FILM AS A PROPAGANDA TOOL IN THE 20th CENTURY

Through the work of Architects, Critics & Film-makers

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Propaganda Film

Propaganda, can be defined as the capacity of a person to produce and disseminate *"attractive"* and reproducible messages that once seeded they will greatly influence human cultures.[1]

The end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century were periods during which propagandistic activities flourished. The development of mass media along with unprecedented advances in transportation and communication, due to innovative new technologies that came with industrial revolution, resulted to the formation of mass audiences for propaganda, in all sectors and for different purposes.[2] All different media such as print, films, radio and television contributed to this new era, offering their unique characteristics for exploitation. In this essay, I am going to focus on the particular use of film as a propaganda tool.[3]

A propaganda film, can take either the form of a documentary film production or a fictional screenplay that aims at convincing the audience about certain issues. They can be driven by politics, social conflicts, environmental problems or simply personal incentives.

Figure1. "The Bond"

Propagandistic content in films can be realistic so as to reflect actual problems and/or situations or specifically formed aiming at misleading large masses of the population on certain matters and alter their perception.[4]

The first acknowledged propaganda film was a series of short silent films, produced during the Spanish-American war in 1898 by the

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[1] Bennett, T. (2002). The Celluloid War: State and Studio in Anglo-American Propaganda Film-Making, 1939-1941. *The InternationalHistory Review*. 24 (1), 64(34).

[2] Jowett, G and O'Donnell, V. (2014). Propaganda Institutionalized. In: *Propaganda and Persuasion*.[online] 6th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Inc.. (105).
Available at: http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/40392_3.pdf [Accessed 3 January 2015].

[3] People – filmmaker, politicians, activists, etc. – came to notice that film industry was not only a powerful tool for convincing illustration of reality or for amusing audiences but a tool through which someone could reform existing perceptions, knowledge and beliefs.
Robberts, L. (2012). *Modern architecture in the age of cinema: Mies van der Rohe and the moving image*. Phd of philosophy Dissertation. Princeton University, (3).

[4] Jowett, G and O'Donnell, V. (2014). Propaganda Institutionalized. In: *Propaganda and Persuasion*.[online] 6th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Inc.. (121-123).
Available at: http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/40392_3.pdf [Accessed 3 January 2015].

Vitagraph Studios. Moreover, in 1918, Charlie Chaplin produced on his own, *"The Bond"*, a comedic film with propagandistic content for World War I. Simultaneously, as a result of the expansion of Russian cinema during 1920s, film-makers such as Dziga Verton and Sergei Eisenstein saw great potential in the use of film as a propaganda tool along with its development as a form of art. Specifically, Eisenstein's film *"Battleship Potemkin"* is considered to be a masterpiece in the world of cinema despite the fact that it promotes Eisenstein's communist beliefs.[5]

Figure2-3. "Battleship Potemkin"

At the same time with the expansion of picture in motion rose modernist architecture. Modernist Architecture is considered to be the descendant of industry and engineering.[6] [7] As a result of this unprecedented interest in technological advances, modernist architects such as Le Corbusier, Bruno Taut, Walter Gropius and Frank Lloyd Wright, immediately saw mass media and particularly film as a means of advertising, to promote ideas in the field of building, housing etc. and a long list of films were produced during that period. Undoubtedly, this discloses that architects believed that the use of film as a form of propaganda tool could prove very efficient.[8] Thus, they endorsed Giedions's argument that *"film..is the "only"*

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[5] Ibid. (121-122).

[6] Guillen, M (2008). *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical: Scientific Management and the Rise of the Modernist Architecture*. Princeton:Princeton University Press. (1).

[7] Architects familiarized themselves with scientific management, tried to establish relations between buildings and machines - Le Corbusier was trying to relate mass production of automobiles with mass production of houses and expansion of cities - incorporated the concepts of waste reduction and order and attempted to "transform" architecture into a science determined by "method, standardization and planning". Technology, science efficiency and functionality became inseparable with style, history, creativity and aesthetics.
Guillen, M (2008). *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical: Scientific Management and the Rise of the Modernist Architecture*. Princeton:Princeton University Press. (1).

[8] Haciomeroglou, N. (2008). *Reconstruction of Architectural Image in Science Fiction Cinema: A case study on New York.* [online] March Dissertation, Middle East Technical University. (22)
Available at: http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12609545/index.pdf [Accessed at 5 January 2015].

medium that allows the subject to experience the new architecture". First films on architecture were realized around 1915.[9]

It is important to note though, that during this period (20th century), film propaganda was used differently by architects, critics and filmmakers and those differences I will try to present through this essay in two basic sections Films on Architecture and Science Fiction films.

[9] Robberts, L. (2012). *Modern Architecture in the age of cinema: Mies van der Rohe and the moving image*. [online] Phd of philosophy Dissertation. Princeton University, (128).
Available at: http://dataspace.princeton.edu/jspui/bitstream/88435/dsp01k930bx05g/1/ Robbers_princeton_0181D_10096.pdf [Accessed 4 January 2015]

Films on Architecture

From the mid-20s multiple countries started producing films on architectural subject, buildings, urbanism etc.[10] Nonetheless, picture in motion in architecture entailed many different categories such as independent productions where architects filmed the construction process of their buildings, films for industries, to advertise companies, or clients' productions on private properties such as *"Villa de Noailles"* by Robert Mallet-Stevens. The most distinct category nevertheless was films for *"interest groups"* either architects who used films to promote their point of view or critics who used it to reflect social problems such as the housing issue of the post-war period.[11] In terms of form, films on architecture were mainly documentary.

Initially, during 1926 a small film company called Humboldt-Film was responsible for nine films on the subject of: *"How to live in a Healthy and Economic way?"*. The films were directed by Ernst Jahn, but for their realization, support by an organization named *"Filmausschuss fur Bau – und Sidelungswesen"* was provided.[12] Important members of this organization, whose ideas are reflected in the series where Walter Gropius, Ernst May and Bruno Taut.[13] Walter Gropius used those films to promote his preference on using modern materials such as steel, concrete and glass along with methods of prefabrication and slab construction. Additionally, the exterior and interior shots, derived from his Master houses in Dessau, attempted to present, convincingly, the advantages of

Figure4. Walter Gropius' Master House

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[10] Janser, A. (1997). Only Film Can Make The New Architecture Intelligible! In: Penz, F and Thomas, M *Cinema and Architecture: Melies, Mallet-Stevens,Multimedia*. [online] BFI Publishing . (34). Available at: http://moodle.nottingham.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/1393135/mod_resource/content/2/Janser-Only%20Film%20can%20make%20the%20new%20arch%20intelligible.pdf [Accessed 14 October 2014]

[11] Ibid. (36-38).

[12] . The aim of this organization was to educate audiences through the use of educational or science fiction films about housing issues and methods that could be used to enhance the existed buildings.

[13] Haciomeroglou, N. (2008). *Reconstruction of Architectural Image in Science Fiction Cinema: A case study on New York.* [online] March Dissertation, Middle East Technical University. (22) Available at: http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12609545/index.pdf [Accessed at 5 January 2015].

modern kitchens.[14]

In 1928, Ernst May propagated his ideas on housing reformation through another trilogy with the help of the filmmaker Dr. Paul Wolff. The trilogy constituted of *"Die Hauserfabrik der Stadt Frankfurt-am-Main"* (1928), *"Die Frankfurter Kleinstwohnung"* (1928) and *"Die Frankfurter Kuche"* (1928). The films presented the construction of a public housing project, using prefabricated elements whose planning director was May himself. They promoted his ideas about living in the air, the effects of light and sun as well as the advantages of built in kitchens.[15] In order to do so, a big part of the film is formed by text and animated plans.
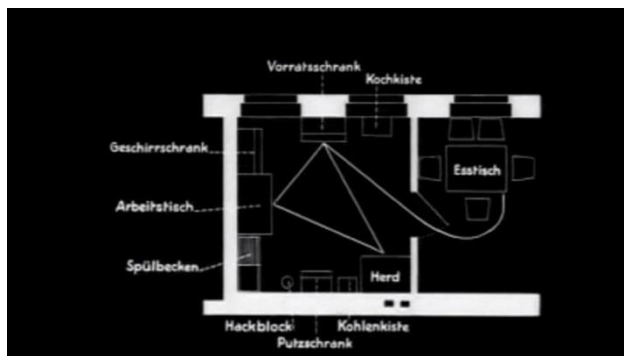

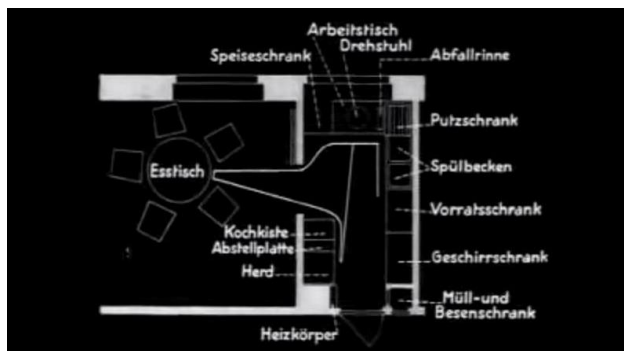**Figure5. Scene from "Die Frankfurter Kuche"**

Figure6. Scene from "Die Frankfurter Kuche"

It is evident that even with the intention of educating people and resolving the housing issues of the era, their techniques and material had a highly propagandistic character possibly driven by personal incentives.

Furthermore, Bruno Taut was one of the first to dynamically incorporate film in his architectural designs. Particularly, in 1917 he argued that film was a tool for *"[the] development of architecture"* and that it would break the barriers that still image imposed to modern architecture.[16]

Specifically, in *"Crystal Chain – Die Glaserne Kette"* (1919-1920), a collection of letters with a utopian discussion amongst many architects on the *"shape"* of future architecture, aiming at creating an ideal society that would benefit from it, Taut proposed its publication along with a complementary film. The film was entitled *"The Galoshes of Fortune – Die Galoschen des Glucks"* and anticipated to capture these architectural fantasies.

[14] Anonymous. (2011). *Bauhaus & Film (1).* Available at : http://www.arsenal-berlin.de/en/arsenal-cinema/past-programs/single/article/1411/2804//archive/2009/january.html. [Accessed at 7 January 2015].

[15] Anonymous. (2011). *Bauhaus & Film (1).* Available at : http://www.arsenal-berlin.de/en/arsenal-cinema/past-programs/single/article/1411/2804//archive/2009/january.html. [Accessed at 7 January 2015].

[16] Robberts, L. (2012). *Modern architecture in the age of cinema: Mies van der Rohe and the moving image.* [online] Phd of philosophy Dissertation. Princeton University. (9)
Available at: http://dataspace.princeton.edu/jspui/bitstream/88435/dsp01k930bx05g/1/Robbers_princeton_0181D_10096.pdf [Accessed 4 January 2015]

Taut believed that film as a medium could promote such ideas and seemed to acknowledge the propagandistic power of the picture in motion and its influence on large masses.[17,18]
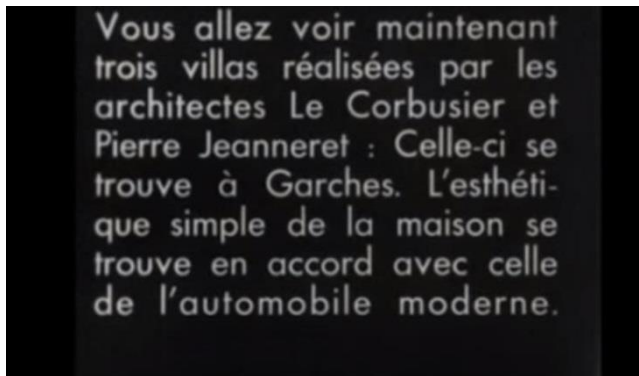

Figure7. Scene from "Architecture d'Aujourd'hui"

Another characteristic figure of the time was Le Corbusier. Clearly, the one who most openly exploited the relation between film and architecture and propagated his architectural ideas. In association with Pierre Chenal he produced *"Architecture d'aujourd'hui"* (1929). In the film he starts from the villas he had design during the 1920s and extends up to his strategic plans on the expansion of the city.[19] The arguments are expressed through interior and exterior perspectives of buildings, drawings and models produced by the architect, supported by plain text for immediacy.

Figure8. Scene from "Architecture d'Aujourd'hui"

The following year, Hans Richter directed *"Die neue Wohnung"*. The film was propagating *"bright and suitable living spaces: movable or built in furniture with clear lines, practical*

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[17] Altenmuller, U. (2012). The City Crown: An Utopianist's Vision of aBetter World by Bruno Taut. *Space of Utopia*. [online] 2 (2), (134-136).
Available at: http://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/11769.pdf [Accessed at 7 January 2015]
[18] Bruno Taut's proposal about using a film to present the Crystal Chain letters unfortunately was never produced and his interest in the use of glass as a building material were kept on those letters.
[19] Haciomeroglou, N. (2008). *Reconstruction of Architectural Image in Science Fiction Cinema: A case study on New York.* [online] March Dissertation, Middle East Technical University. (23)
Available at: http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12609545/index.pdf [Accessed at 5 January 2015].

curtains and a compact laboratory kitchen".[20] Richter expressed his radical vision on the housing problem in Germany and criticized heavy and impractical furniture along with the current unhygienic conditions in the kitchen.[21]

As Andres Janser argued those films start from a common ground and ultimately differentiate.[22] Both were independent productions that used picture in motion for internationalist propaganda, concerning the problems of housing. Subsequently, they both make use of various well-known buildings and develop light qualities and spatial features. Chenal's film is dominated by the designs of Le Corbusier and Jeanneret, while Richter's focuses on the work of Haefeli and Steiger. However, Richter used those works *"anonymously"* in order to create conceptual spaces and only a professional public could recognize the

Figure9. Scene from" Die neue Wohnung"

Figure10. Scene from "Die neue Wohnung"

actual buildings. Consequently, one could argue that his form of propaganda is reasonable and *"subjective"* while in Chenal's film, Le Corbusier's name and work is depicted clearly which implies a form of advertising propaganda driven by personal incentives.[23]

Moreover, perhaps the best example of how architecture can be used in films to propagate key messages is the work of the Italian film-maker and architect Michelangelo Antonioni.

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[20] Such statements were originally initianted by the architect Hans Hofmann.

[21] Haciomeroglou, N. (2008). *Reconstruction of Architectural Image in Science Fiction Cinema: A case study on New York.* [online] March Dissertation, Middle East Technical University. (22-24)
Available at: http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12609545/index.pdf [Accessed at 5 January 2015].

[22] "Architecture d'aujourd'hui" was produced in coordination with Le Corbusier who was a member of CIAM. While the Schweizerischer Werkbund (SWB) that commissioned Richter's film, comprised the Swiss members of CIAM. The collaboration between film-makers and architects took place in a period during which both avant-garde movement had failed to establish a common course.
Janser, A. (1997). Only Film Can Make The New Architecture Intelligible! In: Penz, F and Thomas, M *Cinema and Architecture: Melies, Mallet-Stevens,Multimedia*. [online] BFI Publishing . (34).
Available at: http://moodle.nottingham.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/1393135/mod_resource/content/2/Janser-Only%20Film%20can%20make%20the%20new%20arch%20intelligible.pdf [Accessed 14 October 2014]

[23] Ibid. (44).

In his tetralogy of films "L'avventura" (1960), "La Notte" (1960), "L'eclisse" (1962) and "il deserto rosso" (1964), Antonioni criticized the living standards of the wealthy compared to

Figure11. Scene from "L'Eclisse"

the middle-class Italians. On the contrary to the previous films, Antonioni, instead of using text to enhance his arguments and interest on the modern mise-en-scene, created a slowly ongoing narrative that was of secondary importance. Through architecture, he reflected on issues such as *"Ancient vs. Modern"*, *"Woman vs. Man"* as well as *"Socialism vs. Capitalism"* and underlined how modern architecture alienated people both from each other but also from the idea of the past.[24]

Figure12. Scene from "L'Avventura"

Another film-maker, critiquing architecture, was Jacques Tati. His critique takes the form of science fiction films and not the documentary style that was distinctive in the previous examples. He used different techniques but maintained the focus on architecture. Particularly *"Playtime"* (1967), a *"comedic commentary"* on modernity, articulated his antiphon to the constant dehumanization of everyday life caused by the excessive use of technology. Alternatively, he opposed to everything that modernist architects claimed with eagerness.

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[24] Schwarzer, M . (2000). The Consuming landscape: Architecture in the films of Michelangelo Antonioni. In: Lamster, M *Architecture and Film*.New York: Princeton Architectural Press . Kindle Edition: (3261-3307).

More specifically, the film presented a city within a city, designed in coordination with the architect Eugene Roman, so as to denote the fundamental principles of the International style of architecture. For the construction of the buildings, modern materials like glass and steel were used so as to underline the blurry boundaries between private and public and rectilinear forms to designate the absence of singularity. Tati propagated against the quadrature of modernism, the lack of uniqueness and creativity and tried to arouse people in order to react to the way the respond to their daily lives.[25]

Figure13. Scene from "Playtime"

Figure14. Scene from "Playtime"

Evidently, we can see that films on architecture, produced by architects along with film-makers or film-makers critiquing architecture, had always a more realistic approach during the 20th century. Their style was closer to a documentary, with fragmented flow, interrupted by still frames and text and gradually evolved to sci-fi films and became part of uniform narrative. Obviously, the core of the films is shaped by particular buildings and the way people experience them and through these they propagate their theories. In science fiction films, things change radically, even though architecture continues to play an important part for the realization of the films, the propagandistic content is formed and expressed differently.

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[25] Romney, J. (2014). *Jacques Tati's Playtime : Life-affirming comedy.* Available at:
http://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/oct/24/jacques-tati-playtime-intensely-complex-life-affirming-comedy.
[Accessed at 6 January 2015].

Sci-Fi Films

For film-makers, picture in motion was always an operative tool of propaganda. It enabled them to reconstruct events of *"historical reality and consciousness"*, to express collective behavior trends, to rally audiences for a specific cause or bring to the surface a previously *"obscured"* issue. Particularly, political and historical films were always able to sway people, induce historical consciousness and eventually twist events. As a result, films were used in an *"untrustworthy"* manner dominated by personal incentives of political or social parties.[26]

In 1917, after an initiation of the British high command, D. W. Griffith made a trip around Europe to capture the consequences of WWI and when the film was released it presented the decency and bravery of the Allies against the outrageous actions of the Germans.[27] Similar productions were conducted by the Axis powers as well during WWII in order to control audiences. [28,29] Hence, the film industry had always a mutually influenced relationship with political reality.

Figure15. "Triumph of Will"   **Figure16. Scene from "Triump of Will"**

Furthermore, the advances in technology of the 1920s brought to the fore a new genre of films, science fiction films. Sci-fi introduced a new form of propaganda, with

[26] Stern, F. (2000). Screening politics: Cinema and Intervention.*Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*. 1 (2), (67-75).
Available at: http://issuu.com/gjia/docs/1.2_-_wired_affairs/3?e=1

[27] Westwell, G. (2013). *Politics by Visual Means.* Available at : http://www.theeuropean-magazine.com/guy-westwell--2/6354-film-as-propaganda. [Accessed at 6 January 2015]

[28] "The rise of Totalitarian states during the Second World War are arguably the "Golden Age of Propaganda". During this time Leni Rietnstahl, a film-maker working in Nazi Germany, created the greatest propaganda film of all time: "Triumph of the Will". A film commissioned by Hitler to chronicle the 1934 Nazi Party rally in Nuremberg. Despite its controversial subject, the movie is still recognised today for its influential revolutionary approaches.
Stern, F. (2000). Screening politics: Cinema and Intervention.*Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*. 1 (2), (67-75).
Available at: http://issuu.com/gjia/docs/1.2_-_wired_affairs/3?e=1

[29] Unfortunately, this exploitation of film qualities came along with the creation of military and bureaucratic organizations to form strict censorship and fight against those who were willing to propagating against those who made the decisions in the political "proscenium".
Westwell, G. (2013). *Politics by Visual Means.* Available at : http://www.theeuropean-magazine.com/guy-westwell--2/6354-film-as-propaganda. [Accessed at 6 January 2015]

indirect messages as part of a broader utopian narrative. Yet, even under those circumstances, architecture maintained a critical aspect of those films; but it was contributing in a different way. The art historian Elie Faure, referred to this relation with the term *"cineplastics"*.[30]

Prominent examples of sci-fi films of the 20th century, underpinning the term *"cineplastics"*, were *"The Last Laugh"* (1924) by F.W Murnau, *"Asphalt"* by Joe May (1929) and *"Metropolis"* (1927) by Fritz Lang. All films represented either impending or possible to the distant future embodiments of German cities along with their architecture in order to highlight issues such the augmented population in urban *"megalopolis"*, the intolerable traffic and generally the *"faults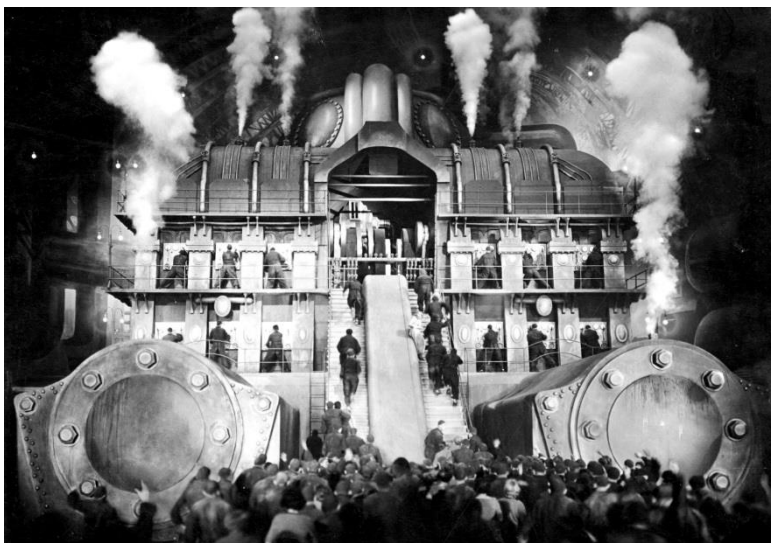"* of modernity.[31] *"Metropolis"* particularly, expressed a dystopian development of future urban centers to propagate the dangers of the current trends. Additionally, it criticized the exploitation of the proletariat by the upper class and tried to mobilize people against social discrimination and towards a more humanized society.[32] In terms of architectural significance, the movie presented skyscrapers

Figure17. Scene from "Metropolis"

that contoured the urban space and streets.

The propagandistic content of the film was such that German authority and particularly German UFA cut parts of the movie after its release.[33] Additionally, in the fear of the

[30] Haciomeroglou, N. (2008). *Reconstruction of Architectural Image in Science Fiction Cinema: A case study on New York.* [online] March Dissertation, Middle East Technical University. (27)
Available at: http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12609545/index.pdf [Accessed at 5 January 2015].

[31] Haciomeroglou, N. (2008). *Reconstruction of Architectural Image in Science Fiction Cinema: A case study on New York.* [online] March Dissertation, Middle East Technical University. (26-27)
Available at: http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12609545/index.pdf [Accessed at 5 January 2015].

[32] Anonymous. (2010). *Reconstructed & Restored: The 1927 science fiction masterwork by Fritz Lang.* Available: http://metropolis1927.com/METROPOLIS_Pressbook.pdf. [Accessed at 8 January 2015].

[33] Universum Film AG was established on December 18, 1917 as a direct response to foreign competition in the realm of film and propaganda. UFA was founded by a consortium, headed by Emil Georg von Stauß, who was a board member at Deutsche Bank.
Kreimeier, K. (1996). Fade In. In: *The Ufa Story:A history of Germany's Greatest Film Company 1918-1945.* [online] Los Angeles: University of California Press. 3-7

influence that Lang's movie could have to the audiences, United States along with Great Britain initiated the production of two films, *"Just Imagine"* (1930) by David Butler and *"Things to Come"* (1936) by W.C. Menzies, so as to present the sociological ambiguity of era with conversely an optimistic and encouraging progression of the urban world. Clearly, the new technology and visual effects of the above science fiction films stimulated the critiquing temper.

Figure18. "Just Imagine"   **Figure19. "Things to Come"**

On the contrary, *"King Kong"* (1933) by Ernest B. Schoedsack and Merian C. Cooper, was a film whose unique visual effects *"overshadowed"* the topics that film-makers raised intentionally. Specifically, it nurtured the dilemma between *"Man and Nature"* as well as *"Free and Imprisoned"*. Kong embodied those ideas and became a symbol for those who were suffering by the oppression that dominated the 1930s in USA. Moreover, the film-makers made important cues on the subject of *"Modernity and Primitive"* and were concerned about whether modern trends would prove beneficial or not, reflecting on the issues raised by modernist architects and how buildings could affect the way of living.[34]

Available at: http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=I1u5qMPO0RkC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false [Accessed at 9 January 2015]

[34] Fraley, J. (2012). *King Kong (1933).* Available: http://thefilmspectrum.com/?p=5407 . [Accessed at 9 January 2015].

Similarly, in the film *"20000 Fathoms"* (1953) by Eugene Lourie, where again a monster leads the plot like in the case of *"King Kong"*, the indirect messages were ample. With the protagonist being a dinosaur and wreaking terror in the urban world of New York, the film-maker reflected the generated terror around the manufacture and use of atomic bombs that dominated in USA during that period.[35] Consequently, once more the propagandistic content on looking critically the decisions and plans of those with political power, is hidden under a sci-fi scenario about dinosaurs *"returning"* back to the earth.

Figure20. Scene from "King Kong"

Figure21. Scene from "20000 Fathmos"

Akin structure we can find in the film *"Planet of the Apes"* (1968) by Franklin J. Schaffner. On a first glimpse, it is a science fiction film on a *"post-apocalyptic"* version of the Earth

Figure22. Scene from Planet of the Apes"

where the apes have evolved and sway humans. However, on a deeper level, the film-maker used various political allegories and propagated the concerns and social difficulties of the time. He presented issues like social discrimination, race, and violence along with the complications of power and criticized people's perception. He tried to direct the audience's attention to the negativity of violating human rights regardless of their social status and origin and to criticize imperialism.

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[35] Haciomeroglou, N. (2008). *Reconstruction of Architectural Image in Science Fiction Cinema: A case study on New York.* [online] March Dissertation, Middle East Technical University. (35)
Available at: http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12609545/index.pdf [Accessed at 5 January 2015].

Furthermore, humans' lack of intelligence was implied, given their stolidity, aiming at mobilizing them to make decisive changes.[36]

The fact that those messages are hidden behind an intriguing unrealistic narrative, implies the need of the audience to have a critical attitude against the film from the beginning and its willingness to ponder on what it is displayed, otherwise, it can be seen as just a *"shallow"* yet entertaining sci-fi film.

Later on, science fiction films started arousing concerns on environmental issues. For instance, *"Soylent Green"* (1973) by Richard Fleischer propagated against the results of the 20th century's industrialization. In a dystopian setting placed in 2022, he presented great housing problems with housing units being derelict and clogged by people. Streets were full of homeless people while food and technology were almost extinct. In addition, subjects such as climate change and global warming play a key role in the development of the film.[37]

Figure23. Scene from "Soylent Green"

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[36] Best, S. (). *Planet of the Apes: Where Humans are Slaves* . Available:
http://www.drstevebest.org/PlanetOfTheApes.htm. [Accessed at 8 January 2015].
[37] Anonymous. (2013). *Soylent Green: Science Fiction Script For Global Warming* . Available:
http://chemtrailsplanet.net/2013/11/26/soylent-green-science-fiction-script-for-global-warming/. [Accessed at 9 January 2015].

At this point, given the fact that such issues are currently taken seriously into consideration one could argue that his intention failed to raise consciousness in the audiences and perhaps the reason was the broader science fiction scenario that was reassuring for the people in terms that it was very distant from their reality. If the structure of the film was closer to the films produced by modernist architects in the same period the outcome could have been more effective and decisive.

Undoubtedly, the dystopian narrative and plot of science fiction film had both its advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, it enabled film-makers to propagate openly against public matters but simultaneously it reduced the effectiveness of their propaganda and mobilization of the audiences. It is also important to note that architecture on those films had an important role to play since cinematic space is greatly associated with architectural space in order to express psychological and experiential aspects that define human attitudes and reactions to the everyday life.[38] Buildings, landscapes or even the absence of architecture reinforced different arguments and meanings proclaimed by the film-makers.

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[38] Shah, D. (). *Cinema and architecture.* Available at:
http://www.academia.edu/3258865/cinema_and_architecture. [Accessed at 7 January 2015].

Conclusion

The examples illustrate how quickly the development of mass media during the 20th century, made the art of film-making/cinematography a powerful propaganda tool and how easily it could make statements on current events. They also reflect two different techniques on how this propagandistic intent was put in place, along with their strengths and weaknesses.

The propaganda films regarding architectural matters, adopted a documentary-fragmented style, which reflected greatly the reality of the time. The use of already constructed buildings and/or architectural spaces made reality part of the artistic expression and consequently enabled the creation of stronger arguments for the audiences to ponder on. The visualization of facts and arguments without a backup storyline avoided the confusion of the audience. On the contrary, sci-fi films' primary focus was given on a specific dystopian narrative and plot underneath which evolved the different messages putting the entertaining component prior to the *"educational"*. The narrative along with the futuristic settings often imposed adverse effects and reduced the strength of the uttered claims. The presentation of an exacerbated, worst case scenario in order to mobilize people radically and lead to decisive action was not always understood.

Nevertheless, sci-fi films had a critical attitude towards various issues such as social discrimination, political parties or environmental problems that affected and concerned a wide range of people and thus a wide range of people could look critically upon them even behind the *"disturbing"* visuals effects. Whereas, architects' documentary films were egocentric and reflected concerns of a particular architect and/or group of architects, implying the risk of "untrustworthy" propaganda as in the case of Hitler.

 In addition, in sci-fi films, film-makers propagated against current situations or attitudes, but did not propose actual solutions. They introduced the subjects to mobilize people and expected them to come up with possible resolutions, while architects used films to provide answers based on their perception of things and everything was highly personalized. As a result the production of different films on the same subject could proclaim diverse solutions, implying their willingness to use films to advertise their personal work. Therefore, the audience needed to adapt a critical temper for both the raised issues and the promoted solutions.

Finally, in both cases architecture plays a key role. Apparently, in films on architecture the "protagonist" is architectural matters but sci-fi films also rely on architecture, in a visual world, as it was stated previously. More specifically, sci-fi films used the utopian ideas expressed by modernist architects to shape their futuristic and unrealistic narratives as it was shown with the case of *"Just Imagine"* and *"Things to Come"*.

To conclude, propaganda does not constitute a straight-forward process anymore since science fiction films come to dominate the world of cinema. But even the etymology of the word, *"to propagate or to grow-still"* reflects the way films have become crucial in the reiteration and underpinning of particular ways of seeing and thinking and turn out to have strong political, social and environmental consequences. As Walter Benjamin argued, *"under these circumstances the film industry* [will continue to] *spur the interest of masses through illusion-promoting spectacles and dubious speculations".*[39]

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