PSYCHOANALYTICAL APPROACH TO COMPLEX NARRATIVE IN MOVING IMAGE: NOLAN'S MEMENTO[*]

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ABSTRACT

This article explores Christopher Nolan's Memento as an exemplar of complex narrative in moving images with a psychoanalytical approach. Psychoanalysis has provided a foundation for commentators, film critics and theorists to analyse cinema. By using Freud's Iceberg Analogy of the unconscious mind, this article examines the parallelism between the emergence of unconscious complex mental states, how they are expressed through emotions and behaviour in moving images and how spectators reflect their unconscious emotions and mental states. The article focuses on Memento and analyses the movie's character and narrative structure. Memento was chosen as Christopher Nolan captured the scary extent of the human mind's complexity and its unconsciousness. Through complex narrative structures, he created associations between audiences' unconsciousness and negative emotions of repression and stress associated with it, such as helplessness, fear of having no purpose, misjudgement or unfair treatment. This article examines the scene structures in relation to the complexity of narratives and narratives' relation to Leonard Shelby's unconscious mind, through the framework of psychoanalysis and interpretivist approaches by utilising psychoanalytic film theory and text analysis. It concludes that the protagonist, Leonard Shelby, has a detached preconscious and conscious and unconscious resulting from not his head injury but unconsciously using it as a psychological shield. The detachment between levels of consciousness is depicted as a moving image in black and white. This provides stability and consistency to Leonard's version of narratives, which plays the reverse. The analysis of Memento with a psychoanalytical approach evidences the parallelism between Freud's Iceberg Analogy of the unconscious mind and humans' complex unconscious mental states and how this is depicted in moving image.

Keywords: Unconscious Mind, Freud, Memento, Iceberg Analogy, Leonard Shelby.

HAREKETLİ GÖRÜNTÜDE KARMAŞIK ANLATIYA PSİKANALİTİK YAKLAŞIM: NOLAN'IN MEMENTO FİLMİ

ÖZ

Bu makale, Christopher Nolan'ın Memento eserini psikanalitik bir yaklaşımla hareketli görüntülerdeki karmaşık anlatının bir örneği olarak incelemektedir. Psikanaliz yorumcuların, film eleştirmenlerinin ve kuramcıların sinemayı analiz edebilmeleri için bir temel sağlamıştır. Bu makale, Freud'un bilinçdışı zihinle ilgili Buzdağı Analojisi'ni kullanarak bilinçdışı karmaşık zihinsel durumların ortaya çıkışı, bunların hareketli görüntülerde duydu ve davranışlarla nasıl ifade edildiği ve zihinsel durumlarını nasıl yansıttıkları arasındaki paralelliği incelemektedir. Makale, Memento'ya odaklamamakta ve filmi

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karakter ve anlatı yapısı açısından analiz etmektedir. Memento, Christopher Nolan'ın insan zihninin karmaşıklığının ve bilinçsizliğinin korkutucu boyutlarını yakalamadaki başarısı nedeniyle seçilmiştir. Nolan, karmaşık anlatı yapıları aracılığıyla, izleyicilerin bilinçsizliği ile çaresizlik, amaçsızlık korkusu, yanlış yargılama veya haksız muamele gibi bununla ilişkili olumsuz baskı ve stres duyguları arasında ilişkiler kurmuştur. Bu makale, sahne yapılarını, anlatıların karmaşıklığı ve bu anlatıların Leonard Shelbyinin bilinçdışı zihniyle olan ilişkisini psikoanaliz ve yorumlayıcı yaklaşımlarla metin analizi ve psikanalitik film teorisi kullanarak incelemektedir. Filmin kahramanı Leonard Shelby'nin kafa travması sonucu değil, bilinçdışı bunu bir kalkan olarak kullanmasından kaynaklanan bağımsız bir ön bilinç ile bilinçli ve bilinçsiz olduğu sonucuna varmaktadır. Bilinç düzeyleri arasındaki kopukluk, siyah beyaz, hareketli bir görüntü olarak tasvir edilmektedir. Bu, Leonard'ın tersten oynanan anlatı versiyonuna istikrar ve tutarlılık sağlamaktadır. Memento'nun psikanalitik bir yaklaşımla incelenmesi, Freud'un bilinçdışı zihinle ilgili Buzdağı Analojisi üzerinden insanın karmaşık bilinçdışı zihinsel durumları arasındaki paralelliği ve bunun hareketli görüntü üzerinde nasıl tasvir edildiğini anlatmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Bilinçdışı Zihin, Freud, Memento, Buzdağı Antolojisi, Leonard Shelby.*

INTRODUCTION
A film may leave a lasting impact because of the forms of identification and emotional engagement it can elicit, appealing directly to many layers of one's awareness and numerous layers of frequently confused sentiments. A film has the power to affect the lives of people and the way they view the world, and it may have highly intimate and private implications. However, it can simultaneously attach itself to numerous public discourses and ideologies to control, transform, and distort individuals' perspectives (Elsaesser & Hagener, 2015). Christopher Nolan's Memento provides a channel to make antagonists internalise the unconscious mind of the protagonist. It makes them face their worst fears in their unconscious: fear, guilt, and shame. Providing a unique interdisciplinary lens, this article amalgamates psychoanalysis and interpretivist approaches and through utilising psychoanalytic film theory and text analysis, explores protagonist Leonard Shelby's complex unconscious mind in relation to complex narratives in the scenes.

Dreams, Imagination and Cinema
Since Charcot's clinic, where he experienced his initial encounter with hysteric female patients, Freud was always interested in understanding and making a sensible explanation of irrational behaviour. According to Freud, an unconscious mental state motivates irrational behaviour rooted in a person's archaic, infantile period. He argued that these unconscious motives emerge in a person's life in an inchoate yet powerful way even before the individual becomes conscious or has the mental capacity to own these wishes (Allen, 2004).

Teays (2012) argues that movies are a gate to our hearts and minds. What exists in our minds reflects *"through a projector and thrown onto a screen"* (Nolan, 2013). Psychoanalysis has provided a foundation for commentators, film critics and theorists to analyse cinema. It has been an effective tool as cinema is a medium for the irrational, and psychoanalysis seeks to explain the irrational (Allen, 2004).

Two particular aspects of the cinema where irrationality and cinema relate are: one investigates the importance of human cognition of how cinema augments perception, and the second one emphasises how irrational thought and dream are magnetic to film (Allen, 2004). In 2021, Schredl referred to a 19th-century experiment by Harvey de Saint-Denys in 1982 (Schredl, 2021). In the experiment, de Saint-Denys intentionally smelled a particular perfume several times a day during his stay in the countryside. When he returned to his apartment in the city, his helper put some amount of the same perfume on his pillow while still asleep. This type of stimulation enabled his dreams to include countryside-related references more. His experiment evidenced that associations we make when awake are and can be re-activated during sleep (Schredl, 2021). It showed that the subconscious and conscious are linked, and

dreams are where the conscious becomes free from limits and can become a reflection of our unconscious motives and wishes.

Memento was very successful because Christopher Nolan captured the scary extent of the human mind's complexity and its unconsciousness. Through complex narrative structures, he created associations between audiences' unconsciousness and negative emotions of repression and stress associated with it, such as helplessness, fear of having no purpose, misjudgement or unfair treatment. Noir enables the audience to indulge their impulses and repressed stress whilst empowering them to have a critical approach to disorder by toying with Freud's psychoanalytical work on repression and motives (Zahariev, 2014).

Repression explains the existence of unconscious mental states, but how are these mental states maintained? Freud contended that unconscious mental processes derive their effectivity in the mind's life through the imagination's ability to conjure, to varied degrees, the power and importance of an experience we have gone through, even though the event is just portrayed to us in the imagination. (Allen, 2004). Thus, the imagination serves as a theatre for the mind to express itself through dreams and wants that are otherwise unattainable. Dreams are the stage of the imagination that is arguably the most frightening. The narrative shapes that imagination takes to mask the desire that animates it, preventing it from being actively entertained and ensuring that it continues to be directly if subconsciously, experienced in the life of the mind. (Allen, 2004). Under some settings, imagination may burst through the fabric of reality and present itself in seemingly incomprehensible human behaviour. Ready-made material, particularly the individual's own body, is deployed as the medium through which imagination is acted out or projected, as in hysteria (Allen, 2004). In that sense, it can be argued that the question of how socially constructed real worlds represent both social reality and hypothetical worlds is born by the imagination through movies (Mikos, 2004). When establishing dichotomies like the conscious and unconscious or Eros and Thanatos, psychoanalytic theory draws on a long line of anthropological reflections that, going back to Plato and the body and soul dichotomy of Judeo-Christianity, highlight the tension between the various facets of personality, between desire and reality, as well as between real experience and dreams. Characters are tormented by memories, dreams, and nightmares, leading them to question reality and their individual ego (Noriega, 2008).

Noir Cinema and the Unconscious Mind

It is difficult to say whether the most intriguing conflicts and characters in film noir were directly influenced by psychoanalytical theory or whether the thoughts of Freud were developed within the moral atmosphere and intellectual mix that the creators of this cinematic cycle shared. In one of the more recent analyses of film noir, Noël Simsolo makes the almost definite claim that psychoanalysis is a subject that preoccupies movie producers. They are aware that the audience is drawn to it in a twisted way, especially when it features violence, sex, and dreams. The viewer imagines himself to be only a bystander, seeing the effects of neuroses, which are often shown in a very simplistic manner (Noriega, 2008).

According to Hugo Münsterberg, a fundamental parallel exists between cinema and the mind since many cinematic processes, including an associative montage of multiple environments and detail isolation, mimic how the mind operates (Elsaesser & Hagener, 2015). Münsterberg's book, The Photoplay (1916), was one of the first to deal seriously with film and its psychological and cognitive capabilities, and it was far ahead of its time in asserting and attempting to methodically prove the parallel between mental and cinematic processes (Elsaesser & Hagener, 2015). More than any other art form, the moving picture of the future would fall under the authority of psychologists who analyse the workings of the mind (Elsaesser & Hagener, 2015). He contends that with typical cinematic techniques such as flashbacks and close-ups, films may make mental processes such as memory, attention, and imagination apparent. (Elsaesser & Hagener, 2015).

Medically, flashbacks are also known as *analepsis*. Flashbacks in film noir have provided the opportunity for several aesthetic operations. For instance, fragmented and scattered narrative breaks temporal cohesiveness and rigid causality, giving the story a level of complexity to encourage audience participation. Above all, flashback suggests the choice of fatalistic aesthetics because it places the source of the present conflict in the unchangeable past (Noriega, 2008). However, in Memento, his flashbacks are unreliable as he has no memory after a certain period, making the narrative more complex for the audience as there is a constantly changeable past since no solid memory of the event exists.

Sigmund Freud's iceberg analogy of the unconscious mind identified the structure of the mind in three categories: conscious, subconscious and unconscious (McLeod, 2023). At a conscious level, people have thoughts and perceptions that they know of; at a pre-conscious level, memories and stored knowledge exist, which people can be aware of if they want to and attempt. These two levels are what people think and can recall for that particular time frame. Things that people are not and cannot be mindful of exist at the unconscious mind level, which Freud refers to as the Id and is considered as the most primitive drives and instinctive real motives where all behaviour originates. This is where people's sexual and aggressive instincts, fears, motives for violent behaviour, immoral urges, traumatising or shameful experiences, selfish needs, and unacceptable sexual desires exist (McLeod, 2023). Like in the analogy, it is an unseen part of the mind.

Table 1. Freud's Iceberg Analogy (Oschman & Pressman, 2014: 78)

Above Surface	**Ego and Superego**	**Conscious Level**	Thoughts Perceptions
Beneath Surface	**Ego and Superego**	**Pre Conscious Level**	Memories Stored Knowledge
	Id	**Unconscious Level**	Selfish Needs Fears Immoral Urges Irrational Wishes Shameful Experiences

Because noir has an emotional foundation, it is a great instrument for cathartically provoking strong emotional reactions from its viewers, bringing hidden feelings and difficulties to the surface. Noir urges the audience to play psychiatrist and experiment with the psychologically concealed. Noir's artistic emphasis on water, in particular, echoes Freudian ideas. By mirroring how the majority of an iceberg is submerged underwater, the iceberg metaphor of Sigmund Freud highlights how most of a person's intellect, memories, and motives remain hidden in the unconscious. Noir appears to allude to water's hiding characteristic, encouraging the spectator to speculate on what lies under its surface (Zahariev, 2014). For instance, noir's darkness and spooky nightmare features hide what is underwater. In addition to being terrifying, complex chronology has a hiding quality, confusing the story and asking the reader to play psychiatrist and unravel its puzzle, reaching that hidden portion of the "iceberg" and thereby probing the psyche (Zahariev, 2014).

Introduction to Memento (2000)
Memento may be the most realistic and captivating neo-noir film on the mental landscape (Szyszka, 2006). Leonard is a former insurance claims investigator who is unable to make new memories and is unable to recall anything that has occurred after his wife's murder as a result of the head trauma he had while attempting to protect his wife. (Szyszka, 2006; Hurd, 2003). He only remembers the most recent, brief portion of his life and cannot remember anything prior to his head trauma. In order to keep track of the clues he finds while doing his search, he makes notes to himself and takes Polaroid photos. Shelby is surrounded by others who may be helping him, lying to him, or doing both in a traditional "noir" fashion. He is careful not to depend on memory in any way, as memory may change a room's

shape or a car's colour, leading to a distorted memory. Thus, memories can be mere interpretations, no records of the actual occurrences and not irrelevant once you have the facts (Chambers, 2004).

During the assault, he takes out one of the two unidentified invaders by gunfire and kills him; the other takes him down and flees (Hurd, 2003). One of the few things he remembers is his wife passing away. He is devoted to tracking and executing the second assailant (IMDB, 2000). During the struggle, he receives a head injury, and from that day onwards, he experiences significant, anterograde loss of memory (Memento Official Website, 2000). His present attention span lasts around fifteen minutes, is even shorter when upset or distracted, and he cannot form new long-term memories. His short-term memory is almost non-existent. The intriguing aspect of Leonard's condition, as he refers to it, is his pristine memory of everything that happened before the accident. He knows his identity, previous employment, and memories of his married life (Memento Official Website, 2000; Hopkins, 2016).

Sequences in black and white and colour are intercut throughout the film. The colour sequences move forward in reverse chronology, while the black and white segments move forward chronologically. Until they finally meet in the midst of the narrative towards the movie's conclusion, the forward, black and white scenes and the backward colour ones alternate (Hopkins, 2016).

The story starts in black and white, in a room where Leonard Shelby awakens, confused about what he is doing there. He cannot trust anyone because he cannot remember anything from the previous day. This leads him to have a rather paranoid and obsessive aim to solve his puzzle. He knows he wants to avenge his wife's death, but nothing else interests him. He converses with an unidentified caller when the phone rings. He explains to the caller that he has anterograde amnesia, a disorder that prevents him from making new memories. To describe it, he gives a detailed account of Sammy Jankis' experience with the ailment. (Hurd, 2003).

Police cannot find the murderer, so he takes this challenge alone. Due to his condition, it becomes very difficult for him to find the killer. Leonard explains that to solve the challenges, one requires a system of records and the motivation to apply them. (IMDB, 2000). Thus, he develops strategies to help him remember what he considers important in finding the murderer. He takes Polaroid photographs of people and things that he considers important to solve his mystery and keeps these in his pocket, where he goes and writes notes on the back (Hurd, 2003). He tattoos crucial information on parts of his body. The audience can see Leonard's tattoo, which reads, *John G. Raped and murdered my wife*, in addition to other evidence and notes.

METHODOLOGY
Purpose and Importance of the Study
Since its release in 2000, Memento has been studied by many scholars in different disciplines, from English literature to cinematography, including fields of psychology such as memory, trauma and cognitive studies (Claydon, 2010; Little, 2005; Botez, 2015; Vučković, 2023). However, existing studies that emphasise the psychological aspect of Memento (2000) are limited to analysing the film from a cinematographic angle, providing the film as an example of a psychological thriller (Claydon, 2010), or studied mind of Leonard Shelby the protagonist, as a trauma survivour (Little, 2005). After 20 years, the movie proves itself that it is still considered an academically intriguing piece of art to be explored by researchers from diverse disciplines (Vučković, 2023; Chen, 2023; Labrouillère, 2023; Davies, 2022; Rohan and Hemmige, 2023; Turcotte, 2022).

Psychoanalytic film theory is dominantly shaped by the Lacanian perspective (McGowan, 2023). However, this study takes a Freudian perspective and applies Iceberg Analogy to Leonard Shelby's consciousness levels, which is its unique contribution to the literature.

Study Method

Psychoanalysis explores the complexities and unconscious aspects of the human mind (Niaz et al., 2019), and psychoanalytic film theory explores cinema with a psychoanalytic approach (Flick, 2014). Two noticeable waves shape this approach. From the late 1960s until the early 1970s, psychoanalytic film theory focused on ideology dissemination through cinema. It was mainly shaped by the thoughts of Jean-Louis Baudry, Christian Mets and Luara Mulvey, originating from the Lacanian perspective. During the second wave, which coincided with the late 1980s and the early 1990s, scholars such as Slavoj Žižek and Joan Copjec discussed the psychoanalytic film theory within the context of cinema in relation to trauma from Lacanian and, to a lesser extent, Freudian approaches. (McGowan, 2023).

In order to analyse the non-sequential scenes in terms of what characters says and the inconsistencies in the content, text analysis has been utilised in this study (Bernard and Ryan, 1998). Direct quotations and conversations between characters have been given as they appear in each scene. To explore the levels of consciousness of the protagonist Leonard Shelby and how non-sequential scene structure is interwoven with his complex mind through psychoanalytic film theory (Allen, 2004). The method of this study is represented in Figure 1. The method combines psychoanalytical and interpretivist approaches and by applying text analysis and psychoanalytical film analysis through Freud's Iceberg Analogy to Memento film, it aims to explore protagonist Leonard Shelby's consciousness levels and his mind. It also interpret how this may be reflected the cinema experience of spectators.
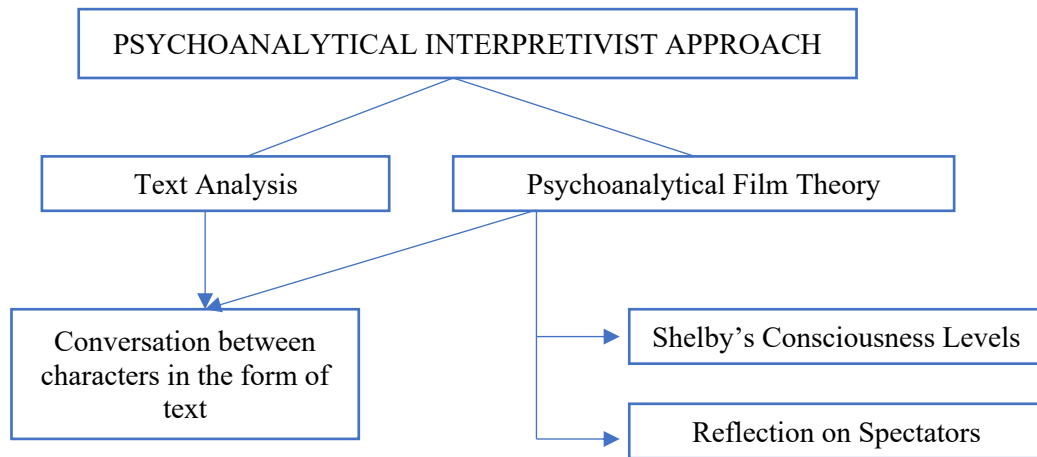

Figure 1. Methodology of the study

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Memento (2020) can be separated into 22 black, and 22 colour sequences (Hurd, 2003). The colour scenes, which depict the primary plot of Leonard's quest for his wife's killer in a succession of three- to eight-minute parts, are interesting because of their reverse presentation in the movie. These very little portions represent the length of Leonard's memory. The narrative is delivered backwards, and as each scene plays out, the audience learns more about the circumstances behind the murder. In every new scene, the viewers discover fresh parts of the jigsaw. However, most of these pieces' meanings are not immediately clear from the order in which they initially occur. Like a detective who gradually gathers more circumstantial evidence whilst conducting an investigation, viewers must pay close attention and wait for the sequence to reveal a specific tip concealed in one of the prior scenes (Hurd, 2003).

Memento's Chronology
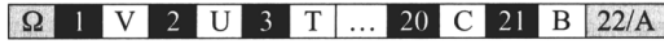
Memento's Filmic Organisation
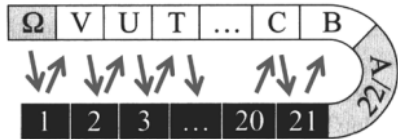
Graphical Rendition of Memento's "hairpin" Organisation

Figure 2. Scene Structures (Tseng & Bateman, 2012: 95)

Chronological scenes are described through letters A-V, A being the first sequence in the chronological sense. Ω represents the opening scene. It goes to the first black and white scene (1), then to the last colour scene (V), then to the next (second) black and white scene, and it continues until the film's concluding structural cross-over sequence at the end of the film (Tseng & Bateman, 2011). These colour scenes, which depict the primary plot of Leonard's quest for his wife's killer in a succession of three- to eight-minute parts, are interesting because of their reverse presentation in the movie. These very little portions represent the length of Shelby's memory. The narrative is delivered backwards, and as each scene plays out, the audience learns more about the circumstances behind the murder that Lenny committed in the initial scene of the movie. It resembles a puzzle in several ways. In every new scene, the viewers discover fresh parts of the jigsaw. However, most of these pieces' meanings are not immediately clear from the order in which they initially occur. Like a detective who gradually gathers more circumstantial evidence whilst conducting an investigation, viewers must pay close attention and wait for the sequence to reveal a specific tip concealed in one of the prior scenes (Hurd, 2003).

Thus, the explanation for a shattered vehicle window in one of the movie's initial colour scenes (V) does not appear until scene M, implying that spectators must wait around fifty minutes to learn the crucial background knowledge. However, sometimes, the audience does not have to wait long to receive the required hints. For instance, a busted lip in a particular scene is revealed in the next (Hurd, 2003).

This, from a chronological standpoint, really occurred just before. Because the plot of Memento is narrated backwards, as was previously indicated, it must begin at the conclusion (V), with Leonard murdering Teddy, and conclude close to the beginning (A), with Lenny murdering Jimmy, the drug dealer. The colour segments in the movie appear in the following order: V, U, T, S...D, C, B, A. Each colour scene either picks up where the previous one left off or replays a specific portion. Usually, it is a different camera angle. These episodes' recurrences immerse the audience over and over in the present moment reality of Lenard repeatedly starting as if it has not begun before (Hurd, 2003).

These non-sequential scene structures represent the inconsistent and confused reality caused by Shelby's amnesia. Through this type of scene design, Nolan captured Shelby's *unconscious level* of shameful experience, which was accidentally killing his wife with an insulin overdose and repressing this memory to cope with his emotions of guilt, shame and remorse. Repressing his memory of killing his wife becomes chronic amnesia, which becomes a convenient gateway for him to face his emotions and consequences. At the *pre-conscious level,* he is supposed to have accessible long-term memories and stored knowledge, which becomes inaccessible, and his amnesia creates a barrier between his conscious and unconscious emotions. At the *conscious level,* he has an unhealthy level of suspicion

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towards people involved with him and he ensures that he is aware that he is seeking the truth about finding the killer of her wife.

Table 2. Application of Iceberg Analogy to Leonard Shelby's Mind

Above Surface	Ego and Superego	Conscious Level	▪ Suspicious of others, paranoia ▪ Have a fixation on finding the truth
Beneath Surface			
	Ego and Superego	**Pre Conscious Level**	▪ Memories and stored knowledge are missing as he cannot remember. ▪ His amnesia helps repressed memories stay that way. ▪ He has false memory thinking that he has amnesia as a result of head injury on the day his wife killed.
	Id	**Unconscious Level**	▪ Shameful experience of accidentally killing his wife ▪ Feelings of guilt, shame and remorse

The Memento audience quickly learns they cannot trust Leonard's inquiry since he is mentally sick; the parallelism is that Leonard cannot trust anyone around him. So, through this, the audience immense self into the psyche of the protagonist at an unconscious level. There are various signs that the narrator in this movie is incredibly inaccurate and that human memory is often faulty. However, Leonard is a simple target for manipulation by others. This suggests that some guys may be trying to deceive him, making the knowledge he has obtained partly worthless and inaccurate. Still, Leonard makes several errors of his own while gathering information regarding his wife's killer (Hurd, 2003). Teddy, an undercover police officer who is investigating Leonard's case, believes Leonard may be helpful in finding a criminal, Jimmie G. and killing him. For example, after writing down Teddy's license plate number, he misreads the letter *I* for the number *1*. (Memento, 2000). The license plate changed in accordance with Leonard's tattoo later in the movie. The takeaway is that you should not believe Leonard's made-up facts since memory is capable of changing anything, or in Leonard's words, *Memory can change the form of a room; it can change the colour of a car*. (…) With this text, audience acquires the knowledge that what they remember in the previous scene may not necessarily be a que of the killer as what they remember may not be accurate. They are not records; they are only interpretations. When attempting to grasp Memento, interpretation and supposition are equally crucial. (Hurd, 2003). In Memento, there is a fascinating parallel plotline in addition to Leonard's revenge story.

The narrative concerns Sammy Jankins and his wife, who used to be one of his cases as an insurance claim investigator. Leonard had an interesting case as an insurance investigator. He needed to determine whether Sammy Jankins' anterograde amnesia, which was brought on by this man's vehicle accident, was a mental or medical issue. The firm did not cover mental sickness, so Leonard characterised Sammy's condition as *psychological rather than medical, resulting in the denial of Sammy's insurance claim*. This is a particular scene where there is an unconscious reflection of the self through Sammy's personality. Sammy's diabetic wife attempts to encourage him to come to a realisation by trying him in a number of ways because she believes that if his memory problem is mental, it must also be wilful (Klein, 2001). She ultimately begs her husband to give her three to four insulin injections in fast succession since she always gets her insulin injections from him, and she knows that he loves her and would never harm her. However, one injection at a time can be quite dangerous. Sammy overdoses his wife without realising it, so she goes into an unrecoverable coma (Hurd, 2003).

Teddy claims that Leonard's wife made it through the incident. She was killed by Leonard when she forced him to administer enough insulin injections to produce a deadly dosage, putting his amnesia to the test. According to Leonard's version of events, his wife puts Sammy to the same cruel test. (Hopkins, 2016).

The possibility that Leonard's life may be Sammy Jankins' life is what makes this subplot so intriguing and puzzling. Given his condition, Leonard may have forgotten the killing. He may have conjured up an alternative scenario in his mind, so perhaps the entire parallel story is intended to demonstrate to the audience that Leonard killed his wife without the help of a murderer—instead, he did it—and that Teddy may have planted the desire for vengeance to turn Leonard into a particularly skilled killer (Hurd, 2003). The idea of childhood trauma or some event that occurred in the past or, in general, some conflict in the personality of the individual as an explanation for criminal behaviour is very common in film noir (Noriega, 2008). However in Leonard's case, he misremembers the head injury as it never happened. His amnesia is a result of repressing his guilt and remorse.

Leonard's inability to form new memories is a well-documented phenomenon, and his situation is comparable to that of prominent physician and novelist Oliver Sacks. Sacks' patient, Jimmie G, might be the source name for Leonard's target, whom he has been chasing since the death of his wife. (Szyszka, 2006). Oliver Sacks, a well-known author and neurologist, described a scenario comparable to Leonard's imaginary instance. In the "Lost Mariner" tale of Jimmie G., Sacks describes his encounter with a patient who, in his opinion, was permanently living in 1945. Sacks left the room after questioning the 50-year-old man, who was adamant that he was just 19 and returned two minutes later to discover that Jimmie had no memory of ever meeting him. "*He is an individual with no past or future, imprisoned in a continually shifting, meaningless moment,*" Sacks noted during his initial assessment. He diagnosed Jimmie as having Korsakov's Syndrome, which may be brought on by alcohol consumption in Jimmie's case (Chambers, 2004).

In addition to having comparable neurological conditions, Jimmie G.'s and Leonard's conditions may be compared since both of their stories are unable to move forward and have no feeling of closure in their lives. According to Frank Kermode, having a "feeling of an ending" is crucial to our existence. Psychologically speaking, our urge for fiction stems from a desire to bring closure to a reality that appears to have a middle (Chambers, 2004).

In Memento's (2000) conclusion, the audience realises Leonard will never be able to solve the mystery since even if he solved it or not, he will never be aware of it. How can one recover if one cannot sense or feel time? Leonard asks himself this question (Chambers, 2004).

Memento (2000) has an amnesic man who keeps his identity, has limited retrograde amnesia, and exhibits several significant daily memory impairments associated with the illness (Baxendale, 2004). The film's fractured, almost mosaic-like succession of sequences perfectly portrays the syndrome's "perpetual present" aspect. A moment puts the viewers in Leonard's shoes, leaving us unsure of what to believe as the movie approaches to an ending.

One scene in particular jumps out in the domain of flashback and recollection. This is a scene near the end of the film in which Teddy informs Leonard Sammy Jankis (another man with memory problems who accidentally kills his wife as a result his memory problems) never existed and that Leonard's mind created him by conditioning his memory and thus changing it afterwards (Szyszka, 2006).

In Christopher Nolan's Memento, we are shown a sequence of flashbacks that shift occasionally. The audience becomes confused on who to believe; whether Leonard is delusional or Teddy is lying. However, because we have only seen him from his point of view throughout the film, it is strange to see him second-guess himself, but that is exactly what he is doing. Film's flashbacks are not made-up

thoughts of someone else. Here, neo-noir has reached the pinnacle of paranoia, with a protagonist who can never trust himself and must instead leave himself a postmodern labyrinth to pick through multiple times daily (Szyszka, 2006). Whilst Teddy begins to describe a version of *the truth*, we look into the horrified eyes of fumbling Leonard Shelby. Which neither we nor Leonard have a clue how to comprehend. Teddy nearly smiles as he continues, *your wife developed diabetes*. Mrs. Shelby then brushes her hair, exclaims, *Ouch*, and looks down at another memory. Leonard has just completed injecting her with insulin, it is revealed. *My wife was not diabetic*, Leonard said again. The sequence of images is rapid. The audience is back on Teddy's face: *Are you sure?* Close on Leonard again, and we see her say, *Ouch*, but Leonard is only pinching her this time. *She was not diabetic*, Leonard says, taking a step back. *Do you think I do not know who my wife is? What the fuck is wrong with you*? Leonard says as he leans against the wall and squats down. *Well, I guess I can only make you remember the things you choose to remember*, Teddy answers. (Szyszka, 2006). This is the scene where Leonard's unconscious comes to the surface and he starts to recall his suppressed pre-conscious memory of injecting his wife with insulin. The reason why he started to recall can be attributed to the fact that memories may stay suppressed until the conscious mind decides to make a connection with them. In Leonard's case, killing his wife accidentally was a traumatising memory, so rather than pre-conscious, he suppressed it to an unconscious level. It can be interpreted as because of his guilt; he chose to suppress that memory to the unconscious until he was reminded in spite of his denial or refusal to remember.

CONCLUSION

Watching Memento is disorienting for viewers as they have to put together pieces of Leonard's story in a narrative that plays in reverse. Leonard tells the narrative and flows from the beginning to the middle, then to the end and then to the middle. The colour sequences also tell the story in reverse, starting from the end during the scenes from 44-23. This is also disorienting for the viewers (hartzog.org, nd). This disorientation is a simulation of Leonard's perception of the world projected to the viewers, where they also experience suspense and disorientation in the narrative. No predictions can be made, or no expectations can be held with this type of disorientation. Leonard's sense of being frozen in time, his tragedy of being timeless (a person without short-term memory), and his forever disappearing "now" are reflected through complex narrative structure, where the viewers also feel through Leonard as his consciousness of new is constant disorientation. He is stuck only in the past with no future. The future is always like a dream that did not happen and one cannot remember (hartzog.org, nd).

Along with Leonard's narrative, Sammy Jankins' character is scattered chronologically in a series of black-and-white scenes (Beresford, 2021). Leonard narrates Sammy's story, and he tells Sammy's story obsessively to anyone willing to listen. Sammy is claimed to be an anterograde amnesiac. Later on, it is revealed that Teddy has been utilising Leonard to kill his associates in crime, and Sammy's narrative is, in fact, Leonard's own story, which he created to be absolved from any guilt (Beresford, 2021).

Implementing Freud's iceberg analogy, Leonard repressed his factual memory of what happened to his wife to an unconscious level where most of a person's intellect, memories and motives remain hidden (Zahariev, 2014). At the surface, the "conscious" level, he created the Leonard character with amnesia as a result of head injury, copying an existing client's case from his insurance claim files in order to cope with his repressed feelings of guilt and self-blame to project these negative emotions. By not having any memories and stored knowledge exists (ibid). By having an anterograde amnesia, he has detached the preconscious from the unconscious and conscious. So, his amnesia is not because of a physical injury caused by any killer but a psychological shield he used. In Memento, this detachment between conscious and unconscious is reflected through Sammy, who represents Leonard's consciousness, whose narratives are black and white and are narrated chronologically. This provides stability and consistency to Leonard's version of narratives, which plays in reverse. His narratives are complex; it is hard to put them in order and make sense, and it is puzzling for the spectator. He puts the viewers in his shoes while building up a reconstruction of events that led him up to the initial moment of the film (Williams, 2003).

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