

How do cinema and photography emerge from the media that come before them? In what ways are they similar and how do they differ from their predecessors?

As different ways to depict life and events by human beings from pre-history time, paintings, telescopes, and other lens have many derivatives later with the development of technology and people's discoveries and historical context. For example, both photography and cinema emerge from those predecessors where people happened to realize the magic of light in related to images and moving pictures and practice them onto certain media for saving the moment. While cinema could also be counted as a branch from photography, the idea and the ways they are presented have differences as well. The philosophy behind is that camera freezes time, and the projector starts it up again, both of which are predeceased from other artistic ways or optical tools.

For photography, one of its special aspects is connectedness. Photos have a relationship with their referents and there is a strong connection between the signifier and referent, which means the connection between the photo and person who it belongs to and the places it takes place. Paintings are usually less likely to be referred by the author but more emphasized on the content since a piece of painting plays the role more like an artistic creation. Also, there is more personalization in the photograph. For example the portrait photo; while painting is a highly detailed picture, it still cannot be considered as a portrait photograph. The photography could store the moment by using the light while telescope, the lens cannot but more immediate.

Compare to the word "photography" which originally means the image of light, cinema elaborates the light onto moving objects; therefore, cinema is led from the development of photography. There is a saying "cinema was not invented. The cinematography was". Cinema carries the aspects that photo has as well. The connection between the cameraman and the object is sometimes even stronger with the projection of a series of individual images that could tell a story. And cinema activates the static object into dynamic and renders more background information and personal interactive to its audience, while paintings, lens projections cannot.

In addition, the topic that whether photo and cinema is art or not has been controversial for decades. Given paintings are mostly artistic work, photo and cinema are relatively loyal to the referent. As it is being said, “Photos are too literal to compete with works of art because it was unable to “elevate the imagination involved”, but there are some other sayings, for example, Lenin said, “cinema is the most important art form.” The creation of cinema later, especially at the stage of Hollywood period promotes visual arts into a historically high level during the 40s to 70s.

Actually, both photography and cinema have more than one predecessors, they could also have emerged from telescopes, lens, and sculpture but they are special due to their connectedness, mobility, personalization, and interactivity. In between of photo and cinema, cinema sometimes gives more information via the projection of series of moving photos while a simple photo captures the moment at best that attract its audience to feel the details behind that frozen time and think in deep.

How does industrialization relate to photography and

Does modernism relate to the cinema?

In the late 1800’s the world was beginning to take shape into something more of what it looks like today — during the industrial revolution and the modernism large groups of people coming from villages crushed to cities to get jobs and took them, literally, to the next level. Tons of excellent work was produced that catch people’s attention and call for deep thought of the issues, and even the society was remade by photographs and; the cinema, called “beauty of speed”, improved the disciplines and made humans’ lives better.

Prior to massive ships, trains, skyscrapers, and cultural heritages being photoed, our landscapes were serene, less spoiled and even unspoiled. Photos broadened the eyesight for entire world starting from French. Since photography was first born there and received the attention and support of the French government, documentary photography played an active role in protecting French urban and rural architecture and cultural heritage in the process of industrialization, and as the traveling became easier that brought to the scope of world — many of famous architecture, cultural heritage, and artwork are able to be seen now.

In addition, photographers were also entrusted with the responsibility for the process of demolition and reconstruction of urban buildings, the construction of bridges and monuments and etc. For example, Philip Henry Delamotte, a British photographer and illustrator, laid the groundwork for the beginnings of time-lapse photography during the industrialization. He photographed the building of the Crystal Palace of London at Sydenham every week for three years and placed the camera at the same place. And all the photographs together became a record of the whole process. Although these photos are used as a flip book or movie (the introduction of cinema) in a quick succession, which not yet entered the field of photography, the concept of recording and documenting the exact same thing over time to observe its changes was original and innovative at that time.

Also, there are more portrait photos produced and techniques developed during the industrialization to focus on people and life especially those “investigative photographs” that revealed to the public what really happened in factories, such as child labors which became a popular factory life at that time. The convenience from traveling due to industrialization benefited people to take pictures for anything in almost anywhere largely broadened our perception of the world.

In addition to photos, cinema went prosperous during the modernism which is a colorful trend for cinema to develop in many ways. Despite the new waves from each country, some obvious features developed in cinema during the modernism were internationally common:

Different from previous cinema, directors at this time focus more on conscious authorship, meaning they made their movies more personal with more emphasis on the work of their own and depicted topics including childhood and personal life. Some directors try to monopolize the right to interpret their films declaring their personal opinions.

Cinema in modernism grew to be more innovative and creative in techniques and themes. Many of the movies emphasized on critical self-reflection. For example in some scenes, the characters look directly into the camera and sometimes directors freeze frame shots, and strength color filters to highlight certain objects and topics behind and catch audience’s attention, and give them a real sense as if they are in the story of the film. Some cinema is not limit to please the public

but include social criticism and outspoken political messages to make it possible the self-reflection into a higher level for deep thoughts and revolutions.

Photograph in Industrialization broadened peoples perception of the world and cinema in modernism made it possible to call people's attention towards the issue in society and featured into the artistic way to convey ideas and thoughts using one's own method.

Look at the two images below. How does each work conceptualize and portray space?

As the development of paintings from the pre-history period to contemporary time, the techniques and topics have never stopped from changing and innovating. Though originally paintings were used as a mean to memorize the event and life as real as possible, later there are more types of artistic styles developed such as impressionism, abstractionism and etc. Among them, paintings start to introduce the idea of concept and dimension, in which we artists focus more on theme and ideas involved in the work and take over the traditional artistic, technical, and material concerns and dimension are emphasized using light and lines.



Syriac icon



Raphael, School of Athens

An Icon is a two-dimensional work of sacred imagery and the Syriac Icon is a typical example that if you directly look at the picture, you feel it obey the general aesthetic sense but emphasizes more on the religious object. People in this painting are of different sizes and their appearance is quite coarse. You can see some people are very tiny and seem to worship the guy on the horse. Based on historical context, Syriac Icon is used as a religious worship paintings to convey the concept Syriac Orthodox Christians and the iconographers are to be faithful believers of the Church and they start their works for prayers with strong and strict emphasizing on a sacred scene for prayers. Also, this icon is technically called “written work” instead of painted as it follows a strict teaching theology delivers the concept of veneration. In the Holy Spirit, “the honor paid to the image passes to the prototype” and anyone who tries to destroy this icon "is the enemy of Christ, the Holy Mother of God and the saints, and is the defender of the Devil and his demons.” While following the tradition of icon to convey the ideas rather highlight aesthetic work, this icon uses two dimensions

and divides the paintings into two parts: the religious people takes most of the place with but they are fewer people compared to the players who are tiny and crowded, the conflicts between their sizes, and spaces promote the icon's concept for veneration.

Different from the first work, then the School of Athens is more aesthetic and dimensional, but still, conceptualize the idea of sacredness and worship. The author of this work was summoned by the pontiff and a commission of his life, to decorate the Papal Apartments. We could see painting convey the sense of peace, learning and thinking from those faithful prayers. And this work was in fact, for the decoration of pontiff's study room on the second floor, and the ideas behind those learners and faithful prayers are the synthesis of worldly and spiritual thinking, a veneration as the first icon does. However, this work portrays the space quite differently. Raphael uses sky and large arches to show the 3D spacious roof which represents spaciousness, harmoniousness, and peacefulness while Christians are learning and reading. The use of light gives the audience a sense that the hall is very deep and tall which sets off the people in painting from sky and god.

The conflicts and comparison of sizes and brightness emphasize the gap and distance between god, religion, and prayers when looking together with the two pieces of work.

Extra Credit: Relate Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" to the origins of cinema.

Allegory of the Cave is a famous book by Plato who teaches us the philosophy of life by telling the story of a group of imprisoned people in a cave. It was a story he written to compare "The effect of education and the lack of it on our nature."

The imprisoned people in the cave have no connection to the outside world and there is no natural light. All the inhabitants could see are coming from the shadows of things throw up on the wall by the light of the fire. The cave dwellers get fascinated by those reflections of animals, plants, food and assume those shadows are real and if you pay attention to them you will understand succeed in life but they don't realize the fact those shadows are just phantoms.

Until one day, someone finds a way out and realizes their sophisticated thoughts are nothing in face of the truth. He is illuminated by the sunshine and is nearer to the true nature of being. When

he returns back to the cave, he is stuck by the darkness and others are totally unimpressive, and when he insists on explaining what the truth like, the cave dwellers start to get sarcastic and then very angry and decide to kill him eventually.

The story of the cave is an allegory of the life of all enlightened people. The cave dwellers are humans before philosophy and the sun is the light of reason the alienation of the returned philosopher is what all truth tell can expect when they take their knowledge back to people who have not devoted themselves to thinking. related to the origin of cinema, which cinematography uses light, specifically magic Lanterns as a type of early projector to employ pictures on sheets of glass. They are actually shadows and phantoms that except for general shape, people hardly get to the truth of the real object. It soon became a popular form of entertainment for people that gradually covers the truth from the real source of light and the object itself.

However, as the cinema develops later, images became clear and movements became faster and smoother, that the idea from Plato's Allegory of the Cave that people themselves have no choice to start from "cave" and find the truth gradually by their own chasing the light from truth and philosophy. As cinema grows better people watching films have more sense of reality and that's how the philosophy Plato believes as to be the truth.