that Kiarostami has been forced to use worn-out equipment due to a shortage of funds and resources. However, what is more accurate is that he has been trying to dismantle the audience's granted presuppositions regarding the conversations between the real and the fake Makhmalbafs by interrupting the sound and the image.

Rosenbaum believed that the nature of the sound recording in this scene results in an interruption in the narrative quality of the conversations and somehow the fiction is defeated in this film. This scene can also work as an invite for the viewers not to always expect a climax in a movie (Rosenbaum, 2003, 17).

At the end of this scene, we hear one of the sound assistants that they won't be able to reshoot this scene and that is exactly where Kiarostami in the appearance of a defeated director comes out victorious. The reason behind the victory of his narrative style is the presentation of a new understanding of cinematic craft especially in the way the production side of cinema meets the ideological side. He simply creates gaps and even technical breaks, and in doing that he intervenes in reality and fiction and subsequently surprises the audience as much as he likes.

Conclusion

Abbas Kiarostami in all of his cinematic productions has a great emphasis on how reality is portrayed. In *Close-up* by showing both the real and the fake Makhmalbafs, he creates a conflict and a debate as to where the truth lies. Kiarostami by applying

a different method and breaking up the normal procedure of filmmaking in conventional cinema establishes a new kind of aesthetics in cinema that is concerned with the conflict between documentary and fiction. In the Koker trilogy, which includes *Where is the Friend's Home?*, *Life and Nothing More* and *Through the Olive Trees*, there is enough potential for making peace between the real and fictional space but the film never reaches the point where these two meet. Kiarostami blurs the line between reality and fiction for his audience and that is the most significant feature of his style in the world. In the film *Life and Nothing More* the story of the two actors searching for the boys from the film *Where's a Friend's Home?* is told in the background of the devastated quake-stricken region of Koker. In *Through the Olive Trees*, the story of the crew arriving at the village to make a film is combined with the love story between Hosein and Tahere. The audience is left to wander in a shared world of documentary and fiction. Behind the scenes of *Close-up* shows Kiarostami using a text which he has probably written before the shoot. Moreover, his voice in the court plays a significant role in what happens to Sabzian. The presence of his replacement director in *Life and Nothing More* and *Through the Olive Trees* manufactures a sort of understanding which in no way complies with the undistorted reality. All of these things point to the fact that he has a distancing presence which helps him create a fusion of reality and fiction.

In conclusion, it can be said that Kiarostami's cinema is an attempt to record reality, but the reality that is presented with a fictional text. To execute this text, Kiarostami sometimes creates defects in the technical equipment of his films (such as the final sequence of *Close-up*) and sometimes mentions his role with the alternative he has defined for himself (such as the director's presence in *Life and Nothing More* and *Through the Olive Trees*).

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