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Under the skin of culture

Cultural analysis of Under the skin of the city

The movie analyzed in this paper is “Under the skin of the city” (1999, directed by Rakhshan bani etemad. The movie contains several sociological and political aspects and concepts. This paper also tries to examine in debates about artistic creativity and aesthetics of “Under the skin of city”

Iranian cinema is today widely recognized not merely as a distinctive national cinema, but as one of the most creativity in the world. This international stature also fascinates Western observers.

From a range of perspectives, Rakhshan bani etemad's films explore cinema's development in post Revolution Iran and its place in Iranian culture.

Tuba, a mother of four, toils in a textile factory where breathing the fibers has produced a chronic cough. Her lame husband stays at home while she provides the meager family income. With oldest son Abbas, Tuba's husband makes the decisions regarding money and possibly selling her home. Completing the family are a teen age daughter and son, and a married daughter who returns home, again pregnant, after being beaten by her husband. Abbas is an affable young man who aspires to get high paying work abroad in order to marry and make a better life, but legal visas are not easy to get, and illegal ones are risky, as he finds out. Tuba is a strong woman who loves her family who struggles to survive and protect her home.

The one concept that is prominent in the movie is subculture. There are four identifiable subcultures. They

are the Abbas's friend fetishizes Japan, with his full size geisha poster and his noodles and his own value, and Abb as who is part of the burgeoning group of Iranians desperate to escape their home country in search of financial prosperity,
Tuba with a group of women co-workers in a textile factory and Masoomeh, the neighbor's daughter, who beaten by her religious brother.

Abass became a subculture of the society when his friend introduced his world to him. They were much more primitive and had different beliefs but they functioned in the same society.

The woman workers were also there own subcultures because they had different beliefs and interests. They had there own ideals that were mainly in profiting themselves. Although they seem to be the main bulk of society they were also a subculture because there were only a few in the Ruling Class.

These four subcultures all have their own culture, and traditions. They all believe in different things and values, but share in the same main culture of the society. ***Under***

the Skin of the City
uses its characters and their interactions to examine the society in which they live, as well as themselves.

Another concept seen in the movie is deviance. Abass and Masoomeh, serves as the best example of deviance. Several times throughout the movie Abass deviates from the family of norms his society sets for him. He is ruled by his social expectations in the beginning but as the movie progresses he seems to be ready to do everything in terms of getting his visa, and the end when Abbas sees that there is neither Japanese nor a house, he accepts Marandi's suggestion and goes into the drug deals. And also Masoomeh, who has been hurt by his brother and leaves the house, get addicted and involves with prostitution.

Finally under the skin of the city is also a great example of social inequality. Tuba is trying to bring social quality by working in a factory. However the ruling class takes facility and money by illegal works.

So the social inequality lead to change, and in turn was also showing much progress. Sadly this progress was

destroyed by those in the ruling class. These conflicts lead to an even bigger inequality in the society. In last scene of the movie Tooba tries to dry her hair in front of small light house as the other woman in her aristocratic house, fighting with his son about money in the dark night.

I felt that this movie was very interesting and also very sad. I think that the social inequality was the most prevalent thing in the movie because it was clear how the ruling class thought of the workers. There was also a great gap between the rich and the poor. I also like the character of Abass and the deviance he brought to the movie. He was almost his own subculture in a way. It never really seemed like he followed any sort of norm or shared belief. I think he just did what his heart told him to do. It is also interesting that he is a deviant in different situations depending on what point of view you are using. I would defiantly recommend this movie to anyone. It is a true story of the inequality that took place and is very sad yet important to know.