Virtual Reality and Special Effects in Cinema with the Approach of Jean Baudrillard, in the State of Extreme Reality

Abstract

Jean Baudrillard, a sociologist and postmodernist philosopher, presented theories regarding images. In all his social theories, his unending concern for the destruction of the existent and its replacement by the pretense is palpable. In the meantime, he considers art as a conspiracy and a means to realize pretense. Cinema, especially, as a simulating reference of reality, has been criticized by Baudrillard. One of the basic solutions to create a simulation from Baudrillard 's point of view is to use special computer effects. Therefore, on the one hand, Baudrillard's criticism of cinema and on the other hand, his interest and emphasis on its capabilities are evident; which itself causes ambivalence in Baudrillard's theories and confusion of his audience. This research is an attempt to resolve existing ambiguities and to distinguish the factual approach behind these seeming contradictions in the field of virtual reality and special effects in cinema. In this regard, in the present study, through library research, data analysis and scrutinizing Baudrillard's statements in a descriptive-analytical method, solutions to prevent the destruction and replacement of the "real thing" in cinema and to determine the relationship between cinema and its effects are sought. As a result, it can be seen that the rejection of special effects, according to Baudrillard, depends on the purpose of its use. In other words, the use of special effects is rejected in the direction of recreating reality and can be accepted in the track of imagination.

Research aims:

1. Examining Baudrillard's negative view of the destruction of reality by special effects.

2. Inspecting special effects in cinema according to Jean Baudrillard.

Research questions:

1. How can cinema, despite the increasing efficiency of special effects, and Baudrillard's negative view of the destruction of reality by special effects; continue its presence?

2. How can special cinematic effects distance themselves from Baudrillard's criticism?

Introduction

Jean Baudrillard, a postmodernist philosopher, in his views, uses his sociological theories regarding the living conditions of today's societies, which he refers to as "hyper-reality". His ideas have taken root in various fields of human life and art is no exception to this rule. Although he never claimed to theorize in cinema as a film critic, the book "Pretense and Deception" had many effects on cinema and initiated many philosophical debates in cinema, thus forcing Baudrillard to enter into cinema discussions. From this point of view, a term called " Baudrillard's cinema" became popular in the world of cinema, especially in Hollywood. Jean Baudrillard was heavily involved in the concept of simulation instead of its interaction with the notion of reality. Meanwhile, media identity, not as a means of communication; rather, it is examined as a means of showing representation—the work of art as a reflection of something essentially "real." When the media reaches an advanced state, they make themselves appear "real" to the point where reality is unrecognizable without the intervention of the media. In other words, that reality is defined by the media and pretending to be a sign is mistaken for its signified. Baudrillard's theory of pretense and simulation, in addition to having a direct and tremendous impact on cinema, also correctly explains how it relates to society and its mechanism.

Baudrillard's theory of virtual reality commenced many discussions related to the philosophy of image, especially cinema. In addition to creating many opportunities for theorizing about cinema; it also caused cinema to be challenged as an agent of destruction of reality in the postmodern world. Since special effects in the cinema are closely related to computer simulations; examining the philosophy of special effects with the approach of simulation theory seems to be necessary and can connect Iranian cinema with the philosophy of world cinema today. It should be noted that little research has been done in Persian language in the field of philosophy of postmodern cinema with Jean Baudrillard's approach. And the research done is either about the media or about art (in general). For this purpose, regarding the literature review of this topic, firstly, the articles that have generally referred to the postmodern art with Baudrillard's approach are referred to, and then the

few cases which have discussed the philosophy of Baudrillard's cinema are mentioned. Regarding the media from Jean Baudrillard's point of view, we can refer to Gholamreza Parhizkar's research entitled: "The reality of the media and the masses at the height of Baudrillard's reality". Regarding postmodern art from the point of view of Jean Baudrillard, we can also refer to two books "Baudrillard in another frame" written by Kim Tuffolty translated by Vahidela Mousavi, Farhangestan Honar Publications, and the book "A path to postmodernism in the scope of aesthetics" written by Dr. Maryam Jamali whose thoughts Baudrillard's philosophy has been carefully evaluated about the image". The following articles can also be mentioned: "Pretend: History and Concept" and "Media Art and Truth in the Postmodern Era" and "The Relationship between the End of Art and the End of Man from Jean Baudrillard's Point of View" written by Soheila Mansourian (2015) extracted from her master's thesis which generally examines Jean Baudrillard's philosophy of art and states that art reaches self-awareness after passing through tradition and modernity in postmodern synthesis, it disappears and withdraws. As it is evident, the lack of Persian-language Persian sources about the philosophy of postmodern cinema has kept filmmakers away from producing and dealing with this field and discussing about today's cinema, and it is necessary to deal with the theory of Baudrillard's simulation theory and its effects on cinema and it reveals special effects. It should be noted that Baudrillard's relatively incoherent and sometimes seemingly contradictory statements about cinema are left behind, which are generally rooted in Baudrillard's dialect and are usually taken from his interviews. Therefore, this research, by using the method of library research and data analysis in a descriptive-analytical way and grounded on the conformity of Baudrillard's cinematic statements with the general ideas of his thought and measuring them with each other, seeks to investigate the relationship between the simulation of reality in cinema, its consequences and control solutions.

Conclusion

Baudrillard both loves cinema and also aims to criticize it and reject special effects. If we pay more attention to this issue, the reason for Baudrillard's criticism of cinema is very dependent on "counterfeit issues". As discussed during this research, Baudrillard's apprehension is constantly the destruction of the real entity and its replacement by pretensions. Baudrillard believes that cinema's approach to reality and its attempt to reconstruct reality at all times leads to its destruction and the creation of a fabricated or pretended reality. Therefore, if special effects and computer

images are used to produce reality, they will have no result except the formation of unreality and fueling pretense, furthermore, they are considered rejected according to Baudrillard. However, if they are used to produce the legendary nature and preserve the mythical quality of cinema, they will not contradict Baudrillard's statements since they have removed themselves from the cycle of reproducing reality - (and the claim of pretending to be real) - and have changed their purpose of existence from pretending reality to creating myths, legends, fantasy and imagination. In this way, we can better understand the reason for Baudrillard's apparent contradictions regarding art. Why Baudrillard generally considers art as a tool to fuel the pretense of objectification, and on the other hand loves cinema or praises art on a case-by-case basis. In fact, according to Baudrillard, the general arts, in line with the demands of the media, lead to the destruction of reality and the deception of the masses, and few of them move in a direction other than this.

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