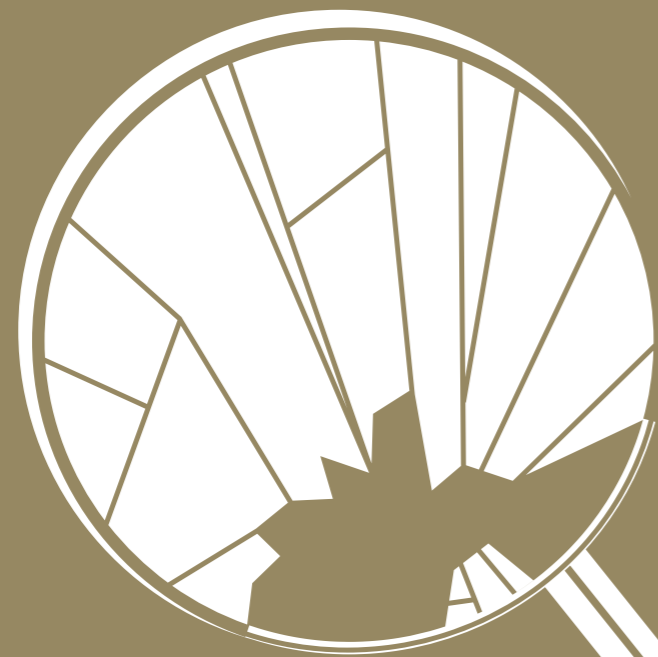# Where the Truth lies

حقیقت

Concepts of Reality in Iranian Cinema

eikones Forum
(Rheinsprung 11, 4051 Basel)

neues kino Basel
(Klybeckstrasse 247, 4057 Basel)

December 1—2
2017

Where the

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Although censorship seems to render realism in film completely impossible, the history of Iranian cinema can be regarded as a history of attempts to put into effect a specific kind of realism. The assumption of the workshop is, that Iranian cinema never strives to represent reality but to produce it in a strategic and tactical manner. Realism remains a question of form, politics and effect.

It is a leitmotif of Iranian Sufism that truth would be a perfectly polished mirror where the light is given shape (Corbin), but this mirror has been broken into pieces. Images of mirrors are a recurring motif in Iranian cinema. In many cases, they are shattered. The notion of the broken mirror opens up several possible perspectives on the relation between image and reality. Be it, that the way of searching the truth is more important than finding it, be it, that the reality of the image is defined by a deficit, always referring to a multiplicity of other possible realities (= mirror fragments), be it, that the measurement of universal truth is lost and artists are committed to a particular shape of the mirror fragment.

A lot of Iranian films are compared to Italian neo-realism and symbolic or magic realism. The starting point of the workshop will be the assumption that those links and parallels don't do justice to the complexity of Iranian forms of realism. Therefore, we are interested in carving out differentiations: What forms and concepts of realism can be found in the history of Iranian cinema? Is there any possibility to draw a line between fictional and documentary impulses? What ontological and social status, what reality of relations do moving images have in Iran's visual culture, also in relation to an economy of political power? What tactics have been developed in order to produce documentarising viewing modes (Odin) and ‚effets de réel' (Barthes)? What layering of acting modes, what interleaving of pretending to pretend (to pretend) might lead to certain effects and dimensions of social reality? What can be said about the cooperation of image and sound-design regarding things that can't be said or shown? How can the forms with which Iranian movies work on ‚our' imagination of reality be brought into dialogue with specific philosophical traditions?

Friday, December 1 (eikones Forum)

13:30 – 14:00	Words of Welcome
14:00 – 15:00	Golbarg Rekabtalaei (Seton Hall University, South Orange): Where does the "truth" lie in Iranian popular cinema? Notions of reality in "film-farsi" fantasies
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee Break
15:30 – 16:30	Seyedkeyvan Mirmohammadi (Universität Köln): Realism without a ceiling: the hidden idleness and the violence of the street
16:30 – 17:30	Adineh Khojastehpour (Bergische Universität Wuppertal): Pieces of a broken mirror widely scattered: realistic strategies in Mehrjui's cinema
17:30 – 18:00	Coffee Break
18:00 – 19:00	Mazyar Eslami (Teheran): Iranian realist cinema: formal style or a social subject?

Saturday, December 2 (neues kino Basel)

10:00 – 11:30	Under the Skin of the City (Iran 2001, Rakhshan Bani-Etemad)
11:30 – 12:30	Bert Rebhandl (Berlin) To film in order to show. On Rakshan Bani-Etemads engaged cinema
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:00	Farshad Zahedi (University of Carlos III, Madrid): Point of view shots, Iranian cinema, realism or reality
15:00 – 16:00	Christine Lang (Filmuniversität Babelsberg, Potsdam): Epic dramaturgy as social representation in contemporary Iranian Cinema
16:00 – 16:30	Coffee Break
16:30 – 17:30	Niklaus Reichle (Universität St. Gallen): Where does the truth lie? Realist quotidianity, melodramatic excess and the role of multiple perspectives in Asghar Farhadi's movies
19:00	Falaknaz (Iran 2015, Sahar Salahshoori, OmU, 59 min.) Q&A with Sahar Salahshoori

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