

Media Criticism: Class Fantasy and Ideology in the Movie *Ganj-e Qaroon*¹

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Abstract: Subjects due to their class position may construct specific fantasies. Class fantasy, one of the given fantasies, is constructed by lower-classes in the society. This study is to critically scrutinize this type of fantasy in media discourse data. Furthermore, as ideology is a means by which cinema apparatus sutures audience within movie narration, the movie ideology and its relation with the given fantasy will be discussed as well. Indeed, the paper presents an attempt to illustrate how movies, through the construction of the fantasy, serve to justify the prevailing ideologies at the time. A case in point is melodrama. The data are extracted from one the most popular movies in the history of Iranian cinema, *Ganj-e Qaroon* (meaning Qaroon's Treasure). Analysis of the data is done within the frameworks of Bordwell (1995); Cormack (1992); and Zizek (2008a). Findings show that the class fantasy is constructed through the movie. That is the hero, reaching the object-cause of desire namely the girl of narration, may fill the class gap; however, a change in his position causes the object to lose its significance. Concerning the movie ideology, results indicate that the movie ideology, i.e. the class ideology, proposes class coexistence in peace. Indeed, the movie not only represents class fantasy but also uses the end of fantasy in its favor.

Keywords: Subject, fantasy, ideology, desire

1. Introduction

In the present section, first, the concept of fantasy, in the words of Lacan, will be presented. Next, ideology, according to Marx, will be clarified.

1.1. Fantasy

Subject is generally defined as "the 'I' who experiences and interacts with the world" (Malpas, 2005, p.56). Subject, based on the given definition, was first originated from Descartes' thoughts. Cartesian conception of the subject "pictures a conscious and unified individual marked by inherently rational capacities that allow one to experience and make sense of the world according to the properties of that world" (Barker & Galasinski, 2004, p.40).

¹ Qaroon's Treasure

Lacan, breaking up the subject into two parts of *conscious* and *unconscious*, rewrites Descartes' proposition as "where I think 'I think, therefore I am' that is where I am not" (Weedon, 2004, p. 12). Accordingly, he conceptualized the subject, i.e. barred subject, according to his own view. Lacan believes that when a child is born he is named and allocated a room. That is, the symbolic of social constructions is vigorously presented in his life. In other words, subject confronted the symbolic², "is trapped in the net of language, through a discourse and a social bond that are induced and commanded by the other" (Branustein, 2003, p.109).

Subject discovers that 'there' is a world (Being-in-the-world) and it is constantly in particular non-arbitrary situations, times, and places whose profitability, on a daily basis, is not justifiable. In the word of Heidegger (1962), this unwanted universal situation is defined as *Gewerfenheit*, i.e., 'thrownness of one's destiny into the particular place in the world (Hersch, 2003, p.393)'. This real situation, according to Heidegger (1962), at first is totally alienated for every entity. That is to say, subject, quite arbitrarily, is given a place in the inter-subjective network of symbolic relations, including a teacher, a clerk, a sales person, a king and so on.

The above situation is arbitrary and non-inherent in sense that 'its nature is performative, it cannot be accounted for by reference to the 'real' properties and capacities of the subject (Zizek, 2008a, p. 170)'. One, who occupies the place of a 'king' within the inter-subjective network of symbolic relations, doesn't deserve any characteristics of being a king. Hence, "the subject who possesses the quality of being a king is automatically confronted with a certain 'Che vuoi?', with the question of the Other. The Other is addressing him as if he himself possesses the answer to the question of why he has this mandate, but the question is, of course, unanswerable. The subject does not know why he is occupying this place in the symbolic network. His own answer to this 'che vuoi!' of the Other can only be the hysterical question: "Why am I what I'm supposed to be, why have I this mandate? Why am I [a teacher, a master, a king . . . or George Kaplan]?" Briefly: "Why! Am I what you [the big other] are saying that I am?" (Zizek, 2008a, p.170)

Fantasy is a scenario which provides an answer to the following questions (Fink, 1995, p.54). A fantasy constitutes our desire; provides its coordinates; that is, it literally 'teaches us how to desire'³; it provides a 'schema' according to which certain positive objects in reality can function as objects of desire⁴, filling in the empty places opened up by the formal symbolic structure (Zizek, 2008b, p.7).

For Lacan, the object is precisely that which is "in the subject more than the subject itself, which I fantasize that the Other (fascinated by me) *sees* in me". Thus, it is no longer the object which serves as the mediator between my desire and the Other's desire; rather, it is the Other's desire itself which serves as the mediator between the 'barred' subject \$ and the lost object that the subject 'is' - that provides the minimum of phantasmic identity to the subject (Zizek, 2008b, p.10).

Each fantasy consists of a number of characteristics. Some of the typical characteristics of a fantasy may include 1) a fantasy obfuscates the true horror of the real⁵ and let the subjects get away from the real of their subjects; 2) fantasy is the primordial form of *narrative*, which serves to occult some original deadlock; 3) fantasy, being in line with the law, supports it as well; 4) fantasy always encompasses an impossible gaze; 5)

² The symbolic in its most general definition is an arena of culture and society. For Lacan, this is related to language, metaphor, or function of a father who is sometime called 'the Other'. The Other can hence be viewed as "the Other of language, of certain ideals, norms and ideology of a particular society or community *and* as a *position*, a presumed or posited point (or perspective) of authority, knowledge, validation" (Dashtipour, 2009, p. 323).

³ Desire is the nature of human as well as a social category. Subjects desire from the view of the other (Evans, 1996).

⁴ Object-cause of desire is defined as the object triggering the desire of subject. Object is, in essence, lacking, and is believed to be primordial lost form. For Lacan, fantasy determines unattainable relationship between subject and object-cause of desire. This object fills the existing split in the Other (Zizek, 1999, p.19; Boothby, 1991, p. 109).

⁵ In integrating social relations, there always remains a surplus sticking out from the frame of symbolic reality. Lacan calls this hole 'the real'. Thus, the real is the universe itself before having been split in by language. This means that the real is non-descriptive and impossible. Indeed, the real is non-symbolized, unrepresented and uncrossable threshold for the subject (Bowie, 1991, p.109). Subjects, constructing fantasy, tries to get away from the real.

fantasy supports and strengthens the social realities of the subject life; 6) In order to be operative, fantasy has to remain 'implicit'; it has to maintain a distance towards the explicit symbolic texture sustained by it, and to function as its inherent transgression (Zizek, 2008b, p.11-39). It is worth mentioning that fantasy may include some or all of the characteristics referred to.

1.2. Ideology

Presumably, a number of different theories have so far been proposed regarding ideology. However, in the present study, due to the influence class ideology, only the ideology as that of supporting the benefits of upper-classes will be focused on.

Marx clarifies ideology based on materialistic practices. According to him, what makes the system of beliefs ideological is the fact that the belief system, covering the real nature of social and economical relations up, helps out to justify the legitimacy of the uneven distribution of economical and social resources in the society. Accordingly, although all classes of the society, in particular the working class, are capable of creating an ideology, this creation will be considered as an ideology only if it leads to drive the benefits for the dominant class in the society (McLellan, 1995, p.16). By the end of Pahlavi period in Iran, bourgeoisie, as the most differentiated dominant class in the society, possessed, or in more specific terms occupied, the main economical resources of the society. Furthermore, having held and controlled the distribution network, consumption goods, credits, and the entire national budget, they set aside the chief positions in the dominant hierarchies of the state including the economical, financial, official, and military ones for themselves (Sodagar, 1999, P. 205).

Sodagar (1999) has segregated four dominant bourgeoisie strata of sixties and seventies in Iran. The given bourgeoisie strata include 1) great monarchy bourgeoisie; 2) traditional bourgeoisie; 3) liberal bourgeoisie; and lastly 4) leftist bourgeoisie (p. 206). The great monarchy bourgeoisie, as the most principal of the bourgeoisies, was shaped by the bureaucratic transformation namely civil and military elites, traditional landowners, and great merchants. This bourgeoisie was the only main support of the Pahlavi class authority. The greatest factories, the most prolific lands and gardens, the most profitable businesses, contractors, banks, and financial institutions, the top official and military positions, the highest-paid public posts, and the production command system were all occupied by and under the control of this great capitalist monarchy (Sodagar, 1999, P. 208). Hence, *Mohammad Reza Pahlavi*, the then King of Iran, can be considered as the chief of the Iran capitalist class who supported the ideology which not only justified the unevenness of the classes but also normalized it, as well.

1.3. The Current Study

"I mean it has happened to me several times that I've looked at rich girls regretfully, and it has happened several times that at nights, while falling asleep, I've imagined that a rich girl with a high-tech car has barked in front of me, picked me up, and fallen in love with me". These statements which have been extracted from an interview with an Iranian youth indicate that some Iranian youth from the lower-classes of the society attempt to imaginarily associate their own life style with that of upper-classes. This study aims at bridging this kind of imagination with Lacan's concept of fantasy and tracing the given imagination to one of the best-selling movies in the history of Iranian cinema at the time named *Ganj-e Qaroon*. Moreover, since cinema acts as an apparatus or technology which makes an attempt to normalize an imaginary reality and makes the audience be sutured within the movie narration due to indestructible nature of cinematic apparatus (Hivard, 2009, p.14), in order to clarify the relationship between fantasy and ideology, the main ideology within the movie will be discussed as well. In other words, regarding fantasy, this study was to address the following questions:

1. Who is the subject? Who is the big other the subject confronted with in the movie narration?

2. What desire does the subject have?
3. What actions and events was the fantasy of the subject made of?
4. Whose subject or entity is the object-cause of desire in the movie narration? What role does the object play in the subject's fantasy?
5. What relationship does the object-cause of desire have with the big other?
6. Is the subject's fantasy that of the subject or the big other's?
7. Answering question 6, is the subject's desire the same as the big other's or not?

Also, concerning the ideology, this study addressed the following ones:

1. How were the characters represented within the movie? What actions and dialogues do the characters make use of?
2. Answering the previous question, what reality was offered by the movie? How was this reality shaped?
3. How are the complexification and resolution within the narrative structure?
4. Are the given complexification and resolution related to the specific ideology?
5. From which point must one look at the movie? What ideology is this point related with?
6. With reference to the background knowledge of the social-political conditions prevailing in the period of filmmaking, is the movie ideology along or in contrast with one of the on hand ideologies at the time?

2. Methodology

2.1. Materials

The data gathered for the purpose of this study were extracted from one of the most famous and popular Iranian movies at the time, *Ganj-e Qaroon*. The movie was aired in 1965. *Ganj-e Qaroon* was highly successful and visited by almost 870000 out of one million residents of Tehran, capital of Iran. As a result of its success, the movie had been on the screen for more than two successive years. To analyze the movie, it was initially segmented into distinct parts. Subsequently, the movie fantasy and ideology were investigated.

2.2. Coding and data analysis

Analysis of data was done within the framework of narrative analysis. Narrative analysis of the movie is the most recent branch of semiotic inquiry emerged from the critical initiatives which redefined film theory in the 1970s. Narrative analysis seeks to peel away the seemingly 'motivated' and 'natural' relationship between the signifier and the story-world in order to reveal the deeper system of cultural associations and relationships that are expressed through narrative form (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman, 2005, p. 70). Presumably, a number of scholars have so far proposed a number of different approaches towards narrative analysis (cf. Propp, 1928; Barthes, 1977; Chatman, 1978). However, the present study was founded on Bordwell's (1995) conception of narration; Cormack's (1992) narrative analysis of ideology; and Zizek's (2008a) notion of ideological 'gaze'.

Bordwell (1995) regards 'discourse' and 'story' as the basic elements of narrative analysis. According to him, 'story' describes events that occur through specific time or place and are 'related through a causal or thematic chain'. 'Discourse', on the other hand, refers to 'order or potential presentation of film story' (p.105). In his term, the principles which provide a link between story and discourse are the causal relations including time and place (Bordwell, 1995, p.9). Bordwell believes two elements namely *characters* and *events* can function as a cause in narration. In the present study, subject is equal to the character and events equal natural incidents or social actions (Bordwell & Thomson, 1998, p. 77). As said by Bordwell (1995), movie has a narration but no narrator (Lothe, 2000). Therefore, consistent with the aims of the study, a 'covert narrator' was considered for the movie. The 'covert narrator' is defined as an ideological system of values a text implicitly makes use through the combination of all sources (Lothe, 2000, 31).

Cormack (1992), in analyzing the ideology of narrative movie, considers the five elements including content, structure, absence, style, and modes of address significant in terms of methodology. This study only draws on content and structure to analyze the movie ideology. Hence, just the content and structure will be focused on. Following, is a brief account of the two.

I. Content: According to Cormack (1992), ideology can be traced within the explicit statements, vocabulary used, characters, and actions taken within a movie. These four subcategories "are used to express a view of reality – a view which the audience is asked to share" (p. 29).

II. Structure: the structure of a movie is the result of its events. In narrative movies, the events can be complexification and resolution. Thus, it may be possible to account them as a part of an ideology. Likewise, the kind of movie resolution may sometimes be consistent and sometimes inconsistent with the movie ideology as well.

The term 'gaze', another concept which was used in the analysis of the ideology, as Zizek accounts for it, refers to the point through which one may look at the movie. As an example, in Chaplin movies, the vicious, sadistic, humiliating attitude towards children is nothing but the gaze of the children themselves; or the Dickensian admiration of the poor but happy, close, unspoiled world of the 'good common people', free of the cruel struggle for power and money, is the view of aristocracy towards them (Zizek, 2008a, p.118-119).

In sum, in order to analyze the movie, first the movie was demarcated into distinct parts. Each part consisted of one or more scenes. Next, the data were extracted, transcribed, and subsequently modified. To describe and analyze the fantasy, this study draws on Bordwell's (1995) conception of narration, without focusing on the aesthetics of the movie. Indeed, the movie was considered as a self-contained text, i.e., apart from its relation to cultural, cognitive, social and phenomenological conditions outside. In other words, only the theoretical model was followed within the movie. It is worth mentioning that within one movie the whole narration may be the fantasy of one character; however, within the other one, like the case under investigation, a number of actions, events, and characters may construct the fantasy of one character and the rest narrative part comprises the reality of the scenario. To analyze the ideology, the study resorts to Cormack's (1992) narrative analysis of ideology; and Zizek's (2008a) notion of ideological 'gaze'. Furthermore, the background knowledge from the ideological atmosphere within the period of filmmaking was employed as a presupposition.

Concerning the validity of the study, as said by Polkinghorne (2007), the validity of a narrative movie can be determined through the well-off details and clear descriptions. Besides, in a narrative analysis, an analyst must justify his own interpretations to his readers. Accordingly, this study made an attempt to offer a precise and detailed investigation of the movie narration. Hence, it was tried to present detailed explanations and provide the necessary references to the original movie dialogues if needed. Moreover, in order to assure the validity of the study through 'theoretical triangulation', a combination of different theoretical frameworks was applied in this study.

3. Findings

3.1. Situational context

Ganj-e Qaroon is the story of a poor young man who was basically the son of a rich man. Indeed, his father, going after his own ambitions, left him and his wife many years ago. After many years, the son found his father through an incident. Having found the truth, the son didn't want to see his father anymore. However, later on, his father convinced him that he had been changed and the movie ended with a family reunion. Three narrations could be traced within the movie discourse. The first one was about an old depressed man named *Qaroon*. Being trapped in the meaningless of life, *Qaroon* decided to kill himself. The next was about

a girl named *Shirin*. *Shirin* looked for a way to get rid of her suitor whom she didn't like at all. The last was about a young man named *Ali Bi-gham*⁶. Along with his mother and his friend, *Hasan Jeghjeghe*⁷, *Ali* had an ordinary life. The movie discourse, making use of two events, provided a link among the three narrations. The first event included *Qaroon's* action in killing himself within *Zayanderood*⁸. This event bridged the first and the third narration. Rescuing *Qaroon*, *Ali* and *Hasan* brought him to their home and accordingly *Qaroon* with the name of *Esmal Bi-kale*⁹ came into the narration. The second event happened when the tire of *Shirin's* car dropped into a hole while she was driving and *Ali* helped her out. Making use of another event, this event provided a link between the second and the third narration. That is, *Faramarz*, the insistent suitor, decided to take her beloved away by force; however, *Ali* and *Hasan* rescued her. Following this scene, the three narrations were interwoven. *Ali* agreed to play the role of *Qaroon's* son and help *Shirin*. Consequently, *Ali* paid a visit to *Shirin's* family. Meanwhile, *Faramarz*, made an attempt to reveal *Ali's* real identity. In a scene through which *Faramarz* was to succeed, *Esmal* who had earlier convinced *Ali's* mother, his ex-wife, to reunite him once more, dressed up as the real *Qaroon* and prevented *Faramarz* to reveal the real identity of *Ali*.

In the last scene, *Ali* who had known his real father did not accept him as the father had left his family for many years; however, later on, while his father was being beaten, *Ali* addressing him as "father" saved his life.

3.2. Movie segmentation

To suit the research purposes, the movie was segmented into distinct parts. Following is the demarcation of the movie. It is worth mentioning that each part may be only one scene long or the summary of several scenes.

- Part 1: The movie discourse including many servants, a luxury house and a private airplane indicates that *Qaroon* is a man from the upper-class of the society. *Qaroon* is on the threshold of death and his physical condition only allows him to have the basics of living including partial amount of bread and water.
- Part 2: Travelling to Isfahan, a metropolis in Iran, *Qaroon* looks at the photos of his family regretfully.
- Part 3: *Qaroon* is to loan *Faramarz* who is to marry the daughter of *Mr. Zarparast*, *Shirin*, almost 800 \$.¹⁰
- Part 4: *Qaroon* is desperately in a hotel in Isfahan. He feels regretful over making his family leave the house many years ago. Saying "this life is of no use", he dismisses his servant and makes up his mind to go on a long trip.
- Part 5: Two passer-bys see a man throwing himself into the *Zayanderood*. The man is *Qaroon*. *Ali*, the younger passer-by, jumps into the river to rescue him. Addressing the older passer-by, *Hasan*, *Ali* says: "being unhappy with his miserable life, he decides to kill himself".
- Part 6: *Ali* and *Hasan* bring the man into their house. Entering the house, *Ali* asks his mother to leave the room as their guest is a man¹¹. Putting his own clothes on the man, *Ali* sings to him. *Qaroon* conceals his real identity.
- Part 7: The *Zarparast*¹², a wealthy family, talks with *Faramarz* about his marriage with their daughter, *Shirin*. Entering the room, *Shirin* informs her family that in her trip to India, the son of *Qaroon*, falling in love with her, has made up his mind to marry her.

⁶ Free from care or sorrow

⁷ Rattle; Hasan is in business of rattles

⁸ A famous river in Isfahan

⁹ Brainless; Esmal does things in unintelligent way including throwing himself in the river

¹⁰ Big money at the time

¹¹ A cultural norm among some Iranians which, highly emphasizing piety, says women should leave the room when they have a guest who is a man and with whom they don't have a relationship of blood, foster, or in-law.

- Part 8: While *Ali Bi-gham*, *Hasan Jekhjeghe*, and *Qaroon* who from that moment on is called "*Esmal Bi-kale*" are crossing the street, *Shirin's* car suddenly changes its course and drops into a hole. At first, *Shirin* finds *Ali* guilty and addresses him as "*the street youth*"; however, at last, she asks him for help and *Ali* helps get the car out of the hole.
- Part 9: *Ali* with his mother vilifies the father who had left them many years ago and says: "Like all my coevals who have a father, I wish I had a father who lovingly called me 'my son'".
- Part 10: *Ali*, *Hasan* and *Esmal* are in a bar. *Ali* and *Hasan* are having beer. *Ali* in response to *Esmal's* refusal to drink addresses him "that's the way life goes on; to continue life, you should be healthy and happy". Fighting breaks out in the bar.
- Part 11: While *Ali*, *Hasan* and *Esmal* are walking on the street, *Ali* sings "I don't wish for *Qaroon's*¹³ treasure; I don't wish for loads of treasure...."
- Part 12: *Faramarz* is forcefully to take *Shirin* away; while crossing the street, *Ali*, *Hasan* and *Esmal* don't allow this to happen.
- Part 13: *Ali*, *Hasan* and *Esmal* bring *Shirin* into *Ali's* house. *Ali* addresses his house "*the poor house*" and says "this poor house does not deserve this lady". Telling them that she lied to her family about the son of *Qaroon's* wooing her, *Shirin* asks for their help. They agree to help her. *Ali* says "we must always help people".
- Part 14: *Ali*, playing the role of the "son of *Qaroon*", *Hasan* as his translator, and *Esmal* as their driver, leave for Royal Tehran Hilton Hotel to meet *Shirin's* family. *Shirin's* mother describes *Ali* as "a handsome wealthy educated gentleman".
- Part 15: *Qaroon's* servant enters. The movie discourse indicates that *Qaroon* himself orders him to come. The servant drives them to *Qaroon's* house.
- Part 16: *Ali* and *Hasan* can't have meals like those of upper classes; they eat food with their hands. *Esmal* and *Shirin* glare crossly at them. They even can't sleep well on the bed; they sleep easier on the floor. While *Hasan* is complaining that "I wish we were wealthy", *Ali* responses "Get to sleep! Don't be ingratitude towards *Allah*!! What is the use of being wealthy? Be Healthy all the time!"
- Part 17: *Shirin* and *her mother* are talking about *Ali* at home. *Her mother* describes *Ali* "well-mannered and noble". *Shirin* continues that *Ali* isn't a fan of nightclub and bar.
- Part 18: *Faramarz* does the trick, brings *Ali's mother* into Tehran, *capital of Iran*, and introduces her as a laundress to *Zarparast* family; however, *Ali* pretends that he doesn't know her.
- Part 19: *Faramarz* decides to take *Ali's mother* away; however, *Ali* and *Hasan* rescue her. Knowing *Ali's mother*, *Esmal* conceals himself.
- Part 20: *Ali* takes her mother with him to *Qaroon's* house. Describing the house to her mother, *Ali* says "look around and take pleasure in take a look at the plasterwork..... see what the plasterer has made.....look on!".
- Part 21: *Ali's mother* recognizes her own furniture in *Qaroon's* house. She is *Qaroon's* lost wife.
- Part 22: Entering the house, *Qaroon* asks his wife to forgive him because of leaving her and their son. At first, she beats around the bush; however, she forgives him at last.
- Part 23: At the courting ceremony, *Ali* sings "Festival night! and my beloved's wishful pleasure..... Cooked beetroot, and me devoid of *Qaroon's*¹⁴ treasure....." *Faramarz* discloses *Ali's* identity. *Ali* makes up his mind to confess everything; however, at the last minute, *Qaroon* and his wife, *Ali's mother*, appear.
- Part 24: *Ali* embraces the father while he thinks that they are playing a trick to perform the plan. *Qaroon* addresses *Faramarz* "you're well aware! I can make you invisible forever!!"

¹² Having a great love of jewels

¹³ An immensely rich man at the time of Islamic Prophet *Musa*; not the character of the narration

¹⁴ An immensely rich man at the time of Islamic Prophet *Musa*; not the character of the narration

- Part 25: *Ali's mother* tells him that *Qaroon* is his real father. Seeing red, *Ali* addresses his father "disgraceful" and makes up his mind to leave the house. *Shirin* stops him. *Ali* says "go to hell; all these are because of you! You are guilty! You've involved me in these circumstances! I had an ordinary life. I got paid peanuts for doing my job but I earned my living respectfully. I never change my poor life with this man's *Qaroon's* treasure. You make my life a misery! I don't want to see you anymore!"
- Part 26: Movie discourse indicates that *Ali* and *Hasan* have been alone in Isfahan for a couple of days. *Hasan* takes *Ali* with him to the home.
- Part 27: At home, *Ali* confronting his mother embraces her. *Shirin* who is in another room enters. Mother says that she has come to live with them. *Ali* responds "with whom? *Ali Bi-gham* and his mother? Or the son and wife of *Qaroon*? I have no business with her..... she makes a mistake to do so." *Qaroon* dressing as *Esmal Bi-kale* enters. *Ali* makes fun of him. Defending *Qaroon*, *Shirin* says "you don't deserve to be a human! You are a beast! Where are the zeal, honor, and manliness you have been proud of? You don't deserve to be a human!"
- Part 28: *Qaroon* and *Shirin* leave *Ali's* house.
- Scene 29: In a bar near *Ali's* house, *Qaroon* tells *Shirin* that if he dies *Ali* and *her mother* will be the beneficiaries. Meanwhile, fighting breaks out in the bar. *Qaroon* is being beaten.
- Part 30: Passing nearby, *Ali* hears the sound of fighting. Entering the bar, he rescues his father. The movie ends with the reunion of *Ali*, *Shirin* and *his father*.

3.3. Textual context

3.3.1. Fantasy

Ali Bi-gham is an ordinary man from the lower-class of the society. Constructing a fantasy and expressing his desire, *Ali* responds to what the big other wants and what his role for the big other is. To explain his position as a worker in the Symbolic, the big other asks him to help others: "we must help others"; be honest: "nothing is better than honesty in the world"; not be interested in money: "what is the use of being wealthy? Be Healthy all the time". However, *Ali* desires to have a life style like that of the upper-class of the society. This given desire has been presented through several parts including the one in which *Ali*, astonishingly, addresses her mother while describing the *Qaroon's* house "look around and take pleasure in take a look at the plasterwork..... see what the plasterer has made.....look on!" (cf. part 20) or the one through which *Ali* sings "I don't wish for *Qaroon's* treasure; I don't wish for loads of treasure...." (cf. part 11). This desire is a kind of projection namely a sort of denegation indicating that he desires to both *Qaroon's* treasure and loads of treasure. Accordingly, through his world of fantasy, he plays the role of "*Qaroon's* son" since "*Qaroon*" is known to be the wealthiest man among people. Within his fantasy, he is described as "handsome, wealthy, gentleman, educated, well-mannered, and noble" (cf. part 14 & part 17). The given attributes are those which *Ali* doesn't truly possess in the Symbolic; however, in his fantasy he deserves himself to have those. Likewise, *Shirin* describes him as the man who is not a fan of nightclub and bar as in reality *Ali* enjoys going to bars (cf. part 17).

In the scenario of *Ali's* desire, there is an object-cause of the desire, as well. *Shirin* as a cute girl and a member of the upper-class plays the role of an object that fascinates *Ali*. However, why should *Ali* bring *Shirin* into his fantasy through a driving accident? In response to this question, no explicit reason is provided within the movie narration, but, an absent element may be constituted. Imagine a young mechanic wearing greasy coveralls is working. A cute girl driving her car enters his garage to fix his auto. He is attracted by her without knowing that he is just a *street youth* in her mind. He fixes her car. Paying no attention to him, the girl leaves the garage. In *Ali's* fantasy, this cute girl shapes as a girl whose car has found problems and this is *Ali* who helps her out. Similarly, *Shirin* sings to him (projection of desire in the fantasy since *Ali* himself sings through the movie), offers him clothes of *Qaroon's* son and falls in love with him. Thus, *Ali* constructs a

fantasy within which he changes to the son of the wealthiest man in the city and a rich girl falls in love with him, too. Next, he enters an upper-class luxury house, swims in their private pool, and owns a chauffeur. Accordingly, the subject resolves the eternal deadlock of the narration of class evenness for himself so that he can signify his life and position in the Symbolic and justify lack of the subject.

Furthermore, object-cause of desire can be related to the big other, as well. The big other involving a gap in essence makes an attempt to fill it in. "Object petit a" fills the vacancy in. Here, the gap of the big other is a kind of class gap which asks *Ali Bi-gham* to resort to the object, *Shirin*. In the character *Shirin*, there is something more than *Shirin* herself that triggers *Ali's* desire, i.e., subject can resolve the class gap within the society for himself and the big other through having a wealthy and pretty wife. Desire of *Ali*, i.e., the desire of the other is the desire of *Shirin* for him and in reality the desire of the big other.

The fantasy constructed by *Ali* has kept on till the identity of *Esmal Bi-kale* is disclosed to him. Evaluating subjectivity of *Qaroon* for *Ali Bi-gham* can be recognized as a kind of eruption of the Real. The Real is a surplus in Symbolic relations. That is, *Esmal Bi-kale* who had previously been a poor miserable man making up his mind to kill himself because of his miserable life changes to a father whom *Ali* seeks his patting hands throughout his life. From this moment on, the whole fantasy of the subject knocks down. The class gap no longer signifies the one intended by the big other. *Ali* faces with crisis and his object-cause of desire changes to a piece of shit. That is why *Ali* crossly addresses *Shirin* "go to hell; all these are because of you! You are guilty! You've involved me in these circumstances! I had an ordinary life. I got paid peanuts for doing my job but I earned my living respectfully. I never change my poor life with this man's *Qaroon's* treasure. You make my life a misery! I don't want to see you anymore!" This Anger is due to the big other paradoxical relationship with the subject. On one hand, the big other asks *Ali* not to be interested in money; on the other hand, it has enriched him through fulfilling his fantasy. Accordingly, realizing that *Shirin* is preparing to live with him, *Ali* says "with whom? *Ali Bi-gham* and his mother? Or the son and wife of *Qaroon*?" (cf. part 25).

In the given part, *Ali's* father helps his anger subside, as well. Previous to *Qaroon's* entrance to their house, *Ali* and his mother had lived together in a mythical unity within the imaginary reality. *Hasan Jeghjehge* is also a part of this reality since rattle is a baby's toy and where *Ali* has experienced his first jouissance in the company of his mother. While *Esmal* is entering the house, *Ali* asks her mother to leave the room as their guest is a man and he doesn't want his mother to be seen by a "Na-Mahram¹⁵". When it becomes evident to *Ali* that *Qaroon* is his real father, he looks on his father as a jouissance who is to forcefully take his mother away. Therefore, addressing his father, *Ali* says "you are my father! My disgraceful father! ... Good for me! I'm ashamed of knowing you as my father....." Thus, leaving his mother with his father, he goes away. In our mind, the fantasy of the subject is ended at this point and the rest of movie narration refers to the ideology.

3.3.2. Ideology

3.3.2.1. Content

The character *Qaroon* is represented in two ways in the movie. On one hand, having many servants, a luxury house and a private airplane, *Qaroon* is a rich man owning all the requirements of a capitalist lifestyle. He is such a man who strongly talks with his inferiors. According to *Qaroon's* claim, this strength has an absolute performance guarantee. This is truly evident when he addresses *Faramarz* "you're well aware! I can make you invisible forever!!" (cf. part 24). He is a benevolent man, as well. Loaning *Faramarz*, *Qaroon* tries to make *Faramarz's* life prosperous, too; thus the life of another man is in his hands. He, who within the social stratification is classified into the higher strata of the society, is only short of one point namely having no wife

¹⁵ The man with whom the woman doesn't have any relationship of blood, foster, or in-law

and children and finding him at fault because of making his family leave the house many years ago. This authoritative man kneels down and asks for forgiveness (cf. part 22).

On the other hand, *Qaroon* plays the role of *Esmal Bi-kale*, a poor man who seeks a shelter to live in, gets into an ignorant fight with others, is satisfied, and helps people like what *Ali* does. This second representation indicates that an authoritative rich man dressing worn-out and poor clothes doesn't greatly differ from the members of lower-classes.

The most principal action taken by *Qaroon* is making a decision to kill himself. With this action, the audience takes pity on him and asks "Does he really deserve to kill himself?" "Why should such a nice man die?" "Have he been in search of great things?" Furthermore, at the end of the movie, *Qaroon* being beaten inspires the same pity once more. Therefore, the overall cost *Qaroon* has to pay throughout the movie is being beaten and taken pity on. In this way, the audience gets prepared to accept that *Qaroon* is worthy of having the great love of his son.

Concerning the character *Ali Bi-gham*, the trait attributed to him is "carefree". This choice of terminology summons up an image in the audience mind that *Ali* has a life free from care or sorrow. *Ali* is also represented in two ways within the movie. On one hand, he is a poor man who earns his living through working in a garage and is satisfied with his life with his mother and *Hasan Jekhjeghe*. His dialogues simply justify his social position, e.g. "that's the way life goes on; to continue life, you should be healthy and happy" (cf. part 10). Through this dialogue, he is represented to be of better physical health condition in comparison to his sick father. On the other hand, he plays the role of *Qaroon's* son. In this representation, however, he can't get along well with the norms of the upper-classes and tells *Hasan* that he is happy he ends his role as the son of *Qaroon* soon. His actions in rescuing *Qaroon*, helping *Shirin* out, and helping his father once more at the end of movie are more outstandingly screened to indicate his best intentions in the mind of the audience. When *Ali* doesn't accept his father, *Shirin* addresses him "you don't deserve to be a human! Where are the zeal, honor, and manliness you have been proud of? You don't deserve to be a human!" that is, honor necessitates him to forgive his father. The audience is also convinced that *Ali* as an altruism man is better, indicating manliness, to forgives his father.

The content of the representation and actions undertaken by these two characters of the movie present a particular kind of the reality. That is, the members of the upper-classes are not happy with their lives. Although they are not concerned about material welfare, they are terribly sick and deserve to be taken pity on. In contrast, those of lower-classes, despite their low incomes are kind, generous and enjoy good physical health.

3.3.2.2. Structure

Some complexifications occur for both *Shirin* and *Qaroon*, namely the subject of upper-classes, within this movie narration. *Qaroon* has been trapped in the meaningless of life and *Shirin* is desperate because of the suitor whom she doesn't like at all. These complexifications are resolved by *Ali* and *Hasan Jekhjeghe*, namely the subject of lower-classes. *Ali* sings "Festival night! and my beloved's wishful pleasure..... Cooked beetroot, and me devoid of *Qaroon's* treasure....." (cf. part 23). That is, the one who resolves the complexifications of *Qaroon* and *Shirin* is the one who cannot even afford his own basics of living. These complexification and resolution within the movie narration is the cost the ideology pay to the members of lower-classes to set out an obtainable reason for their social lives. In other words, the poor may not have enough power and wealth to change their path of lives. However, they can help others, in particular those who are wealthier, through their altruism and sacrifice. Although they cannot make radical changes, their representatives in the movie including *Ali* and *Hasan* have the power of change; this suggests that the members of lower-classes have the power of change, as well.

3.3.2.3. Gaze

The question posed here is "from which point must we look at the movie?" In answering this question, we refer to the movie segmentation. When *Ali* and *Hasan* go to *Qaroon's* house and dine at a luxury dining table, *Ali* and *Hasan* can't have meals like those of upper classes; they eat food with their hands. Glaring crossly at them, *Esmal* and *Shirin* make an attempt to prevent them. The point looks at this event is the one looks at the narration. In this movie, *Ali*, his mother, and *Hasan*, as the representatives of lower-classes, have a happy life. In contrast, *Qaroon*, as the representative of upper-classes, has faced with crisis. Also, *Zarparast* family, who as their name suggests has a great love of jewels, only thinks about power and money. Description of a life full of happiness and joy in lower-classes is an ideological gaze taken by those of upper-classes to justify the lack of social welfare in this way. At the end of the movie, *Ali*, who had previously left the city, is obliged to meet his father in Isfahan while he's dressing up as *Esmal Bi-kale* and supports him, as well. Besides, he has to accept the girl. This support and acceptance can be regarded as an obligatory choice for *Ali* in order to keep the social order through empty gesture. At the end of the movie, while *Ali*, *Qaroon*, and *Shirin* are passing by the camera, the given ideological gaze tells the audience that although you are wearing worn-out clothes, your wealthy father with the same worn-out clothes is with you and you are a happy family.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study was to resolve a specific kind of fantasy namely class fantasy and illustrate how movies, through the construction of the fantasy, serve to justify the prevailing ideologies at the time. Class fantasy is constructed by the subjects of lower-classes. Within this fantasy, the subject doesn't accept his position in social atmosphere, and desires the lifestyle of upper-classes. Accordingly, having no way to get away from the real, in his imagination, through having relationship with a rich girl, he makes an effort to consider himself as a rich man. In Lacan terms, a rich girl is the object-cause of desire. That is the object that triggers the subject's desire and provides him the promise of a change. The same has been screened in the movie *Ganj-e Qaroon*. When *Ali Bi-gham* recognizes that he is originally a rich man, object-cause of desire changes to a piece of shit and loses her position within the scenario of *Ali Bi-gham's* desire. The reason behind it is that, the object-cause of desire fills in the gap of the big other, in this scenario the class gap, so that the subject of the lower-classes can fill the given gap; however, when the subject recognizes himself as a member of upper-classes, the object loses its prior symbolic sense and changes into a piece of junk. As the analysis of the movie indicates, *Ali's* acceptance of *Shirin* and *his father* refers to the ideology of the movie. This ideology, to be exact class ideology, screens the class fantasy. That is why the movie could sell well. Concerning the ideology, we can refer to the given bourgeoisie at the time. Great monarchy bourgeoisie was Iran's most principal capitalist class in 1960s; a class whose major source of asset and income was provided by "dollar-based trading in the oil". While exploiting labor force didn't provide them with direct income, legitimacy of their rule was accounted vital necessity for them. Furthermore, White Revolution, a fatherly action taken by the most distinguished figure of Iran's great monarchy bourgeoisie namely Shah to fascinate people and legitimize the Pahlavi dynasty, was launched in 1960s. Shah intended the country to improve, and the rule to promote the welfare of all citizens. Indeed, he was going to show considerable public sympathy this way. Likewise, the ideological representation of social class in the movie offers a peaceful coexistence of upper-classes with lower-classes. Although those of upper-classes have high incomes, it couldn't provide them happiness in their lives. Indeed, these are the people of lower-classes, who are content with their lives, have lives free from care or sorrow, are filled with a sense of well-being, help their kind father out, and continue the path of life with the father of upper-classes arm in arm. Without a doubt, representing a kind of class peaceful coexistence, the movie sutures audience within the narration through which they are filled with a kind of contentment. They are content with their life in the company of the father, at this point the king of Iran *Mohammad Reza Pahlavi*. In other words, cinema apparatus represents the class fantasy of the

subjects and in order to control the desire of the audience, uses the end of fantasy in favor of the benefits of the class honesty or to be precise its own favor.

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