



the iafor north american conference series 2014

nacmfcs2014

nacah2014

Official Conference Proceedings

ISSN:2189 - 1079



“To Open Minds, To Educate Intelligence, To Inform Decisions”

The International Academic Forum provides new perspectives to the thought-leaders and decision-makers of today and tomorrow by offering constructive environments for dialogue and interchange at the intersections of nation, culture, and discipline. Headquartered in Nagoya, Japan, and registered as a Non-Profit Organization (一般社団法人), IAFOR is an independent think tank committed to the deeper understanding of contemporary geo-political transformation, particularly in the Asia Pacific Region.

INTERNATIONAL

INTERCULTURAL

INTERDISCIPLINARY

**iafor**

# The Executive Council of the International Advisory Board

IAB Chair: Professor Stuart D.B. Picken

IAB Vice-Chair: Professor Jerry Platt

**Mr Mitsumasa Aoyama**

Director; The Yufuku Gallery, Tokyo, Japan

**Professor David N Aspin**

Professor Emeritus and Former Dean of the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia  
Visiting Fellow, St Edmund's College, Cambridge University, UK

**Professor Don Brash**

Former Governor of the Reserve Bank, New Zealand  
Former Leader of the New National Party, New Zealand  
Adjunct Professor, AUT, New Zealand & La Trobe University, Australia

**Lord Charles Bruce**

Patron, Japan Society of Scotland  
Patron, Scottish Centre of Tagore Studies at Edinburgh Napier University  
Chairman, Kolkata Scottish Heritage Trust

**Professor Judith Chapman**

Professor of Education, Australian Catholic University, Australia  
Visiting Fellow, St Edmund's College, Cambridge University, UK  
Member of the Order of Australia

**Professor Chung-Ying Cheng**

Professor of Philosophy, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, USA  
Editor-in-Chief, The Journal of Chinese Philosophy

**Professor Steve Cornwell**

Professor of English and Interdisciplinary Studies, Osaka Jogakuin University, Osaka, Japan  
Osaka Local Conference Chair

**Professor Michael A. Cusumano**

SMR Distinguished Professor of Management and Engineering Systems, MIT Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

**Professor Dexter Da Silva**

Professor of Educational Psychology, Keisen University, Tokyo, Japan

**Professor Georges Depeyrot**

Professor and Director of Research & Member of the Board of Trustees  
French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) & L'Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris, France

**Professor Donald E. Hall**

Herbert J. and Ann L. Siegel Dean  
Lehigh University, USA

**Professor June Henton**

Dean, College of Human Sciences, Auburn University, USA

**Professor Michael Hudson**

President of The Institute for the Study of Long-Term Economic Trends (ISLET)  
Distinguished Research Professor of Economics, The University of Missouri, Kansas City

**Professor Koichi Iwabuchi**

Professor of Media and Cultural Studies & Director of the Monash Asia Institute, Monash University, Australia

**Professor Sue Jackson**

Professor of Lifelong Learning and Gender & Pro-Vice Master of Teaching and Learning, Birkbeck, University of London, UK

**Professor Sing Kong Lee**

Director; The National Institute of Education, Singapore

**Professor Sir Geoffrey Lloyd**

Senior Scholar in Residence, The Needham Research Institute, Cambridge, UK  
Fellow and Former Master, Darwin College, University of Cambridge  
Fellow of the British Academy

**Professor Keith Miller**

Orthwein Endowed Professor for Lifelong Learning in the Science, University of Missouri-St. Louis, USA

**Professor Kuniko Miyanaga**

Director; Human Potential Institute, Japan  
Fellow, Reischauer Institute, Harvard University, USA

**Professor Dennis McInerney**

Chair Professor of Educational Psychology and Co-Director of the Assessment Research Centre  
The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong SAR

**Professor Ka Ho Joshua Mok**

Chair Professor of Comparative Policy, Associate Vice-President (External Relations)  
Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong SAR

**Professor Michiko Nakano**

Professor of English & Director of the Distance Learning Center, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

**Professor Baden Offord**

Professor of Cultural Studies and Human Rights & Co-Director of the Centre for Peace and Social Justice  
Southern Cross University, Australia

**Professor Frank S. Ravitch**

Professor of Law & Walter H. Stowers Chair in Law and Religion, Michigan State University College of Law

**Professor Richard Roth**

Senior Associate Dean, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University, Qatar

**Professor Monty P. Satiadarma**

Clinical Psychologist and Lecturer in Psychology & Former Dean of the Department of Psychology and Rector of the University, Tarumanagara University, Indonesia

**Mr Mohamed Salaheem**

Director; The United Nations World Food Programme, Japan & Korea

**Mr Lowell Sheppard**

Asia Pacific Director; HOPE International Development Agency, Canada/Japan

**His Excellency Dr Drago Stambuk**

Croatian Ambassador to Brazil, Brazil

**Professor Mary Stuart**

Vice-Chancellor; The University of Lincoln, UK

**Professor Gary Swanson**

Distinguished Journalist-in-Residence & Mildred S. Hansen Endowed Chair; The University of Northern Colorado, USA

**Professor Jiro Takai**

Secretary General of the Asian Association for Social Psychology & Professor of Social Psychology  
Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Nagoya University, Japan

**Professor Svetlana Ter Minasova**

President of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Area Studies, Lomonosov Moscow State University

**Professor Yozo Yokota**

Director of the Center for Human Rights Affairs, Japan  
Former UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar

**Professor Kensaku Yoshida**

Professor of English & Director of the Center for the Teaching of Foreign Languages in General Education, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan

The International Advisory Board is composed of distinguished academics, business executives, former and current government officials, and community leaders. Its role is to consult and provide counsel on the business and affairs of IAFOR, and suggest areas of scholarly investigation. Membership of the International Advisory Board is by invitation only. For a full list please see the IAFOR website.

The IAFOR North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014

Providence, Rhode Island, United States

Official Conference Proceedings

ISSN: 2189-1079

© The International Academic Forum 2014  
The International Academic Forum (IAFOR)  
Sakae 1-16-26-201  
Naka Ward, Nagoya, Aichi  
Japan 460-0008  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)



## Table of Contents

<i>Rape Culture in Music: Lyrics that Provide a Step-by-step Guide to Sexual Assault</i> Antonella Regueiro Fernandez	pp. 1-12
<i>Eliot's Notion of Tradition and its Significance in the Age of Multimedia</i> Aburawi Abuajaila Elmajdoub	pp. 13-32
<i>The Power of Pretty: Re-Appropriating the Gaze and Feminine Agency in "Spring Breakers"</i> Patricia Williamson	pp. 33-40
<i>Israel through the Lenses of Oscar-Nominated Documentary Film 'Promises'</i> Abida Eijaz	pp. 41-54
<i>How Cinema Sounds Affect the Perception of the Motion Picture</i> Andreas G. Anestis Christos A. Gousios	pp. 55-60
<i>Pakistan, Its Youth and Social Media</i> Muhammad Zain Islam	pp. 61-68
<i>The Concept of Ghostwriting from Literature to Film Music: The Moacir Santos Case of Study</i> Lucas Zangirolami Bonetti	pp. 69-84
<i>1+1=1; An Exploration of Bakhtinian Minimum for Existence in Andrei Tarkovsky's Nostalgia</i> Maryam Zehtabi Sabeti Moqaddam	pp. 85-92
<i>The Representation of Ethnic Youth Gangs in "The Combination"</i> Branka Prodanovic	pp. 93-104
<i>Multiplicity and Difference: Pluralities of Identity</i> Rehana Esmail	pp. 105-112
<i>Hello Kitty's Popularity and Its Change of Representation</i> Miho Tsukamoto	pp. 113-122



***Rape Culture in Music:  
Lyrics that Provide a Step-by-step Guide to Sexual Assault***

Antonella Regueiro Fernandez, Nova Southeastern University, USA

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings

**Abstract**

The evolution of gender relations has brought women to the forefront of social functions. However, these roles have come with a price as women have often been labelled by society as nothing more than sexual objects for the taking regardless of their profession, especially in public forums. This research seeks to impose upon the reader the gravity of the sexualization and objectification of women through the analysis of contemporary music laden by rape. The author argues that the lyrics analysed are part of a larger issue, that of rape culture; and that their existence allows for the proliferation and validation of such a culture. Through a lyric-by-lyric analysis, this research finds that instances of sexual violence in music are dangerous due to their possible applicability, as the verses of these songs provide a step-by-step guide to rape.

iafor

**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## Introduction

Misogyny is not a new development in our world. Society has become immune to the objectification, sexualization, and violence that surround women. Whether it is product advertisements or music videos, the issue of violence against women permeates our culture. Rooted in that premise are more serious issues such as the spread of and acclimatization to rape culture. In this culture, rape infiltrates many aspects of society and consequently allows for its continuity by reflecting acceptability to the act of rape. It is here where the unthinkable happens, as victims find themselves being blamed for their attacks, underrepresented in the legal sphere, and constantly reminded of their misery via mainstream media. The pervasive nature of such culture has lasting effects on the communities we inhabit. This research seeks to impress upon the readers the gravity of the situation through a lyric-by-lyric analysis of some of the most prominent songs which have perpetuated, and more importantly glamorized, glorified and validated a culture of rape.

The extolment and acceptance of rape lyrics is an extension of the acceptance of such an event in our societies, as music and media are usually a reflection of the community they arise from. "In a rape culture, people are surrounded with images, language, laws, and other everyday phenomena that validate and perpetuate, rape" (FORCE, n.d.). Music is one of the realms in which this validation takes form. The producers of this music not only feed from, but also feed into, the repetition and propagation of sexual assault. Rape music is not new in our society, yet it has permeated the industry to the point of becoming more than a happenstance in a single musical genre. Rape has transcended musical styles, languages and cultural barriers, to become an all-encompassing issue without regards to sociocultural delineations.

This research connects more than just one type of music or language, as it seeks to provide enough information for an educated inference into the enormity of the situation. Hopefully, by the end of this analysis, the reader will understand that it is not only the graphic accounts of rape given in some songs that we must be attentive to, but rather the more subtle and often concealed portrayal of such violence. It is the latter of these two that seeps inconspicuously into the realm of normalcy and becomes the backbone for the continuing acceptance of a culture that blames the victim rather than the perpetrator.

## Analysis

Rape is a persistent malady in our nation as shown by the numbers found on the website for the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), which states that "there is an average of 237,868 victims (age 12 or older) of rape and sexual assault each year" in the United States ("How Often," n.d., par.1). Songs that perpetuate the idea not only of rape, but of a right to rape, may very well play a part in the sustenance of such high number of victims. I begin this analysis with the overt examples of rape-related violence in music, to address the acceptance of aggression against women in popular culture. The artists in this section were chosen due to the heinousness of their lyrics, and their unabashed use of rape as a selling point for their music. Instances of rape in music cross cultural and language boundaries, and involve a demographic which spans from rap, to metal, to ska punk. Regardless of the type of

music, the message seems to be the same. It is a message that enables male entitlement over the female body and their ability to make their own choices.

The first example comes from one of the most controversial rappers of all time: Eminem. According to the artist's IMBD profile, Eminem's album, "Slim Shady EP," went to triple platinum. His 2002 release of "Marshall Matters LP," sold over one million copies during its first week alone. His career has been awarded with MTV Music Awards, Grammy Awards, and even an Academy Award for his "8 Mile" soundtrack ("Eminem Biography," n.d.). This immense success speaks to his popularity and thus, his potential influence on society. Originally born under the name of Marshall Bruce Matters, this young artist from Detroit grew into one of the most violent lyricists in the music industry. He has, undoubtedly, the most graphic account of rape in this research, in his song "Stay Wide Awake."

The song begins with the author identifying a "young girl", a minor, sitting in a park, seemingly vulnerable to his advances. He approaches the girl with the intention of causing physical and emotional harm. He befriends his intended victim, and then proceeds to exact such a violent attack that even I am uncomfortable describing it. From the start, the song is an assault on the humanity of any woman, as he does not hesitate to refer to the young girl in his song as a "whore." The aggression escalates as the lyricist uses inanimate objects as aides in the violation of his victim.

Sit down beside her like a spider, hi there girl, you mighta  
 Heard of me before, see whore, you're the kind of girl that I'd assault  
 And rape then figure why not try not to make your pussy wider?  
 Fuck you with an umbrella, then open it up while the shit's inside ya  
 ("Eminem Lyrics," n.d.)

Not only is the degradation of the girl accomplished by name-calling, it is also exuberated by the use of an umbrella to worsen the damage inflicted on her. The girl becomes nothing but an object to be "played" with at the discretion of her rapist. By the end of the song, the listener has been described a total of two rapes and one murder – all of females. In the second instance of rape, the singer insinuates that the woman is to blame for the attack because she is naked in her own house "but I [the singer] can see she wants me." The woman is left without a choice due to the man's perception of her desires.

Throughout the song, the author refers to himself as spider and a stalker who hides in the darkness and preys on his victims. In one of the instances, he even hides in the woman's basement and waits until she gets into the shower before attacking. Afterward, the violence is freely issued upon his victims. Throughout the song, the author perceives himself as an artist producing the same level of work as Mozart, glamorizing his acts by comparing them with classic masterpieces.

Eminem's "Stay Wide Awake" lyrics propagate the phenomenon of rape. The fact that his albums continue to sell millions validates the support for his music from the population. It is the buyers, after all, who make this "art" permissible. In supporting an album with a song in which women get violated, both physically and emotionally, the population is legitimizing the permissibility of rape in music. Rape, then, becomes

something to bob our heads to and pump our fists in the air for, instead of being something we fight against.

The argument could be made in an attempted defense of artists like Eminem, stating that their music is made to satisfy the phenomenon of rape fantasy; that in no way are the lyrics inciting actual instances of rape. However, the difference should be clear. Rape fantasy involves partners in consensual interactions. The women participating in rape fantasy have willingly given their partners the power to re-enact an instance of rape. The men, on their part, have been allowed to wield such power but only to the extent to which the women feel comfortable – there are safe words, and the word “no” retains its meaning. Rape fantasy caters to the “dark” side of many of us, but those many are aware of their actions and are consenting to the event. The lyrics in these songs reach an incredibly wider audience, as the numbers show, and the message behind the verses is spread to children and adults alike, some of whom may not be mature enough to deal with the severity of the content. Therefore, rape lyrics do not have defined boundaries of influence. Rape fantasy is not rape because the women are consenting, and their consent is not to rape, but to the illusion of it. Rape lyrics promote rape, not consensual sex.

The instances of explicit rape in music are endless. However, this research seeks to go beyond the unambiguous and into the realm of the concealed. There are songs that are not as evident in their disdain for women, as they do not directly address the issue of rape, but rather insinuate the act in between rhythmic beats.

I begin this section with a controversial song which, to my knowledge, is the only song that has actually inspired repercussions against the singers. “U.O.E.N.O” by Rocko, featuring Rick Ross, produced a backlash of such magnitude that the latter artist found himself dropped from some of his endorsement contracts and apologizing publicly via his official social network sites. The verse chosen has no direct mention of rape in it, yet the insinuation of the act is unmistakable:

Put Moly all in her champagne, she ain’t even know it  
I took her home and enjoyed that, she aint’ even know it  
 (“Rocko Lyrics,” n.d.).

A “Moly” is a synthetic drug that has made its way into the pockets and tongues of thousands of drug users in the United States. It is part of the fastest growing drug problem in America, the synthetic drug market, and it has been found in nearly every state (Griffin, Black & DiCarlo, 2013). It is a popular way to alter the mind of willing users and of unsuspecting victims alike.

The lyrics to this song objectify the female victim, who has been drugged by the lyricist, as something to be enjoyed without consent; after all, the perpetrator takes her home and enjoys *that*. The use of “that” in the verse not only illustrates the objectification and dehumanization of his victim, but also the contempt for “it”. The victim becomes a thing that does not even deserve to be named. However, there is more to this song than meets the eye, as rape is not only being committed but also glamorized. The artist did not put the drug into a Coca-Cola, or a beer, or boxed wine; he is dropping the drug into champagne. Champagne, by custom, is a high-quality and high-priced drink that is mostly drunk during special occasions. It is a drink which, in

popular culture, has usually implied a high-class environment. Rape is, therefore, occurring not in the streets of the ghetto or the back alleyways of our cities, but in a world filled with money. The message is that rape occurs everywhere because it is all-encompassing; no one can escape it, regardless of the means at our disposal for protection.

Rick Ross was dropped from his Reebok© endorsement deal and was motivated to write an apology to his audience. In his apology, Ross stated: “To the young men who listen to my music, please know that using a substance to rob a woman of her right to make a choice is not only a crime, it's wrong and I do not encourage it” (Cubarrubia, 2013, par.4). This apology begs the question of why the song was written in the first place. The lyrics to a song are not done overnight, they are listened to by the artists and their producers before they are released. Rick Ross was very much aware of the message he was spreading and his apology is an insincere consequence of the repercussions he was made to “suffer.”

These subliminal messages of rape have crossed genre lines and found themselves embedded in top-chart pop songs, the latest of these being the catchy, yet eerily sexist, song titled “Blurred Lines” by Robin Thicke, featuring Pharrell and T.I. This song played repeatedly for most of 2013. According to the Mobile Marketing Magazine’s website, “Blurred Lines” became the song most searched for via the mobile application, Shazzam, with approximately 17.8 million tags worldwide (Spencer, 2013). According to the New Musical Express’s website, this single became the highest grossing single of 2013, with 1.44 million copies sold (“Robin Thicke’s,” 2013). These numbers serve to illustrate the impact of these lyrics, as the song was not downloaded by a few individuals, but by millions. The ability for music to be downloaded via the internet, recognized via phone applications, and distributed by the click of a button, makes the content of the songs a matter of importance.

The lyrics to “Blurred Lines” have been criticized by different outlets of social media for their message of rape. It is so subtle, in fact, that many may not even recognize the content even though they have heard the song repeatedly.

I hate these blurred lines  
 I know you want it (x3)  
 But you're a good girl  
 The way you grab me  
 Must wanna get nasty  
 (Robin Thicke Lyrics, n.d.)

The most prominent message found in the song is that of the existence of blurred lines of consent and a sense of male entitlement. It is obvious for the singer that because a woman has approached him, she must want *it*; therefore, he has a right to claim her. The singer knows that the woman would otherwise not engage in any sexual activities with him, because she is “a good girl.” The implications for both men and women in this song are alarming, because women are perceived as having initiated the sequence of events by approaching the singer in a way he found provoking. Men, on the other hand, are being instructed to take any movement from the women they deem provocative as a sign of approval and consent. This outlook feeds into the already existing paradigm of victim-blaming prevalent in our society. Examples of this mind-

set can be found across the nation and at all levels of society. News reports in December, 2013 revealed that a high school student in Texas had been kicked out of her school for reporting rape and accused of lewd behavior; consequently, she was sent to a school for children with behavioral issues along with her rapist, whom she was forced to see every day (Pesta, 2013). This blatant disregard for the victims of sexual abuse is so ingrained in our society that some music artists have thought it appropriate to continue its proliferation.

Sezin Koehler (2013) recognized this issue and proceeded to compare the lyrics of “Blurred Lines” to the images provided by *Project Unbreakable*, a non-profit organization that works to help survivors of sexual assault cope with their trauma through art. In the images, victims of sexual assault stand with posters in hand, containing the words said to them by their rapists during the act. The words found on the poster are disconcertingly familiar: “You know you want it,” “Good girl.” The side by side comparison pierces through the audiences’ ignorance of the similarities between these two seemingly disconnected entities, and produces a simultaneous reaction of both awe and shame. For the audience, it would be hard to believe that the song they have been dancing to for over a year is loaded with the same words which have been told to countless victims by perpetrators of rape.

Koehler concludes that “ultimately, Robin Thicke’s rape anthem is about male desire and male dominance over a woman’s personal sexual agency...she’s relegated to the role of living sex doll whose existence is naught but for the pleasure of a man” (par.11) It is the role of women to be complacent to the wants and needs of their male counterparts, while at the same time being the subject of blame for their behavior. The women’s behavior is conversely observed and judged relative to the personality of the male character involved. This flexibility in perspective allows for a million possibilities in which everything, from a sensual dance to the grazing of a hand, can be perceived as a blatant invitation for sexual advances.

Another song within the realm of what is known as “pop” that satisfies the conditions to be included in this research is Jamie Foxx’s, featuring T-Pain, “Blame It (On the Alcohol).” The single was released on December, 2008 and managed to reach both Gold and Platinum levels by May, 2009 (RIAA, n.d.). At first, the song seems to be blaming alcohol for the endeavours of the party goers. However, a closer look reveals that what is being blamed on the alcohol is much more sinister.

She put her body on me  
And she keep staring me right in my eyes  
No telling what I'm gonna do  
Baby I would rather show you  
What you been missing in your life when I get inside  
(Jamie Foxx Lyrics, n.d.)

The song does not seem to be inciting or suggesting rape yet, but slowly it has begun to resemble Thicke’s assumption of entitlement as a consequence of the woman’s actions. She is now drunk, and because she has approached the singer in a way he finds provocative, he now does not know what he will do. He just wants to get “inside,” leaving us to question where exactly that is – inside her life, or inside her? The singer continues as he believes that with just a “couple more shots,” the woman

will “open up like a book” that he will then proceed to read. The song follows with “Shawty got drunk thought it all was a dream/So I made her say ‘Ah, ah, ah’.” Therein lies the admission that the woman did not even know what was happening when the man took advantage of her. Her levels of intoxication were so high that she thought she was dreaming. Much like Rick Ross, Jamie Foxx took the woman home and enjoyed *that* while she thought she was asleep – she did not even know it. The pattern of intoxication and abuse seems irrepressible.

Besides having crossed the lines of musical genres, the issue of rape culture in music has also broken the barriers of language, allowing for the Anglo-speaking community to share the spotlight with the Spanish-speaking constituency. Bachata sensation, Romeo Santos, came into the business as a Spanish-speaking singer for the musical group *Aventura*, which “has sold over 4 million copies in the US” (Garsd, 2011). Their success as a group gave Santos a stable ground upon which to launch his solo career. His second solo album, *Formula Volume 2*, is the focus of this research, as it contains the song “Propuesta Indecente.” The lyrics below are in their original language with the translation provided adjacently by the author:

Si te invito una copa y me acerco a tu boca/Si te robo un besito, a ver, te enojas conmigo?/Que dirías si esta noche te seduzco en mi coche/Que se empañen los vidrios si la regla es que goces/Si te faltó al respeto y luego culpo al alcohol/Si levanto tu falda, me darías el derecho/A medir tu sensatez, poner en juego tu cuerpo (Romeo Santos Lyrics, n.d.).

If I buy you a drink and get close to your body/If I steal a kiss, would you get mad at me? What would you say if tonight I seduce you in my car/Let the windows get foggy and the idea is that you enjoy it/If I disrespect you and then blame the alcohol/If I hike-up your skirt would you give me the right/To measure your sensitivity, put your body at play.

The content of the song is a direct assault on the female character, masked under the guise of an irresistible proposal. Santos tells the woman that he will disrespect her, whether she is okay with it or not, and will then blame the act on the consumption of alcohol. Further context might help to understand that this is an act of dominance. The second line of the song is “Te adelanto no me importa quien sea el” (In advance I’m letting you know I do not care who he is). The woman in this song has willingly chosen the company of another partner, and the singer refuses to accept this by imposing himself on her decision. He insists on dominating the situation, even if it means disregarding her freedom to choose her own partner, and he will turn to alcohol as his aide if he must. Lines such as the subsequent “Este martini calmara tu timidez” (This martini will calm your shyness), are testament to the reoccurrence of a pattern of intoxication and entitlement.

This move is surprisingly similar to Rick Ross’ and Jamie Foxx’s, as all three singers seem to believe that intoxicating women is a precondition for taking advantage of them. Whether it is via illicit drugs or through alcohol, these songs seem to give the audiences a step-by-step guide to commit sexual assault. Santos proceeds to ask if it would be okay with the woman if he hikes up her skirt. This behavior allows us to wonder whether or not he will stop if she declines, or if he will continue regardless of her levels of inebriation. There may not be a direct mention of rape in Santos’ ballad,

but there is irrefutable proof of a sense of entitlement from the part of the male character – an entitlement which may manifest as sexual assertion.

The last song chosen for this research is Sublime's "Date Rape", because it addresses sexual assault in a different way. The track is found in the album, *40oz to Freedom*. According to the Recording Industry Association of America, the album has made the Multi-Platinum award category twice (RIAA, n.d.); a feature that is only accomplished by selling over two million copies. The song starts with a woman being drugged and raped at a party, and continues with the rapist being caught and prosecuted. If the song would have ended there, the band would not be a part of this research. In fact, it would have been a breath of fresh air to see the subject treated with the respect it deserves. However, the song continues by following the life of the convicted rapist after being imprisoned. During jail time, the man is raped by other convicts and, although heard by the guards, his sexual assault is not prevented or acknowledged by them. This instance of rape is provided as punishment for the assailant's own actions; denoting an acceptance to sexual violence that should not be the norm.

*The Hammurabi Code* instituted the preconditions for a system in which violations of the law were punished by equal actions; an eye for an eye was the way of the law. The idea that a rapist should be allowed to be raped is as primitive as the act of rape itself. Promoting instances of rape as fair retribution feeds into the idea that the act of rape is a part of human nature, and that there is nothing we can do to stop it. Recently, an Indian woman was sentenced by her village court to undergo gang rape as punishment for having a boyfriend from another tribe (Smith, 2014). Although the official judicial system of India does not condone this behavior, the fact that it was an option to the village kangaroo court speaks to the ability for societies to see rape as an inescapable part of life, and more than that, as an adequate mode of punishment. This view of rape as punishment can be extended to explain the argument given in today's society, stating that women deserve to be raped because of what they have chosen to wear – they asked for it; therefore, they must deal with the consequences.

The fact that the guards in the song turned away from a man being raped simply because they believed it to be the appropriate punishment, place the lyrics of the song on equal footing to the kangaroo courts in India who saw rape as viable and excusable retribution. This should not be the case in any society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *The Hammurabi Code* was overthrown by a rich history of advancements in law and order systems that advocate for the idea that "prevailing social patterns can only be transformed through a change in social relationships, structures, and ideologies" (Vogelman, 1990). Rape should not be a glorified subject in the lyrics of songs, nor should it be advocated as suitable admonition for rapists. Furthermore, as rape in prison is a deeply embedded issue in our society, it should not be trivialized in song, much less capitalized from.

## **Relevance**

The lyrics in this research have direct applicability, consequently making their implementation plausible. The songs do much more than promote rape as a type of entertainment; they provide the guidelines to seemingly successful ways of performing sexual assault. First, the men must ensure that the women are vulnerable

enough for the action – whether by stalking them when they are alone or by providing intoxicants that will alter their condition. Second, the men must interpret women's behavior as acquiescence to their sexual advancements by focusing on the way women may grab them. Third, men are to righteously enjoy women without their consent while at the same time forgetting that they are women at all by naming them such names as “that” and “it”. And lastly, men are to sing about it so that they may validate and glamorize their actions with considerable public acceptance and multi-million dollar sales. Through it all, men should not forget their entitlement to choose for women, instead of allowing them to choose for themselves; forgetting that women becoming intoxicated by willingly drinking alcohol, does not, under any circumstance, give men the right to abuse their power.

Lloyd Vogelmann (1990), in his article titled “The Sexual Face of Violence: Rapists on Rape,” concludes that “rape emerges from a culture that involves the domination and objectification of women” and that “as an act of sexual violence, rape reflects the masculine role as dominant and controlling.” These ideas of objectification and male domination are already found in society at large, but they have become almost permanent by their proliferation through violent lyrics. As seen in the verses provided, overt violence is no longer the seminal problem. The fact that rape culture has been so ingrained into the music business that lyrics no longer need to state explicit instances of rape, but rather simply imply it as subtext, should be an alarming observation to all. Violence is masked by tunes that are appealing to the public, consequently managing to influence as many people as possible. We are all complicit if we do not recognize the situation and battle against it.

## **Conclusions**

The prevalence of sexual assault in music complements a holistic culture of sexual violence. The fact that audiences have not rejected the phenomenon and continue to support even the most overt instances of rape makes them accomplices to the sentencing of women as deserving of such treatment. Much like the Indian kangaroo court, supporters of this music are allowing the defilement of women, and in fact validating it, by refusing to oppose lyrics that contain such a call to action. Thousands of people listen to these songs on a daily basis, as proven by a success which can be easily measured in the number of sales for each record. Women have become so accustomed to the existence of rape in their environment that they do not even attempt to recognize it when it is playing on their radios. Instead, some women have resigned themselves to live constantly under the fear of possible assault and the repercussions of reporting it.

Sexual assault can be suffered in varying degrees, but regardless of the severity of the attack, the scars are equally damaging to those who suffer them. The current culture of rape in society does not aid the resolution of this problem, and “in contemporary popular culture, representations of rape and sexual violence seem rampant, recurring in rap lyrics, visual arts, and cinematic texts” (Smith, 2004, p.150). By providing a guide to rape, music becomes a dangerous weapon.

Artists such as Eminem, Romeo Santos, Jamie Foxx, and Robin Thicke may all argue against this interpretation of their work; yet the lyrics speak for themselves, and the fact that they refused to change their verses before releasing their songs, proves their

apathy towards the subject. Whether their lyrics impact a million people or just one, the messages delivered by their music are a hindrance to society as a whole. Stopping this phenomenon should be an essential task for our society, and it is the audience who must end the cycle. It is within this type of culture that rape victims are blamed for their assaults, women are shamed for their choices of clothing, and perpetrators are forgiven their violence.

In her protest song, "Fight Back," Holly Near recognized the severity of rape culture in our society and aptly summarized the issue in a few verses: "By day I live in terror/ by night I live in fright/ for as long as I can remember/ a lady don't go out alone at night" ("Holly Near," n.d). The occurrence of rape in our culture is intertwined to much more than just the inability of the perpetrators to restrain their urges. It is also intricately bound to the worldview of a society that allows for the crime of rape to go unpunished, and for victims to be humiliated into silence. Pop culture, especially music, plays an increasingly important role in the sustainability of rape culture. The messages within the lyrics in this research are those of irrefutable violence and more than that, are a weaponizable guide to sexual assault. The objectification and sexualization currently victimizing women in our society cannot be deterred if these songs continue to exist. The onus of responsibility must be borne by those of us who recognize its happening and actively engage in its cessation.

### **Acknowledgements**

This research would not have been possible without the support and guidance of a friend and mentor, Dr. Jason J Campbell. Your selflessness in using your spare time to help me showed me what being an instructor, a truly great one, is all about. Thank you for pushing me to question everything.

Also, I have to recognize my dear friend and colleague, Lima Bhuiyan, M.S., for her help with revisions over and over again. I know the subject was not something you wanted to read about repeatedly, but still you did. Thank you for that. Here's to changing the world one day, one subject, and one paper at a time.

## References

- Cubarrubia, J.R., (2013, April 12). Rick Ross issues apology for ‘rape’ lyrics. *RollingStone Music*. Retrieved December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/rick-ross-apologizes-for-pro-rape-lyrics-20130412>
- Eminem Lyrics (n.d.) *Stay Wide Awake*. Retrieved December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/eminem/staywideawake.html>
- FORCE: Upsetting the Culture of Rape (n.d.) Retrieved January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 from <http://upsettingrapeculture.com/rapeculture.php>
- Garsd, J., (2011, November 18). Romeo Santos: Taking Bachata mainstream. *NPR Music*. Retrieved January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from <http://www.npr.org/2011/11/19/142514062/romeo-santos-taking-bachata-mainstream>
- Griffin, D., Black, N., & DiCarlo, P., (2013, November 23) 9 Things everyone should know about the drug Molly. *CNN*. Retrieved December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from <http://www.cnn.com/2013/11/22/health/9-things-molly-drug/>
- Internet Movie Data Base (n.d.) Eminem Biography. Retrieved December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0004896/bio>
- Jamie Foxx Lyrics (n.d). “Blame it (On the Alcohol)” featuring T – Pain. Retrieved January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013 from <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/jamiefoxx/blameitonthealcohol.html>
- Koehler, S., (2013, September 17). From the mouths of rapists: The lyrics of Robin Thicke’s Blurred Lines. *The Society Pages*. Retrieved December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013 From <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2013/09/17/from-the-mouths-of-rapists-the-lyrics-of-robin-thickes-blurred-lines-and-real-life-rape/>
- Near, Holly (n.d.) Fight Back Lyrics. Retrieved January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 from [http://www.hollynear.com/and\\_still.html](http://www.hollynear.com/and_still.html)
- Pesta, A., (2013, December 23). Kicked out of high school for ‘public lewdness’ after reporting rape. *NBCNews.com*. Retrieved December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from [http://usnews.nbcnews.com/\\_news/2013/12/23/21795266-kicked-out-of-high-school-for-public-lewdness-after-reporting-rape?lite](http://usnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/12/23/21795266-kicked-out-of-high-school-for-public-lewdness-after-reporting-rape?lite)
- RAINN, Rape, Abuse and Incest and National Network (n.d.) How Often does Sexual Assault Occur? Retrieved January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 from <http://www.rainn.org/get-information/statistics/frequency-of-sexual-assault>
- Recording Industry Association of America (n.d.) RIAA’s Gold and Platinum program. Retrieved January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 from [http://www.riaa.com/goldandplatinum.php?content\\_selector=criteria](http://www.riaa.com/goldandplatinum.php?content_selector=criteria)
- Robin Thicke’s ‘Blurred Lines’ named 2013’s Biggest Selling Single. (2013, December 8). Retrieved December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from <http://www.nme.com/news/robin-thicke-0/74290>
- Rocko lyrics, (n.d.). *U.O.E.N.O*. Retrieved December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/rocko/uoeno.html>
- Romeo Santos Lyrics (n.d.) “Propuesta Indecente”. Retrieved January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/romeosantos/propuestaindecente.html>
- Smith, A., (2014, January 23). Indian village ‘court’ orders gang rape of woman as punishment for boyfriend. *NBCNews.com*. Retrieved January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 from [http://worldnews.nbcnews.com/\\_news/2014/01/23/22414118-indian-village-court-orders-gang-rape-of-woman-as-punishment-for-boyfriend](http://worldnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2014/01/23/22414118-indian-village-court-orders-gang-rape-of-woman-as-punishment-for-boyfriend)
- Smith, M.D. (Ed.). (2004). *Encyclopedia of Rape*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Spencer, A., (2013, December 3). Blurred Lines Most Shazamed Song of 2013, with 17.8M tags. *MobileMarketing*. Retrieved December 16<sup>th</sup> from <http://mobilemarketingmagazine.com/blurred-lines-most-shazammed-song-of-2013-with-17-8m-tags/>

Vogelman, L., (1990). Sexual face of violence: Rapists on rape [Abstract]. *National Criminal Justice Reference Service*. Abstract retrieved from NCJRS Abstract Database. (Accession number NCJ 127046).

**Contact email:** ar1236@nova.edu  
antonella.regueiro@gmail.com



*Eliot's Notion of Tradition and its Significance in the Age of Multimedia*

Aburawi Abuajaila Elmajdoub, University of Tripoli, Libya

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings

**Abstract**

Our world today is being remade through the continuous spread of multimedia. Though some technological advances have caused some negative developments in our modern times: some people are being distracted, overly stressed, alienated, increasingly isolated, divided, and seriously frustrated, Yet, many of them are involved in a number of relationships through the use of technology. Multimedia has helped in overcoming this sense of isolation and frustration. The greatest features of online communities and virtual worlds are instances of good communications. Someone might feel like an outcast in his/her own community or family but might find someone online with similar interests. Someone else who enjoys photography, sports, education, etc. would be able to make contacts and share that passion with people all over the world by using the Internet and its powerful tools.

In such an advanced, technological atmosphere, Eliot's notion about the collective experience of past generations can be quite influential in the efforts of remaking the tradition in this age of multimedia. Eliot believes that the concern with the present and future requires a concern with the past. He pleads that modern poets should bridge the gap between an ordered past and a chaotic present and exhausted civilization.

Consequently, this paper demonstrates how Eliot's appreciation of the poetry of past generations; particularly the metaphysical poets of the 17th century, reflects his own interest in reviving that lost traditional- to synthesize the present with the past for achieving order in a chaotic present characterized by the use of sophisticated multimedia.

**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## **Eliot's Notion of Tradition and its Significance in the Age of Multimedia**

Our world today is being remade through the continuous spread of multimedia. We are actually living in what is called 'New Times'. Multimedia has changed our life enormously. Modern life Technology has advanced to such a degree that even the most menial tasks can be dealt with efficiently with a mere touch of a button. Today's doctors, engineers, businessmen, teachers, students etc. can benefit a lot from multimedia in their daily life affairs.

Technology makes use of developing internet structures that allow users, for example, to access applications, interact with visual aids, and encounter material in new and helpful ways that were not available before. Online courses and multimedia methods of teaching are also used most commonly to help train new employees on company policy and business procedures. Many young people have to deal with and use technology on a daily basis, including Internet access, mobile devices, videos, computers, electronic devices, and so forth. Furthermore, with the proliferation of technologies that are able to overcome the obstacles of time and space (e.g., airplanes, cars, the Internet), one would think that these tools would be used to gain an understanding of other cultures, meet people all over the world, maintain and strengthen familial relationships, communicate effectively with others, and help people to become more socially adept. In brief, Thanks to the different types of multimedia which have brought the people all over the world very closer; our life will certainly remain incomplete without the media.

On the other hand, some technological advances cause some of the following negative developments: some people are being distracted, overly stressed, feeling qualitatively empty, alienated, increasingly isolated, divided, hopeless and seriously frustrated, Yet, many of them are involved in a large number of relationships through the use of technology.

Multimedia has played a very important role in overcoming this sense of isolation, hopelessness, despair and frustration. It has tremendously created a very effective means of communications between individuals, societies and other cultures. The greatest features of online communities and virtual worlds are obvious instances. Someone might feel like an outcast in his/her own community or family but might find someone online with similar hobbies, pursuits, and interests. Someone else who enjoys photography, sports, education etc. as another example, would be able to share that passion with people all over the world by using the Internet and its powerful tools (e-mail, video chat, discussion boards, online video, family Web sites).

Hence, in such an advanced, technological atmosphere, Eliot started giving special emphasis, attention, and consideration to the significance of the collective experience of past generations; particularly the metaphysical poets of the 17<sup>TH</sup> century. For Eliot, 'The revolution of the metaphysics,' as Praz suggests, "has been an earthquake in the English Parnassus, reshaping the outline of its summit as if it were volcano." (165-66) Their writings, in Bush's opinion, is "the main single factor in affecting the modern revolution in taste." (135) Moreover, "The social situation of the metaphysical poets," Adams affirms:

is a latent for powerful stimulus to our interest in them because in some respects it is like our own. Donne and his followers lived in a period of declining form to communicate new feelings; they expressed the consciousness of an old and complex culture ... . (279)

It is T. S. Eliot, who, more than any other, is credited with the resurrection and revival of metaphysical poets. Indeed, he is considered “the messiah of the recent metaphysical cultivism” and the “high priest of the modern metaphysical revival” (Dunccan 33, 143.)

Many of his critical pronouncements and analyses in this regard are explored in numerous essays, several of which have become classics of the genre: *"Tradition and the Individual Talent"* (1919), *"Hamlet"* (1919), *"The Metaphysical Poets"* (1921), *"The Function of Criticism"* (1923), *"Dante"* (1929), *"Milton I"* (1936), *"What Is a Classic?"* (1945), *"To Criticize the Critic"* (1961), and many more. Beyond literary criticism, there are also Eliot's essays on sociological, educational, and theological subjects: *"Thoughts After Lambeth"* (1931) and *"Modern Education and the Classics"* (1932), are examples. Two longer works of this kind, *The Idea of a Christian Society* (1939) and *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (1948) are properly classified as extended essays.

Eliot's deep appreciation of the metaphysical poetry reflects his own desire to revive and reestablish that lost and broken tradition. He feels that his age has lost contact with the past; therefore, he pleads that the modern poets should bridge the gap between an ordered past, a chaotic present and exhausted civilization by following the example and continuing the line of the metaphysical poets. The employment of the various tools of multimedia will certainly help in achieving Eliot's endeavors and objectives in this regard. Since the metaphysical poets have played an important part of that lost tradition which Eliot wishes to revive, it is, thus, essential to start a brief discussion of Eliot's views on tradition.

Eliot's reformulation of the idea of literary tradition has been one of the key critical concepts of the twentieth century. The essay ‘Tradition and Individual Talent,’ first published in 1919, as an example, contains all those critical principles from which his criticism has been derived ever since. It formulates Eliot's influential conception of the relationship between the poet and the literary tradition which precedes him. ‘The point of view which I am struggling to attack,’ Eliot indicates,

is perhaps related to the metaphysical theory of the substantial unity of the soul: for my meaning is, that the poet has, not a 'personality' to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected ways." (From 'Tradition and the Individual Talent,' 1920)

‘Tradition,’ Eliot thinks, has a three-fold significance. Firstly, tradition cannot be inherited; it can only be obtained by hard labor. This labor is the labor of knowing the past writers. Secondly, it involves the historical sense which involves a perception not only of the ‘pastness of the past,’ but also of its present. Thirdly, the Historical sense enables a writer to write not only with his own generation in mind, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature from Homer down to the

literature of his own country forms a continuous literary tradition. In brief, tradition, for Eliot, represents the accumulated wisdom and experience of ages. To judge the work of a poet or an artist, we must compare and contrast his work with the works of poets and artists in the past. Such comparison and contrast is essential for forming an idea of the real worth and significance of a new writer and his work.

Eliot asserts that it is absolutely necessary for the poet to study, to have an understanding of the poets before him, and to understand and incorporate the 'mind of Europe' into his poetry.

Every great poet like Virgil, Dante, or Shakespeare, Eliot believes, adds something to the literary tradition out of which the future poetry will be written. The work of a poet in the present is to be compared and contrasted with works of the past, and judged by the standards of the past. But this judgment does not mean determining good or bad. It does not mean deciding whether the present work is better or worse than works of the past. An author in the present is certainly not to be judged by the principles and the standards of the past. The past helps us to understand the present, and the present throws light on the past. It is in this way alone that we can form an idea of the future.

The term 'tradition,' Eliot sees, is also imbued with a special and complex character. It represents a "simultaneous order," that is, a historical timelessness – a fusion of past and present – and, at the same time, a sense of present temporality. A poet must embody "the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer," while, simultaneously, expressing his contemporary environment. Eliot challenges our common perception that a poet's greatness and individuality lies in his departure from his predecessors. Rather, Eliot argues that "the most individual parts of his (the poet) work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously."

He gives importance to the interdependence of past and the present as follows:

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artist. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. ... The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relation, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new.

Eliot's conception of tradition is, therefore, a dynamic one. Tradition is not anything fixed and static; it is constantly changing, growing, and becoming different from what it is. A writer in the present must seek guidance from the past, he must conform to the literary tradition. But just as the past directs and guides the present, so the present alters and modifies the past. When a new work of art is created, if it is really new and original, the whole literary tradition is modified.

According to Eliot, in the words of Parkins, a poet

must have models, standards, aims and procedures. These are not innate and must be formed through contact with external influences; from other forms of literature, from art, music, philosophy, and scientific love ... . (520)

The critic, Eliot thinks, has also an important role to play in reviving the tradition. In the 'Introduction' of the Sacred Wood, he says, it is part of the critic to preserve tradition and to see literature as a whole (xv.) 'To bring the poet back to life,' he points out in another essay, is "the great, the perennial task of criticism." ("Andrew Marvell") To do this the critic must possess what he calls "the ability to delete the living style from the dead." ("Charles Whibley")

The lack of tradition, on the other hand, affects the writings of many other poets on every level. Eliot attacks the fundamental premises of the Romantic view of poetry. In his essay "William Blake," for example, he points that though Blake is a genius poet, yet 'what his genius required and what it sadly lacked, was a framework of accepted and traditional ideas which would have prevented him from indulging in a philosophy of his own.' (Selected Essays 279)

Thus, Eliot's theory of poetry marks a complete break from the 19th century tradition. He rejects romantic subjectivism and emphasizes the value of objective standards. He rejects Wordsworth's theory of poetry having, 'its origin in emotions recollected in tranquility,' and indicates that in the process of poetic composition there is neither emotion, nor recollection, nor tranquility.

Reacting against subjectivism of the romantics, Eliot advocated his famous theory of the impersonality of poetry. Great works do not express the personal emotion of the poet; the poet does not reveal his own unique and novel emotions, but rather, he expresses feelings that surpass, altogether, experienced emotion. This is what Eliot intends when he discusses poetry as an 'escape from emotion.'

The artist must continually surrender himself to something which is more valuable than himself, i.e. the literary tradition. He must allow his poetic sensibility to be shaped and modified by the past. His emotions and passions must be as impersonal and objective as a scientist. An artist must forget his personal joys and sorrows, and should be absorbed in acquiring a sense of tradition and expressing it in his poetry. That is why Eliot holds that, 'Honest criticism and sensitive appreciation is directed not upon the poet but upon the poetry.'

In the second part of 'Tradition and the Individual Talent,' Eliot develops further his theory of the impersonality of poetry. He compares the mind of the poet to a catalyst and the process of poetic creation to the process of a chemical reaction. Just as chemical reactions take place in the presence of a catalyst alone, so also the poet's mind is the catalytic agent for combining different emotions into something new. The mind of the poet is constantly forming emotions and experiences into new wholes,

The greatness of a poem depends on the process of poetic composition. Just as a chemical reaction takes place under pressure, so also intensity is needed for the fusion of emotions. The more intense the poetic process, the greater the poem.

In his essay "Wordsworth and Coleridge," Eliot also emphasizes that the great poet is 'one who is in his poetry re-twins as many straying strands of tradition as possible.' So, Eliot praises Dante because he 'thought in a way in which everyman of his culture in the whole of Europe then thought.' ( *Selected Essays* 4, 85, 2-3.) Likewise he praises Yeats' poetry because it 'is stimulated by folklore, occultism, mythology and symbolism ... .' (Miller 166)

In part v of his poem 'Little Gidding,' Eliot stresses the significance of tradition in the following lines:

[...] A people without history  
Is not redeemed from time, for history  
is a pattern of timeless moments [...]

Accordingly, Eliot's idea of tradition, with all its magnificence, has a meaning beyond the conventional sense of the term. It is based on the continuity of the values during the process called civilization, and aims at developing a new concept and structuring a new approach to the very phenomenon called poetry.

Regarding the function of poetry, Eliot suggests that the poet is an artist whose primary function is to maintain the pattern of tradition as well as to redesign it by his own creation. The poet is 'involved with the past and the future': with the future because he is assuring the continuance of tradition, and, therefore, of art; with the past because he must explore and study the tradition, as well as modify it, and in this way transmit it to the future. 'His search is to discover again what has been found before, and to adapt it to contemporary needs.'

Another essay in which Eliot expresses his notion of the impersonal poet is *Hamlet and His Problems* (1919). Eliot presents the phrase 'objective correlative.' The theory is that the expression of emotion in art can be achieved by a specific set of objects, including events and situations. Eliot confirms this notion, stating 'no poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone.' To Eliot, what happens to the poet is 'a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable,' that is to say, the continuity of tradition.

Eliot's demand for an objective authority for art is also expressed in 'The Function of Criticism' (1923). It shows Eliot's appreciation of the order and completeness of classical poetry, qualities which he tried to achieve in his own practice as a poet. The classics, he asserts, could achieve this form and balance, this order and completeness, only because they owed allegiance to an objective authority which was provided to them by past tradition.

In 'The Frontiers of Criticism,' Eliot indicates that to understand a poem, one should ignore everything considered 'extraneous:' the writer's autobiography, his or her historical moment, as well as the social, economic, cultural, and historical contexts of production.

Eliot worries:

[A] knowledge of the springs which released a poem is not necessarily a help toward understanding the poem: too much information about the origins of a poem may even break contact with it.

This sensibility may help in understanding a poem like “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.”

Eliot believed that modern society lacked a vital sense of community and a spiritual center. In “The Waste Land,” a highly complex poem, which deals with the failure of Western civilization as shown by World War I, we get the general impression of isolation, decadence, and sterility. It depicts modern society and human beings as isolated and meaningless. Moreover, it describes cultural and spiritual crisis. Consciousness of the waste and futility of war, and the desolation and hopelessness resulting from it were dominant features of this poem .

In affirming the unity of past, present and future into a single moment, Eliot demonstrates his desire of integration and the historical sense. In this regard, Eliot’s criticism awakened the interest of readers in metaphysical poets resulting in the revival of Metaphysical writings of 20<sup>th</sup> century. He coined the new concepts of criticism like ‘objective co-relative’, ‘dissociation of sensibility’ and ‘unification of sensibility’ and ‘theory of impersonality’ which had much practical and rational approach in them.

As a result, a sincere quest for positive faith emerged. Religious poetry came to be written under the influence of the seventeenth century metaphysical poets whose poetry is characterized by the habit ‘of always seeking to express something after, something behind the simple, obvious first sense and suggestion of a subject.’ (Meta = beyond+physical.)

Eliot’s poetry bears close resemblance to those of the metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century. The sense of obscurity, concentration, unification of sensibility, witticism; use of conceits, metaphors and paradoxes, colloquialism are among the major literary devices of the metaphysical poetry of the 17th century. Traces of most of these metaphysical devices are all present in Eliot’s poetry.

Like the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, Eliot deliberately deviated from the poetic trend of his age. He strongly felt that poetry should have universal and lasting value and be capable of incorporating different aspects of human existence, no matter how sordid or complex.

A characteristic feature of metaphysical verse is indulgence in ‘dissimilar images, of discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike.’ A comparison is often made between objects that have little in common with each other. Cowley, for example, compares being in love with different women to travelling through different countries—‘two heterogeneous ideas yoked by violence together’:

Hast thou not found each woman’s breast  
(The land where thou hast travelled)

Either by savages possest,  
 Or wild, and uninhabited?  
 What joy could' st take, or  
 . what repose.  
 In countries so uncivilized as those.

In the following stanza from the same poem, Cowley stresses the geographical metaphor by describing women's breasts (hearts) as being different lands, have now different constellations to influence their climate:

Last, the scorching dog-star, here  
 Rages with immoderate hen;  
 Whilst Pride, the ragged Northern Bear,  
 In others makes the cold too great.  
 And where these are temperate known,  
 The soil's all barren sand or rocky stone.

Another feature Eliot found in the Metaphysicals, is the unification of sensibility—of thought and feeling, of the critical and the creative faculties. Metaphysical poetry is witty, ingenious, and highly philosophical. its topics included love, life and existence. It used literary elements of similes, metaphors, imagery, paradoxes, conceit, and far-fetched views of reality.

Eliot conceives a poem as an object, an organic thing in itself, demanding a fusion and concentration of intellect, feeling, and experience. He suggests that, through cultural memory, a poet unconsciously continues the tradition of his culture. His poetry presents difficulties of numerous allusions, use of foreign language, use of metaphysical conceit, and an absence of obvious narrative structure.

Eliot's essay on *The Metaphysical Poets* (1921), one of the most significant critical documents of the modern age, has thrown new light on the metaphysical poets, and shown that they are great and mature poets. They represent a continuation of the mainstream of English poetry. His theory of the 'dissociation of sensibility', has caused much critical re-evaluation and rethinking. The poets henceforth began, as Frank Kermode points out, 'to charge their thinking with passion, to restore to poetry a truth independent of the presumptuous intellect.'

John Donne is regarded as the 'leading poet' of this highly intellectual form of poetry. The poetry of Donne and his followers had qualities which particularly appealed to Eliot and other poets of the postwar world; it revealed a sense of spiritual tension and frustration; combined a powerful intellect with a strong sensuousness, and possessed a bold originality of technique. In his poetry, Donne connects the abstract with concrete, the physical with spiritual, the remote with the near and the sublime with the common-place. As Hayward says: 'This juxtaposition, and sometimes, interfusion of apparently dissimilar or exactly opposite objects often pleasantly thrills us into a new perception of reality.' Donne, as Hayward emphasizes, is a 'thrilling poet.'

Donne, Eliot asserts, is among the foremost representative of the modern temper and the living force in the rise of the style. It is Donne, in Eliot's opinion, who gave to his

successors new attitudes, themes, and a new conception of aims of poetry. His strength lies in his peculiar fusion of thought and feeling in action.

Donne used unconventional and colloquial rhythm and tone, which was highly contrary to the Elizabethan poetry style. In developing comparisons, he uses brief words and sudden contrasts as in the following line:

‘A bracelet of bright hair about the bone’ (“The Relique”)

Here the most powerful effect is produced by the sudden contrast of the associations of ‘bright hair’ and of ‘bone’. So it is to be maintained that metaphysical poetry is the elaboration of far-fetched images and communicated association of poet’s mental processes. This line is also a striking example of Donne’s powerful rhetorical style which Eliot admires.

The following lines from Donne’s poetry are other instances of the real, simple language of Donne’s poetry that Eliot appreciates. ‘For God’s sake hold your tongue, and let me love’ (‘Canonization’); ‘And we said nothing all the day’ (‘The Ecstasy’); ‘What I will say, I will not tell thee now’ (‘The Apparition’); ‘Go and catch a falling star’ (‘Song’); ‘Come live with me, and be my love’ (‘The Baif’) and the list goes on.

Another major characteristic of metaphysical poetry praised by Eliot, is use of the conceit. A conceit is a generally defined as fairly elaborate figurative device of a fanciful kind which often incorporates metaphor, simile, hyperbole or oxymoron and which is intended to surprise and delight by its wit and ingenuity. Probably one of the best examples comes from John Donne’s poem “A Valediction: forbidding Mourning.” In this poem Donne compares the love he shares with his wife to a drafter’s compass:

Our two souls therefore, which are one,  
Though I must go, endure not yet  
A breach, but an expansion,  
Like gold to aery thinness beat.  
If they be two, they are two so  
As stiff twin compasses are two ;  
Thy soul, the fix'd foot, makes no show  
To move, but doth, if th' other do.

So, lovers are shown to share a single, indivisible soul, and absence will not impair this unity. The compass in this poem illustrates Donne’s use of science.

‘Eliot and Donne,’ Adams suggests:

are the key figures of the metaphysical analogy; the division of their work into sacred and profane aspects supports the parallel; the dramatic impurities of temperament which they share, a common nostalgia for discipline ... all enhances the pairing ... . (286-7)

Like Donne’s poetry, Eliot’s poem *Preludes*, for example, is rich in imageries that powerfully depict the different atmospheres prevailing at different parts of the day. The first, second and third sections of the poem respectively portray the scenes of

evening, morning and night of a city characterized by spiritual and moral degradation. It also contains few conceits that closely resemble those of the metaphysical poetry. The fourth line of the first section of the poem, 'The burnt-out ends of smoky days', is a metaphysical conceit that contains a startling metaphor.

Again, in the third section of the poem, another metaphysical conceit occurs:

You tossed a blanket from the bed,  
 You lay upon your back, and waited;  
 You dozed and watched the night revealing  
 The thousand sordid images  
 Of which your soul was constituted;  
 They flickered against the ceiling.

The character is lying on the bed and is seeing a vision of the 'thousand sordid images' that are flickering against the ceiling. The thousand images are that of the vices and evils of the squalid city life. The idea of the soul being constituted of the 'thousand sordid images' is farfetched and is comparable to a metaphysical conceit.

The first line of the fourth section, 'His soul stretched tight across the skies' is also a conceit. Here the soul of the street is compared to some material which could be a wire or a rope that can be stretched out to an incredible extent. This comparison is like a metaphysical conceit. The comparison of the woman and the street too is very similar to a metaphysical conceit. In this connection, Grover Smith says:

Woman and the street alike are earthbound: she supine in bed, "he" trampled underfoot; and in their hypothetical aspirations upward, when her soul's images flicker overhead and his soul is "stretched tight across the skies," they but mirror the degraded nature of their conscious selves. (22)

Another conceit is found in the second passage of the fourth section, 'I am moved by fancies that are curled/ Around these images, and cling.' Fancies are presented as something that are capable of curling around something else, and the images are presented as some tangible objects that are capable of being curled around.

The poem concludes with yet another fantastic comparison, 'The worlds revolve like ancient women/ Gathering fuel in vacant lots.' The comparison of the worlds to ancient women is also far-fetched. It is hard to find any similarity between them. The comparison, in fact, fulfills the description of a metaphysical conceit, which is said to be 'a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike.' (Abrams 30)

On the metaphysicality of these two lines, A.D. Moody states:

As in the wit of some of Eliot's masters, Donne and Webster and Marvell, things remote and unlike are 'yoked together'- 'The worlds revolve like ancient women'- in order to intensify some immediate emotion or perception. The effect depends upon there being no connection between the elements: it is the wit alone which hold them together. (56)

'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' (1911) deals with the sordid life of Paris Street is another vivid example of Eliot's fondness of metaphysics. It opens at midnight when the moonlight is dominating over the landscape and the atmosphere. The mind and the memory of the narrator too have been so powerfully affected by the moonlight. On the obscurity of the poem and the presence of unified sensibility in it, George Williamson says:

More complicated feeling is expressed in ... the 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night,' ... concerns ... a windy night on a street "held in a lunar synthesis" and the speaker is returning to his lodgings. The lunar spell dissolves the usual order of the memory and provides a new principle of association; then time successively shakes the memory in an irrational but symbolic fashion, producing in each instance a synthesis which is both an emotion and a comment. (80)

Far-fetched comparisons occur in the first and second passages, which closely resemble metaphysical conceits:

Every street lamp that I pass  
Beats like a fatalistic drum,  
And through the spaces of the dark  
Midnight shakes the memory  
As a madman shakes a dead geranium.

Again the comparisons of midnight to a madman and the memory to a dead geranium are farfetched. They closely resemble the conceits employed in metaphysical poetry. Again, in the following lines that occur in the second passage of the poem, there are two more fantastic comparisons:

The street-lamp said, 'Regard that woman  
Who hesitates towards you in the light of the door  
Which opens on her like a grin.  
You see the border of her dress  
Is torn and stained with sand,  
And you see the corner of her eye  
Twists like a crooked pin.'

The comparisons of the opening of the door to a 'grin' and the twisting of the corner of the woman's eye to 'a crooked pin' are, indeed, significant.

Mr. Apollinax, the main character of the poem, bears a powerful influence of metaphysical poetry. He is a man with contradictory and paradoxical qualities. On these paradoxical personality of Mr. Apollinax, "Mr. Apollinax, as George Williamson remarks, 'is presented as both shy and crude, intellectual and animal; and the combination baffles his host and hostess, to the amusement of the speaker, on this afternoon of a faun.' (83-84)

Another striking metaphysical feature of the poem is in its clever mixing of serious and light elements. In this connection, Elizabeth Drew also says:

One of the qualities for which Eliot has praised the Metaphysicals is the 'alliance of levity and seriousness' in their poetry. It is a quality which disappeared early from his own work, where his wit, concentrated intellectual brilliance, becomes steadily more serious and sardonic. But in this poem there is an agreeable mixture of grave and gay in his ironic scrutiny. (25-26)

The poem also contains interestingly interrelated metaphysical elements like conceit, wit and unified sensibility. The following lines demonstrate the metaphysicality of the poem:

He laughed like an irresponsible fetus.  
His laughter was submarine and profound  
Like the old man of the sea's  
Hidden under coral islands

Where worried bodies of drowned man drift down in the green silence, dropping from fingers of surf. The comparison of Mr. Apollinax's laughter to that of an irresponsible fetus is is, undoubtedly, a significant conceit.

Again, his laughter, which is described as submarine and profound, is compared to the old man in the sea who is hiding in the coral island. This too is an instance of mixing 'levity and seriousness' which constitutes a metaphysical wit.

Another quality of metaphysical poetry in the poem can be also seen in the association of ideas in a rapid manner. This happens in the opening lines of the second stanza of the poem:

I looked for the head of Mr.  
Apollinax rolling under a chair  
Or grinning over a screen  
With seaweed in its hair.

Regarding these lines, D.E.S. Maxwell states:

It is by the association of Apollinax with 'the worried bodies of drowned men', tugged by ocean currents that this image is aroused. Its connection with the previous lines, though not overtly stated, is implicit, and this swift elaboration of the initial idea is equally a characteristic of metaphysical poetry. (53)

In his comments on Eliot's contribution to the revival of interest in metaphysical poetry in the first quarter of the 20th Century, F. O. Matthiessen thinks that

with the generation of readers since the First World War, Donne has become a centrally important figure for the first time since the seventeenth century; and his rise has been directly connected with the fact that Eliot has enabled us to see him with fresh closeness, not only by means of his analysis of the method of metaphysical poetry but also in his renewal of that method in the rhythms and imagery of his own verse. (Matthiessen 1976)

To unite thought and feeling, the poetic and unpoetic, form and content, was the main quality of the metaphysical poets. Eliot points out the difference by dividing the poets into two kinds: intellectual poets and reflective poets. He says:

Tennyson and Browning are poets, and they think; but they do not feel their thought as immediately as the odour of a rose. A thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility. When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly merging disparate experience; the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular fragmentary.

In the introduction to his Clark Lectures Eliot explains the reason why there has been a revival of interest in the metaphysical poetry in the 20th century:

We have seen in the present century and increasingly within the last few years, an awakening of interest in the seventeenth century. However, this arose ... a consciousness or a belief that this poetry and this age have some peculiar affinity with our own poetry and our own age, a belief that our own mentality and feelings are better expressed by the seventeenth century than by the nineteenth or even the eighteenth . . . Contemporary poets are by their admirers likened to Donne or to Crashaw; some of them no doubt study these writers deliberately and elect to receive their influence; there are not wanting voices to declare that the present age is a metaphysical age. (Eliot 1993)

Referring also to metaphysical poets, Eliot again says, 'They are simple, artificial, difficult, or fantastic, as their predecessors were; no less nor more than Dante, Guido Cavalcanti, Guinicelli, or Cino.' (Eliot 1972) Eliot's comparison of the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century with some of the greatest poets, which include Dante, suggests Eliot's immense admiration for Donne and other metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century.

The close similarities between Eliot and the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century particularly, Donne, are also pointed out by F. O. Matthiessen as follows:

Similarities between Eliot's technical devices and those of Donne have been often observed: the conversational tone, the vocabulary at once colloquial and surprisingly strange – both of these a product of Eliot's belief in the relation of poetry to actual speech, and paralleling his use of 'non-poetic' material; the rapid association of ideas which demands alert agility from the reader; the irregular verse and difficult sentence structure as a part of fidelity to thought and feeling; and, especially, the flash of wit which result from the shock of such unexpected contrasts. (Matthiessen 1976)

Eliot's poetry incorporates some of the essential features of the metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century. The closely interconnected metaphysical characteristics like obscurity, erudition and esotericism are widely used in Eliot's poetry. Obscurity is indeed an important quality of Eliot's poetry that brings him into close connection, as S. K. Sen points out, with Donne:

The same charge of 'obscurity' was made against Eliot's poetry when he started writing. What Johnson said about the metaphysical – 'To show their

learning was their whole endeavour' – was repeated or insinuated. The 'difficulty' of Donne's poetry was due partly to the new manner – the packed style and the disconcerting turns of logic – and partly to the use of obscure allusions and learned conceits. (Sen 1965)

His employment of mythical method, symbolism, irony, etc. contributes much in making his poetry obscure as well. Heavy doses of allusions, references and quotations from varied literatures and philosophies belonging to Europe, Asia, Africa and America are also found in his poems. He revolutionized the poetry of the early twentieth century and went on to become a dominant poet of the whole century.

In this direction, Tony Sharpe presents a highly valuable observation:

Confronted by Eliot's poems, many early reviewers had commented on their difficulty and their 'cleverness', evidenced in the literary allusiveness that practically became his hallmark; and to some degree a sense of Eliot's 'difficulty' continues. The obscurity of his 'meaning', together with the recondite nature of many of his literary allusions, have led some to conclude that this is a game to be played by the intelligentsia alone- with the equal conclusion that, if you can play the game of reading Eliot's poems, then you are entitled to consider yourself a member of that elite. (Sharpe 1991)

In his *The Poetry of T. S. Eliot*, D. E. S. Maxwell clearly points out the factors that contributed in making Eliot's poetry obscure and esoteric:

The technique and the ideas of Eliot combining the symbolists and Jacobean traditions were a potent factor in abstracting his poetry from the falling romantic tradition. Such poetry demands close reading, extreme concentration, to enable the reader to follow its progression, and the significance of its methods. ... It is mainly this that makes his poetry esoteric and obscure. (Maxwell 1969)

In the wake of scientific advancement, rapid industrialization and urbanization, things were getting more sophisticated, complex and problematic. Eliot explains the necessity for the modern poetry to be difficult and complex, which seems to implicate the two important metaphysical features namely, esotericism and obscurity. He says:

Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning. (Eliot 1972)

The metaphysical poets had a mechanism of sensibility—a unified sensibility—which enabled them to assimilate and fuse into new wholes most disparate experiences. They could feel their thoughts as intensely as the odour of a rose, that is to say they could express their thoughts through sensuous imagery. In his poems, Eliot affirms, Donne expresses his thoughts and ideas by embodying them in sensuous imagery and it is mainly through the imagery that the unification of sensibility finds its appropriate expression.

Eliot himself fuses the kind of psychological realism that he attributes to Donne and other metaphysical poets. He employs similar techniques and devices to those which characterize metaphysical poetry. Eliot's poems, as Pearce suggests 'are filled with [...] mentally visual clarity. His images strike the mind's eye, which is a combined receiver of all the senses, and of the feelings and thoughts that they promise.' (25) Like Donne, Eliot uses the technique of irony as a means of synthesizing and bringing separate and fragmentary things together. 'The desperate remain desperate,' as Miller indicates, 'the fragments fragmented and unity emerges from a clash of these which affirms the ideal and ... the unattainability of the ideal.' (154)

This method of causing dissociated elements to flow together into harmonious order by means of irony distinguishes Eliot's earlier poetry, in particular. In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock."

For many readers in the 1920s "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" seem to epitomize the frustration and impotence of the modern individual in the age of multimedia. Such phrases as 'I have measured out my life in coffee spoons'(line 51) capture the sense of the unheroic nature of life in the twentieth century. Prufrock's weaknesses could be mocked, but he is a pathetic figure, not grand enough to be tragic. The title 'Love Song' is itself ironic since the eponymous character is isolated, timid, anti-heroic, middle aged, and unromantic.

Throughout this poem, we move from one subject to another- from the woman speaking of Michelangelo to the cat like yellow fog, to the 'lonely men in shirt-sleeves,' through 'the floor of silent seas' and to 'the mermaid singing, each to each' juxtaposed against tea, cakes and ice.

Images of involvement and action oppose images of paralysis and fear and such is the conflict that defines the thinker whose musings we share. The time is evening, and the 'you' is invited to make a visit involving traverse of a slum area. The idea of sickness or paralysis is imported along with a suggestion that the world is twilit due not merely to the time of day but to a realm between the brightness of life and the darkness of death.

The images of the evening, in the same poem, as 'a patient etherized upon a table' (The etherized patient is both modern man and the modern world), or to experience the 'half-deserted streets' of the city in the image of the 'yellow fog' as a sleepy cat that 'rubs its back upon the window panes,' are sharply defined and demonstrates Eliot's fusion of thought and feeling.

The same admission of disharmony is found in Eliot's picture of the poet making new wholes of the experience of falling in love or reading Spinoza, hearing the typewriter smelling and cooking.

The surgery will be diagnostic and will attempt to answer the 'overwhelming question.' (And we continue to wonder just what that question is.) Eventually we enter a room where 'women come and go/ Talking of Michelangelo.' Their subject is a person as unlike Prufrock as a man could be: an artist of epic scale and outspoken opinions - a Renaissance man.

Self doubt and hesitation color this poem: 'Do I dare?' 'How should I presume?' "How should I begin?" "Shall I part my hair behind?" "Do I dare to eat a peach?" How much derring-do is such a man capable of? He can't risk eating a peach for fear of upsetting stomach or bowels.

Prufrock's life of cultured moral behaviour and empty affectation echoes in such lines: 'For I have know them all already, known them all:- / Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons, / I have measured out my life with coffee spoons.' Prufrock's proper behaviour in his drawing room society has been measured out in discreet coffee spoons, and the 'voices dying with a dying fall' are music from a farther room into which he dare not intrude.

The final image is about Prufrock walking along the seashore, trousers rolled to prevent their being splashed. His hair is carefully combed over his bald spot. The thinness of his legs and arms cannot be concealed by morning coat and trousers. Prufrock is awakened from his dreams only to 'drown' in the dry sterility of a wasted existence.

Even in his later poetry, Eliot's style still reflects the poetic qualities of the metaphysical. In 'Ash Wednesday,' as Williamson sees, 'Eliot's religious emotion, like Donne, springs from a conflict between the experience of skepticism and the sense of our mind as a continuation of the varnished mind of the past' (166). Eliot, Williamson stresses, 'has not surrendered his metaphysical quality. He still has Donne's ability to reduce religious abstractions to the level of the image.' (169)

Eliot, like Donne, uses the technique of paradox. Donne's line 'A bracelet of bright hair about the bone' which draws very obviously the contrast between the skeleton and lively flesh, is matched with Eliot's line "skull beneath the skin" in his poem 'Whispers of Immortality.' Moreover, Eliot's line 'as if a magic lantern through the nerves in patterns on a screen' ("Prufrock") illustrates Eliot's use of scientific images—a famous quality in Donne's poetry. His line 'protract the profit of their childhood delirium' demonstrates his use of business, medicine and physics..

Like Donne, Eliot uses the standard English conversational idiom and tone as described in these lines from Little Gidding:

The common word exact without vulgarity,  
The formal word precise but not pedantic,  
The complete concert dancing together. (221-3)

The vocabulary of 'Prufrock,' as another instance, is at once colloquial and surprisingly strange. The lines 'Let us go and make our visit,' 'In the room the woman come and go.' Also, the next opening lines of Gerontion :

Here I am, an old man in a dry month,  
Being read to be a boy, waiting for rain.  
I was neither at the hot gates  
Nor fought in the warm rain  
Nor knee deep in the salt march, heaving a cutlass.

are typical of Eliot's direct, simple and natural language which is quite similar to Donne and his followers.

In the use of conversational tone, there is similarity between the poetry of Eliot and that of Donne. Like Donne, S. K. Sen o emphasizes, Eliot refreshes the language of poetry by bringing it closer to common speech. And his subtle use of speech rhythms relates him to the tradition of Donne.

In addition, there are other great similarities between Eliot and Donne in the application of conceits too. Both of them, Matthiessen points out, employ conceits for some special purposes:

... it is essential to emphasize that ... the conceit exists not just to shock or startle, though that is one of its valuable attributes. It is an integral element of the metaphysical style since it is the most compelling means of making the desired union of emotion and thought by bringing together widely divergent material in a single image. Instead of being ornamental. (Matthiessen 1976)

Another remarkable similarity between Eliot and the metaphysical poets is in their witticism and keen sense of perception. ... [Eliot's] conceits, paradoxes and satires are striking examples of his sharp wit and incisive sense of perception. In this connection, George Williamson also makes this comment:

In the new and the old he finds both antithesis and similitude, often mingled in the paradox of the one and the many, or of time and the timeless. His acute perception of similarity and difference between the same things, his mixed use of the intellectual wits that Hobbes called fancy and judgment, is common in Metaphysical poetry or the poetic wit of the seventeenth century. (Williamson 1965)

In his use of puns and paradoxes, Eliot, as Ronald Tamplin affirms, closely resembles Donne:

... Eliot is simply embracing a long tradition in playing with the Word in *The Rock*, in 'Journey of the Magi' and in *Four Quartets*. ... And just as the Metaphysicals could extend out from the example of Christ into ever-widening rings in imagery because paradox is the key to the meaning of experience, so for Eliot paradoxical unities constantly help to give form to his thought. (Tamplin 2003)

Concentration is another important characteristic of Eliot's poetry. Vast and varied materials are compressed and concentrated in his poems. The complexity and futility of human existence, not only of that of modern urban life but of all ages, have been amalgamated in some of his highly concentrated poems.

It is for all these qualities, among others, that Donne and other metaphysicals are considered by Eliot good models that modern poets should follow in their poetry. Eliot sees that the poetry of a diverse and complex age such as the present must be complex, compressed, and ironical. As in the poetry of Donne and his followers,

modern poetry must reflect the complexity of modern civilization by producing complex results.

Eliot, himself, uses concepts and methods, as discussed above, very much similar to those of the Metaphysicals who also lived in complex and rapidly changing times. Donne and the other Metaphysicals are in the direct current of English poetry, and the modern poets are their direct descendants. This current flows direct from the Elizabethan age right up to the modern age.

Eliot has, consequently, played an important role in further extending, reviving and continuing the metaphysical tradition in the 20th century. David Daiches (1962) grants Eliot's poetry the highest regard when he observes that:

[T]he nature of his imagery together with the movement of his verse generally succeed in setting the tone he requires, in establishing the area of meaning to be developed, so that even a reader ignorant of most of the literary allusions can often get the 'feel' of the poem and achieve an understanding of what it says.

Donne and his followers' place and influence, in Eliot opinion, will certainly remain permanent in our sophisticated age of multimedia. In 'Donne in Our Time,' Eliot confirms that Donne has greatly

effected a revolution of the kind which has to occur from time to time, which will have to occur again in newly measurable time, if the English language is to retain its vigour." (13) 'In nothing are Donne and Eliot alike,' Williamson also declares, "then in the fact that each has taught his fellow poets what it means to be 'contemporary'." (165) Furthermore, "both" the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, Raiziss remarks, 'are marked by world disorder, amiable breakdown, scientific advances and religious skepticism.' (59) Like our age, the age of Donne and his followers suffered corruption and disintegration in many aspects. Therefore, 'the jagged brokenness of Donne's thought,' Matthiessen indicates, 'has struck a responsive note in our age [...] unable to find any final truth in which it could rest, became fascinated with the process of thought itself.' (12)

It is quite obvious to conclude that despite the gap of more than two centuries that separated his age and that of Donne and his followers, Eliot perceived in metaphysical poetry something that was of unique and permanent value. Consequently, Eliot has made a tremendous contribution in reviving and further extending the tradition of the seventeenth century metaphysical poetry. This revival of tradition has undoubtedly become very distinctive and extremely invaluable at the age of multimedia.

## Works Cited

- Abrams, M. H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. New Delhi: Macmillan India Ltd, 1998.
- Adams, Robert Martin. "Donne and Eliot: Metaphysicals." *Kenyon Review* 16 (1954).
- Bush, Douglas. *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century, 1600-1660*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- Drew, Elizabeth. *T. S. Eliot: The Design of His Poetry*. Delhi: Doaba House, 2000.
- Duncan, Joseph E. *The Revival of Metaphysical Poetry*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962.
- Eliot, T. S. "Tradition and the Individual Talent," in *The Waste Land and Other Writings*. (New York: Modern Library, 2002)
- Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," *The Waste Land and Other Writings*. (New York: Modern Library, 2002)
- , "The Frontiers of Criticism," *The Sewanee Review* 64 no. 4 (1956) Hughes, Langston "Situation," *Selected Poems of Langston Hughes*, (New York: Vintage, 1987), 235
- . *The sacred Wood*. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd, 1948.
- , *Selected Essays: 1917- 1932*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1932.
- Matthiessen, F. O. *The Achievement of T. S. Eliot*,. New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1947.
- Maxwell, D. E. S. *The Poetry of T. S. Eliot*. London: Roulledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1969.
- Miller, J. Hillis. *Poets of Reality*. Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1965.
- Moody, A. D. *Thomas Stearns Eliot: Poet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979
- Parkins, David. *A History of Modern Poetry: From 1890s to the High Modernist Mode*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1976.
- Praz, Mario. "The Critical Importance of the Revival Interest in Seventeenth Century Metaphysical Poetry," *English Studies Today*. Ed. C. L. Warren and G. Bullough. London (1951).
- Raiziss, Sona. *The Metaphysical Passion: Seven Modern Poets and the Seventeenth Century Tradition*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952.

Smith, Grover. *T. S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971

Williamson, George. *A Reader's Guide to T. S. Eliot*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1965.

- - "Donne and the Poetry of Today," A Garland for John Donne: 1631-1931. Ed. Spencer. Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1958.



***The Power of Pretty:  
Re-Appropriating the Gaze and Feminine Agency in “Spring Breakers”***

Patricia Williamson, Central Michigan University, USA

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings



**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

When Mulvey (1975) posited the marginalization of female characters in film as passive, powerless figures that advance the narrative only in the sense that they drive male characters to act, she became one of the key figures of second-wave feminist film theory. Her analysis of scopophilic pleasure and the male gaze has long been a cornerstone of feminist film criticism. But what can be made of a film that self-reflexively investigates the relationship between the male gaze and a third-wave feminist viewpoint of female sexuality as a possible form of agency? This analysis will focus on writer/director Harmony Korine's 2013 film *Spring Breakers*, which has been called both the "perviest movie ever made" (Edelstein, 2013, 69) and "a collaboration of genius directing, stellar acting and a riveting plot line" (Riley, 2013, 1). Using a feminist perspective, this study will investigate the re-appropriation of the gaze by the film's female characters as a means of discovering and asserting their own personal power. The fact the characters are depicted by young Disney starlets who have themselves been marketed as commodities for much of their young adult lives adds a layer of self-reflexivity to the narrative. The overly sexualized, yet infantilized depictions of the young female actresses offers a critique of our modern mediated culture. This analysis will attempt to make sense of the contradictory images and meanings embedded in the controversial film.

### ***Spring Breakers***

Released in March of 2013, *Spring Breakers* is a curious mix of exploitive teen flick raunch and postmodern social satire. The basic plot of the film is one that has been told on film many times. Four college co-eds want nothing more than to spend a week in the Florida sun, experiencing complete nihilism for one of the first times in their lives. They are compelled to flee the stress of what some might call "first world problems," like homework, classes, jobs, and the boring homogenous crowd they hang out with on their archetypal college campus.

The film opens as many spring break-themed films do, with tracking shots lingering on the bodies of young women in bikinis, arms raised, alcohol literally funneled into their throats. There are shots of bare-breasted young women sitting atop men's shoulders, looking directly into the camera and shaking their breasts for the delight of the camera, the camera operator, and the subsequent viewer. Young women are licking red, white and blue phallic popsicles, linking the exploitation of women and their bodies with a warped American patriotism. The entire opening sequence of the film sexualizes and objectifies women, while men command a dominant position. If one were to stop watching the film after this opening sequence, they would walk away thinking *Spring Breakers* was no different from any other film of this ilk. This paper will argue that *Spring Breakers* is anything but a typical exploitation teen flick. In fact, writer/director Harmony Korine has crafted an astute social commentary, directly skewering the typical misogynistic teen-movie world view and the objectification of young Hollywood starlets.

The film revolves around the experiences of Brit, Candy, Cotty and Faith, four young women on a quest to make it to St. Pete's Beach in Florida for Spring Break, despite the fact they can't afford the trip. Their financial problems are solved when Brit and Candy rob a local chicken shack with squirt guns, while Cotty serves as the getaway driver. Faith is unaware of the source of the girls' newfound wealth until after arriving in Florida.

Once in their Spring Break wonderland, the women party, get arrested, then are bailed out by a sleazy white-rapper and gangster-wannabe, Alien, played by James Franco replete with cornrows and a grill. While with Alien, the women see a whole new side of St. Pete's Beach, beyond the beaches and party hotels. Alien introduces them to the local community of drug traffickers, prostitutes and violent criminals. It's a contrast to the bright, sunny and predominantly white-washed world constructed in the opening sequences. Alien's community is largely African-American, and the film takes place more and more at night and in darkened bars and backrooms, rather than on sunny beaches. This may be Korine's commentary on the racialized way in which we stereotype white, middle-to-upper class drug use and crime (as we've already in the film see the female protagonists participate in), versus the way African-American drug use and criminal activity involving people from a lower socio-economic status is depicted in the media.

Faith is the first of our four female protagonists to exit the environment, realizing rather quickly that she is uncomfortable with Alien's lustful attention. This new side to Spring Break releases her from the spell of her idealized version of their communal experience. Up to this point, Faith had been seemingly entranced by the Spring Break experience, going so far as to call her grandmother to tell her "I'm starting to think this is the most spiritual place I've ever been" and characterizing her fellow partiers as "so warm and friendly." She continues to say she's having "way more" than a good time during her break from reality. In fact, it's such an amazing place she tells Grandma she wants to come back next year with her.

Faith struggles with the religiosity she has been raised with, and appears to be torn between good girl/bad girl dichotomy often depicted in film. While participating in her church youth group, she appears to fit in with the crowd, singing the praises of Jesus and maintaining the veneer of a well-mannered, chaste young woman. However, when she leaves the shelter of the church group and hangs out with Brit, Candy and Cotty, we see Faith give in to the temptations of drugs, alcohol, and partying. While on spring break, Faith again seems to be torn between the togetherness and belongingness she experiences with her friends old and new, and the realization that her initial spiritual reading of the setting was perhaps marred by a naïve worldview. What Faith saw as a communal celebration of youth and life is exposed to be debauchery when Alien enters the scene. In fact, the spell is broken long before the young women are hauled off to jail. Faith truly begins to question the trip's higher meaning and purpose when she hears Candy and Brit talk about the Chicken Shack robbery. Up until the time they are wandering the streets of St. Pete's Beach, Faith has no idea the trip was paid for with ill-gotten gains. Seeing her friends with whom she feels such a bond of friendship so exhilarated by the memories from the robbery leads her to question her judgment for the first time. Alien and his crew are just the final straw to break the aptly-named female character's faith.

Cotty follows Faith home late in the second act of the film after being shot in the arm by a rival gangster upset that Alien was threatening to impinge on his drug operation. Brit and Candy stay with Alien, reveling in the newfound excitement of their adventure, seemingly unaffected by the violence inherent in this new lifestyle; not at all afraid of what might come next.

The cast of the film garnered a great deal of attention at the time of its release due to the fact that several of the key roles star young, former-child stars who have grown into mature young women. Many have ties to Disney via roles in ABC Family series. Selena Gomez appears as Faith, the young religiously-inclined ingénue with a wild streak. Gomez started her career as a child actor on *Barney and Friends* in 2001. She had a brief role in the film *Spy Kids 3-D*, and made appearances on the Disney productions *Suite Life of Zack and Cody* and *Hannah Montana*. Gomez has been linked romantically (on and off) to pop star Justin Bieber, who himself was an internet sensation at a young age, and who has transformed from a baby-faced pre-teen to a rebellious (and often shirtless) young man who has had more than his share of run-ins with the law.

Vanessa Hudgens plays Candy. Hudgens began acting at age eight and landed her breakthrough role in *High School Musical* in 2006. Ashley Benson takes on the character of Brit. Benson started modeling professionally at the age of five, and was pursued by the Ford Modeling Agency at age eight. She appeared in more than 35 commercials by the time she was cast as Hannah Marin on the ABC Family series *Pretty Little Liars*. Rachel Korine plays Cotty. She is married to director Harmony Korine, with whom she has a child. She has appeared in several independent films, including Harmony Korine's *Trash Humpers* and *Little Red Riding Hood*.

The Disney Corporation has long come under fire for its commodification of young female actresses and pop stars. A study by Myers (2013) involved focus groups and qualitative textual analysis of popular television shows aimed at young girls, including *Hannah Montana*, *iCarly*, and others. What she found was that the prevailing messages of these programs celebrated beauty and heterosexual coupling, demonized strong unattractive women, and praised anti-social "bad" girl behaviors. Furthermore, a major message was that girls were valued more if they were beautiful and desired by boys. The female actresses and characters were objectified for male consumption. (Myers, 2013).

The young stars of this film seem to be following in the shoes of other former Disney starlets Britney Spears, Cristina Aguilera and Miley Cyrus. Indeed, one of the main characters is named Brit, a possible allusion to the pop starlet. Of course the name Candy refers to a sweet, guilty pleasure, devoid of nutritional value. Beyond the tasty treats the name conjures, it could also be read as a commentary on how these women are consumed within media the media industry. The formula for success for young female actresses and singers seems to be to transition from "child" star to "woman" by hitting the audience over the head with a new sexualized persona (ie: Miley Cyrus twerking at the MTV Awards). Singer Charlotte Church is one pop star who has spoken out against this music industry trend. She argued that young women in the industry are "...encouraged to present themselves as hyper-sexualised, unrealistic, cartoonish, as objects, reducing female sexuality to a prize you can win." (Dutta, 2013). She goes on to talk of her own experiences as a 19 and 20 year old, being pressured into wearing more and more revealing outfits, generally by middle aged men. (Dutta, 2013)

It is certainly true that the young female protagonists of *Spring Breakers* are portrayed in this highly sexualized way. They spend the majority of the film wearing nothing more than bikinis, and at times, less. Simultaneously, they are infantilized. Early in

the film the four women romp in their dorm hallway in their underwear, playing leapfrog and doing handstands. But unlike other exploitation films, this paper argues that the presentation of these young women as sex-kittens is self-reflexive. They are self-consciously putting on a performance of expected sexuality, but doing so with full knowledge of the power their sexuality can wield. Director Harmony Korine is aware of the images he is projecting, playing with the virgin/whore dichotomy that seems to be so prevalent in film portrayals of women. Korine lets us see that beyond the “performance” of childlike helplessness that the young women put on, they are in fact much stronger than one might imagine. Korine seems to be playing with a third-wave, “girlie” feminist notion of using the male gaze and stereotypically sexualized representations of young women to show that the protagonists are in control all along. These are not damsels in distress that need to be rescued by a man. The helplessness or innocence portrayed is ironic. Brit, Candy, Cotty, and Faith use the expectations of the audience and of the male protagonist (antagonist?) Alien that has been cultivated over decades of passive, on-screen female depictions. But throughout the film, he shows us that these women are perfectly capable of taking care of themselves without any help from a man. These women have learned from a young age that sex is power. Their bodies, despite being prized for being overtly sexual, are in fact powerful weapons. In a third-wave feminist context, they have learned to re-appropriate the gaze by using their allure to control men, such as Alien. Throughout the film, images of the women’s vulnerability is juxtaposed with images of their power. But it is not only power that is projected from the young women, it is also anger. Anger at the stigmatized roles they have been forced into by a society that seems to place value on their looks beyond anything else.

One of the first glimpses we get of the dichotomous representations of these women comes when Brit and Candy rob the chicken shack. With masks on, the women threaten the patrons with death and beatings if they don’t hand over their cash. In fact, they are using water guns, children’s toys, rather than real guns. But they are able to assert themselves as threatening and powerful. Before they rob the restaurant, they give themselves a pep talk, reminding each other that they need to be “hard.” “Just pretend it’s a video game,” exclaims Brit, “...like you’re in a fucking movie.” One might look at the plastic guns as symbolic of traditionally masculine “phallic” power. It may also represent the women’s re-appropriation of the filmic gaze. These protagonists are not passively looked-at any longer. It’s important to note the women wear ski masks to camouflage themselves during the hold up. Not only does this mask their identities to avoid being caught, it also masks their physical identities as young, blonde, beautiful women, which might lead them to be taken less seriously by the patrons. Brit and Candy know the gender politics that are at play and they manipulate them for their own benefit.

A key scene in the film involves Brit and Candy exploring Alien’s home. He takes immense pride in his many possessions. His house is decorated with guns and other weaponry. But it is more than weapons and money. Alien takes pride in the act of possessing things, and it is implied the girls he has bailed out of jail are now part of his collection. He believes he possesses these young women, after all, he bought and paid for them. However, this power dynamic is soon turned on its head as the two women pick up two of his guns and begin to play with them, symbolically taking on that phallic power that Freudians argue is the key to masculine agency. The girls again re-appropriate their agency by mimicking the actions of men. They point the

guns at Alien, telling him to get down on his knees and for him to “open your fuckin’ mouth.” They penetrate his mouth with the guns, which they hold at crotch level so that the guns appear to be phalluses. They taunt Alien, saying, “You like that don’t you? You’re a nasty little fuck. You like that in you. We don’t need you, Alien. What if we just used you to bring us here? What if we shoot your brains out?” The words seem natural to the women, as if they’ve heard them before. As if they’re mimicking what they think a hardened, powerful gangster would say in this situation. Of course, we’ve all heard these types of trite, threatening lines of dialogue before in countless action films and crime dramas. However, the formula we’re used to seeing played out on screen involves a male antagonist threatening and dominating female characters, as we wait for the male protagonist(s) to come save the damsels in distress. In *Spring Breakers*, Korine’s flipping of the archetype strikes the audience as shocking and unexpected. Perhaps even more surprising is Alien’s reactions to the threats. Rather than simply becoming fearful and defensive, Alien begins to attempt to fellate the guns, saying, “I just wanna suck y’all’s dicks. I’d do that shit every night...you’re my motherfuckin’ soul mates.” Again, Korine defies generic and gender-driven expectations by showing the slightly menacing, yet simple Alien embracing a passive stereotype that is used to represent a warped view of women as sexually submissive to such an extent that threats and aggression would be seen as foreplay. By reversing the gender roles, Korine takes on decades of stereotypical subordination of women in film.

This scene harkens back to the beginning of the film when we see Brit in class with Candy, making a joke about how much she enjoys giving oral sex. It also illustrates a progression from the earlier Chicken Shack robbery. The women have graduated from toy squirt guns to real guns with real bullets. They have nearly transitioned from powerless and passive to powerful and active agents of their own destinies. However, they are not quite there yet. For Alien believes he has found his soul mates in these young women, seeming to treat them as if they are his muses. It is not until they can move on without Alien’s misguided direction that they are truly in control.

It isn’t until the climactic final scene of the film that the audience realizes the duo of Brit and Candy have reached the point where they have moved beyond power of the male gaze. Dressed in bikinis and shot at night, so all we as spectators see are matching neon bikinis travelling through the nighttime world of St. Pete’s Beach. The women join Alien on his quest for revenge against a rival gang of drug dealers; the same people responsible for shooting their friend Cotty. Armed with automatic weapons, the trio take off in a speedboat across the bay, landing at a private dock that leads to the main drug dealer’s mansion where he is having a party. Alien and the women climb up on the dock and proceed toward the land when they are confronted with gun-toting bodyguards. Unexpectedly, Alien is immediately gunned down. But the women are unscathed by the flying bullets. Reminiscent of the “miracle” experienced by Jules and Vince in an early scene in *Pulp Fiction*, the women seem to be protected by some unseen force field. They don’t so much as hesitate after Alien is shot. They shoot back at the bodyguards, killing them. They never miss a step in their march toward the mansion. Along the way, they mow down man after man, all of them armed and on alert for intruders. Yet Brit and Candy remain unscathed. The women eventually reach the mansion, enter it, and find the rival drug dealer/gangster in his bathtub, watching two women of color perform naked for him. The women are touching and kissing one another in a clichéd way, feigning sexual interest in one

another, but clearly performing for the dominant male figure. Brit and Candy shoot the man as he lies passively in his bathtub, cigar in mouth, ogling the women's performance. Brit and Candy exit the bathroom without harming the women. On their way back to the boat, they stop momentarily to give Alien's dead body a short kiss, perhaps a thank you for his role in facilitating what they see as their ultimate revenge on the societal patriarchy, and they leave.

It is important to note that during this killing spree, it is only men whom Brit and Candy kill. They allow all of the women at the mansion to go free. They are kindred spirits, after all. The women at the mansion are eye candy, there to sexually gratify men and reinforce their masculine hegemonic power. They have been used as if possessions or objects. Brit and Candy show these women that they can, quite literally, blow up that power dynamic. The two heroines (?) prove that patriarchal oppression can be overturned, but it may have to come by any means necessary. And the method Brit and Candy use is to take control of traditionally masculine fantasies of violence and sex and use them to their own benefit.

Some critics have argued that *Spring Breakers* is just too far from reality to be enjoyed as a film. Clearly, this scene is not at all realistic. But that is the point. It is a scene in a movie. Just as women are projected as passive objects to be looked at in films time and time again fulfilling young male movie-goers' fantasies, these women try on another film fantasy, the revenge fantasy. In doing so, they prove that the male gaze can be manipulated. It also illustrates a building rage against oppressive and misogynistic portrayals of women in film.

**References:**

- Dutta, K. (2013, October 14). Charlotte church slams 'hyper-sexualised' music industry and 'unattainable sexbots' Rihanna and Miley Cyrus. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/charlotte-church-slams-hypersexualised-music-industry-and-unattainable-sexbots-rihanna-and-miley-cyrus-8879992.html>
- Edelstein, D. (2013, March 25). Disney does Daytona. *New York*, 46(8), 69-71.
- Gillis, S. and Munford, R. (2004). Genealogies and generations: The politics and praxis of third wave feminism. *Women's History Review*, 13(2), 165-182.
- Karras, I. (2002). The third wave's final girl: Buffy the Vampire Slayer. *Thirdspace: a journal of feminist theory & culture*, 1(2). Retrieved from <http://journals.sfu.ca/thirdspace/index.php/journal/article/viewArticle/karras/50>
- Korine, H. (2013). *Spring Breakers* [Motion picture]. United States: A24 and AnnaPurna Pictures.
- Myers, K. (2013). Anti-feminist messages in American television programming for young girls. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 22(2), 192-205.
- Riley, M. E. (2013, April 11). 'Spring Breakers' makes a splash. *UWIRE Text*, 1.
- Shugart, H. A. (2001). Isn't it ironic? The intersection of third-wave feminism and generation X. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 24(2), 131-168.
- Totaro, D. (2002). The final girl: A few thoughts on feminism and horror. *Off Screen*, 6(1). Retrieved from [http://offscreen.com/view/feminism\\_and\\_horror](http://offscreen.com/view/feminism_and_horror)

**Contact email:** willi1pa@cmich.edu

*Israel through the Lenses of Oscar-Nominated Documentary Film 'Promises'*

Abida Eijaz, University of the Punjab, Pakistan

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings**Abstract**

Film is a significant tool of (re)shaping, (re)constructing, (re)presenting and (re)structuring realities. According to Edelman (1993) the social world is like a kaleidoscope of potential realities (p. 232). Media plays an active role in determining when and how to evoke certain realities depending on which observations are framed and categorized. The concept of media as shaping and reshaping realities suggests exploring various influences on the production of media content (Gans, 1980; Gitlin, 1980; Altschul, 1984; Shoemaker & Reese, 1991; O'Reagan, 1996; Herman & Chomsky, 2002; Curran & Seaton, 2003; Allan, 2004; Gauntlett, 2005). This study is applying production perspectives to evaluate the depictions of Israel through documentary film 'Promises.'

Framing in the documentary films may have profound effects by leading viewers to accept one meaning over another. Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the contents of documentary film under consideration serves as a means of understanding overt and covert messages. Contents of the film at the first stage are analyzed to study patterns of depiction for the followers of three religions in terms of marginalization or prominence; production/technical treatment; formation, integration and comparison of images associated with the participants; comparison of coverage given to the followers of different religions; associations on gender basis. According to Gunning (2008, p 198), "non-fiction filmmaking remains one of the other major lacunae of film studies." This research is an attempt to contribute in the domain of documentary film studies.

**iafor**The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## **Israel through the Lenses of Oscar-nominated Documentary Film ‘Promises’**

John Grierson says, “In documentary we deal with the actual and in one sense with the real. But the really real, if I may use that phrase, is something deeper than that. The only reality which counts in the end is the interpretation which is profound.” Documentary film is taken to be a journalistic work and belongs to realist tradition. The selection processes suggest that how much a documentary filmmaker has authority, freedom and control on the subject. There are two paradoxes that control the politics of film; one belongs to production end and the other one belongs to consumption end. Form and content that belongs to production; former is revolutionary and later is conservative of traditional values. Second paradox addresses ‘the politics of film and the politics of real life.’ Both are so closely intertwined that it appears ‘generally impossible to determine which the cause is and which is the effect’ (Monaco, 2000, p. 262).

The documentary film ‘Promises’ was shot during 1997 to 2000 in times when there was relative calm between Palestinians and Israelis. The filmmakers are Justine Shapiro, B. Z. Goldberg, and Carlos Bolado. Goldberg is a Jew and has spent his childhood in Jerusalem. The film is about seven Palestinian and Israeli children living in or around Jerusalem.

The first chapter is titled as ‘Introduction.’ Goldberg, one of the filmmaker and narrator introduces himself and shares the objective of the film. His childhood memories are linked with Jerusalem’s break outs, bomb blasts and killings. He tells that children who belong to these areas want to say something about conflict and conflict resolution but they never get an opportunity to voice their opinion. That’s why Goldberg decided to make a film about seven Palestinian and Israeli children in and around Jerusalem. He says, “There were no more than twenty minutes for a child but they are each growing up in a very separate world.” The dialogue shows filmmaker’s planning to give equal time to all the leading participants in the documentary. On screen text tells about the first ‘Intifada’ (1987-1991). Intifada is Palestinian uprising that led to the Israeli-Palestinian “Peace Process.” Text shares about the second ‘Intifada’ started in 2000 and faced a fierce response of Israeli military. As a result the region plunged into severe violence. Talking heads mode is applied with the footage of Jerusalem. Sequence of scenes is assisting to introduce the design of documentary. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and fifty three seconds.

Second chapter is titled as ‘Twins’ named after Yarko Solan and Daniel Solan who are Ashkenazim Jews. Yarko and Daniel are the main participants of this chapter. They are Jews, living in Israeli neighborhood, West Jerusalem. They are quite concerned about the insecurity especially in downtown areas. Yarko remarked about the insecure conditions, “When we are downtown, most of the explosions are downtown. So, I can’t wait to get past the downtown area. I count the seconds.” The dialogues depict that downtown areas are more vulnerable. During the so called ‘Peace Process’ insecurity was prevailing and Jewish children were quite apprehensive about their security. Post production treatment includes music, text on the screen, Jerusalem map and juxtaposition of talking heads with the text on screen. Talking heads mode is used for all the twenty nine dialogues delivered by Yarko and Daniel. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and thirty-eight seconds.

The third chapter is named after Mahmoud, the only participant of this chapter. Mahmoud is a Muslim child, lives in East Jerusalem, Palestinian neighborhood. Mahmoud is of the view that Jerusalem belongs to Muslims so how Jews can claim it. He gives the argument, "Why does the Quran say that the Prophet, Mohammad (peace be upon him) flew from Mecca to the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. So, Jerusalem belongs to us, to the Arabs." Mahmoud considers Israel a very natural country of Muslims. The argument depicts that some of the Muslims interpret Jerusalem from Quranic perspective. The footage of McDonald and satellite dishes on the house tops depicts East Jerusalem as a modern place. The chapter depicts the viewpoint of Mahmoud from East Jerusalem. Jerusalem map, text on the screen, music and different images are part of schematic structuring and facilitate to develop the discourse of the scene. Preference is given to 'text on screen' as compared to voice over that gives the impression of dissociation of the content from the narrator. Three statements appear on the screen. Music is eastern and talking heads mode is used for twelve dialogues delivered by Mahmoud. Non-diegetic sound is used for thirty three seconds only for the chapter transition.

'Shlomo' is the title of fourth chapter, named after the participant. Sholomo and Goldberg are the participants of this chapter. Sholomo is a Jew born in the Jewish Quarter of Old City, Jerusalem. He is the son of a Rabbi from the United States. Shlomo is learning Torah by heart with great commitment, devoting twelve hours every day to learn Torah. He says, "I live in the city of Jerusalem, an old city and I hear the church bells irrupt and I hear the Jews praying so it will really bother me very much if I would not live here and would not get used to it." Jerusalem is sacred for Muslims too so Shlomo thinks that Saddam Hussein will never bomb it. However, he considers Saddam Hussein as terrorist. Goldberg asks Shlomo if it is Sholomo's duty to convert non-practicing Jews into practicing ones. Sholomo replies that each person comes to the Rabbi with the spirit to do something so the person is assigned to perform a particular job depending on the qualities of a person. The chapter depicts the lifestyle, interests and conditions of Jews living in Old City. Juxtaposing of talking heads and voice of authority facilitate to reflect the perspective of Shlomo as a Jew. Two dialogues are in voice of authority mode and rest in talking heads mode. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and five seconds.

'Sanabel' is the title of fifth chapter, named after the participant. Sanabel and Goldberg are the participants of this chapter. Sanabel is a Muslim girl, living in Deheishe refugee camp. Voice over tells how the Deheishe refugee camp came into being. Israelis labeled 1948 conflict as 'War of Independence' however, Palestinians labeled it as 'catastrophe.' The conflict resulted in forced flees of 750,000 Palestinians settling in refugee camps around neighboring Arab States. Voice over explains that in 1967, Israel conquered the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. As a result many of the camps came under Israeli military occupation. Now more than 11,000 Palestinians are living in Deheishe refugee camp. Sanabel's father, a journalist and a local leader of the Popular Front for the liberation of Palestine (political faction) vehemently opposes the peace process. He remained behind the bars without any formal charges for two years and the chapter depicts him still in Israeli jail. Sanabel tells about the 'Holy Dome of the Rock' built for her father by prisoners of Ashkelon jail who belonged to Hamas. Sanabel's father is a hero for Palestinians but a rebellion for Israelis. The chapter depicts Muslims' living conditions in refugee camps which are very pathetic. Text on the screen, music and juxtaposing of talking heads assist to highlight the poor

conditions of Muslims living in the camp. All dialogues are in talking heads mode. Non-diegetic sound is used for two minutes and thirty-three seconds.

'Faraj' is the title of sixth chapter, named after the participant. Faraj is a Muslim child residing in Deheishe refugee camp. The scene starts with Goldberg's account of his last visit to Deheishe as a journalist. He tells that 'Intifada' started from refugee camps by Palestinian youth, using 'stones' as their weapon. Goldberg's comment shows that Palestinians are not involved in violent activities rather they want to register their protest against Israelis. Faraj tells how twelve years old Bassam was martyred in Deheishe Camp during a curfew. "My friend Bassam threw a stone through an open window, and a soldier shot Bassam, killed him. I wanted to cut that soldier in half, shoot him or blow him up to avenge Bassam's death." Faraj's narration depicts the brutalities of Israelis. The epitaph of Bassam's grave carries the text, "Those killed in God's name are not dead. They are alive at His side. We belong to God and to God we shall return." The text on epitaph is Quranic verses, showing that Muslims get their strength from God and inspiration from Quran. Faraj encourages people to take part in Intifada because stones helped to liberate nearly half of Palestine. How pitiable it is that Palestinians are using stones to defend themselves against guns and nuclear stuff. The main discourse appears to depict the helplessness of Palestinians living in refugee camps and their involvement in Intifada. Temporal processes are very subtle as Faraj appears in the chapter for two times after a one year gap. Footage of camp, Bassam's grave, and Muslims offering prayers are integrated in the chapter to support the perspective of Faraj. Sequencing of scenes helps to highlight Faraj as a Palestinian Muslim. The chapter ends on Muslims offering prayers, reciting seventh verse of Surah 'Al Fatihah, "Those whose portion is not wrath, and who go not astray". Talking heads mode is applied. Non-diegetic sound is used for thirty-four seconds.

'Moishe' is the title of seventh chapter, named after its participant. Moishe, a Jew child, is living in Beit El and wants to be a religious Commander in Chief. The chapter starts with music and Goldberg tells the history of the Jewish settlements in West Bank after the 1967 war. Israeli government backed Jew settlers during 1967 to occupy Arab territories. Jews believed that the land is biblical land of Judah and Samaria so, it belongs to them. Goldberg tells, "There are more than 150,000 settlers living in the West Bank. Beit El is one of the oldest and largest settlements." History of the dispute is shared through voice over and Jews perspective about their occupation is explained. As Moishe says, "God promised us the land of Israel." He quotes the statement from the book of Genesis as an argument, "Rise and walk the land" and explains that God is addressing our forefather Abraham. That's why he claims that Beit El belongs to Jews. All Arabs should flee from the place and then the Temple would be rebuilt. The argument is in contrast with the Mahmoud's argument. Both are quoting text from their religious books. The main discourse is to depict Beit El and the viewpoint of Jews living there through Moishe. Post production treatment includes music and juxtaposing that are in agreement to the main discourse. Seven out of thirty two dialogues are in voice of authority mode and rest in talking heads mode. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and four seconds.

'Raheli' is the title of eighth chapter, named after its participant. Goldberg and Moishe are the other participants, all Jews. Raheli is a practicing Jew girl who explains Shabbat throughout the scene. She refuses to shake hand and considers it

immodest action. She believes in observing Shabbat with all the formalities. Talking heads mode is applied on all the twenty nine dialogues. The chapter depicts the aspirations of practicing Jew children. Raheli is very imaginative about Shabbat's celebrations as a married woman. Though Moishe and Raheli belong to the same place but their future aspirations are different as Moishe wants to join army and work as chief commandant. Sequence of scenes contributes to the development of the documentary design. Non-diegetic sound is not used in this chapter.

The title of ninth chapter is Checkpoints and participants are Goldberg and Faraj. The discourse is to depict problems of Palestinian Muslims in the form of checkpoints. The chapter starts with eastern music. Goldberg is shown entering into Jerusalem from West Bank. On the way Goldberg tells that checkpoints are established at all crossings between West Bank and Israel. Palestinians cannot enter into other areas without the permit issued by Israeli military. Palestinians are perceived as threats to the security of Israelis and considered terrorists. Goldberg tells, "For Palestinians, checkpoints are a daily reminder of the occupation. As an Israeli traveling a car with an Israeli license plate, checkpoints are no inconvenience." The comment explains how difficulties are created for Muslims. Faraj tells that Jews and Americans are welcomed at the checkpoints but Arabs are searched and humiliated. Talking heads mode is applied and video footage is used to corroborate the statements. Non-diegetic sound is applied throughout the chapter.

Chapter ten is constituted through the discussions of Yarko, Daniel and their grandfather. The grandfather left Poland during WWII in search of a place where Holocaust could never happen again. The chapter is titled as 'Somewhere Safer' and lasts one minute and forty nine seconds. Many a Jews moved to Israel during that period to establish their state in Israel. Yarko inquires from his grandfather, "Some Jews think that God made this state." The grandfather is of the view that Israel is not established by God rather Jews made efforts for that. The title depicts Israel as a safe place for Jews after the Holocaust. Reference to the word holocaust creates favors for Israeli Jews and justifies their stay to certain extent. Sequence of scenes, music and juxtaposing of talking heads are supportive to get sympathies of audience for Jews. Non-diegetic sound is used for twenty four seconds for chapter transition and talking heads is mainly applied.

'Al-Aqsa Mosque' is the title of chapter eleven. Goldberg and Mahmoud are the participants. The chapter starts with music and shoots of Beit El Maqdas where Muslims and Jews are offering prayers. Muslims and Jews both claim that Haram Al Sharif belongs to them. Goldberg narrates, "The Temple Mount or Haram Al Sharif is holy to both Jews and Moslems. For Jews, this is where the Jewish Temple stood 2000 years ago. For Moslems, this is the site of Mohammad sanctioned to Heaven and the home of two Islam's holy shrines, the Dome of Iraq and the Al Aqsa mosque." Mahmoud shares that whenever he enters Al Aqsa mosque, he gets a feeling of being present before God. The scene ends on Mahmoud offering prayers in Al Aqsa mosque. Mahmoud is a practicing Muslim child who claims that Jerusalem belongs to Muslims. Significance of Al Aqsa Mosque for Muslims is highlighted through juxtapositions, music and footage. Talking heads mode is applied for all the six dialogues. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and twelve seconds.

'The Western Wall' is the title of twelfth chapter. All the five participants of this chapter are Jews. The main discourse is to depict the significance of the 'Western Wall' that is holiest site of Jews. Video footage shows Jews praying and reciting Torah there. Tourist Jews, who visit Jerusalem, also visit Western Wall. Goldberg invites Yarko and Daniel there. According to Goldberg, "Like many secular Israelis, the twins want little to do with religious Jews." These remarks depict Yarko and Daniel as non-practicing Jews. When Yarko and Daniel arrive there, they are scared of the practicing Jews. According to Jewish tradition, believers put their requests in 'Western Wall' for God to read. Goldberg shares that he has been following the tradition of putting papers into the Western Wall. He usually wished for peace. Daniel writes a note wishing that his school could win volleyball championship. Juxtaposing is supportive to the arguments of the main characters. Direct cinema and talking heads mode is applied in all the twenty five dialogues. Direct cinema mode is used to depict Jews praying and reciting the verses.

Chapter thirteen is titled as 'The Palestinian Dance.' Main discourse is to depict Palestinian Muslim children of Deheishe Refugee Camp. The children are practicing traditional dance that serves as a means to tell stories of refugees. They have to give the performance in their school. Goldberg through voice over tells, "The dance celebrates the resilience of the Palestinian people and their dream of Palestinian statehood." Footage shows children busy in the dance practice. Sanabel along with other children sings national song on school stage. The wording stirs patriotic feelings. The discourse is to depict activities of the children of Deheishe Refugee Camp. Voice of authority and direct cinema mode are applied in all the seven dialogues. Two dialogues are by Goldberg in voice of authority mode and five are in direct cinema mode in the form of a song. Text, music and juxtaposition are supporting to highlight the activities of Deheishe Refugee Camp children. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and seven seconds.

'The Jerusalem Finals' is the title of fourteenth chapter. Goldberg and Yarko are the main participants of this chapter. The discourse is to depict the activities of Jew children. Previous chapter reflected the activities of Muslim children at Deheishe Refugee Camp. Yarko and Daniel's volleyball team is in Jerusalem finals. Winning team is going to represent Jerusalem in the national championship. Twelfth chapter is about Jews tradition of putting papers into the 'Western Wall'. With reference to that tradition, Yarko tells that last time he did that but lost the match. However, Daniel has put paper there to win the match. Sequence of the chapters depicts the activities of Muslim and Jew children side by side. There are total three dialogues; two by Goldberg in voice of authority mode and one by Yarko in talking heads mode.

'Faraj: The Sprinter' is the title of fifteenth chapter. The participants include Goldberg, Faraj, Yarko and Daniel. The chapter starts with the children singing in a coach, going to participate in the sports. The theme is to depict the spirit of Palestinian children to participate in games. Voice of authority tells that Faraj is representing Deheishe Refugee Camp as first ever Palestinian track meet. Direct cinema mode depicts that Faraj got second position. Yarko and Daniel, in talking heads mode, discuss Faraj's emotions on his conquest. The chapter highlights that the emotions of human being are same irrespective of their religion. Children feel happy for participating in a game and become sad after losing it. Religion does not influence the emotional responses. Three modes are applied including voice of authority, direct

cinema and talking heads for a total of eighteen dialogues. Direct cinema mode is used to depict playground activities.

Chapter sixteen is titled as 'Ashkelon Jail' depicting Deheishe Refugee Camp and Israeli checkpoint. The participants include Sanabel's family, Israeli military and Goldberg. The chapter shows that Palestinians are facing difficulties posed by Israelis everywhere. Letter of Sanabel's father to his family is integrated into the chapter that highlights the conduct of Israelis. Post production treatment includes juxtaposing of voice over to direct cinema, text and letter of Sanabel's father. On screen text informs about places and time. Voice of authority and direct cinema mode is applied. Non-diegetic sound is used for three minutes and forty two seconds.

'Our Land' is the seventeenth chapter. The participants include Moishe, Sholomo, Yarko, Mahmoud, Sanabel, Faraj and his grandmother. The chapter depicts viewpoints of Muslims and Jews regarding the land. Muslim children Mahmoud, Sanabel and Faraj give their arguments that how the land belongs to them. Mahmoud considers since he was born and raised there, so land belongs to him. Faraj shows land deeds that prove his family to be the owners since 1931. He says, "We won't harm the Jews and they won't harm us." Sanabel's family was kicked out from their place and now living at Deheishe Refugee Camp. Among the Jew children, Yarko thinks that both people can live together. Sholomo believes that the Palestinians quitted from the place fifty years ago so their attempts to come back are just like hawk. Moishe quotes from Torah that God said to Abraham, "I will give to you and to your descendants, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession." He furthers that this blessing passed from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob. Then an angel changed Jacob's name to 'Israel.' Since they are called Israel, land belongs to them. Talking heads mode is applied throughout the chapter. Equal numbers of Muslim and Jew children's viewpoints are included through talking heads. Faraj and Yarko believe that Muslims and Jews can live together. Moishe and Mahmoud claim to be the actual owners. Non-diegetic sound is used for ten seconds for the chapter transition.

Chapter eighteen is titled as 'There is Our House.' The participants include Goldberg, a journalist, Faraj and his grandmother. Main discourse is to depict Faraj's family background. The chapter starts with music. Goldberg's voice over narrates that Faraj's family belonged to Ras Abu Ammar Village that is inside Israel. The chapter depicts Faraj and his grandmother visiting the place and offering prayer there. Grandmother tells how Jews blew up their land. Then Faraj and Sanabel are shown chanting slogans in a procession. The slogans include, "We don't want to see Zionists... The Martyr has sacrificed his blood". A Zionist is a member of the movement of world Jewry that arose late in the 19th century with the aim of creating a Jewish state in Palestine. The chapter depicts Muslims struggling to get back their homeland. Three modes are applied to depict all the sixty three dialogues. Voice of authority mode is used for Goldberg's two statements about Faraj's family background. Direct cinema mode is applied to show procession and Faraj's grandmother offering prayer. Faraj, his grandmother and journalist are depicted through talking heads mode for a total of forty three dialogues. Juxtaposing of modes is supportive to the main discourse and non-diegetic sound is used for fifty seconds only.

Chapter nineteen is titled as 'All of Jerusalem.' The participants include Moishe, Daniel, Yarko, Sanabel, Mahmoud, Goldberg, teacher and students. The main discourse is to depict the conflicting perspectives of Muslims and Jews about Jerusalem. The chapter starts from the depiction of a classroom of 'Faith Islamic Boys School' situated in East Jerusalem. Teacher discusses the concept of freedom and captivity to know the perspective of Palestinian children. Teacher inquires students' perceptions about, to whom Jerusalem belongs to. The answers include; the Palestinians, the Canaanites, and the Muslims. The scene is followed by the reflections of Jewish and Muslim children about Jerusalem. Daniel thinks that Muslims want Jerusalem as their capital while Yarko suggests solving the problem through international think tank. Moishe says, "I would clear out the Arabs from the Mount of Olives and all Jerusalem." The remarks show that Moishe believes Jerusalem belongs to Jews. Sanabel shares how they are deprived of going to Jerusalem. Since Mahmoud and his family are Jerusalem Arabs, they do not need a permit to cross the checkpoint. According to Mahmoud the celebration of the reunification of Jerusalem is an act of provocation because Jerusalem is for the Arabs and not for the Jews. Mahmoud supports the killings of Jews by Hamas and Hezbollah. He says, "The more Jews we kill, the fewer there will be, until they are almost gone." Goldberg narrates through voice of authority that until 1967, Jerusalem was divided into West and East Jerusalem between Israel and Jordan respectively and Jews had no access to their holy sites. Goldberg says, "When Israelis conquered the West Bank, all of Jerusalem came under Israel." The modes applied are voice of authority, talking heads and direct cinema for a total of sixty-five dialogues. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and eleven seconds.

'Murdered' is the title of twentieth chapter. Moishe and Daniel are the main participants. The chapter starts with Moishe's explanation of his friend's murder. Ephraim Tzur was twelve year old Jew, murdered by terrorists along with his mother. Moishe believes that Ephraim is in heaven and if he gets a chance to make one wish to God, he will ask God to send Messiah so that he can get back all the people murdered by terrorists. On Memorial Day for Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism, Daniel says that in a war people on both sides die so winning of one side is not actually a winning. The comments show Daniel opposing war in any case. He gives the simile of Holocaust to murdered Israeli soldiers. Holocaust is always referred to by Jews to get sympathies. Only the Jews are depicted as 'murdered.' The participants are Moishe and Daniel, both Jews. Talking heads and direct cinema modes are applied to constitute the chapter. All the thirty five dialogues are in talking heads mode. Footage is used as a testimony to the dialogues. Juxtaposing of modes, text and footage assist to bring forth war and conflict damages. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and thirty-seven seconds.

'Hadassa Hospital' is the title of chapter twenty one. The hospital is situated in West Jerusalem. Yarko and Daniel go there to see Matan, their childhood babysitter, who gets injuries by the explosion of a missile. Yarko responds to Matan about joining army, "I might want to be in a combat unit but I don't want to kill people. And in a combat unit you have to kill people, right". Matan says, "I also don't want to kill people." The scene depicts Jews not in favor of killing. Goldberg narrates through voice of authority mode about orthodox Jews who are not taking part in military service. He says, "Military service is compulsory in Israel but all the orthodox Jew boys like Sholomo are exempt. Instead of serving in the army, they continue their

religious studies, receiving a monthly stipend from the government.” The scene is followed by Sholomo’s comment that religious study is as good as joining the army. Sholomo believes that Torah facilitates to do anything that the modern knowledge can. The remarks show Jews deliberate considerations for army and religious education. Israeli military service is compulsory for all Jews except those who are engaged in religious studies. Juxtaposing of chapters and scenes depict that consequences of war are discouraging young Jews to join military service. Talking heads and voice of authority modes are applied for a total of thirty two dialogues. All the dialogues are delivered by Jews.

‘Burping Contest’ is the title of chapter twenty two. Sholomo and Goldberg are the main participants. ‘Old City’ is filmed that serves as border between Muslim Quarter and Jewish Quarter. Sholomo’s maintains that most of the Jew children are innocent but Arabs’ are usually rude, fighting and cursing other people. A Palestinian boy during his conversation to Sholomo asks, “Do you know of any Jews who are Palestinians’ friends?” Sholomo replies, “I know a lot of fathers like who have very nice communication between each other but kids almost never.” These dialogues depict that the new generation is not friendly to one another. Direct cinema mode shows Sholomo in a ‘burping contest’ with a street boy. It can be inferred that Jew and Muslim children are not having healthy contest. However, Jew children are depicted more positively through video footage and juxtaposing of the direct cinema with talking heads. Direct cinema and talking heads modes are used. Non-diegetic sound is used for four seconds and serves as a link to the next chapter.

‘Why Don’t We Meet Them’ is the title of chapter twenty three. The participants include Faraj, Mahmoud, Sanabel, Ahmad, Motassam, Moishe, Daniel, Yarko, and Goldberg. The chapter brings forth the reasons by Jew and Muslim children for not meeting with each other. Mahmoud says, “I don’t like talking to Jews. I know them. They are mean and deceitful, since the time of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). They betrayed him in battle and fought against him.” Mahmoud is always referring to Quran and Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) to explain Jews. Moishe thinks that his friends will curse him for meeting with Arab kids. The Arab kids could be terrorists in future. He, himself is not against Arabs or Muslims. Faraj says that he thinks of throwing a stone whenever he sees a Jew. “Any Jew who sees me would think I am a terrorist.” Faraj wants a positive perception about Palestinians. He explains the hatred between Palestinians and Israelis. Since the relatives of the families of both sides have been killed by each other that is why hatred for each other exists. On Yarko’s suggestion to meet Muslim children, Goldberg visits Deheishe Refugee Camp. Faraj, Motasam and Sanabel are willing to meet Jew children but Faraj does not appreciate the idea. Faraj is criticized by Motasam, Ahmad and Sanabel. All the three think that it is necessary to create peace, understanding, goodwill and congenial environment. Mahmoud also rejects the idea of seeing any Jew and when Goldberg tells him that he is a Jew, Mahmoud views him as a non-authentic Jew. According to Mahmoud authentic Jews speak Hebrew, belong to Israel and are not mixed breed. Talking heads mode is used throughout the chapter. Juxtaposing of talking heads and text supports the main discourse. In a total of sixty seven dialogues, thirty one are by Jews and thirty six are by Muslims. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and seventeen seconds.

The title of chapter twenty four is 'Invitation.' The participants include Motassam, Ahmad, Faraj, Sanabel, Goldberg, Yarko, Daniel and their parents. Chapter starts in direct cinema, filming 'Solomon Pools' that is just behind Deheishe camp. On the invitation of Goldberg, Muslim children think that they should meet the Jewish children. The meeting will help to know each other's viewpoints. Ahmed says, "If we refuse to meet Jewish kids, and they refuse to meet us, there will never be peace between us and the Jews, nor between any two countries." Motasam thinks that checkpoints and borders should be removed. Faraj thinks that meetings are futile while Sanabel is in favor of children's meetings and politicians should not be involved. She says, "No Palestinian child ever tried to explain our situation to the Jews." Parents of Yarko and Daniel have some security reservation in visiting to Muslim children. However, after some discussion Yarko and Daniel get permission. Direct cinema and talking heads modes are used for a total of seventy nine dialogues. Forty seven dialogues are by Muslim children while thirty two by Jews. Non-diegetic sound is insignificant and lasts seventeen seconds.

Chapter twenty five is titled as 'The Meeting.' The main discourse is to depict meeting of Jew and Muslim children to discuss the issue of Palestine. Direct cinema depicts Faraj listening to an Arabic song and getting ready to meet Jew children. Yarko and Daniel discuss Hamas in a frightening way. Their mother draws their attention to the Arabs being searched at the checkpoints. Yarko says, "It's not fair, it's their land. Why do they have to be searched?" The comments show that now Yarko can understand the kind of humiliation Arabs face on the checkpoints. Palestinian children welcome Yarko and Daniel and show them the place with bullet holes which was the center of clashes during Intifada. Faraj tells, "Many people were martyred here. Boys threw stones and the soldiers would shoot at them." It is surprising for Yarko and Daniel that Palestinians are hit by real bullets. Faraj asks them not to speak Hebrew as it is considered the language of Israelis. Direct cinema mode shows children playing football, taking lunch together and sharing their views. The chapter suggests the feasibility of peaceful interactions between Jews and Muslims. In the total twenty nine dialogues, twenty one are delivered by Jews and eight dialogues by Muslims, all in direct cinema mode. Non-diegetic sound is used for one minute and thirty five seconds.

'Our Day Together' is the title of chapter twenty six. The chapter is constituted through the children in direct cinema mode. The children share their reflections like Daniel says, "Just like all Palestinians are not Hamas-nicks, not all Israelis kill Arab." The statement reminds Motassam of his brother killed by Jews and he starts crying. Ahmed tells that Motassam's brother went to herd the sheep on mountain with his friends. There he joined people throwing stones and was killed by a bullet. Yarko justifies by saying that Israelis are also killed and Daniel reiterates by saying, "Its not one sided. On TV we see pictures of people killed by Hamas." The scene depicts meeting of children as successful. Children realize that both sides are facing loss. They feel that all the people are not involved in killing each other but there are some people who want peace. In the total twenty nine dialogues, thirteen are by Jews and sixteen by Muslims, all in direct cinema mode. Non-diegetic sound is not used in the chapter.

'Respect Will Grow' is the title of chapter twenty seven. The chapter is filmed after the meeting of children with a gap of two years. The children are interviewed after

two years of their meeting. Sanabel and Moishe are of the view that increased interactions between Jews and Muslims can help to resolve the conflict. Mahmoud connects the resolution of conflict with the retrieval of land to Muslims. Sholomo and Yarko are not concerned with the friendly relations between Jews and Muslims. However, Faraj wants to maintain contact and interaction with Jewish children that seems impossible to Daniel due to checkpoints and other complications. Faraj is disappointed of the endless ongoing conflict, war and catastrophe. The chapter depicts that the resolution of Palestinian conflict and the retrieval of land to Palestinians will grow respect between Jews and Muslims. The main discourse is to encourage interactions between Jews and Muslims. Talking heads mode is used for a total of twenty nine dialogues.

The last chapter is titled as 'End Credits.' The chapter begins with the burning tyre moving on the road which symbolizes the ongoing crisis in Israel and Palestine. Newly born babies are depicted which is again symbolic and depicts the continuity of life and hope in spite of the entire catastrophe. Direct cinema mode depicts the scenes followed by end credits.

B.Z. Goldberg, Carlos Bolado and Justine Shapiro are the directors of this film. Talking heads is used for maximum times. Goldberg, also appears in the film. Filmmakers selected Jew and Muslim children as main participants to explain Palestinian issue in religions' perspectives. Talking head is perceived as the point of view of the participant (Bordwell & Thompson, 2004: 132). Filmmakers' strategy is to build the frames with the perspectives of Jews and Muslims. Technical treatment is used for frame setting to amplify the case of Palestine and its implications on the residents and next generations. However juxtaposing, sequencing, chapter titles and non-diegetic sound help the filmmakers to depict Palestinian issue from historical perspective as well as current scenario. The main argument is to highlight the significance of mutual negotiations to resolve the conflict. Narrative structures describe the case from historical perspective through on-screen text and representatives of the two religions. Filmmakers have presented their argument through Jew and Muslim children's opinions and reflections. The following graph shows the interference level of the filmmakers.

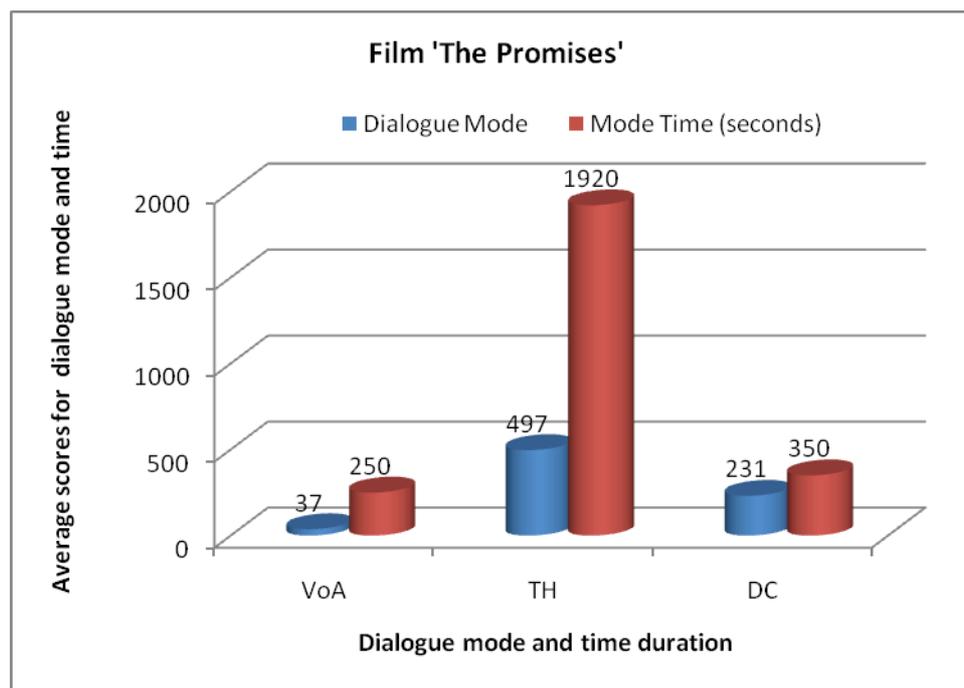


Figure 1: Interference level of the filmmakers in the film 'Promises'

Film's running time is 106 minutes and non-diegetic sound is applied for 32 minutes. The film was nominated for Oscar however it won twelve other awards including Documentary Award in Buster International Children's Film Festival, Golden Starfish Award in Hampton International Film Festival, Prize of the Ecumenical Jury in Locarno International Film Festival, three Audience Awards, Best Documentary Award in Valladolid International Film Festival, and Most Popular Film Award in Vancouver International Film Festival. The film was also nominated for MTV Movie Award, and Independent Script Award.

## References

- Allan, S. (2004). *Issues in cultural and media studies: news culture* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Altschull, H. J. (1984). *Agents of power: The role of the news media in human affairs*. London: Indian University.
- Curran, J., & Seaton, J. (2003). *Power without responsibility* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: Routledge.
- Edelman, M. J. (1993). Contestable categories and public opinion. *Political Communication*, 10(3), 231-242.
- Gans, H. (1980). *Deciding what's news: A study of CBS evening news, NBC nightly news, Newsweek, and Time*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Gauntlett, D. (2005). *Moving experiences: understanding television influences and effects*. London: University of Luton Press.
- Gitlin, T. (1980). *The whole world is watching: Mass media in the making & unmaking of the new left*. California: University of California Press.
- Gunning, T. (2008). Film studies. In T. Bennett & J. Frow (Eds.), *The sage handbook of cultural analysis* (pp. 185-205). London: Sage Publications.
- Herman, E. S. & Chomsky, N. (2002). *Manufacturing consent: The political economy of the mass media*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Monaco, J. (2000). *How to read a film movies, media, multimedia* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London: Oxford University Press.
- O'Reagan, T. (1996). *Australian national cinema*. London: Routledge.
- Shoemaker, P. J., & Reese, S. D. (1991). Patterns of media content. *Mediating the message: Theories of influence on mass media content* (pp. 38-52). New York: Longman



## *How Cinema Sounds Affect the Perception of the Motion Picture*

Andreas G. Anestis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece  
Christos A. Gousios, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings

### **Abstract**

The object of the present study was to investigate the effects of sounds on the perception of motion pictures by film viewers. For this purpose, the product of audio-visual synthesis itself was used as a tool: One sequence from the film “Elephant” (G. Van Sant, 2003) was selected and two different soundtracks were composed for it. The three different versions of the sequence (one original and two with new soundtracks) were screened to 51 adult students (mean age 21.3 y.o.) who answered a series of questions after each screening. We concluded that different soundtracks change the perception of the audience mainly concerning the recognition of the film gender and the emotions that the viewers develop while watching the sequence. Moreover, the sound-design is not unlike to create visual illusions when the source of the sound used is obvious. Finally, factors like the sex and the study field of the audience were among the factors that differentiated our results, thus possibly affecting the viewer’s perception.

Keywords: motion pictures, viewers’ perception, sound design

**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## **Introduction**

The ability of our organism to receive, translate and respond to environmental stimuli has been crucial during the evolution of the human species and remains of great importance for its survival. An important number of studies in the last 50 years have investigated the mechanisms of the human nervous system that coordinate the reception of various environmental stimuli in order to create what the individual understands as “reality”. Older studies supported the idea that vision was dominant between the five senses in this “reality-building” brain process (Hay et al., 1965; Howard & Templeton, 1966). However, recent papers conclude that there is a balance between vision and audition (Bertelson & Aschersleben, 1998; Kitagawa & Ichihara, 2002; Kitajima & Yamashita, 1999; Recanzone, 2003; Repp & Penel, 2002; Wada et al., 2003; Guttman et al., 2005). In these terms, the development of methods for screening brain activity has permitted the identification of brain areas that are implicated in the process of interacting between visual and auditory stimuli (Thesen et al., 2004). In a characteristic research, Lahav et al. (2007) identified a group of neuron cells that may be activated both from visual and auditory stimuli introducing the idea of a cross talk in these two sensory pathways.

Concerning the sound, it is known that listening is a complicated procedure composed by many intermediate steps, most of which remain to be elucidated. In contrast to acoustics that study the physical and measurable parameters of sound waves (wavelength, frequency etc), psychoacoustics is the branch of science that tries to investigate the mechanisms of sound perception from the human brain (Iakovides et al., 2004). Psychoacoustics, however, doesn't refer only to the auditory, but to all different kinds of sound effects, both beneficial and harmful, on biological systems, thus contributing in revealing the different aspects of sound as a stimulus (Kight & Swaddle, 2011; Radin, 2006; Samson et al., 2005; Møller & Swaddle, 1998; Gest et al., 1986).

Taking into account the great range of biological effects of the sound as well as the importance of both audition and vision in constructing a common audiovisual reality, it is of great importance to identify the relation between sound and image in the case of film synthesis, since cinema is exactly what we call an “audio-visual art”. More specifically, in this study we aim to focus on the effects of sound designing in the perception of the motion picture. Our main purpose is to try to answer the following two questions: (1) can we change the viewers' perception of the film's gender or dramatic elements (crucial moments, protagonist feelings), by performing changes in the sound band? (2) are there any differences in the perception of the above elements between different groups of viewers? As far as we know, this is the first time that a study of sound effects on the image is performed in terms of the cinematic art.

### **Using a film sequence as a research tool for viewers' perception**

A three minutes sequence from the film “Elephant” (G. Van Sant, 2003) was selected as a methodological tool for the conduction of our study. The sequence is composed by two steadicam shots, where we follow a young man walking in a college / high school campus. The sound designer of this original version (from now on called “version 1”) was Leslie Shatz, who developed a dramatic / poetic synthesis for the sequence. Besides version 1, two different soundtracks were composed for the same

sequence. For “version 2” we composed a dramatic – realistic soundtrack, while for “version 3” a comedy one.

Table 1. Sample ID. Differences between left- and right-handed as well as between individuals who have and have not seen the movie could not be detected due the extra small participation of left handed and having seen the movie individuals.

<b>Total subjects</b>	<b>51</b>
Men	21
Women	30
Students in film department	32
Students in biology department	19
Students who play an instrument	20
Students who don't play an instrument	31
Right handed	45
Left handed	6
Have seen the movie	4
Haven't seen the movie	47

These products of audiovisual synthesis were used as a methodological tool for the following research: The three versions of the sequence were screened to 51 adult students (mean age 21.3 y.o., Table 1) of the Departments of Film Studies (32 students) and Biology (19 students) of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. Before the screening, all the individuals were asked for possible disabilities in hearing and seeing. The viewers were asked to write their answers on a series of questions they were given after each screening. No hearing or seeing disabilities were mentioned by the subjects, so all the 51 questionnaires were taken into account for the rest of the analyses. The most important of the findings after collecting and processing the data, follow in the next session.

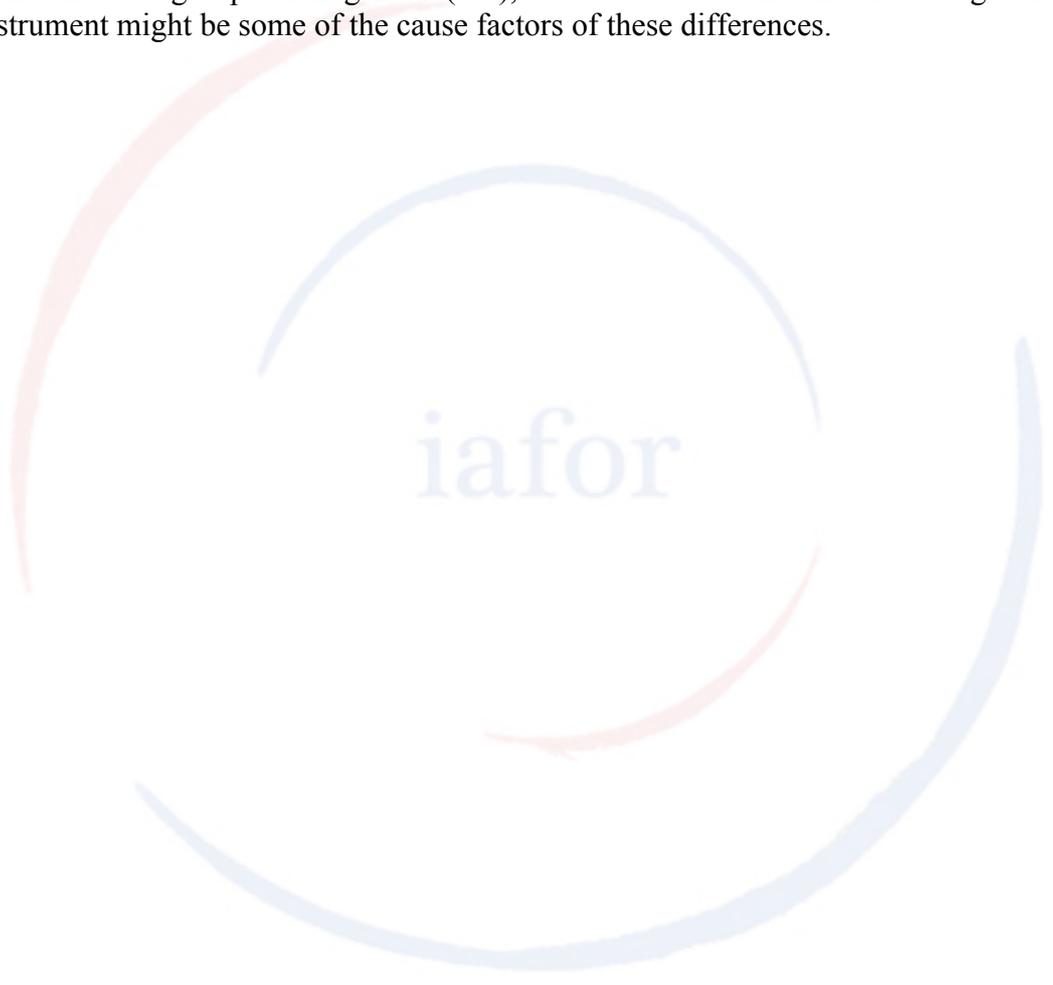
## **Conclusion**

Concerning the identification of the film gender, versions 1 and 2 were characterized as “social films” by most of the subjects among the different groups. However, version 3 (comedy soundtrack) was characterized as “social film” or “comedy” by almost equal parts of the sample. This could mean that elements of drama and realism are easier recognizable comparing with comedy, by the film viewers. This is also supported by the finding that most of the subjects selected as original soundtrack the one of version 2.

The time (season) in the film-world was found to be determined mainly by visual than auditory elements of the sequence for the majority of the subjects. Visual elements also determined the viewers' perception of the sequence crucial moment in all groups. The emotions of the protagonist, according to the viewers' approaching, were different in the three versions of the sequence and most times the same as the emotions of the viewers.

Sound design was able to create visual illusions. In both versions 2 and 3, there was a part of the sample that “saw” elements that were not on the screen, but existed only as sounds. It seemed that women, students of biology and individuals with no instrument knowledge were mainly the victims of this illusion.

We finally conclude that the sound is a dynamic quality of the cinematic aesthetics, which can be manipulated in order to cause a different perception from the viewers. Taking into account the parameters studied (film gender, crucial moment, emotions etc), it seems that the effect of changing the sound band is not equal to each all of them, depending on the relation to the corresponding visual elements. Finally, it is possible that the changes in the sound design affect in a different way individuals from different groups. The gender (sex), field of studies and the knowledge of an instrument might be some of the cause factors of these differences.

The logo for iafor is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters "iafor" in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, semi-transparent arcs. The outer arc is a light blue color, and the inner arc is a light red color. The arcs are positioned such that they appear to be part of a larger circle, with the text "iafor" centered in the space between them.

iafor

## References

- Bertelson P., & Aschersleben G. (1998). Automatic visual bias of perceived auditory location. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 5, 482–489.
- Gest, T.R., Siegel, M.I., & Anistranski, J. (1986). The long bones of neonatal rats stressed by cold, heat, and noise exhibit increased fluctuating asymmetry. *Growth*, 50, 385–389.
- Guttman, S.E., Gilroy, L. A., & Blake, R. (2005). Hearing What the Eyes See: Auditory Encoding of Visual Temporal Sequences. *Psychological Science*, 16(3), 228–235.
- Hay, J. C., Pick, H. L., & Ikeda, K. (1965). Visual capture produced by prism spectacles. *Psychonomic Science*, 2, 215–216.
- Howard, I. P., & Templeton, W. B. (1996). *Human spatial orientation*. Wiley, New York.
- Iakovides, S. A., Iliadou, V. T. H., Bizeli, V. T. H., Kaprinis, S. G., Fountoulakis, K. N., & Kaprinis, G. S. (2004). Psychophysiology and psychoacoustics of music: Perception of complex sound in normal subjects and psychiatric patients. *Annals of General Hospital Psychiatry* 2004, 3, 6.
- Kight, C. R., & Swaddle, J.P. (2011). How and why environmental noise impacts animals: an integrative, mechanistic review. *Ecology Letters*, 14, 1052–1061.
- Kitagawa, N., & Ichihara, S. (2002). Hearing visual motion in depth. *Nature*, 416, 172–174.
- Kitajima, N., & Yamashita, Y. (1999). Dynamic capture of sound motion by light stimuli moving in three-dimensional space. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 89, 1139–1158.
- Lahav, A., Saltzman, E., & Schlaug, G. (2007). Action representation of sound: audiomotor recognition network while listening to newly acquired actions. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 27(2), 308–314.
- Meyer, L. (1956). *Emotion and meaning in music*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Møller, A. P., & Swaddle, J. P. (1998). *Asymmetry, Developmental Stability, and Evolution*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Radin, D., Hayssen, G., Emoto, M., & Kizu, T. (2006). Double blind test of the effects of distant intention on water crystal formation. *Explore*, 2(5), 408–411.
- Recanzone, G. H. (2003). Auditory influences on visual temporal rate perception. *Journal of Neurophysiology*, 89, 1078–1093.

Repp, B. H., & Penel, A. (2002). Auditory dominance in temporal processing: New evidence from synchronization with simultaneous visual and auditory sequences. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 28, 1085–1099.

Samson, J., Devi, R. S., Ravindran, R., & Senthilvelan, M. (2005). Effect of noise stress on free radical scavenging enzymes in brain. *Environmental Toxicology and Pharmacology*, 20, 142–148.

**Contact email:** [aanestis@act.edu](mailto:aanestis@act.edu)



***Pakistan, Its Youth and Social Media***

Muhammad Zain Islam, University of Management and Technology, Pakistan

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings

**Abstract**

Pakistan has faced some serious problems in recent years. It has a tarnished international image, but there is optimism in the country. The much needed bearers of new hope are the young guns of Pakistan who are vocal, active, and as informed as any. They like to express themselves on different social media platforms. The constantly evolving online youth of Pakistan has acted responsibly on critically important occasions such as the shooting of Malala Yousuf, Lawyer's Movement etc. The online community has shown its muscle on certain occasions but it remains to be seen, how will it face up to the challenge of coming elections, will it impact the outcome?

Keywords: Pakistan, Pakistani Youth, Impact of Social Media, Online Political Activism, Social Media

iafor

**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## **The Youth of Pakistan and Social Media**

Pakistan sits on top of the Indus Valley civilization, a civilization as old as the known history of mankind – a civilization known for its richness in creativity, heritage and progress, but Pakistan has fallen on to bad times. The horrendous specter of political instability, inconsistent economic growth, corruption and dictatorship has haunted the imagination of every Pakistani. This is a country divided on many fronts, and torn by sectarian strife and war on terror. Low foreign direct investment, floods, and energy crisis have hit the country badly. Macroeconomic indicators portray a portentous picture for the immediate future of Pakistan. Everything looks gloomy. It feels as though the whole country is teetering on the brink of an irreversible slide. In spite of all that, there is a silver lining in the gray clouds hovering threateningly above every Pakistani's head. Where there is hope, there is youth. Where there is youth, there is social media.

Pakistan is a country of 180 million. Its population is growing at 1.8% annually but this is exactly the point where the game changer enters the scene with a bang: more than half the Pakistani population is now under the age of 25 (Sattar, 2013). This number right here becomes more meaningful when you realize that the youth of Pakistan, the sheer size of it, offers a unique opportunity and a challenge in the wake of current circumstances. This youth is different than the youth of the past. It is louder, vocal, active and more aware of the acute predicament it is faces today. This youth is alive. There is verifiable, demonstrable and concrete evidence available to back up this claim.

There are 32,500,000 Internet users in Pakistan (CIA, 2013). Over 1 million cellular phones are sold each month. IT industry in Pakistan, particularly telecom sector, has shown tremendous performance in the past 10 years. Total revenues of the Telcos reached Rs. 412 billion in 2012, which represented a significant rise from Rs. 363 billion the previous year. Telecom sector is now the highest contributor to the national exchequer, and had deposited Rs. 100 billion on average every year in the national kitty (Atta, 2013). There were 48,000 Broadband users in Pakistan back in 2007. Now there are more than 2.4 million broadband users today. And the annual cellular subscribers are 120,962,829 (PTA, 2013). The number of Internet users increased substantially since 2009 in Pakistan, and mobile subscribers increased by 161% in 2010. Every second person in Pakistan owns a cellphone, this happens to be one of the highest rates in South Asia (Kugelman, 2012).

According to the Netcraft.com there are over 605 million active websites in the world today. Despite all the hullabaloo about Pakistan, the country is ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in world according to number of visitors. According to Alexa monitoring website, Facebook is the number one website in Pakistan. Facebook has 8.05 million Pakistani users on it. Pakistan is ranked 28<sup>th</sup> in the world in terms of Facebook users. 65% of Facebook users in Pakistan are between the age 18 and 24. Percentage of visitors from Pakistan constitutes 1.2% of the total Facebook population. The penetration of total online population is just a notch under 30%, which means there is huge potential in Pakistan with regards to Facebook traffic that is yet to be exploited. In the past six months, Facebook population in Pakistan grew by 1,238,620. Facebook generates about 600 million page views from Pakistan (Alexa, 2013).

Twitter is the 9<sup>th</sup> most popular social networking website in Pakistan. It has over 2.1 million Pakistani users. Imran Khan, a cricketer-turned-politician, is the most popular Twitter Account among Pakistani population on Twitter. YouTube and Bloggers have over 7 million and 3.4 million Pakistani users respectively. LinkedIn is the 12<sup>th</sup> most popular website in Pakistan. Express News and Jang News are ranked 15<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> respectively in popularity. Pakistan is ranked as the top 11<sup>th</sup> country driving traffic to Word Press (Alexa, 2013).

Social media is all powerful. It is borderless. It has no fixed shape, size or any other measurable dimensions attached to it. This is one powerful tool of communication that has truly made the world a global village. *“If Facebook were a country, it would be third most populated country in the world behind China and India”*. It has become a very powerful/influential tool in instigating political revolutions all across the globe. Almost a decade ago, there were 361 million Internet users in the world, now this population has swelled to over 2 billion users. Pakistan can now boast of having more than 20 million Internet users and more than 3.5 million bloggers (Mushtaq, 2012).

Social media’s success can be attributed to the fact that it has acted more than just a tool for sharing and exchanging information, it has been used as a tool for mobilizing social movements. Now we have thousands of examples to back up this claim that range from Occupy Wall Street to Arab Spring at the world level, and the 2007 Lawyers’s Movement in Pakistan.

Today, more than ever before, Pakistan is well and truly a part of social media. The interesting part is that the pattern of using social media in Pakistan is not much different from that of people using social media in America. The popularity of social media can be gauged from the fact that in the last 6 months more than 1 million Pakistanis joined Facebook (Abbasi, 2013).

Things are definitely heating up in Pakistan as far as social media is concerned. It has touched the lives of many in the recent years. According to Michael Kogelman (2012), social media use can be defined in five different ways:

1. Social media brings stories to the forefront that traditional media misses either intentionally or through blissful ignorance. It often serves as a platform to publish news and information at a faster pace than traditional media. For example, Samaa TV channel’s morning show’s host Maya Khan did a show on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2012 in which she accompanied by a coterie of strange-looking women raided public parks in Karachi in search of young couples and asked them weird questions. She asked them if they were engaged, or did their parents know what they were doing in the park. This was picked up instantaneously by bloggers, and the people on Twitter and Facebook got into action. They condemned her in strict terms, criticizing her of ‘moral policing’. In a matter of days, Maya Khan was fired by the TV channel. The pressure from the social media was extreme. People congratulated Social Media Activists from all over for playing a positive role in making sure that the channel fired Maya Khan. This is just one example. There are many others. In 2010, social media highlighted public lynching of two brothers in Sialkot. The video was uploaded on YouTube, in which police were shown standing there as spectators doing nothing about it. Social media took the matter into its own hand and forced Chief Justice of Pakistan to take sou moto action against the perpetrators. Thus, social media can be credited for

bringing stories to attention not given sufficient coverage by the traditional media – where traditional media fails, social media stirs itself into action. A video on YouTube in which a teenage girl was shown, getting flogged publically in Swat Valley, infuriated people. There were shouts of public outcry against the brutal acts of Taliban. It invoked international ire and protests were held in the country. That video combined with social media activism criticizing such inhuman actions became one of the reasons Pakistani military started an operation against the militants in the Swat Valley (Iqbal 2013).

**2.** Social media is used as a coordinating tool for disseminating information related to holding social movements for public good. The Lawyers' Movement in 2007-08 against the despotic, repressive rule of General Musharraf when he unconstitutionally declared state of emergency in the country is a prime example of how social media spurred into action where traditional media was barred from broadcasting the movement's progress. Bloggers were updating information on the movement. Many important things related to the movement were shared on the social media. Later on, social media was lauded for its positive role in the Lawyers' Movement.

**3.** In order to serve humanitarian cause, social media has been proactive in creating public awareness, mobilizing relief activities, and identifying places where help was required. Floods in 2010 and 2011 witnessed social media playing a positive role where government efforts and international donations to help the flood victims proved to be too late and severely inadequate. Online activists remained busy in coordinating relief activities, generating donations, and identifying places where help was needed.

**4.** Pakistan's social media scene has been particularly receptive to the call of social movements. It is helping social movements aimed at addressing women rights issues. The case of Malala Yousufzai is a notable example in this regard. Social media in Pakistan and elsewhere swirled into public outrage and protests when Malala, a 17 years old girl, was shot in head by the Taliban. The voices on the social media came together for creating awareness among the public with regards to education for girls, against the killing of innocent girls, against child abuse and against the barbaric actions of Taliban. Social media in the truest sense of the word gave voice to the voiceless (Brametz, 2012). There have been various instances when social media was used to make people aware of the discriminatory, unjust and questionable attitudes of the ruling class, asking and prompting people to come out of their houses and stand up for a just cause and raise their voices against criminal abuse. Shahzaib Khan, a 22 years old Karachi boy, was shot dead on December 25th 2012 by two boys having strong feudal ties. The policemen were reluctant to register an FIR against the perpetrators. Bloggers and people active on social media raised their voices against the system that habitually allows the privileged class to get away with the crimes. They built up pressure on the Chief Justice of Pakistan to take suo moto action against the murderers. It is also an indicative of the fact that the people on social media are not going to sit idle on the margins. They are going to become louder and more vociferous with every passing moment. Very soon, if not in the near future, this little fish is going to transform into something bigger and better (Atif, 2013).

**5.** The fifth most important use of social media is political parties trying to woo the voters through this platform. Imran Khan's political party became one of the first to come to adopt social media to reach to the young voters. Today, Imran Khan is the

most popular leader among the young guns of Pakistan. Imran's popularity is much owed to his social media campaign. His popularity increased many times since he decided to make social media the hub of his political campaigning (Abbasi, 2013). Other political parties have followed the suit to join social media in order to attract young voters. There are dedicated pages which get updated constantly and highlight the manifesto of a party and their accomplishments and more. Political parties now do realize the potential of social media as an important strategic tool for influencing young voters.

### **The Final Word**

The success of social media can be attributed to the fact that it has given people a chance to voice out their concerns without fear. Young people are made to feel important as they openly, without any hesitation, take part in discussions on the current political scenarios, energy crisis, humanitarian issues, and the coming general elections. People, in particular the youth of Pakistan, have become vocal critics of the political set up in Pakistan, thus forcing the parties to put in some concrete things into their party manifestos. Imran's rise to power and in him people starting to see a powerful alternative to traditional dynastic politicians is a testimony to the fact that social media is up and running, and is an effective communication tool to be reckoned with. In Imran's rise to fame, one may find all the functions of social media into action: it was used to create awareness among people with regards to Imran's political ambitions and motivations, it was used to disseminate important information on party developments, asking people to stand up for their own cause, and it was used as a tool a for mobilizing people to mass processions.

The social media scene is growing big in Pakistan. Facebook users in Pakistan are growing at a rate of 7% on annual basis. This is fast becoming a potent platform where people feel free to voice out their concerns. Young guns are also doing their bit in transforming the shape of Pakistan. Their numbers count. Nobody can afford to ignore their concerns. The general elections in Pakistan will be held on May 11, 2013. The interesting part is that 48% of the voters are young voters, 39,700,000 in total. This is a significant number. If they will make their voices heard on the Election Day, they can tip the balance of power in a new direction. They are already making their voices heard even before the elections. The electioneering has already begun to spill over on to different social media platforms.

According to a survey conducted by British Council, 69% of young voters are unhappy with the system. They are disenfranchised, annoyed and angry. If they went out to cast their vote on the Election Day, then it can be said with a certain degree of confidence that social media had a role to play in shaping the behavior of the youth (Sattar, 2013). It is the sheer number of youth whose presence on social media has forced political parties to take notice of them. Failure to woo the youth of Pakistan can have detrimental effects for a particular party on the Election Day.

Social media has definitely shaken up things in Pakistan. Ten years ago, politicians would take to streets in order to garner support for themselves in the elections. Now, they are using social media platforms and smart phones to keep in touch with their electorate, particularly, tech-savvy urban voters because these voters are important and they are in good numbers now. Political parties like PTI, PML-N, JI, and MQM

have established themselves a pretty formidable presence on Facebook and Twitter. Many politicians keep updating Tweets to stay in touch with the masses, and it helps them get valuable feedback as well. PTI has demonstrated the workable importance of social media, they have mobilized people to rallies through social media, and their electioneering campaign gets Tweeted, video shared and webcasted on different online platforms. If social media can push people to go to rallies, it can also push them to come out of their homes to vote on the Election Day though it remains to be seen how things will pan out on that day. There is definitely division in opinion among the politicians, critics, journalists and scholars whether or not social media will have a definite effect on the coming elections on May 11th 2013 but one thing is for sure that there is excitement in the air, and even the biggest of skeptics have their fingers crossed, their breaths stalled, feet and fingers sweaty, because you never know what's going to happen come May 11, 2013. Electioneering will come to a stop two days before the polling day but social media will not sleep. The coming elections will be on air and online. Details of the polling day will be Tweeted, every second a new status upload will either dampen the optimism in the air or will rage fire across the breadth and width of Pakistan, videos and photos will be shared, and every minute update will be online (Imtiaz, 2013).

Social media is different than traditional media. The traditional media can be pressurized via laws and regulations undermining and compromising the integrity of the media, and making sure that certain news items would not reach the ears of the people. This has happened on countless occasions in the past. With social media now in town, things have changed rather dramatically. Things that traditional media misses, social media picks them up. This is the reason that the suicide of a fruit seller in a small town of Tunisia in December 2010 did not go unnoticed, social media was there to spread the word, and what started afterwards is today known as the Arab Revolution.

Social media is like a closely-knit town, where word spreads like wildfire. In today's world, more than any other day in the past, the word counts.

## References:

1. Sattar, Madiha (2013); *The Youth Vote: More Hype Than Reality*, Dawn Daily Newspaper, Pakistan, April 12<sup>th</sup> 2013, p 1.
2. CIA, (2013); *The World Fact Book: Pakistan*, [Online]. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html> [Accessed on April 1st 2013].
3. Atta, Aamir (2013); *Telecom Revenues Reached Rs. 412 Billion during 2011-12*, [Online]. Available at: <http://propakistani.pk/2013/03/20/telecom-revenues-reached-rs-412-billion-during-2011-12/> [Accessed on: April 1<sup>st</sup> 2013].
4. Kugelman, Michael (2012); *Social Media in Pakistan: Catalyst for Communication, Not Change*, Noreff Report, Norwegian Peace building Resource Center, 2012.
5. Alexa.com, (2013); *Top Sites In Pakistan*, [Online]. Available at: <http://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries/PK> [Accessed on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2013].
6. Mushtaq, Momal (2012); *Social Media Developments In Pakistan*, Media & Technology, April 13<sup>th</sup> 2012, [Online]. Available at: <http://thinkbrigade.com/media/social-media-developments-in-pakistan/> [Accessed on: April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013].
7. Abbasi, Nadia Mushtaq (2013); *A New Avenue for Political Discussion*, Social Media and Politics, February 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 [Online]. Available at: <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2013/02/10/comment/columns/social-media-and-politics-2/> [Accessed on: April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013].
8. Iqbal, Sajid (2013); *Why Social Media in Pakistan Is Unlikely to Spark an 'Arab Spring'*, January 31<sup>st</sup> 2013, BBC Urdu, [Online]. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/blogcollegeofjournalism/posts/Why-social-media-in-Pakistan-is-unlikely-to-spark-an-Arab-Spring> [Accessed on: April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2013].
9. Bramerz (2012); *Social Media's Role In Malala Yousufzai's Attack (Case Study)*, October 17 2012, [Online]. Available at: <http://bramerz.pk/blog/2012/10/17/social-medias-role-in-yousafzais-attack-case-study/> [Accessed on: April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2013].
10. Atif, Mohammad (2013); *The Role of Social Media in The Changing The Future of Pakistan*, [Online].
11. Imtiaz, Saba (2013); *The Election Will Be Televised – and Tweeted*, Dawn Lahore, Thursday April 18, 2013, P – 4.



***The Concept of Ghostwriting from Literature to Film Music:  
The Moacir Santos Case of Study***

Lucas Zangirolami Bonetti, State University of Campinas, Brazil

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings

**Abstract**

In most cases, the concept of ghostwriting in film music is related to bigger budget industrial movies. It happens mainly because of the amount of simultaneous productions and the agility the cinema market achieved. Ghostwriters was needed for the first time in a more systematical way during the “golden age” of Hollywood film music, through 1940’s and 1950’s. And it consists of hiring composers and orchestrators to write music anonymously, all the credits would be given to a major musician who signs for the scores. There is a clear correspondence of this concept of ghostwriting and the one used in literature and other writing based strands. In these fields, a huge amount of bibliography can be found, and it is also very easy to reach active ghostwriters service today with a simple internet search, being the academic writing the greatest target of these professionals. Ghostwriters work can be found from early literature, highlighting some studies of Bible’s ghostwriters, to present political speeches, for example.

The doctoral research in progress held by the author of this paper aims to study the Moacir Santos (1926-2006) work for film music, which is temporally located in the first decades the Brazilian composer established residence in the U.S. (1967-1985). By this time Santos became a requested composer of film and television industries, participating as ghostwriter in the teams of Henry Mancini and Lalo Schifin, specially known for his ghost work in the music composition of the television series *Mission: Impossible* fifth season.

Keywords: ghostwriting, film music, literature, Moacir Santos

**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## Introduction

This paper is part of an ongoing doctoral research held at State University of Campinas, Brazil, which deals with the audiovisual work of a Brazilian composer called Moacir Santos (1926-2006). In this particular essay, we shall investigate the concept of ghostwriting from literature and other writing based strands to film music. We begin by taking a closer look at a historic overview of the ghostwriting activity, passing through different types of examples and studies, so we can better understand the theme's diversity and the moral difficulties in dealing with it.

Another aim of this research is to handle some ethical issues, as the "blurred" levels of authorship, knowing that "the boundaries of authorship are always hard to define" (Accioly, 2001, p. 70)<sup>1</sup>. Particularly considering that a text is never free of the author's discursive marks.

## Ghostwriting in Literature and Other Writing-Based Strands

The concept adopted so far in this research consider literature in a broad way, any written text could be used to illuminate the understanding. To illustrate, some mixed examples will be shown in a very quick way, given the relatively short amount of space. And also considering that endless examples could be demonstrated, as the ghostwriting activity begun almost simultaneously with the writing practice itself.

### 1) The Bible

For a long time scholars have been concerned about who is/are the writer(s) of the most popular book on earth.

While Christian and Jewish tradition credits the first five books of the old testament known as "The Torah" to Moses, the general consensus among religious scholars is that it was written by multiple writers. They observed that there are, for instance, passages referencing Moses in the third person and mentions of Edomite kings that lived after Moses died. But if entire sections of the world's most influential books was in fact a collaborative work, then the question remains: who were these ghost writers? And who wrote what? (Nguyen, 2011, p. 1)

An Israel research team<sup>2</sup> created a computer algorithm<sup>3</sup> that recognizes linguistic patterns, such as repeated word use, to separate texts into probable author groupings.

(...) the software searches for and compares details, such as the frequency of the use of "function" words and synonyms. One example might be an author's preference for using the word 'said' versus 'spoke'. (...) While the algorithm is

---

<sup>1</sup> "(...) as fronteiras da autoria são sempre difíceis de delimitar" (Accioly, 2001, p. 70).

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Nachum Dershowitz (Tel Aviv University - School of Computer Science), Idan Dershowitz (Hebrew University - Bible scholar), Prof. Moshe Koppel, and Ph.D. student Navot Akiva (Bar-Ilan University).

<sup>3</sup> The results are published in the paper: *Computerized Source Criticism of Biblical Texts* (Dershowitz et al., 2011).

not yet advanced enough to give the researchers a precise number of probable authors involved in the writing of the individual books of the Bible, Prof. Dershowitz says that it can help to identify transition points within the text where a source changes, potentially shedding new light on age-old debates. (Nguyen, 2011, p. 1)

Just as a curiosity closely related to the same topic: There is also another algorithm developed by Berzak, Reichart & Katz (2014) in a partnership of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Israel Institute of Technology that recognize (with 72,2% of probability) which are the native languages of people worldwide writing in English. This algorithm measure its results by analyzing the words order and other specific aspects of the written language. As we can see, computer algorithms can make important efforts in the development of an analysis parameter.

## 2) William Shakespeare

Some scholars believe Shakespeare may not have even existed. Stating that his texts were written by a huge number of authors who lived in the same period, and then historians attributed the authorship to one invented *persona*. The complexity of the subject is so big that there are some societies over the world to debate this ideas, as the case of The Shakespearean Authorship Trust, a fellowship founded in 1922.

To get deeper on this subject, see the writings of Michell (1996), Schoenbaum (1970, 1991), Boyle (1988), and Regnier (2003).

Although, there are some researchers who believe in Shakespeare's existence. There is also an entire website<sup>4</sup> dedicated to prove the author really did existed.

## 3) Tale of Genji

The book is considered by many to be the first real novel, as the word is used today. It was released around the 11th century and was supposedly written by Murasaki Shikibu, a Japanese noble woman. However, there is plenty of debate over the issue. Yosano Akiko was the author of the first modern Japanese translation, and she believed Shikibu had only written part of the chapters. She also suppose that Shikibu's daughter, Daini no Sanmi, wrote a few chapters. Other scholars have also doubted the complete authorship of Shikibu, as the book contains examples of continuity mistakes.

In the same direction of the Bible's algorithm studies, recent computer analysis has turned up "statistically significant" discrepancies of style among chapters. This computer analysis was published by Hosoi et al (2014), entitled: *Visualization of Special Features in "The Tale of Genji" by Text Mining and Correspondence Analysis with Clustering*.

---

<sup>4</sup> See: <http://shakespeareauthorship.com/>

#### 4) Rambles Among Words

*Rambles Among Words* (1859), written by William Swinton, is a popular book on English etymology. Many scholars state that it may have been ghostwritten by Walt Whitman, due to the style, text organization and even conceptual ideas. There are many sections of *Rambles Among Words* known to be written by Whitman, as the entire eleventh and twelfth chapters (Warren, 1984, p. 22). For further details, see the paper: *Whitman as Ghostwriter: The Case of Rambles Among Words* (Warren, 1984).

#### 5) Medical literature

There are many ethical questions involved in the medical ghostwriting, however, it is one of the most popular ghostwriting services today, “being encountered most frequently in health sciences journals” (Spinak, 2010, p. 1).

Sometimes, a scholar or even a research team may employ a ghostwriter “just” to write the paper with some original data. But in most cases even the data is generated by the ghostwriters.

(...) ghostwriters are not the same thing as professional medical writers. It can happen that a group of researchers may contract a professional writer to edit a document based on original research data, but it is the researchers who continue to maintain control of the written work by blocking marketing messages that are favorable to companies or products. (Spinak, 2010, p. 2)

Some medical journals rely on great amounts of money from industry-funded trials, and those trials are “in fact more likely to be cited than non-industry trials” (Barbour et al., 2011, p. 1-2). “Sponsoring companies may employ various strategies to increase the awareness of their studies, including ghost authored reviews that cite them. Journals have no more precious currency than citations” (Barbour et al., 2011, p. 1-2), so the ghostwriting business is an important engine for this industry.

At this matter, it is difficult to list a few references because there are so many of them. If you perform a research at some databases<sup>5</sup> with the proper keywords (ghostwriting, authorship) you will find a great amount of works on this issue. An particular publication is very interesting, *Ghostwriting Revisited: New Perspectives but Few Solutions in Sight* (Barbour et al., 2011), as it is a “letter” from the editorial staff of PLoS Medicine which raise questions on the fact of ghostwritten papers published in the specialized reviews are becoming more common every day.

#### 6) Journalism

There are many ghostwriting cases in all the written Medias. It is easy to realize that a great amount of articles do not even have any attributed author at all, especially in our internet era. This kind of thing happens mainly because a whole team may be involved with the research, writing and publication processes in daily/weekly/monthly journals. So as they cannot attribute only one author, they may not attribute any at all.

---

<sup>5</sup> For example: PubMed, PLoS Medicine and/or The American Journal of Medicine.

As a punctual example, a particularly famous Brazilian writer who worked as a ghost in a weekly tabloid is Clarice Lispector (1920-1977). She wrote in the name of an famous national actress, called Ilka Soares<sup>6</sup> (1932-). Lispector did it because the tabloid realized they would sell a lot more copies if a cinema star signed the writings instead of a novel writer, as it was oriented to a female audience (with behavioral tips).

For further information on this specific topic, we recommend seeing the academic paper written by Nunes (2004): *Seduction recipes in Clarice Lispector's female pages for the Night Diary*<sup>7</sup>.

## 7) Judicial Ghostwriting

Different countries have different justice systems, but in general, they have similar hierarchical positions. They include huge amounts of responsibilities for the Chief Justices.

Imagine a job where each year one is required to evaluate over seven thousand files, closely evaluate approximately sixty to eighty cases, and write seven to ten lengthy published documents, all of which will become established law and be scrutinized by countless judges, lawyers, academics, and law students. Add one additional requirement: do this job well past retirement age into your seventies and eighties. Incredible as it sounds, the above describes the job of a Supreme Court Justice. (Rosenthal & Yoon, 2011, p. 1308)

Having it in mind, "given the demands of the job, it is understandable that Justices seek to ease their work burdens" (Rosenthal & Yoon, 2011, p. 1308). Usually, the Justices ghostwriters are well prepared clerks. So, the question raised by Rosenthal and Yoon (2011) is: "Should we care if Justices delegate the opinion-writing process to their clerks?" (p. 1309). The same authors answer concluding that probably no, due to a number of facts, and the most significant is that: "clerks, while typically excellent law students from elite law schools, are also usually recent graduates" (Rosenthal & Yoon, 2011: 1310).

For deeper research, see: Rosenthal and Yoon (2011), and Paiva (2010).

## 8) Academic Research

It is probably the most popular ghostwriting service today, if you perform a Google research you will be surprised to know how many websites offer to ghostwrite thesis, dissertations, papers, etc. Unfortunately, just a few academic researchers wrote about ghostwriting in the academic research field. It is understandable, considering the tricky moral issues attached.

Accioly (2001) masters dissertation is a good example of bibliography. Her work is called *Ghost writer: The author in the shade*<sup>8</sup> and she performed a series of interviews

---

<sup>6</sup> Ilka Soares became famous after her roles in films of Atlântida, one of the first cinema companies of Brazil to release big budget productions and to achieve a numerous audience.

<sup>7</sup> *Receitas de Sedução nas Páginas Femininas de Clarice Lispector para O Diário da Noite.*

with ghostwriters, who chose to keep their names preserved. And in order to get a practical understanding of their jobs, she commissioned one sub-chapter of her dissertation to one of those professionals aiming to compare the style and organization with her own work. This ghostwritten sub-chapter is fully reproduced in the appendix of her dissertation.

Another example of an author who ordered some ghostwriters' services to compare their work and billing procedures is Grieger (2007). In her paper, *Ghostwriters and the trade of scientific papers in the web: science in danger*<sup>8</sup>, she demonstrates what were the specifications of the solicitation and how many ghostwriters accepted then, totally or partially, as well as how much they charged for the job.

### Speechwriting<sup>10</sup>

Speechwriting is often linked to the judicial ghostwriting, but it can be found in all kinds of speeches, such as politics, religious, etc. Schartzman (2006) adapts some Plato's thoughts to a simpler and more contemporary language, showing the objections the philosopher had concerning the *speechwriting*. For example the lack of authenticity of the written discourse against the spoken language, and the lack of dynamicity of the written discourse, by its staticity and little flexibility. Schartzman (2006) also argue "what qualifies the ownership of a speech?" Considering it a performative "art" of delivering words.

As all types of judicial ghostwriting, the speechwriting is somehow "justified" as a logistical necessity. "Because busy people should not trouble themselves with crafting every presentation, so they farm out the smaller jobs to the speechwriters" (Schartzman, 2006, p. 1).

To accept these thoughts we need to consider that there are some moral issues involved. "For example, a student who delivers a speech composed by a classmate gets convicted of plagiarism (...). A university president who delivers a speech composed by an assistant does not raise any eyebrows" (Schartzman, 2006, p. 1).

### Concept of Authorship

Some important aspects need to be considered when we are dealing with the concept of authorship, and there are plenty of references in past studies. Two of the most recognized authors, Roland Barthes (1953, 1967) e Michel Foucault (1969), proposed several relevant questions concerning this concept in their writings<sup>11</sup>. For example:

- Who writes and what is his role? (Barthes)
- What is the importance of the reader? (Barthes)

---

<sup>8</sup> *Ghost writer: O autor à sombra.*

<sup>9</sup> *Escritores-Fantasma e Comércio de Trabalhos Científicos na Internet: A ciência em risco.*

<sup>10</sup> The term "speechwriting" defines a particular type of ghostwriting, which is related to ghostwritten speeches and "I generally employ the term "speechwriting" because of its preferable moral neutrality (unless "ghostwriting" must be used to clarify authorship)" (Schartzman, 2006, p. 1).

<sup>11</sup> Barthes: *Le degré zéro de l'écriture* (1953) [Writing Degree Zero]; *La mort de l'auteur* (1967) [Death of the author]. Foucault: *Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?* (1969) [What is an author?].

- Who is the author and when he appears and disappears? (Foucault)

These questions seem to raise more doubts than resolutions, although they are a good starting point to reflect.

On another perspective, Accioly (2001) supports in her thesis that the rise of the ghostwriters could be a parallel and simultaneous phenomenon to the individualization of authorship (p. 30).

The author's figure was conceived by the Middle Age's rhetoric as an integrated function in the writing process. It had not, at that time, an identifying nature and not even remotely enjoyed the privilege that the Modern ages came to give it, even because a value of originality was never attached to the written text (Accioly, 2001, p. 10)<sup>12</sup>.

The author also establish some dialogues with Foucault (1969) about the relation between production and consumption, showing that the right to attribute authorship came with the necessity of censorship. Considering that "(...) the granting of property rights over certain types of discourses would be a gift in return to the establishment of the penal responsibility" (Accioly, 2001, p. 11)<sup>13</sup>. In her speech, she also flirted with Barthes (1968), reiterating his discourse that it is the language what communicate, not the author, and the texts only produce meaning in the reading process.

Another interesting point is that some authors became so prestigious that they turn out to be nouns (Marxism, Platonism, etc.) or even adjectives (Cartesian, Lacanian, etc.), "being related more strongly with the discursive environment than with the individual who designate" (Accioly, 2001, p. 16-17)<sup>14</sup>. Having it in mind, she also conclude that "both author and work are arbitrarily established units, and for this very reason precarious" (Accioly, 2001, p. 17)<sup>15</sup>.

Another Brazilian scholar reached similar considerations in her doctoral thesis. "According to Foucault (1992)<sup>16</sup>, the author is a function" (as cited in Paiva, 2010, p. 37)<sup>17</sup>. She also similarly propose, paraphrasing some Barthes' ideas, that "the reader create his/her own interpretation(s) of the text" (Paiva, 2010, p. 38-39), indicating that the author may have little control over his work. At the same time, Passos (2004) assume that "the 'author' is always is in the text, his marks are there" (as cited in Paiva, 2010, p. 46)<sup>18</sup>.

---

<sup>12</sup> "A figura do autor foi concebida pela Retórica da Idade Média como uma função integrante do processo da escrita. Ela não tinha, então, um caráter identitário e nem de longe desfrutava do privilégio que a Modernidade veio a lhe conferir, até porque não se atribuía ao texto escrito um valor de originalidade" (Accioly, 2001, p. 10).

<sup>13</sup> (...) "a concessão de direitos de propriedade sobre determinados tipos de discurso teria sido uma contrapartida à instauração da responsabilidade penal" (Accioly, 2001, p. 11).

<sup>14</sup> "(...) passando a relacionar-se mais fortemente com o ambiente discursivo do que com o indivíduo que designa" (Accioly, 2001, p. 16-17).

<sup>15</sup> "Tanto autor quanto obra são unidades arbitrariamente constituídas, e por isto mesmo precárias" (Accioly, 2001, p. 17).

<sup>16</sup> She is referring to the Portuguese translation of the 1969's publication.

<sup>17</sup> "De acordo com Foucault (1992), o autor é uma função" (Paiva, 2010, p. 37).

<sup>18</sup> "(...) o 'autor' sempre está no texto, suas marcas estão lá" (Passos, 2004 *apud* Paiva, 2010, p. 46).

Concerning this mutual connection of the author with his work, Amarante (2014) states that we cannot separate them mostly because the work is the essence of the author's personality and carries a personality said to be inseparable (p. 6-7).

Although, with the end of the twentieth century the world started to see a new phenomenon with the popularization of the internet. The concept of copyright and authorship are in regular development, amplified by Free-software Movement, Creative Commons license, piracy, illegal downloads, etc. Numerous things are yet to be altered and the ghostwriting activity will certainly follow this changes.

### **Capitalism and Productivity**

It is possible to see the parallel between the ghostwriting services and the capitalist logic, as it exists essentially in order to make money. All the author's egos are nullified, at least if we consider this matter in our post-modern era. The ghostwriter became more a figure that sell his/her ability of writing to the "future author", and this ability is closely related to dealing with different types of material and reorganizing it in order to fit the aimed discourse. "As a result of this subjection of discourse to the market logic, the post-modern culture is not only welcoming to the figure of the ghostwriter as it induces its proliferation" (Accioly, 2001, p. 58)<sup>19</sup>.

We can conclude that the ghostwriting services works as any other: "produce more in less time is a permanent objective of the capitalist economy" (Accioly, 2001, p. 81)<sup>20</sup>. Although, "productivity is the enemy of uniqueness, because it depends on standardization and mass production to evolve. Depending on the level of demand of the customer, the productivity level of a ghostwriter work can be incredibly high" (Accioly, 2001, p. 82)<sup>21</sup>.

### **Ethical Position**

Despite what many would believe, the activity of ghostwriting is nowadays fully expected. Progressing "to a commonly accepted job and function with no embarrassment attached" (Conner, 2014, p. 1). However, there are still many moral and conceptual issues, as the ghostwriter must hide his identity for reasons beyond his own ethical position.

Some scholars consider that although the ghostwriting activity was and still is publically doomed, it is a "necessary evil" that is being consolidated through a discourse of effectiveness (Accioly, 2001, p. 96). In other words, it is a concealed situation that the majority of the research institutes and/or universities do not act against "since in many cases it implicates accomplished researchers who hold positions of power and who attract grants (Spinak, 2010, p. 4). It is also implicit that

---

<sup>19</sup> "Como decorrência dessa sujeição do discurso à lógica do mercado, a cultura pós-moderna é não somente receptiva à figura do ghost writer como induz à sua proliferação" (Accioly, 2001, p. 58).

<sup>20</sup> "Produzir mais em menos tempo é um objetivo permanente da economia capitalista" (Accioly, 2001, p. 81).

<sup>21</sup> "A produtividade é inimiga da singularidade, porque depende da padronização e da produção em série para evoluir. Dependendo do nível de exigência do cliente, o índice de produtividade do trabalho de um ghost writer pode ser incrivelmente alto" (Accioly, 2001, p. 82).

“going against ghostwriting could open up a Pandora’s box for everyone, academic institutions and publishers” (Spinak, 2010, p. 4).

Beyond the question of ethics in the general *metiér*, we also need to consider the personal ethical position of each ghostwriter, which can diverge a lot. It is known that there are some ghostwriters who are able to do “any business”, only looking forward the amount of money earned. But there are also the ones whom just cannot accept to do some kinds of works<sup>22</sup>, regarding their own ethical principle (Accioly, 2001, p. 88).

Another important concept to understand the ethical problems in the area is the contradiction between patrimonial rights and moral rights. According to Amarante (2014):

(...) the copyrights contracts can only set about around property rights. It is prohibited to transmit the moral rights of the author, that as the personality’s rights, they assume, among others, characteristics of inalienability, unavailability, imprescriptibility, non-waiver (p. 2)<sup>23</sup>.

Ghostwriters can transfer their patrimonial rights to someone else, by some sort of payment or even freely, typically by signed contracts. But the moral rights are more complicated to deal with, remaining in a subjective level. Therefore, this contradiction raise an unsolved question: has the ghostwriter any remaining right on the work he sells? There are no easy answer, but we can think over it in a productive way.

According to Amarante (2014) the ghostwriter never abdicate over his work, he just choose not to engage as an author at certain time, being able to “claim paternity at any time” (p. 8)<sup>24</sup>. In her paper, the author states that “in the Brazilian legislation, there is no prediction about the duration of the author’s moral rights (...). Therefore, it is said that the author’s moral rights are perpetual” (Amarante, 2014, p. 8-9)<sup>25</sup>. This means that the discretion of the ghostwriter can be considered a type of “good neighbor policy”. Nevertheless we need to consider that legislations and interpretations of the law in distinctive locations can be a differential factor.

All in all, those contradictions do not seem to be near an easy resolution. Mainly because of the theme’s subjectivity. Some consider the activity an illegal act, while others states that there is no problem at all, knowing the ghostwriter gives up his authorship (Grieger, 2007, p. 248).

---

<sup>22</sup> Mainly due to conflicts of interest with themes, costumers, etc.

<sup>23</sup> “(...) os contratos em matéria autoral apenas podem versar sobre os direitos patrimoniais. É vedada a transmissão dos direitos morais do autor, que por serem direitos de personalidade, assumem, dentre outras, as características de inalienabilidade, indisponibilidade, imprescritibilidade, irrenunciabilidade” (Amarante, 2014, p. 2).

<sup>24</sup> “(...) reivindicar a paternidade a qualquer tempo” (Amarante, 2014, p. 8).

<sup>25</sup> “Na legislação brasileira, não há previsão acerca da duração dos direitos morais do autor (...). Por isso, diz-se que os direitos morais do autor são perpétuos” (Amarante, 2014, p. 8-9).

## Ghostwriting in Film Music

In most cases, the concept of ghostwriting in film music is related to bigger budget industrial movies. It happens mainly because of the amount of simultaneous productions and the agility the cinema market achieved. Ghostwriters was needed for the first time in a more systematical way during the “golden age” of Hollywood film music, through 1940’s and 1950’s, but there are examples of this practice until today. Basically, it consists in hiring composers and orchestrators to write music anonymously, all the credits would be given to a major musician who signs for the scores. This major composer can work among the ghostwriters or not, depending on the project.

It is known that the person who signs a film score in this type of situation function mainly as a “trademark”, which is going to sell more and attract much stronger attention of the audience and critics. “An author, to the market, is just that: a brand” (Accioly, 2001, p. 80)<sup>26</sup>.

Some examples of film composer who supposedly hired ghostwriters for their works are Lalo Schifrin, Henry Mancini, John Willians, Danny Elfman and Hans Zimmer (especially in his Remote Control Productions).

It is also interesting to consider that many composers begin to hire ghostwriters in order to help themselves, as they have to be more involved with bureaucracies and the business process than in the art of composing. For example, how one person can deal with the composition of several audiovisual productions simultaneously and still manage the non-musical part of the job, considering huge productions with big budgets and tons of contractual clauses.

Having seen the profile of the composer that hire ghostwriters, a doubt remain unsolved: who exactly are the film music ghostwriters? The majority of them are musicians in their career’s early years, sometimes even during their educational process. In short, composers who are starting a professional life and must earn money to live, whenever the conditions are like.

As a result, the ghostwriting activity suffer from great rejections by the musical community. An article in the Composers Union website tries to depreciate the profession in a declaration that can be considered vulgar:

In many cases, being a ghostwriter is a bit like being a musical mistress. You’re paid well for your services, but if you talk about it or dare publicly take credit for your “work”, it can have career-damaging consequences for you and your “employer”. (Northam, 2009, p. 1)

The same author also proposed an alternative that seems to be fairer for the ghostwriters. Which is to hire additional staff to compose and orchestrate the scores, but in the end of the day the producers should pay and list then in the cue sheet and in

---

<sup>26</sup> “Um autor, para o mercado, é exatamente isto: uma marca” (Accioly, 2001, p. 80).

the final credits as the authors or co-authors of the music they compose (Northam, 2009, p. 1).

In addition, according to Figueiredo (2014), under the analysis of some concepts of authorship proposed by Roland Barthes, the film composer is by its essence a less authorial composer.

“The film music is composed in creative restrictions due to the components of its functionality – the epic-dramatic balance and the need for reference – and in it, perhaps even more than in literature, the compositions operates in the mix of existing elements of already produced musical discourses”. (Figueiredo, 2014, p. 29)<sup>27</sup>

Finally, hiring other composer is a usual practice in the cinema and television industry and the production dynamics leads to it. So many productions are done at the same time with strict deadlines, as a lot of money is involved. For all that, the film music composers have “a relation, perhaps, more functional than artistic” (Figueiredo, 2014, p. 29)<sup>28</sup>.

### **Moacir Santos Ghostwriter**

Moacir Santos was one of the most important Brazilian composers and arrangers. In the mid-1940's he used to work at Rio de Janeiro's *Rádio Nacional* as a performer and soon he decided to take composition classes with distinguished musicians as: Claudio Santoro, Guerra-Peixe, H. J. Koellreuter, and Ernst Krenek. When he was 25 years old he had already become a complete *maestro* of the Brazilian radios' “golden age”. Furthermore, he was the teacher of a countless number of musician, whom end up being really important references to the consolidation of Brazilian music, among some of his students were: Baden Powell, Paulo Moura, João Donato, Raul de Souza, Dori Caymmi and many others. In 1965 Moacir released his first and only album recorded in Brazil over his complete supervision, titled *Coisas* and in the end of the same decade he moved permanently to the U.S. Where he kept going with his teaching activity, becoming a member of the MTAC (Music Teachers Association of California) (França, 2007, p. 29). Santos also released several albums in North-America, some of them by important jazz labels, as Blue Note and Discovery Records. Since 2001 his work and history has been recurrently promoted and investigated with a series of musical recordings, publications and academic researches.

During the 1960's Moacir composed a great number of scores for the Brazilian cinema, in productions like *Seara Vermelha*, *O Santo Místico*, *Ganga Zumba*, *Os Fuzis*, and *O Beijo*. His music for the film *Love in the Pacific* was the work which took him to the U.S. for the first time. After establish residence in California, one of his first activities was to compose for the local audiovisual industry, particularly as

---

<sup>27</sup> “A música de cinema é composta sob restrições criativas devidas aos componentes de sua funcionalidade – o equilíbrio épico-dramático e a necessidade de referência –, e nela, talvez ainda mais que na literatura, a composição atua na mescla de elementos já existentes, de discursos musicais já produzidos” (Figueiredo, 2014, p. 29).

<sup>28</sup> “Uma relação, talvez, mais funcional do que artística” (Figueiredo, 2014, p. 29).

the ghostwriter of well-known film composers. Besides that, Santos is also credited to be the composer of other North American movies as *Jungle Erotic* (1970), *Final Justice* (1985) and some other productions. The research projects of the author of this paper focus exactly on this section of Moacir's work. In the recently finished masters' dissertation<sup>29</sup> the main effort was to catalogue and analyze the Brazilian productions of the early 1960's, as well as transcribe every musical cue of the soundtracks. After that, in the ongoing doctoral project, the focus is to catalogue the North American part of his film scoring works. The first and most important challenge to deal with is his ghostwriting activity, as well as how to manage the scientific approach and to establish an effective analysis methodology.

França (2007) and Gomes (2009) suggests in their dissertations the specific years that Moacir Santos worked as a ghostwriter for Henry Mancini and Lalo Schifrin, 1968 and 1970 respectively. Basing on that information we could observe the possible participation of Santos in some important projects, as for example, the fifth season of the *Mission: Impossible*<sup>30</sup> TV series.

There is also an informal speculation about the composition of the *Mission: Impossible*'s main theme, which was used again in the movies tetralogy released between 1996 and 2011<sup>31</sup>. Many musicians assert it may be composed by Santos, but the fact is denied by the own composer in some interviews. This speculation is specially grounded in the rhythm writing, because the main pattern reminds clearly the *Mojo*, a kind of rhythm pattern created by Moacir and found in a great number of his compositions.

It is extremely difficult to state affirmatively if someone really was a ghostwriter, because in general they are not allowed to talk about it due to contractual processes. In Moacir Santos' case we had some trouble on that matter, as he never confirmed nor denied his ghost work. His interviewers say he would just be quiet and smile whenever asked about it. This attitude reveals he was being part of the system, "giving up the public exposure of the authorial vanity and remaining on the backstage, because the nature of the business requires it" (Accioly, 2001, p. 69)<sup>32</sup>.

### Final Considerations

This paper is an initial approach on the ghostwriting subject, and it was a first historical overview and preliminary bibliographic revision. Much more need to be done in the research's next steps, as well as define an effective methodology on how to deal with the ghostwritten works of Moacir Santos. And most importantly, in the near future, we will need to do an extensively field research in order to find more accurate sources.

---

<sup>29</sup> Bonetti (2014).

<sup>30</sup> The series was broadcast between 1966 e 1973, there is also another version, reshot, produced in the 1980's.

<sup>31</sup> In chronologic order: *Mission: Impossible I* (1996), *Mission: Impossible II* (2000), *Mission: Impossible III* (2006) e *Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol* (2011)

<sup>32</sup> "(...) abrir mão da exposição pública da vaidade autoral e permanecer nos bastidores, porque a natureza do negócio assim o exige" (Accioly, 2001, p. 69).

However, as we could see, there is a clear correspondence of the concept of ghostwriting in film music and the one used in literature and other writing based strands. All those thoughts mentioned before points out to a very complex and rich research subject, which cannot be fully understood just in one short paper. However, some meaningful considerations has been certainly reached out aiming to indicate some possible paths of understanding.



## References

- Accioly, M. I. A. J. (2001) *Ghost Writer: o autor à sombra* (Master Dissertation). UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro/Brazil.
- Amarante, F. M. (2014) Direitos morais do autor e autonomia privada: os Ghost-writers e a indisponibilidade de paternidade da obra. *Revista do Curso de Direito*, 165. Retrieved from <http://www.revistas.unifacs.br/index.php/redu/article/view/3016>
- Barbour, V., Clark, J., Jones, S., Norton, M., Simpson, P., & Veitch, E. (2011). Ghostwriting Revisited: New Perspectives but Few Solutions in Sight. *PLoS Med*, 8(8). 10.1371/journal.pmed.1001084
- Barthes, R. (1953). *Le degré zéro de l'écriture*. Paris: Seuil.
- Barthes, R. (1967) *La mort de l'auteur*. Paris: Seuil.
- Berzak, Y., Reichart, R., & Katz, B. (2014). Reconstructing Native Language Typology from Foreign Language Usage. Proceedings from Association for Computational Linguistics: *Eighteenth Conference on Computational Language Learning*. Baltimore, MD.
- Bonetti, L. Z. (2014). *A trilha musical como gênese do processo criativo na obra de Moacir Santos* (Master Dissertation). UNICAMP, Campinas/Brazil.
- Boyle, J. D. A. (1988). *The Search for an Author: Shakespeare and the Framers*. 37 *AM. U. L. REV.* 625.
- Conner, C. (2014). Is Ghostwriting Ethical? Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/cherylsnappconner/2014/03/13/is-ghostwriting-ethical/> Acesso em: 12/08/2014
- Dershowtz, I., Koppel, M., Akiva, N., & Dershowitz N. (2011). Computerized Source Criticism of Biblical Texts. Retrieved from <http://www.cs.tau.ac.il/~nachumd/papers/Computerized%20Source%20Criticism.pdf>
- Figueiredo, M B. da C. (2014). *Quem é o autor? O trabalho colaborativo e a questão autoral na produção industrializada de trilhas sonoras* (Scientific Initiation Report). UNICAMP, Campinas/Brazil.
- Foucault, M. (1969) *Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?* *Bulletin de la Société française de philosophie*, 63(3), 73-104.
- França, G. I. (2007). *Coisas: Moacir Santos e a composição para seção rítmica na década de 1960* (Master Dissertation). UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro/Brazil.
- Gomes, J. M. Z. (2009). *“Coisas” de Moacir Santos* (Master Dissertation). UFPR, Paraná/Brazil.

- Grieger, M. C. A. (2007). Escritores-Fantasma e Comércio de Trabalhos Científicos na Internet: A ciência em risco. *Revista Associação Médica Brasileira*, 53(3), 247-251.
- Hosoi, H., Yamagata, T., Ikarashi Y., & Fujisawa, N. (2014). Visualization of Special Features in “The Tale of Genji” by Text Mining and Correspondence Analysis with Clustering. *Journal of Flow Control, Measurement & Visualization*, 2(1). 10.4236/jfcmv.2014.21001.
- Michell, J. (1996). *Who wrote Shakespeare?* New York, NY: Thames and Hudson.
- Nguyen, T. (2011). Can computers solve mystery of Bible’s ‘ghostwriters’? Retrieved from <http://www.smartplanet.com/blog/thinking-tech/can-computers-solve-mystery-of-bibles-ghostwriters/>
- Northam, M. (2009). Ghostwriting and the Composers Union. Retrieved from <http://www.filmmusicmag.com/?p=4391>
- Nunes, A. M. (2004). Receitas de Sedução nas Páginas Femininas de Clarice Lispector para O Diário da Noite. Proceedings from INTERCOM 2004: Congresso Brasileiro de Ciências da Comunicação. Porto Alegre, RS.
- Paiva, C. G. (2010) *Da (in)visibilidade na autoria: desvelando o ghost-writer do discurso parlamentar* (Doctoral Thesis). UnB, Brasília/Brazil.
- Regnier, T. (2003). Comment, Could Shakespeare Think Like a Lawyer? How Inheritance Law Issues in Hamlet May Shed Light on the Authorship Question. *University of Miami Law Review*, 57(377), 1-45.
- Rosenthal, J. S., & Yoon, A. H. (2011). *Judicial Ghostwriting: Authorship on the Supreme Court*. *Cornell Law Review*, 96(6). Retrieved from <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/clr/vol96/iss6/2>
- Schartzman, R. (2006) Ethical and Theoretical Perspectives on an Ancient Art. The Predicament of Speechwriting: Carolinas Communication Association Convention, Charleston, SC.
- Schoenbaum, S. (1991). *Shakespeare's Lives*. Oxford, OX: Oxford University Press.
- Spinak, E. (2014). Ethical Editing: Ghostwriting is an unhealthy practice. Retrieved from <http://blog.scielo.org/en/2014/01/16/ethical-editing-ghostwriting-is-an-unhealthy-practice/#.U8ZTRfldWSo>
- WARREN, J. P. (1984) *Whitman as Ghostwriter: The Case of Rambles Among Words*. *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 2, 22-30.

**Contact email:** [lucas@lucasbonetti.com.br](mailto:lucas@lucasbonetti.com.br)



***1+1=1; An Exploration of Bakhtinian Minimum for Existence in Andrei Tarkovsky's Nostalgia***

Maryam Zehtabi Sabeti Moqaddam, University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings

**Abstract**

Mikhail Bakhtin's emphasis upon the constructedness of language and consciousness, the essential connectedness of individuals to each other, and the co-creation of un-finalized beings in the course of inter-subjective utterances of a dialogue have come to the aid of a great many people to defy subjugation and confinement. By depicting the anti-authoritarian spirit of the carnival within which the hierarchies are disrupted, the materiality of the body celebrated, the Otherness of the individual acknowledged, and the identities arbitrarily assumed, Bakhtin shows the disparity between individuals and their labels, as well as the impossibility of possessing a private and autonomous self. A vigorous display of these liberating notions in action is Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia* which chronicles the fateful moments of introspection in the exiled director's life. Rich with autobiographical elements, the movie depicts the predicament of an itinerant artist in a foreign land. Having felt deeply uprooted in a country he doesn't belong to, the Russian protagonist gets empowered when he goes through a conciliatory ritual which enables him to acknowledge the necessity of abolishing borderlines and creating a meaningful dialogue between his Russianness and life in Italy. The movie ends with a utopic vision in which a Russian landscape is embraced by the pillars of an Italian cathedral. By drawing upon Bakhtinian notions, I wish to tackle the question of how the protagonist/director of *Nostalgia* escapes monologism by co-authoring himself into being, averring the fact that consciousness is only relational.

Keywords: Mikhail Bakhtin, Andrei Tarkovsky, Conflict, Intersubjectivity, Dialogism, Carnivalesque, Polyphony, Heteroglossia

**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

Ever since Bakhtin's discovery by a group of students in the early 1960s', every possible area of human studies has claimed this cult figure as his. Considering that he was living under the most tumultuous time in the history of Russia in which he experienced wars, revolutions, internal exile, prosecution, purges and famines, one is awe-stricken by the prodigious range of material he produced. In his oeuvre, one comes across theories of "the novel, socio-linguistics and the philosophy of language, aspects of Renaissance and medieval folk culture, cultural and literary history, the psychology of perception, and numerous epistemological and interpretive issues in the human sciences" which place him vis-à-vis, to name only a few, linguistics, philosophy, sociology and literature (Gardiner, 1992, p. 2).

Mikhail Bakhtin is known for emphasizing the constructedness and relationality of language and consciousness. In his works, he shows the inherent cracks within the bubble of language surrounding us which cages us in time and space, while also aiding us to transgress. By focusing upon the heteroglossic nature of language, which postulates the internal struggle within a language between the centripetal and centrifugal forces trying to homogenize or reify language, he demonstrates the impossibility of possessing a private and autonomous whole. He proves individuals to be mere sites of heterogeneous and incompatible social, cultural, and ideological voices they come to internalize due to the various backgrounds they come from. Thus, one is self and Other at the same time. This obsession with the Otherness of the self which is the shared ground of Bakhtin's notions has been employed as the evidence of emancipation and empowerment in many artistic works. His regenerating notions are here applied to Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*, which is a powerful display of Bakhtinian notions in action. In this paper, I will indicate how the protagonist/director of *Nostalghia* escapes monologism by co-authoring himself into being, averring the fact that consciousness is only relational.

The film opens with Andrei Gorchakov, a Russian émigré and Eugenia, his translator, visiting a cathedral in Italy. Andrei is in the country to research a famous eighteenth-century Russian expatriate composer, Pavel Sosnovsky, who left Italy out of homesickness but ended up taking to bottles and committing suicide once back to Russia. Andrei obviously identifies with Sosnovsky since he can no longer remain in Italy as his constant reveries about his dacha and family disclose. This is one reason he slights Eugenia, who is sexually attracted to him, to the point that she is offended and leaves him to go back to Rome to join a man who is the exact opposite of Andrei.

Andrei accidentally meets Domenico, an Italian madman and former mathematics teacher, who locked his family at home for seven years in order to save them from some unknown threat. Unlike the bathers in Saint Catherine's pool, Andrei believes Domenico's actions to be driven by his great faith and goes out of his way to make Domenico's acquaintance. In Domenico's house, Andrei is entrusted with the mission of carrying a candle across Saint Catherine's pool to save humanity from destruction. Domenico cannot accomplish the mission himself because the minute he tries to get into the water to cross the pool with the lit candle, people force him out since they are afraid he might kill himself.

Andrei seems to be in pain due to his heart disease; nonetheless, he takes it upon himself to cross the pool with the lighted candle and after a couple of aborted attempts, as the wind blows the candle out, he makes it to the other side of the pool

and lodges the candle on a ledge, but, at that very moment, he groans and collapses off screen. He apparently dies as the characters' later actions show. This scene is intercut with a demonstration Domenico has organized in Rome for what seems to be a group of mentally ill people who are to witness his self-immolation after he has delivered his oration calling for the unity of the whole society. The film ends with a vision of unity as we see Andrei sitting next to a pool in front of his dacha while surrounded by the arches of the pillars of the very same cathedral we saw near the beginning.

The film has a rather simple plot because Tarkovsky (1989) was not interested in plots:

I have always been interested in a person's inner world, and for me it was far more natural to make a journey into the psychology that informed the hero's attitude to life, into the literary and cultural traditions that are the foundation of his spiritual world. (p. 204)

It is exactly this quality that connects his films so neatly with Dostoevsky's novels at the heart of whose "tragic catastrophe lies the solipsistic separation of a character's consciousness from the whole, his incarceration in his own private world" (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 10). It is this incapability that tears Andrei asunder from the country he is living in. Just like the underground man in Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, he is so obsessed with his inner world that he prefers to sever all his connection with his surroundings. He neither pays attention to Eugenia nor the beauty of Italy.

It is this peculiar conjunction of Dostoevsky and Tarkovsky's worldviews that brings us to Bakhtin's *Dialogism*. Dialogism is the term Bakhtin designates to refer to the highest achievement of Dostoevsky's novels. This term is the umbrella term which encompasses his theories concerning language and literature, namely *polyphony* and *heteroglossia*, and is linked with "the search for truth, the rejection of a finalized notion of truth or teleological approach to human existence, and the humble yet ennobling acknowledgment that each individual participates in a unique way in the ongoing process of self-discovery" (Nolan, 2004, p. xxiv).

What Bakhtin postulates that all human beings are relational subjects whose self can be defined if only put in relationship with an "other". What I perceive to be me can only be meaningful when I defy my self-sufficiency and isolation and interact with another "I" whom I acknowledge as having the same rights and responsibilities as I do. Thus, my sense of myself constitutes in "the distance which divides my situation from yours, and from the various bridges which can be built across that distance, which can never, for all that, be abolished" (Dentith, 1994, p. 12). It is in this dialogue between I and you that my self becomes created or achieved.

This recognition of the other as a subject, rather than an object, with whom I am in an ever-going dialogue is the major principle of Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*. The only sign of transformation in Andrei comes at the time when Domenico becomes not only the focus of his friendship and curiosity but his double whose identity becomes so inextricably intertwined with his that their reveries merge and the reflection of one in

the mirror becomes that of the other's. Every aspect of Andrei and Domenico's consciousness becomes entangled in these inter-subjective and communicative acts since they are constantly engaged in dialogues. Even when they are not in a face-to-face dialogue with people or one another, they are holding conversation within themselves by anticipating the responses of the others. Thus, Andrei is in a never-ending dialogue with himself in order to bring his past and present into some stable reconciliation: a dialogue. A case in point is Tarkovsky's devising an audience to turn Andrei's interior dialogues into exterior ones as the example of the latter's conversation with Angela shows. This externalization of the interior dialogue is reminiscent of Ivan Karamazov's. However, whereas Ivan held a conversation with the Devil, Andrei converses with an angel.

The inevitability of dialogue is even more evident in the character of Domenico who is persistently talking to his dog, Zoe, or addressing others for a cigarette, even though he does not even know how to smoke. His very motto,  $1+1=1$ , is the substantiation of Bakhtin's:

to be means to communicate dialogically. When dialogue ends, everything ends. Thus dialogue, by its very essence, cannot and must not come to an end ... ; All else is means; dialogue is the end. A single voice ends nothing and resolves nothing. Two voices is the minimum for life, the minimum for existence. (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 252)

As the quotation shows, this concept was Bakhtin's contribution to a time which tended toward reconceptualizing "epistemology the better to accord with" the age of "revolutionary models of the world" and "new versions of the mind" which were put forward by the natural sciences and the relativity theory (Holquist, 2002, p.16). One of the trends of the nineteenth-century thought that Bakhtin specifically renounces is the notion of a "transcendental ego" whose consciousness is a unified whole (Holquist, 2002, p. 8). We see this refutation of the centered, authorial consciousness in all of Tarkovsky's works (Botz-Bornestein, 2007, p. 7). Tarkovsky uses reveries and dreams to blur the distinction between the external and the internal world of the characters "as the transition in most cases is accomplished without any clear borderline between dream and reality being established (Skakov, 1983, p. 41). But Tarkovsky takes it a step further when in one such reverie in *Nostalghia*, Andrei becomes "an intersection of worldviews (one's own and the other's), an intersection of two consciousnesses" which is

revealed by the simple phenomenon of looking at oneself in the mirror: with one's own and with others' eyes simultaneously, a meeting and interaction between the others' and one's own eyes ... ; Unity not as an innate one-and-only, but as a dialogic concordance of unmerged twos or multiples. (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 289)

This is a description of Dostoevsky's novels, but it is wonderful how efficiently it can be applied to Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*. A case in point is when Andrei looks in the mirror and sees Domenico as his reflection and utters what the audience clearly remembers to be Domenico's rumination regarding closeting his family inside the house for seven years. In this scene, Andrei appropriates not only Domenico's

memories, but also his language and adds a new dimension to it by merging it into his own consciousness. The movie is replete with the examples of Andrei's fascination with language which brings us to Bakhtin's conception of language.

Bakhtin was a vehement believer in the sociality of language. The writer opposes Saussure whom he conceives as dealing with the underlying system of language, langue, divorced from its context rather than the real instances which are used in everyday speech, parole. He postulates that "what is important for the speaker about a linguistic form is not that it is a stable and always self-equivalent signal, but that it is an always changeable and adaptable sign" (Volosinov, 1986, p. 68), i.e. , the signification of each sign changes according to the context and factors such as the addressee, the intonation, etc. Thus, a word never coincides with itself in different contexts.

This might account as why Andrei is so opposed to the idea of translation. As "Andrei's remarks raise an important possibility that echoes throughout Tarkovsky's work: that trying to synthesise, universalise, and speak for or to others is misguided" (Rainsford, 2008, p. 128). Eugenia's translation is abstracting words from their contexts and having them speak on their own. As Bakhtin puts it, meaning is not transmitted but made in the give and take of a dialogue that deals only with utterances rather than sentences. An utterance is no longer a mere grammatical unit and is essentially placed in a dialogue and is always directed toward an addressee; therefore, anticipates a response. An utterance can only exist between people who occupy different positions within their social network. As Bakhtin (1986) points out in his late essay "The Problems of the Speech Genres", the speaker is not an Adam "dealing only with virgin and still unnamed objects, giving them names for the first time" (p. 93). All words are charged with a history from which they cannot be purged. Thus comes "none of you understand Russia" since you should dispense with "the frontiers" to be able to understand different cultures (Tarkovsky, 1983, 16:09); and in a ritualistic and symbolic gesture Andrei burns the Italian translation of some Russian poems.

Andrei's first attempt to discard borderlines is communicating only by using Italian itself rather than having a translator interpret it for him. And yet, he knows it from the very beginning that "it is impossible for us poor devils" to understand Petrarch, Dante, Machiavelli, i.e. Italy (Tarkovsky, 1983, 16:25).

The notion of abolishing frontiers reappears in the demonstration scene in Rome when Domenico launches into a harangue

What ancestor speaks in me? I can't live simultaneously in my head and in my body. That's why I can't be just one person. I can feel myself countless things at once. There are no great masters left. That's the greatest evil of our time. The heart's path is covered in shadow. We must listen to the voices that seem useless in brains full of sewage pipes of school wall, tarmac and welfare papers. The buzzing of insects must enter. We must fill the eyes and ears of all of us with things that are the beginning of a great dream. Someone must shout that we built pyramids it doesn't matter if we don't. We must fuel that wish and stretch the corners of the soul like an endless sheet if you want the word to go forward we must hold hands. We must mix the so called healthy with the so

called sick. You healthy ones what does your health mean? The eyes of all mankind are looking at the pit into which we are plunging. Freedom is useless if you don't have the courage to look us in the eye to eat, drink and sleep with us. (Tarkovsky, 1983, 102:35)

Domenico's passionate speech sits quite well with Bakhtin's notion of dialogism, as explained by Holquist (2002), since "in dialogism consciousness is otherness. More accurately, it is the differential relation between a center and all that is not that center" (p. 17). It acknowledges that "all meaning is relative in the sense that it comes about only as a result of the relation between two bodies occupying simultaneous but different space", the sick and the healthy in this case, "where bodies may be thought of as ranging from the immediacy of our physical bodies, to political bodies and to bodies of ideas in general (ideologies)" (p. 19).

Domenico, whom all the critics have unanimously called the holy fool, mounts the statue of Marcus Aurelius and atop of its horse delivers a speech for a group of insane individuals. The whole scene is reminiscent of Bakhtin's notion of the *carnavalesque*. In the carnival festivities that Bakhtin draws upon, one had the opportunity to forget his social position for once and assume whichever identity he preferred. He could be a peasant in real life but a king in the carnival. This interchange of identity gave the medieval people the chance to author themselves for once as they pleased. These moments of revelry had the power to momentarily free people from the restraints of their official life and their alleged piety and mysticism. Unlike the official feasts which were endorsed by the church and the state, these carnivals were not to consecrate the already existing norms but "the continual shifting from top to bottom and from front to rear" of all indisputable values (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 11). Domenico seems to be trying to accomplish the same end. He is after subverting the already established hierarchies in order to mingle the sick and the healthy, and the sane and the insane.

Being profoundly influenced by him "Gorchakov learns from Domenico that in order to overcome his nostalgic bind, his longing for his past homeland and future Utopia, he must collapse the difference between individual redemption and mass redemption into a single act" (Samardzija, 2004, p. 303). By the end of the movie, Andrei realizes that "participation in the being-event of the world in its entirety does not coincide, from our point of view, with irresponsible self-surrender to Being, with being-possessed by Being" (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 49). It is no wonder that both characters in the end turn out to be reflecting Tarkovsky himself for whom people could not be rescued on their own but only when unified all together against "the insanity of modern civilization" (Tarkovsky, 1989, p. 209).

The film aptly closes with Andrei sitting in the impossible union of his Russian dacha and the Italian cathedral to confirm Bakhtin's postulation that "existence is *sobytie* *sobytiya*, the event of co-being; it is a vast web of interconnections each and all of which are linked as participants in an event whose totality is so immense that no single one of us can ever know it" (Holquist, 2002, p. 40).

## References:

Bakhtin, M. M. (1984a). *Rabelais and his world*. (H. Iswolsky, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1984b). *The problems of Dostoevsky's poetics*. (C. Emerson, Trans.). Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). The problem of speech genres. In C. Emerson, & M. Holquist (Eds.), *Speech genres and other late essays*. (V. McGee Trans.). (pp. 60-102). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1993). In Liapunov V. (Ed.), *Toward a philosophy of the act*. (V. Liapunov, M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Botz-Bornstein, T. (2007). *Films and dreams: Tarkovsky, Bergman, Sokurov, Kubrick, and Wong Kar-Wai*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Dentith, S. (1994). *Bakhtinian thought: An introductory reader*. London: Routledge.

Gardiner, M. (1992). *The Dialogics of critique: M. M. Bakhtin and the theory of ideology*. London: Routledge.

Holquist, M. (2002). *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his world* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Routledge.

Nolan, V. Z. Introduction. In V. Z. Nolan (Ed.), *Bakhtin, ethics and mechanics* (pp. xiii-xxxiii). Evanston, IL: Northern University Press.

Rainsford, D. M. Tarkovsky and Levinas: Cuts, mirrors, triangulations. *Film-Philosophy*, 11(2), 122-143. Retrieved from <http://www.film-philosophy.com/index.php/f-p>

Samardzija, Zoran. 1+1=1: Impossible translations in Andrey Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*. *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 32(4), 300-04. Retrieved from <http://www.salisbury.edu/lfq/>

Skakov, Nariman (2012). *The Cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky: Labyrinth of space and time*. New York, NY: I. B. Tauris.

Tarkovsky, A. (Director). (1983). *Nostalghia* [Motion picture]. Soviet Union & Italy: Radiotelevisione Italiana (RAI).

Tarkovsky, A. (1989). *Sculpting in time: Reflections on the cinema*. (K. Hunter-Blair, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Volosinov, V. N. (1986). *Marxism and the philosophy of language*. (L. Matejka & I. R. Titunik, Trans.). New York, NY: Academic Press.

**Contact email:** mzehtabi@complit.umass.edu



***The Representation of Ethnic Youth Gangs in “The Combination”***

Branka Prodanovic, Macquarie University, Australia

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings



**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## Introduction

In December 2005, Sydney was subject to one of the worst racial riots in its own history. News bulletins reported that approximately 5000 Anglo-Australian men (referred to as “Aussies”) were alcohol intoxicated and attacked anyone presumed to be of Middle Eastern appearance (Poynting 2006, p.85). These news reports concluded that high racial tensions were to be blamed for the riots, which were instigated by “Aussie” perpetrators. Many scholars and journalists argue that such reporting is misleading as the violence was a result of on-going media and political discourses about Middle Eastern men living in Australia (Windschuttle 2005). According to Scott Poynting (2007) the Cronulla Riots were inevitable due to a decade long media narrative exposing young Lebanese, Middle Eastern and Muslim men as moral panics. This conclusion was framed through research that considered the media and other political influences, which have engulfed Lebanese, Middle Eastern and Muslim youths in Australia.

A chain of events occurred between the years of 2000-2002 involving Lebanese, Middle Eastern and Muslim men immersing in criminal acts in areas around Sydney. These events primarily included street, gun and sexual violence, as well as car crimes. These were identified as the Middle Eastern youth gang crisis. Media recycled much of these reports to establish a firm “other” whom society should fear. The reporting of these events created a conflation between Muslim, Middle Eastern, Arab and Lebanese identities made interchangeable. The use of these four terms in media reporting was commonly linked back to violence and crime, emphasizing the threatening nature of these “others” (Manning 2006). The conflating factor also created an overt distinction between “us” and “them”; that is, Middle Eastern/Lebanese/Muslim men were portrayed as “barbaric others” threatening the rest of Sydney’s community (Poynting et al. 2004).

In this paper I aim to investigate how the Middle Eastern youth gang stereotype has been constructed by analyzing the “realness” in the Australian film *The Combination*. As such, I am not concerned with the racial discourses that are exposed in the film, but rather how the film mimics reality in order to satirize orientalist assumptions present in news media discourse about Middle Eastern youth gangs. However, representing the “real” re-constructs many of the stereotypical traits exposed by news media as belonging to Middle Eastern men. How effective then, can local cinema be in by-passing this factor? The purpose of this paper is to discuss the re-construction of the fear commonly associated with Middle Eastern youth gangs. This will be conducted in reference to the Middle Eastern youth gang crisis that initially started in 1998.

## Constructing Ethnic Crime and Imagining Fear

In October 1998, a young boy by the name of Edward Lee was stabbed to death by a group of Middle Eastern boys in the suburb of Punchbowl (south-western Sydney). Lee’s death caused hysteria in media reporting disgracing the Lebanese, Muslim and Middle Eastern communities. The hysteria also caused police to conduct a stop-and-search campaign, which allowed anyone who looked Middle Eastern and suspicious to be stopped and searched by local police. The campaign was conducted in the western Sydney suburb of Bankstown during which 130 police officers took part

resulting in 24 arrests and 71 charges (Poynting et al. 2000, p.1). Two weeks after Lee's death, several shots were fired into Lakemba Police Station. The shooting was reported by several media outlets as retaliation attacks by Middle Eastern members of the community. These events were followed by several reports, linking the crimes to gang activity which gave rise to the Middle Eastern youth gang moral panic.

A series of Lebanese gang rapes followed Lee's stabbing. A group of young men from Muslim and Lebanese backgrounds went to trial accused of raping young females. These rapes were widely known as the Skaf rapes. Alice Aslan (2009) summarizes the key points,

A group of Australian youths of Lebanese-Muslim background took part in a series of gang rapes in the Bankstown area in south-western Sydney in 2000. Bilal Skaf was the ringleader, and the perpetrators contacted one another using mobile phones and used text messages to coordinate sexual assaults. They trapped teenage girls at various locations; threatened their victims at gun point; beat and sexually assaulted them; and on some occasions they raped the girls in groups of up to fourteen boys at a time. The perpetrators also insulted their victims with racial remarks such as "Aussie pigs", "You deserve it because you're Australian", "I'm going to fuck you Leb style". This case became known as "the Lebanese gang rapes" (p.82).

The Skaf rapes became a media phenomenon as many media reports associated the crime of rape with that of gang activity. Gang connotations are favoured by media reporting as, 'gangs are media grabbers because they play on people's fears.... and they appeal to the biases of race, age, and social class' (Poynting et al. 2000, p.35). Predominantly, stories about "gangs" and "gang violence" instil an imaginary fear into the community. The Skaf rape reports became part of a 'signification spiral', which refers to the linkage of multiple events to establish common ground (Warner 2004, p.345). Warner (2004) explains that a heated debate about Middle Eastern crime was commonly linked with ethnic, Arab, Middle Eastern and Muslim offenders, immigration, asylum seekers and terrorists (p.345). These links were made between several identities but obviously became interchangeable within news stories.

Such events were central in constructing hysteria around the safety of everyday Australians in the areas of western Sydney where "Lebanese thugs" were commonly reported as terrorizing the streets (Poynting et al. 2000). Rob White (2007) explains, 'given their (Lebanese youth) overall socioeconomic situation, they now constituted the new "dangerous classes" of late capitalism and are perceived as breeding ground for criminality, immorality and social deviance' (p.47). The media, thus, instructed a "permission to hate" allowing engagements in vigilance or retributive racial violence against the Lebanese or Muslim minority (Poynting 2007, p.160). Not only did this raise concerns about criminal activity but also constructed the Lebanese "other" as a threat to the Australian nation, one that has commonly been linked to the barbaric nature and conflicts in the Middle East (Said 1978; Poynting et al. 2000).

The purpose of this paper is not to examine the extent of reporting of these events, but rather to understand how the media re-constructs the initial criminal stereotypes of young Lebanese men. It is not that the stabbing of Lee or the shooting of Lakemba Police station did not occur, but rather that the media reportage of these events,

emphasized strongly the importance of the Middle Eastern perpetrators. Consequently, a rise in ethnic descriptors such as “males of Middle Eastern appearance” to identify crime suspects have been strongly present within media reporting (Humphrey 2007, p.13). This is a central point in the film, *The Combination*, which I will discuss later in the paper.

Many of these factors are re-visited in the Australian film, *The Combination*, which follows the lives of two Lebanese-Australian brothers commonly exposed to racism and violence. In an attempt not to re-construct the fear of Middle Eastern youth gangs, *The Combination* uses stereotypes developed by news media to explore reasons for racism, crime and violence in Australia. The film will be analyzed in the next section of this paper, to show how fear created by news media re-invents itself in the reel.

### **Re-representing or Mimicking?**

*The Combination* centers on two brothers, John (the elder) and Charlie, who are in constant conflict over issues involving culture, violence, crime and responsibility. In the opening scene, John is walking home following his release from prison to his widowed mother and younger brother. His walk home symbolizes a redemption process as he falls in love with an Australian woman named Sydney whilst simultaneously attempting to keep Charlie out of trouble. John struggles to do so, however, as Charlie’s stubborn behavior influences him to make similar criminal decisions that John made in his youth. Charlie remains resistant to John and is explicitly loyal to his ethnic friends who are in constant conflict with a group of Anglo-Australian boys known as the Aussie boys.

For purposes of argument, Charlie and his group of friends will be the focal point in this analysis. As teenagers still in high school, Charlie and his friends (Zeus, Nipper, Yas, Mo and Tom) succumb to peer-pressure and a milieu of violence and drugs. The recurring scenes of these young boys being subject to crime and racism, reinforces common media stereotypes associated with Middle Eastern male youths. Arguably, it is because of such negative portrayals that *The Combination* appears substantially familiar and enticing to audiences. Besides getting caught up with the law in stabbings, shootings and drug distributions, Charlie and his friends are in constant conflict with the Aussie boys, who are portrayed as a group of working-class, Anglo-Australian rednecks. The connection created between both groups of boys and their association with crime becomes an obvious stance for labelling *The Combination* as a film of gang culture.

The film interlinks ideas of ethnicity and danger through the negative portrayal of crime, drugs and violence. This is how ethnic “otherness” has often been framed in Australian (and/or Western) society. Since 9/11 the definition of the term “ethnicity” has shifted and is now commonly linked with people of Middle-Eastern heritage. In short, ethnicity mainly defined Arabs or Arab-ness in ways contrary to dominant (Western) cultural norms (Said 1978; Poynting et al. 2000). However, these very terms are made interchangeable and thus problematic. The media has commonly used conflation to link troubled youths, criminal behaviour and danger to ethnicity. Ethnicities are also identified visually through the media’s use of the phrase “Middle-Eastern appearance”. As such, ethnic behaviour was connected with specific appearances. These appearances play an important role in stereotyping the Middle Eastern

characters within *The Combination* as they reflect the troubled “ethnics” of daily society.

The concept of “Middle Eastern appearance” suggests that visual structures are major factors in the construction of threatening “otherness”. Appearance is perhaps the most important aspect in newspaper articles about ethnic “otherness” as, ‘articles about “race rape” and “ethnic crime” among young Arab and Muslim men are often accompanied by graphic images of alleged wrongdoers who are seen to embody evil’ (Noble 2008, p.14). By creating specific images and associating them with dangerous behaviours, there is a suggestion that it is not just one single perpetrator that is evil but rather an entire cultural community. The face becomes a signifier of identity and the faces of evildoers allow for associations with “otherness”. Appearance is obviously an important aspect within *The Combination*. It is critical that characters such as Zeus had an appearance that would reflect their criminal and violent behaviour throughout the film. This was achieved by styling the boys with mullet haircuts, wearing sporty tracksuits labels such as Adidas and Nike. These visual signifiers are widely associated with men of “Middle Eastern appearance” (Tabar 2007). Such a signature aspect creates a criminal type that doesn’t necessarily need to perform criminal actions in order to be seen as dangerous (Noble 2008, p.22). Hence, as long as Charlie and the boys are seen as dangerous, they *will* be dangerous. Noble (2008) labels this tendency as “vilification” in that the ethnicity of the men in these news articles is the central component identified as evil in the story.

The promotional poster for *The Combination* was just as much attention grabbing, showcasing the importance of “Middle Eastern appearance” and links to danger. The characters of *The Combination* are positioned to look thug-like and dangerous. Zeus is located in the centre of the poster, bare-chested, holding his hand across his chest in the shape of a gun. Charlie, Scott and the rest of the boys stand behind Zeus in a threatening way. The characters stand against the backdrop of a dark, grey sky with the phrase, ‘No second chance’ written underneath. This image suggests that the film is indeed one of gun violence and gang culture. By representing the boys in such a way, the film becomes more enticing for audience members because media commonly presents such an image making it quite relatable. Importantly, even though John is the main character in the film, he is not present on the poster.

The purpose of the threatening appearance is to accompany the dangerous behaviour these young males are believed to encounter. A simplistic way to do this is by submerging fear through idioms of space and place. Accordingly, ‘when we are talking about crime and fear of crime, we are talking about place and public space’ (Poynting et al. 2000 p.120-121). Many of the Middle Eastern youth crimes did occur in public spaces. Edward Lee was stabbed in a suburban street, the Skaf rapes occurred in suburban parks around Sydney’s west and the Cronulla Riots occurred on a public beach. *The Combination* mimics much of these crimes as well as their settings. Charlie and his friends are hanging out at the shops when Tom stabs a boy. It is in the parking lot that Charlie and Zeus have their first encounter with drugs and police. The bashing of Yas happens on a football field, at a local park. Not only do these scenes repeat common conceptions about ethnic youth and crime, but they also provide a truth in that the reel of the film reflects factuality. This allows audiences to use previous knowledge developed by the media about “otherness” to interpret specific criminal and violent scenes within *The Combination* as ethnic.

The violent spaces portrayed are most effective in regions where criminality is known (or assumed) to be high. Accordingly, the setting of western Sydney is idealistic in *The Combination* as the suburban outskirts of the city tend to be associated with a dystopia of immigration, violence and crime 'implying crime and urban go together' (Moran 2010, p.350). Public spaces that are used in *The Combination* become familiar and enticing to audiences over fictional settings. Moran (2010) argues that spaces used in cinema and television become locales upon which everyday life in metropolis is staged (p.349). Indoor scenes within *The Combinations* such as in the house or school are quite rare and the boys are commonly positioned outdoors in iconic Western Sydney settings (e.g. Parramatta River).

The use of real suburbs gives the film an advantage in connecting with audience interpretation. It is important for audiences to recognize these suburbs in order to form a real connection with the film. McClean (2011) argues, 'understandings of social reality are mediated by fictional as well as factual content' (p.180). There is a connection that audiences develop called emotional realism where there is a voluntary suspension of disbelief to engage with situations or characters (McClean 2011, p.180). In other words, audiences momentarily believe the film narrative to be real and thus the 'imaginary world allows for emotional connection' and 'to empathize, shift loyalties, accept character reversals, and deal with complexity in developing individual private interpretations of broader public issues' (McClean 2011, p.180). Such mimicry allows audiences to understand themes discussed in *The Combination*. Sydney's West is commonly addressed as a 'ghetto' housing people with ethnic and low socio-economic backgrounds (Powell 1993). These are perhaps some considerations and understandings as to why boys in *The Combination* are involved in crime.

In their studies, Poynting et al. (2000) have found that news media often deem ethnic males too caught up in gang culture to go out and seek lawful employment. These males are represented as lazy, irresponsible and criminal. However, many of these men have migrated with families to Australia from Middle Eastern and other regions. As a result, they claim a working-class and low socio-economic status which tends to lead them to be un-educated and often criminal. According to Poynting et al. (2000) these young men turn to minimalist crimes such as drug trafficking because they have been marginalized as such by the media. As a result, 'people participate in the "underground economy" not because of a predilection for criminal behaviours, but because drug dealing and stealing constitute an alternative path to economic success' (2000, p.141). This is especially true in *The Combination*, as Charlie and Zeus get involved in drug distribution because they want quick and easy money.

There is an emphasis on violence that is prominent throughout the film. This is perhaps most significant as violence is a key factor in many Middle Eastern youth gang related stories. Likewise, the Cronulla Riots were violent uprisings promoting as a day of "bashings" (Poynting 2006). It is no surprise then that violence is presented as both a masculine and an ethnic trait in *The Combination*. Notably, no female character performs a criminal act. Both Charlie's group and the Aussie boys use violence as a means to overpower the other. *The Combination* follows a chain of bashings between the two groups. At first, Charlie is seen flirting with Scott's girlfriend, leading Scott and the Aussie boys to confront Charlie by using racist remarks such as 'dirty wog' and 'camel rider'. The ringleader of Charlie's group,

Zeus, starts a brawl with the Aussie boys after these remarks. In order to get revenge, Scott leads the Aussie boys to bash Yas, which enrages Zeus, who later shoots and kills Scott.

One of the more iconic violent scenes is between Tom and another boy. Whilst hanging out at the shops, playing arcade games, Tom stabs another boy with his pocketknife after losing a game called *Street Fighter*. This scene stresses two important points. First, due to the negative media portrayal of his Middle Eastern ethnicity, Tom is already expected to carry around violent weapons and use them in public spaces. As a result, this scene mimics the ethnic intent of harm and danger considering the banality that stabbings in public spaces between youths is frequent. Second, Tom's loss in *Street Fighter* undermined his toughness as a male and so Tom resorted to violence to restore his power. Moreover, the latter is also valid as the boy who won *Street Fighter* teased and humiliated Tom in front of his friends, explicitly undermining Tom's power as a male.

The violence that is re-occurring within the film may also be linked to urban-popular culture. Hip-hop and rap are quite accessible stereotypes in the frameworks of youth gangs. In *The Combination*, the posters in Charlie's room are all of gangster rap artists such as N.W.A and Tupac. In the scene where Charlie receives his first gun, he plays with it and quotes a famous line from the film *Scarface* (1983), 'fuck you Tony you cockroach.' *Scarface* happens to be a film well known for its association with violence and crime. These can be read as aspects that influence Charlie's decisions and thus influence his criminal choices. Crime and violence is read not only to be masculine, but also as something that allows young males to fit in with the masculine world. Having a gun proves Charlie's masculinity over the other male characters.

Racial slurs within *The Combination* are frequent between Charlie's group of friends and the Aussie boys. When expressed by the Aussies, these are invariably informed by contemporary politics, whereas those of the ethnics, whilst also political, act like a defence mechanism. Insults such as 'dirty wog', 'terrorist', 'Osama', and 'camel rider' are used by the Aussie boys against the Charlie and his friends and carry stereotypical traits that have been picked up by media representations. These, according to Peter Manning (2006), are frequently used by Australian news media to depict Lebanese and Arabic people as naturally evil. In the scene where Ibo (the drug dealer) confronts Charlie and Moe about Zeus's arrest, he comments on Moe's mullet hairstyle, 'Fuck off Osama. Go to the hairdresser, one that specialises in cutting the hair of human beings.' This insult doesn't just attack the presumed Middle-Eastern appearance as suggested earlier, but also de-humanises that very appearance. When Scott and the Aussie boys beat up Yas, they do so using insults that are quite politically driven, such as, 'this is our country, we grew here, you fucking flew here', stressing the importance of White domination of Australian territory. Yas then replies, 'we came on planes, you came in chains' which is used as a defence comment by insulting Australian history. At the end of the bashing Scott calls Yas a 'terrorist', a racial concept fuelled by political tension. Importantly, this scene is significant because the insults used by Yas and Scott were directly quoted from actual racial slurs used by men during the Cronulla Riots in 2005.

## **‘Real’ or ‘Reel’**

The complex imprint of racism and crime, as well as the setting of western Sydney, allowed *The Combination* to become a success during its opening days. In fact, *The Sydney Morning Herald* prompted that the film was, ‘the weekend’s top earning release across Western Sydney’ (2009, p.3). Unfortunately, this was the only article that mentioned *The Combination*’s success. There were several film reviews that described *The Combination* as a dark portrait of youth in western Sydney. *The Sydney Morning Herald*’s Sanda Hall (2009) described it as a tough-talking film that feels as if it has been ripped out of today’s paper. Prior to the film’s release, Gemma Jones (2009) reported in *The Daily Telegraph* that *The Combination* ‘captures a sickening but realistic violence between warring gangs’ (p.9). What these newspaper reports neglect to highlight however, is perhaps that the mimicry of reality was the point of the film.

Three days after its release, Greater Union cinemas pulled the film on claims that riots erupted amongst audience members at a Parramatta venue in Sydney’s west. Newspapers including *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian*, reported that brawls broke out between audience members and Greater Union staff. *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported, ‘*The Combination*, a feature about Lebanese gangs in Parramatta, opened to sell-out crowds on Thursday but within three days was pulled from all Greater Union screens’ (Jensen, 2009, p.3). The brawl was blamed on the dark and violent themes of the film. *The Australian* stated that it was the audience members that compromised the health and safety of Greater Union staff (Overington, 2009, p.5) suggesting that when it comes to ethnic youth, violence is inevitable. *The Sydney Morning Herald* also reported on the brawl but concluded that, ‘Police attended a minute after the brawl was reported with no sign of anyone fighting. There was just people leaving’ (Jensen, 2009, p.3). The interesting factor of these reports is that such a minor incident resulted in the pulling of *The Combination* from Greater Union cinemas nationwide.

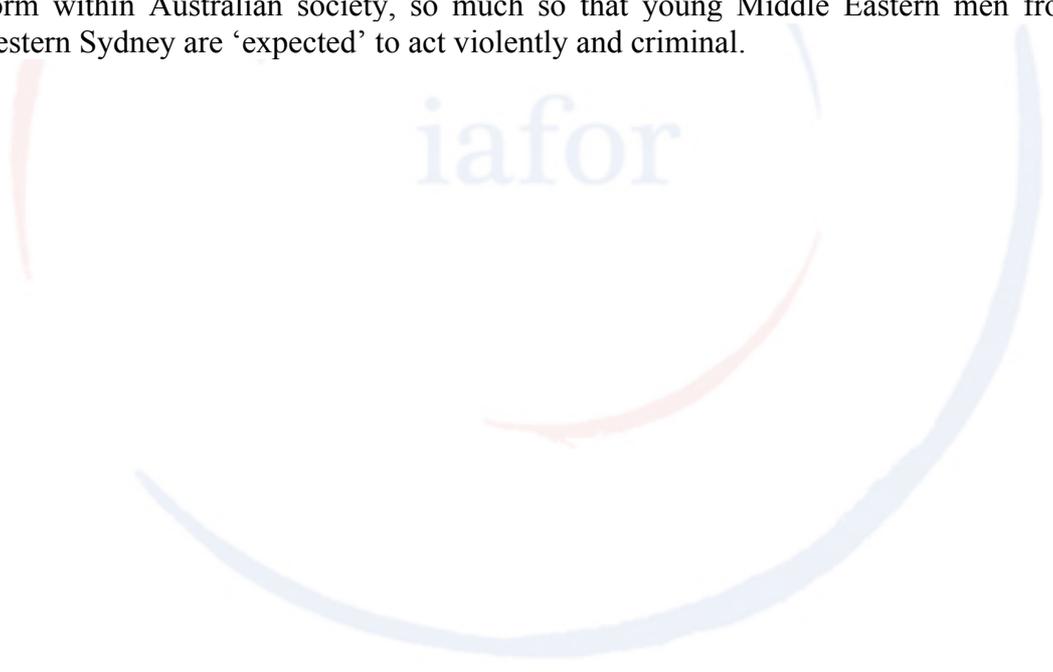
One of the leading actors of the film, Ali Haidar (Zeus) was charged with assault the same weekend as the opening of the film. Many articles were published outlining Haidar’s arrest and claimed that his criminal actions mimicked those of his character in the film. It was reported that Haidar was sentenced to almost six months imprisonment for violent assault not dissimilar to those *The Combination* depicts. *The Daily Telegraph* released an article with the headline, ‘Star of Gang Film *The Combination* Ali Haidar in Silverwater Jail’. Not only was Haidar’s arrest used to create bad publicity for the film, but also stated, ‘this is the second time life has imitated art with the stabbing murder of Mohamad Omar last month at a Homebush Lebanese club where a scene from the movie was shot’ (Jones, 2009, p.9). This comment suggests that the “real” and “reel” align, re-creating fear among community members. However, there is no official evidence that the stabbing of Omar has any relation to *The Combination*.

## **Conclusion**

Since the stabbing of Edward Lee in 1998, a spiral of Middle Eastern youth gang reports have surfaced and re-surfaced in media reporting. The significance of these reports (and events) has clarified an us/them narrative which gave rise to the Cronulla

Riots. Poynting (2007) asserts that the media does not invent demonstrations out of thin air, but rather articulates and elaborates on popular concerns that are already established within society (p.164). Consequently, the Cronulla Riots erupted from a context of anxiety, fear, hostility and paranoia about men of “Middle Eastern appearance”. The reporting of the riots clearly showcased the sensitivity of racism in a multicultural environment.

Australian film, *The Combination*, attempted to highlight much of news content about Middle Eastern youth gangs. By drawing out specific discourses of Middle Eastern appearance, racism, crime and violence, *The Combination* was able to re-represent these very factors. In doing so, Middle Eastern, Muslim, Arab and Lebanese communities are given a voice to defend the criminal actions commonly addressed in news media. However, the consequence of such a style of cinema means that *The Combination* emphasises stereotypes over important issues. Audiences tend to get lost in the enticing appeal and familiarity of orientalist representations rather than understand the key discourses being challenged. Consequently, *The Combination* was unable to by-pass the reoccurring stereotypes developed within news media about Middle Eastern youth gangs. However, the film did manage to establish a real/reel binary that blurred the factuality of news content, cinema narrative and actuality. Perhaps the constant injection of orientalist stereotypes through media has become a norm within Australian society, so much so that young Middle Eastern men from western Sydney are ‘expected’ to act violently and criminal.

The logo for the International Association for Cultural Studies (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the word "iafor" in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, faint, light blue circular arc that is partially visible at the top and bottom. A thin, light red curved line is also visible, partially overlapping the blue arc.

## Works Cited

- Aslan, A. (2009). *Islamophobia in Australia*. Glebe: Agora Press.
- Casey, M. &. (3 November 1998). Dial-a-Gun: gang says it's easier than buying a pizza. *The Daily Telegraph*, 1,4.
- Dreher, T., & Chalmers, S. (2009). Safeguarding Masculinity, Protecting "our" Borders: The Banality of Sexual Violence in the Public Sphere in Australia. In T. Dreher, & C. Ho, *Beyond the Hijab Debates: New conversations on gender, race and religion* (pp. 134-148). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars.
- Evers, C. (2009). 'The local boys': Violence, Care, Masculinity and the Riots. In G. Noble, *Lines in the Sand: The Cronulla Riots, Multiculturalism and Belonging* (pp. 185-200.). Sydney: Institute of Criminology Press.
- Field, D. (Director). (2009). *The Combination* [Motion Picture].
- Hall, S. (2009, February 26). The Combination. *Sydney Morning Herald*.
- Humphrey, M. (2007). Culturalising the Abject: Islam, Law and Moral Panic in the West. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 42(1), 9-25.
- Hussein, S. (2009). Looking In or Lookin Out? Stories of the Multiple Meanings of Veiling. In T. D. Ho., *Beyond the hijab debates : new conversations on gender, race and religion* (pp. 81-87). Newcastle : Cambridge Scholars .
- Jensen, E. (2009, March 2). Assaults not linked to gang film's dumping, say police. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 9.
- Jones, G. (2009, January 19). Star of Gang Film The Combination Ali Haidar in Silverwater Jail. *The Daily Telegraph*, 9.
- Manning, P. (2006). *Us and them: A Journalist's Investigation of Media, Muslims and the Middle East*. Sydney: Random House Australia.
- McClellan, G. (2010). Cultural threats, cop drama, and 'community PR': Diversity and security cultures in EastWest 101. *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 25(2), 177-188.
- Moran, A. (2010). TV nation or TV city? *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 24(3), 343-356.
- Noble, G. (2008). The Face of Evil: Demonising the Arab other in contemporary Australia. *Cultural Studies Review*, 14(2), 14-33.
- Overington, C. (2009, March 2). The Combination pulled as audience starts fight. *The Australian*, 5.
- Palma, B. D. (Director). (1983). *Scarface* [Motion Picture].
- Powell, J. (1993). *Out West: perceptions of Sydney's western suburbs*. ST Leonards NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Poynting, S. (2002). 'Street Arabs' and 'Mug Liars': racism, class relations and moral panic about Lebanese-Australian youth. In G. Hage, *Arab Australians Today: citizenship and belonging* (pp. 145-160). Carlton South: Melbourne University Press.
- Poynting, S. (2006). What caused the Cronulla riot? *Race & Class*, 48(85), 85-92.
- Poynting, S. (2007). 'Thugs' and 'grubs' at Cronulla: From media beat-ups to beating up migrants. In G. Moran, & S. Poynting, *Outrageous: Moral Panics in Australia* (pp. 158-170). Hobart: ACYS Publishing.
- Poynting, S., Collins, J., Tabar, P., & Noble, G. (2000). *Kebabs, Kids, Cops and Crime: Youth, Ethnicity and Crime*. Annandale: Pluto Press.
- Poynting, S., Collins, J., Tabar, P., & Noble, G. (2004). *Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other*. Sydney: Sydney Institute of Criminology.
- Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism* . London: Routledge.

- Tabar, P. (2007). Habiibs in Australia: Language Identity and Masculinity. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 28(2), 157-172.
- Warner, K. (2004). Gang Rape in Sydney: Crime, the Media, Politics, Race and Sentencing. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 37(344), 344-361.
- White, R. (2007). Taking it to the streets: The larrikins and the Lebanese. In S. Poynting , & G. Morgan, *Outrageous! Moral panics in Australia* (pp. 40-53). Hobart: ACYS Publishing.
- Windschuttle, K. (2005). It's not a race war, it's a clash of cultures. *The Australian*.

**Contact email:** [branka.prodanovic@mq.edu.au](mailto:branka.prodanovic@mq.edu.au)





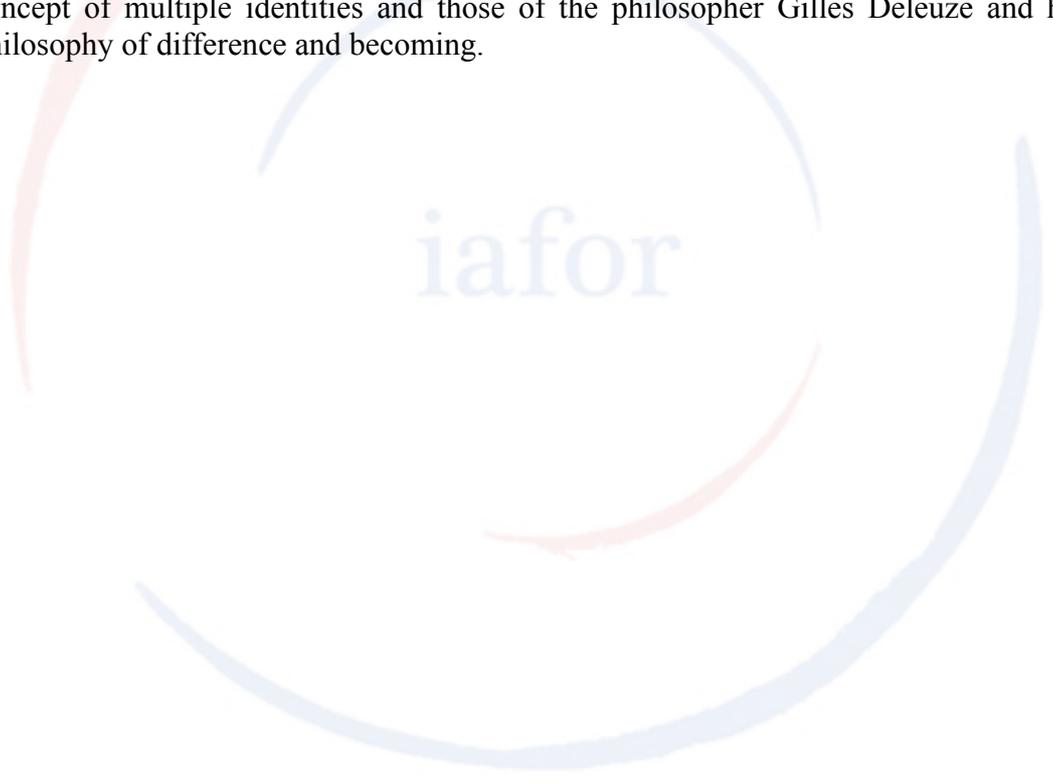
***Multiplicity and Difference: Pluralities of Identity***

Rehana Esmail, The New School for Public Engagement, USA

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings

**Abstract**

The main objective of this paper is to discuss the idea of cultural identity, and the tendency for it to become the overriding or singular affiliation. While exploring individualism as a pluralistic notion of constant movement and becoming as opposed to monistic substance, the discussion will emphasize on the importance of parallel multiplicity and difference as a critical, yet overlooked quality of identity. Here, the arguments are mainly rooted in the claims of the economist Amartya Sen and his concept of multiple identities and those of the philosopher Gilles Deleuze and his philosophy of difference and becoming.



iafor

**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## Introduction

The idea of identity can be traced back to the beginning of civilization, when people began to define themselves in regards to their race and belief, and later, their culture, which again was according to which part of the world or region they are from. Thus, the emergence of identity can only occur through differentiating oneself from “the other”; in other words, identity is relative.

These human-created differences between the human race or civilizations is not only the reason for the emergence and existence of countries, race and beliefs, but also to a great extent for the barbaric violence human history has experienced. Different groups whose affiliation is rather singular towards a specific identity in order to dissociate themselves from other groups, can lead to exclusion and hatred among these groups as common interests are ignored.

In this context Amartya Sen points out the destructiveness of mono-dimensional affiliations and argues against the reductionist conviction that human beings around the world can be understood and pre-eminently characterized in terms of the distinct civilizations to which they belong. Similarly, the philosopher Gilles Deleuze anchors his discussion in the idea that the individual is to be comprehended in terms of the constant differentiating-process of becoming -- a metaphysics in which the concept of multiplicity replaces that of substance.

Elements of collective, individual and cultural memory as well as the contemporary socio-political structures will be embedded, as the discussion about singular identity and its dangerous path proceeds.

Combining these two very similar viewpoints of Sen’s humanitarian perspective and Deleuze’s ontological approach, the paper will not only critically examine the romanticized notion of cultural belonging, community and group-affiliation, and how these are often seen as a kind of extension of one’s own self, but also bring to attention how these affiliations can influence the thinking and decision-making process, as well as the stereotypes, prejudices and nationalism they evoke.

### 1. Individualism as a Pluralistic Notion of Constant Movement and Becoming

“To live well is to fully express one's power, to go to the limits of one's potential, rather than to judge what exists by non-empirical, transcendent standards. Modern society still suppresses difference and alienates persons from what they can do. To affirm reality, which is a flux of change and difference, we must overturn established identities and so become all that we can become—though we cannot know what that is in advance”.<sup>1</sup>

When approaching the topic of identity, it is essential to look at it from the angle of cultural studies (exterior) as well as from the perspective of the ontological question (interior or individual), and, above all, the dialectic relationship between the two.

---

<sup>1</sup> From “Essays Critical and Clinical”, by Gilles Deleuze, 1993, p. 135

There is a clear (exterior) attempt of partitioning the people of the world into little boxes of disparate civilizations while trying to manipulate the nature of our (interior) individuality and using identity as a tool to create power structures. Why else is it that we “implicitly give credibility to the allegedly unique importance of that one categorization [of civilization] over all the other ways in which people of the world can be classified?”<sup>2</sup> That is why it is important, when embracing the idea of identity, to break, or at least set aside these metaphysical constructions of identity and address the very essence of the individual from the ontological perspective.

Gilles Deleuze’s approach towards a philosophy that mobilizes difference while privileging movement over substance, leads the way into understanding identity as a constant flux as opposed to a solid entity. He believes that the concepts of identity -- based on forms, categories, resemblances, etc. -- fail to attain what he calls “difference in itself”. The individual should be comprehended through the elements of ‘process of becoming’, constant change and movement, which brought it into existence in the first place, instead of being categorized with a predeterminate identity based on an already defined type, species, or essence to which she or he will then belong. Thus, identity is based on constant movement and change, just like everything around us. There is no singular substance, only an always-differentiating process, always folding, unfolding, refolding. Individualism consists of multiplicity which leads to the paradoxical formula of “pluralism=monism”.

### 1.1 The Destructiveness of Mono-Dimensional Affiliations

In order to embrace this pluralistic notion of our individuality, it is crucial to understand that we are not imprisoned in our installed locations and affiliations, and especially cannot be reduced to one overriding affiliation emerging from a single identity.

The destructive tendency to categorize humanity and “view individuals in terms of one overriding affiliation as opposed to the multiple affiliations, myriad groups, and plurality of interests that define people in the real world. When complicated individuals are simplified and diminished into neat little boxes, with no allowance for the crosscutting complexities that connect us all our common humanity begins to erode.”<sup>3</sup>

This reductionist conviction that human beings around the world can be understood and preeminently characterized in terms of the distinct civilizations to which they belong is extensively endorsed in Samuel Huntington’s book ‘The Clash of Civilizations’.

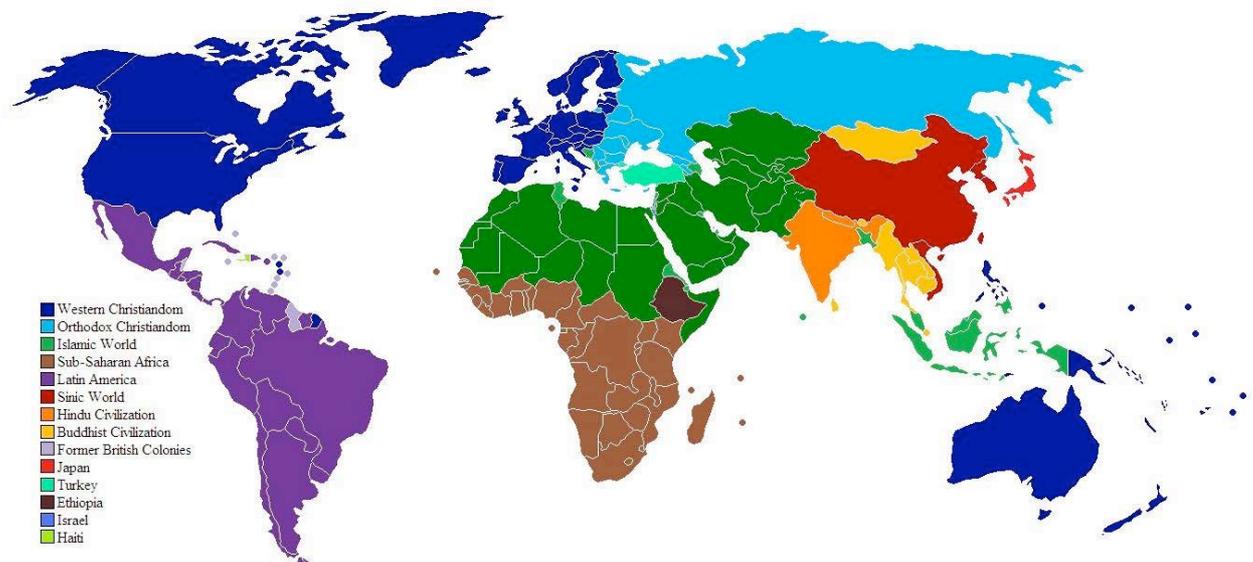
As Huntington refers to his categorizations as “The Western world”, “The Islamic world”, “The Hindu world”, or “The Buddhist world”, not only he reduces people to this very one dimension, but he also implies that these “disparate civilizations *must be*

---

<sup>2</sup> From “Identity and Violence”, by Amartya Sen, 2006, p. 41

<sup>3</sup> From “Pluralism And Posterity: Extricate The Positives And Negatives Of Group Identity Through The Writing Of Amartya Sen And David Brooks”, by Michael Cohen, 2010

somehow antagonistic and hostile to each other and tend, in an almost “natural” way, to breed enmity toward each other”.



**Figure 1: This is an image<sup>4</sup>**

This conviction seems to be convenient for Huntington in order to avoid the “shabbiness of contemporary politics”<sup>5</sup>, and when there is no way around it, conflicts are simply referred to as “ancient feuds”.

The illusion of destiny of a singular identity is arresting the individual to choose and experience all her or his other identities and affiliations disregarding their civilizational background.

### 1.2 Multiplicity, Not Substance

The alternative to generating unique identity is not a position ‘unencumbered’ with any identity, but rather the idea of conscious and subconscious choice that is able to continue to exist even in any *encumbered* position one happens to occupy. The insistence of splitting up the large world into little islands that are not within intellectual reach of each other<sup>6</sup> can only be broken by recognizing multiplicity within each and every individual. For example, a woman identifying herself as a Hindu (since she practices hinduism - may it be in the way that suits her ideology or interpretation) can, at the same time, identify herself a musician (since she plays the guitar), a poet (since she writes poetry), an engineer (since this is her profession), an activist (since she is actively involved in women’s rights), as well as many more things. Civilizational classifiers ignore the extensive interconnections among the people that are not based on being from the same civilization, but instead on involvements in political, social, economic, commercial, artistic, musical, or other cultural activities.

<sup>4</sup> From “The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order”, Samuel Huntington, 1996

<sup>5</sup> From “Identity and Violence”, by Amartya Sen, 2006, p. 43

<sup>6</sup> From “Identity and Violence”, by Amartya Sen, 2006, p. 34

However, identity shifts not only in its kind but also the scale of one particular identity within an individual can shift depending on their environment or if they feel that their identity is threatened or even questioned by exterior forces; as the author and architect Suad Amiry states:

“If you ask me about my identity I will first tell you that I am Mediterranean, then I will tell you I am an Arab, then I will tell you that I am a Palestinian by cause. But our identities are changing all the time, and the identity that is strongest is the one that is under attack. If women are attacked, then our identity as women becomes very high; if Palestinians are under attack or occupation, then the identity as a Palestinian comes to the surface; if there is Islamophobia, and even someone like me who isn't religious (I am an atheist), then my identity as an Arab, a Muslim, Palestinian comes forward. But if I am sitting at peace with myself, really I feel I am a human being, nothing more, nothing less, all the rest have to do with how people relate to me and not to do with how I really feel.”<sup>7</sup>

Therefore the reasoning of the choice of relevant identities must go well beyond the purely intellectual surface and be put into the social context and environment the individual occupies during different moments in time.

## 2. Cultural Belonging as an Extension of the Own Self

Since the social structures around the world are based on nation-states which all advocate and stir some form of nationalistic and cultural pride (some more than others), the urge of the individual to belong and to fit into one of these manufactured boxes can be considered as a natural reaction. Thus, Community-based identity tends to be perceived as a kind of extension of one's own self and has been established as peerless and paramount. This romanticized view of community memberships without questioning its predetermination, is something that needs to be deglamorized and taken into account through a critical lens. Not only does it halt the continuation of developing other possible affiliations and identities that an individual may come across besides being a member of a particular community, but it also effects the individual's decisions, moral judgements, values and norms. In the context of how the environment can shape one's identity, the concept of collective and cultural memory need to be drawn into the discussion.

Maurice Halbwachs analyzed the concept of *The Collective Memory*, which can be seen in symbols, rituals and representations that are available publicly, and can be seen as (cultural) elements that shape our individual memory in a collective manner. While he refers to this contrast between “history” and “collective memory” as being the same as that of past and present, he describes the link between collective memory and identity as “the active past that forms our identity”. Building upon Halbwachs' relation between collective memory and identity, the German Egyptologist Jan Assmann introduced the term “cultural memory” in his book *Das Kulturelle Gedächtnis*, where he emphasizes the process of memory within a certain culture and how its past (its memories) effect the present state of this culture.

---

<sup>7</sup> “Suad Amiry: A Conversation”, *Kalimat* Issue 03, by Danah Abdulla and Karim Sultan, 2011

That being said, it is critical to realize the tremendous influence that our memory generates towards our present perceptions, ideas and feelings, in other words, our identity. It is precisely our memory that shapes us as we exist in our identity (in particular our cultural identity) as past and present are in a constant interchange with one another.

“The specific character that a person derives from belonging to a distinct society and culture is not seen to maintain itself for generations as a result of phylogenetic evolution, but rather a result of socialization and customs. The “survival of the type” in the sense of a cultural pseudo species is a function of the cultural memory.”<sup>8</sup>

There can be little doubt that the way a person judges a situation or views a decision is highly influenced by the culture and/or community he or she belongs to, as well as his or her extent of involvement with it.

### **Conclusion**

This paper attempts to demonstrate one vision from yet two very different perspectives. While Gilles Deleuze is approaching his ideas of a philosophy of difference from a predominantly ontological perspective arguing the individual constitutes multiplicity, Amartya Sen speaks from a political-humanitarian viewpoint about the idea of multiple identities. Both rooting their argument in the failure of limiting and reducing human beings to one-dimensional creatures.

The creation of impenetrable divisions among people lie to a great extent in polarized visions focused on a singular categorization while expunging the far-reaching relevance of all our other manifold affiliations that make human beings the complex and intricate social creatures that we are.

A first step towards embracing the multidimensionality of human nature is to free ourselves from any presumptions of unique identity. This idea is not to be confused with an unencumbered position towards any particular identity, in fact, social relationships of group memberships are crucial, but we need to understand ourselves as “diversely different” and shift away from the imposed tendency to construct categories based on civilization, religion, nation etc. but rather create interconnections among the common cultures of political, social or artistic affinities and involvements. The hope of harmony in the contemporary world resides in liberating the pluralities of the human identity while incorporating reason and choice in any identity-based thought and decision.

---

<sup>8</sup> New German Critique, No. 65, Cultural History/Cultural Studies, 1995, p. 125-126

## References

- Abdullah, D. and Sultan, K. (2011). Suad Amiry: A Conversation, *Kalimat, Issue 03*, <http://www.kalimatmagazine.com/currentaffairs/tag/riwaq>
- Assman, J., Czaplicka, J. (1995). Collective Memory and Cultural Identity. *New German Critique, No. 65, Cultural History/Cultural Studies, pp. 125-133*. Duke University Press  
<http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublication?journalCode=newgermcr>
- Cohen, M. (2010). Pluralism And Posterity: Extricating The Positives And Negatives Of Group Identity Through The Writing Of Amartya Sen And David Brooks. <http://www.mediate.com/mobile/article.cfm?id=5694>
- Deleuze, G. (1968). *Difference and Repetition*. Columbia University Press
- Deleuze, G. (1993). *Essays Critical and Clinical*. University of Minnesota Press
- Huntington, S. (1996). *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Simon & Schuster
- Sen, A. (2006) *Identity and Violence*. W. W. Norton & Company

iafor



## *Hello Kitty's Popularity and Its Change of Representation*

Miho Tsukamoto, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, Japan

The North American Conference on Media, Film & Cultural Studies 2014  
Official Conference Proceedings

### **Abstract**

Since it was introduced in the market in 1974, Hello Kitty, a fictional white cat, became a Japanese cultural icon and has been attributed as being “kawaii” (“cute”). Characters of Kitty have been used in a myriad of ways like iPods, PCs, Nintendo 3DS, Play Station, games, telephone, televisions, buses, jewelries, coins, and etc. Many celebrities such as Cameron Diaz, and Mariah Carey, love to buy Hello Kitty products.

The manufacturer, Sanrio Co., Ltd. sold Kitty license to Walmart in the US, and maintains a Kitty character brand office in Milan, Italy. It endeavors to promote Kitty brands all over the world. This gives us a picture of Sanrio’s sales strategy in the global market. In this presentation, I will examine Kitty’s history, and its products, as well as Sanrio’s sales strategy. I exemplify Sanrio’s sales strategy in the global market, intentional changes its styles every five years of Kitty’s appearance. Then, I will also focus on Kitty’s popularity in terms of its distinct characteristics and its changes in its image, as impacted by “KITTYLAB” with a comparison of American Girl by Pleasant Company. Accordingly, I especially focus on “KITTYLAB,” a new type of attraction where you can enjoy games with Kitty, and choose its parts to build your own Kitty, which totally alters the image of the cultural icon.

**iafor**

The International Academic Forum  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)

## **I. Introduction**

After its mass market introduction in 1974, the “Hello Kitty<sup>1</sup>” figure, a fictional white cat, has become a Japanese cultural icon and thought of by many Japanese people as being “kawaii” (“cute”). The “Hello Kitty” character also known as “Kitty” has been used or integrated into many products such as iPods, PCs and laptops, Nintendo 3DS Gameboys, Play Station, games, telephones, televisions, buses, jewelries, watches, clothing items, edible products such as macaroni, stationery items, postal stamps, golf balls, coins, etc. Many international celebrities such as Cameron Diaz, Mariah Carey, Lady Gaga, and Britney Spears have purchased Kitty products and displayed them openly. Although Kitty is just a fictional character, its notoriety has helped to serve as an “ambassador” to UNICEF three times, and to the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

The manufacturer, Sanrio Co., Ltd. sold the Kitty license to Walmart in the US, and maintains a Kitty character brand office in Milan, Italy. It endeavors to promote Kitty brands all over the world. This gives us a picture of Sanrio’s sales strategy in the global market. Moreover, the third-generation creator of Hello Kitty, Yuko Yamaguchi, reveals that she intentionally changes its styles every five years so that consumers will never get tired of Kitty’s appearance. Although Kitty’s successors recommended keeping Kitty’s original appearance, Yamaguchi has drastically changed its shape and form through time. After the opening of “KITTYLAB,” a new type of attraction, in 2011, the concept changed further. In “KITTYLAB,” you can enjoy games with Kitty, and choose its parts to build your own Kitty. You can select parts of its hair style, its eyes, its nose, its ribbon, and outfits, which totally alters the image of the cultural icon. In this respect, I will examine Kitty’s history, its products, and Sanrio’s sales strategy. I will also focus on Kitty’s popularity in terms of its distinct characteristics and its changes in its image, as impacted by “KITTYLAB” with a comparison of American Girl by the Pleasant Company.

## **II. Kitty’s History and Its Popularity**

Kitty’s products are vast ranging from food items, cosmetics, furniture, buses, cars, PCs, jewelries, stationary goods, and other collaborated products like stickers, plates, and lunch boxes. We, in Japan, are inundated with various Kitty’s products. If you live in Japan, you can easily purchase Kitty’s goods naturally as you would go to McDonald, or Kentucky Fried Chicken to buy fast food. Its appeal and popularity resulted in Sanrio opening an indoor amusement park called Puteri Harbour Family Theme Park in Malaysia and BLACK WONDER in Hong Kong in 2012 related to consumers growing awareness and acceptance of Kitty products outside of Japan.

Now we see Kitty’s history and its popularity through the eyes of a Kitty fan, and “Kittylers.” Kitty is popular to many Kittylers because Kitty and its numerous products are affordable, and its simple designs are captivating to many people. Kitty has been popular since its creation by Sanrio Co., Ltd. Although Sanrio has created many fantastic characters including Little Twin Stars (Kiki & Lala), Patty and Jimmy (a couple of a girl and a boy), Bad Batsumaru (bad penguin), Usahana (a rabbit), Osaru no Monkichi (a monkey), and etc., Kitty has been most popular among them. However, Kitty has been changed periodically to maintain its consumer appeal.

## A. Kitty's Change and its Production

Firstly, we analyze Kitty's change as it changes remarkably, and focus on its production as we have more products than ever. Almost every five years, Kitty has been renewed. The following shows Kitty's changes.

Year	Change
1983	Kitty's outline was taken away
1985	Kitty's body became larger
1987	Kitty became fashionable
1994	Kitty's ribbon changed
1999	A new boyfriend, Daniel, was created

The biggest change is Kitty's face line. Even without a black outline, we can still distinguish Kitty. In addition, without it, we can have variation of Kitty's products. The original 1974 Kitty wears blue clothes and a red ribbon. Primary colors have also added light pink and more varied colors. After 1987, Kitty wears different types of more varied clothes. Kitty's ribbon, her trademark, also changes with different colors and shapes such as flowers, and cherries. To represent Kitty's biggest change, Sanrio creates Kitty's new boyfriend, Daniel, because Kitty never has a boyfriend before.

Currently, the 50,000 Kitty's products outnumber Disney's products on the market, and are sold in 60 countries. Sanrio depends on 80 percent of its profits on Kitty's production in-house. In 2012, Sanrio sells Kitty's license to 3,000 stores in the US Walmart. Moreover, they enthusiastically work for license business in the European market, and now they are serious about going into the Chinese market to establish Asian companies. These products include not only daily use products such as food, clothes, cosmetics, furniture, but also stock certificate and financial products such as gold coins, and transportation vehicles such as taxis, buses, and train. In Japan, Kitty's labels can be found in food, cosmetics, furniture, buses, cars, PCs, jewelry, stationary items, just to name a few. You can say we are saturated with Kitty's products nationwide.

While most Kitty products are affordable, there are some Kitty which is more expensive such as PC, Robot, Cristal Dog House, Handbag, and Platinum Jewelry. PC Hello Kitty LaVie Laptop Swarovski is decorated with precious stones on the PC which costs \$1,825. Kitty Robot can communicate and recognize faces with a CMOS server with a price tag of \$6,299. Hello Kitty Cristal Dog House costs \$31,660 which was decorated with gorgeous crystals, with Kitty's face designed on the bottom surface. The Hello Kitty Handbag costing \$100,000 is decorated with Swarovski crystals. The most expensive Kitty is of Platinum metal made to commemorate the 35th anniversary of Kitty created by Austria's Glass manufacturer, Swarovski at the sum of \$152,585.

If you live in Japan, you can easily collect Kitty's goods just as you frequent a McDonald, or Kentucky Fried Chicken fast food restaurant, you can find Kitty's items such as dolls, stickers, plates, lunch boxes in collaboration with other companies.

Kitty's shows and movies have produced and shown. Kitty also remade the world great fairy tales such as Thumbelina, Cinderella, White Snow, Hansel and Gretel, and etc. In addition, board and card games and Nintendo DS electronic games featuring the Kitty character were also created.

Moreover, Kitty celebrated its anniversary by collaborating with works with designers such as Anna Sui, and Leatherette. In addition, in KITTY EX, an exhibition of art and fashion, as a Kitty's thirtieth anniversary in 2004, more than 100 artists participated in the event. As a memory of 50th anniversary of Sanrio's establishment in 2010, they publish Vogue with a Hello Kitty's key chain as an extra free gift, and designers such as Dior and John Galliano have designed Kitty's products.

## **B. Kitty's Popularity and Kittler**

What makes Kitty so popular? There were several reasons to Kitty's popularity. Kitty is popular among people in all generation, all females and males, any nation, and any ethnicity. It is especially popular among teenage girls in many nations. Indeed, Sanrio is paying attention to produce Kitty products for people in diverse generations. As the US writer, Mark McVeigh, cites, "through its marketing of Hello Kitty, Sanrio has made a concentrated effort to tie together within a single individual different modes of self-presentation that chronologically correspond to girlhood, female adolescence, and womanhood: 'cute,' 'cool,' and 'camp'" (McVeigh 226-7). This implies that most teenage girls see Kitty as 'cute,' and indeed, Kitty is a symbol of "cute" representation, "female adolescence" sees Kitty as "cool," and womanhood "camp." The company creates different Kitty productions with different designs. For example, Sanrio makes a metal pink leather wallet with small illustration of Hello Kitty for womanhood, while they create a bright pink enamel wallet with the large Hello Kitty logos and a small illustration of Kitty for female adolescence, and for girlhood, they make a red plastic wallet with a huge Hello Kitty figure. Accordingly, Sanrio identifies products to those whom to be targeted to.

Now, let's take a look at the reasons for Kitty's popularity. Firstly, Kitty's products are extremely affordable, so even elementary school children can afford to buy them with their pocket money. Almost every girl in Japan has some kinds of Kitty's products at home or workplaces. Secondly, through mass marketing, publicity and public acceptance, everybody knows Kitty. The country is filled with Kitty's goods. Kitty shares so much with us in our daily life that we can naturally purchase and have them at home and in public. Even if we go to souvenir shops in every service area on highway or train station, or even at the airport, we can see Kitty's good luck charms, handkerchiefs, key chains, pencils, erasers, and etc. In other words, Kitty can be a good model of mass production in society. Japanese will purchase the latest iteration of Kitty and related products, and anxiously wait for new Kitty introductions with different versions to purchase. It is similar to the Apple fans waiting for the newest IPAD to hit the market. Not only can we buy Hello Kitty PCs, cameras, car navigation systems, suitcases, shoes, clothes, and etc., but also we can buy color contact lenses. We see the repeated Kitty "supply and buy" cycle in our capitalist society. Thirdly, one of the reasons of popularity is that Kitty brings us comfort. Kitty's round face and a round body give us a sense of ease, soft and fluffy images, and this is one of the reasons that Kittyler collects a lot of Kitty's stuffed animals, cushions, pillows, futons, and etc.. Finally, Kitty shows its simplistic form. Its facial

expression is simple, and is easy to make a change of face and appearance such as attaching a mouth or a hair. Kitty is popular because its face is simple without a mouth. Without a mouth, Kitty can a multitude expressions and emotions such as delight, anger, sorrow, and pleasure.

In fact, Kitty was extremely popular during 1990s. Many people think Kitty is “kawaii.” According to Oxford dictionary, “kawaii” defines “the quality of being cute, or products that are cute.” There are many celebrities who were lovers of Kitty. Thus, enthusiasm of Kitty’s collector is called “Kitt Tyler” who wears Kitty’s product and coordinate with Kitty’s belongings. For example Mariah Carey is a Kitt Tyler who has a Kitty’s electric guitar, and fills her room with Kitty’s products. With an increase of Kitt Tyler, we will examine the Sanrio’s market strategy in the next section.

### **III. Sanrio’s Sales Strategy & Business Model**

Sanrio tries to gain more and more profits in the market under favor of Kitty’s popularity. Higher profit objective there is Sanrio’s corporate strategy. Although Sanrio has gained high profits in Japan, they try to globalize their sales in the world market and compete with the likes of Disney through licensing. Because Disney gains 25 percent of its profit rate in the world whereas Sanrio targets 27 percent in March, 2015, now Sanrio establishes in Italy, and sells its license to European countries.

Looking at the increasing growth of profit rate is shown by Mark McVeigh: “Sanrio’s profits are enormous, totaling 120 million yen in 1998. In 1999, that equals approximately one billion US dollars” (McVeigh, 226). As he shows, its profits rapidly grew in 1999. Furthermore, the sales in 2007 were higher than in 2009, the sales profits are 6.2 billion in 2007, and 14.9 billion in 2011. Unfortunately, Japan’s national budget was 1.5 billion in the red with decrease of sales in Japan. However, total sales profit increased to 8.7 billion due to positive overseas sales and production growth. Moreover, strong yen is an opportunity of acquisitions. Sanrio’s profit rate was 25 percent in September, 2010, and their objective to attain 27 percent of sales profit in March, 2015 was within reach. As they establish license business in Milan, Italy, Sanrio changed its sales business to license business of “Hello Kitty” brand and has sold its license to other European countries. In 2012, Sanrio also sold the Kitty’s licenses to 3,000 Walmart stores in the US. Moreover, they are serious about going into Asia especially the Chinese market to promote their Kitty brand products.

According to McVeigh, there are 15,000 Hello Kitty products. Sanrio receives 3% in royalties every time a company sells a product bearing a Sanrio character” (McVeigh, 229-30). As much of these products, Sanrio gains royalties which make the company more profitable. Indeed, rapidly enough, the Kitty brand spread all over the world. Now Sanrio develops business in the field of intellectual property. Sanrio also considers to acquisition of other characters in the future.

#### IV. Comparison with American Girl

As we have seen, Kitty is a character which has a variety of products. Now I will take up American Girl, a doll, which also sells a variety of doll products, and see uniqueness of both products. Although American Girl is a doll which has Historical Character Doll, and My American Girl Doll, it provides a variety of characters with varied products such as magazines, movies, DVDs, and etc. Thus, I will compare two characters: Kitty and American Girl.

Firstly, I introduce the doll, American Girl, then, I see Kitty's and American Girl's differences and commonality of their products. American Girls was produced by the Pleasant Company, a children's Publisher. The company sold 80 million dolls and more than 90 million books (Morriss 5). American girl, an 18 inch size with enamel material elasticity, has rather a human-like appearance. It has two characteristics. One is to manufacture a historical doll. If you buy a doll, a history book of the doll's era is attached with it. We can see that American Doll has an important historical element to carry over the US history from the past to the present.

Another characteristic is to choose a doll which is similar to personality. You can choose hairstyles, colors of their hair, eyes, and skin. For example, you can choose colors of skin such as light skin, light skin with freckles, medium skin, and dark skin. For colors of hair, there are light blond hair, honey-blond hair, brown hair, and black-brown hair. Hairstyle are short hair, long bangs style, straight, layer, wavy hairstyles, curly hair, and etc., with sixty variations. For colors of eyes, there are blue eyes, green eyes, brown eyes, hazel eyes, and etc. Thus, you can choose your favorite hair style, eye color and skin color, accessories, and costumes. Many girls who buy a doll often change a doll's appearance to look like themselves. Some go to a hair salon in the store to set doll's hair style or have their pictures taken with a doll. Many consumers treat their dolls as their alter ego, as they create, dress and model the dolls like themselves. It is fantastic to purchase a doll which can personifies oneself.

Now, we see the philosophy of two companies and how they target their buyers. Sanrio uses themes such as respect, love, and express as a social communication philosophy. A Media assistant manager of Sanrio Co., Ltd., Mr. Kato says that it is a company of creation of characters, planning, development, and communication of gift productions (Asahi Shinbun 2001: 6). Based on Sanrio's website, it is a license business company which produces, raises, and lends characters to other companies. Moreover, Sanrio targets a growing relationship with others by giving small gifts which are Sanrio characters.

Pleasant company's corporate philosophy is "to enrich the lives of American girls by fostering pride in the traditions of growing up female in America and celebrating the lifestyle of girls today" (Medina 1). In other words, by possessing a doll, they wish to take pride in the tradition of their country and lead abundant life.

In the below table, I compare Kitty with American Girl to see commonality and differences.

## Comparison of Kitty and American Girl

	Kitty	American Girl
Products	Character	Doll
Corporate Philosophy	Respect, love, and express as a social communication	To enrich the lives of American girls by fostering pride in the traditions of growing up female in America and celebrating the lifestyle of girls today
Average consumers	Teenage Girls Mainly Female of all ages	Teenage Girls
Uniqueness Option of Products	KITTY LAB Choice of parts of Kitty's face	American Girl Doll Choice of colors of hair, eyes, skin, and hairstyles
Setting	10 years old girls	Mainly teenage girls, but varied
character	Fashionable, kind, cheerful	Fashionable, kind, cheerful
Least favorite subject	Math	Math

Considering the above, both American Girl and Kitty give consumers an option of their new creation of their products. Thus, creative access to products provides possibility of unique characteristics of objects. In the case of Hello Kitty, you go to KITTY LAB, answer a brief Kitty quiz, and then select your favorite Kitty's head, eyes, hair, ears, whiskers, palms, body shape, ribbon, and accessories. In this way, consumers have creative inputs to creating their version of its original form in accordance to their preference. At the discretion of consumers' option, original products easily alter its shape, and consumers can even take pictures as a record of their creation.

### V. Controversy to Arrangement

Although Kitty has been popular, there has been a lawsuit of character, facial expression and body appearance. Unlike American Girl, Kitty can be arranged its facial expression with a permission of the third Kitty creator, Yuko Yamaguchi, also an executive of Sanrio. With the advancement of Kitty's facial expression, now consumers create their own Kitty with digital character. Thus, Kitty has more discretionary flexibility for customers to choose their options.

#### A. Lawsuit and Controversy

There is a lawsuit of Sanrio rabbit character, Cathy. In October, 2010, Dick Bruner, an illustrator of the rabbit Miffy, sued Sanrio for similarity of a character of a rabbit, Sanrio's Cathy, Kitty's friend. In November, 2010, Amsterdam Court judged to accept a claim of Bruna, and ordered Sanrio to prohibit selling its production in three Benelux countries. Moreover, they ordered indirect enforcement to Sanrio if the company would appeal against a sentence (Sankei Shinbun2010: 2). However, in November, 2011, Sanrio and Bruner both dropped a demand and settled a lawsuit

with, and they compromised to use law costs of reconstruction support to The Great East Japan Earthquake (Nikkei Shinbun 2). Another dispute was in January, 2013, when Kofu city shopping district decorate Kitty's stone statue. Since they haven't made an agreement with licensing, the statue was taken away (Asahi Shinbun 2013: 4). Later, with license, it was resettled.

The other dispute was Kitty's fundoshi, G-string, in June, 2013. It was criticized because Kitty's bare hips were shown though it is a style of wearing during Yamagasa festival in Fukuoka. The sale company suspended sales, and the model line was abandoned (Sankei Shinbun 2013: 3). It is true that since Kitty outline was taken away in 1983, its shape has changed remarkably and its face became more flexibility. Because of its flexibility of shapes, another dispute related to Kitty's tongue was occurred. Kiss Kitty's tongue and Kitty's fundoshi became controversies, but producers admitted its change. With their acceptance, there became more variation of Kitty's production.

Kitty is popular because its face is simple without a mouth. But what happens if there is a Kitty with a mouth? Do you think you prefer with the version with a mouth or without it? Some animation has Kitty's mouth to show its expression of emotions such as delight, anger, sorrow, and pleasure from one situation to another. Because of its flexibility of shapes, another dispute related to Kitty's tongue was occurred. Kiss Kitty's tongue and Kitty's fundoshi became controversial, but produces relented to the change and additional variations to Kitty were added to production to broaden appeal and increase sales.

In a TV program, NHK special titled "Pursuit! Mystery of Hello Kitty's Creates a Furor" broadcasted on May 29, 2012, Kitty's Milan office collaborated with Kiss, a music rock band. The band members wanted to attach a tongue to the character which was one of the member's trademarks. This caused consternation to an Italian designer, because she knew that it was a company's principle not to alter the face of Hello Kitty. However, due to the persistent demand from the client, the designer relented and added a small tongue, and resigned from her designer position shortly. Seeing a tongue on Kitty's face, the creator of Kitty, Yuko Yamaguchi, concurred to put a tongue on the face. Thus, the "KISS × HELLO KITTY" character with an added tongue was created.

## **B. Arrangement and KITTY LAB**

With the ability to morph Kitty into different expressions, shapes and styles, a KITTY Laboratory known as Kitty LAB for customers, was created. KITTY LAB is a rotary attraction in Puroland and Harmonyland in Japan. To get Kitty's DNA called KTA, you play games and get Kitty's facial parts to create your own Kitty. KTA embeds RFID Chip, and every data of the games have been recorded. In the games, you answer questions on the screen, or wave at a camera, speak on the microphone. Since the time limit is short and if you don't answer soon, the game decides your options. After answering all the questions, take a picture with your created Kitty character illustration at a photo shop, which costs 500 yen. It is a unique attraction to create

your own Kitty with computer activities in that Kitty and American Girl give a choice for customers to arrange their preference of representation of objects. Considering consumers' choice of facial expression, American Girl can select colors of skin, eyes, and hair styles. However, in Kitty's case, there are different types of shapes such as no hair, only ears, blond hair, black hair, and etc.

It is unique that consumers can choose and change product's facial expression with their own choice because usually because of trademarks, character's shapes or faces are restricted as we can see Snoopy by Charles Schultz. Kitty's choice of its face gives consumers flexibility and enjoyment to create their own Kitty. In this way, we can interpret consumers realize their own autonomy by selection of products, which can lead their representation of identity.

## **VI. Conclusion**

In the above, it is clear that Kitty's and American Girl's cases show consumers' choice of detailed parts of face not only to choose to create a new character, but also to show their preference and their own image. To be more precise, a sociologist Roberta Sassatelli defines, "modern consumers are asked to actively participate in the process of de-commoditization, producing themselves as the source of value" (150), consumers need to establish their own value rather than depending on commodities. Moreover, "not simply having actively to choose, but having to choose in ways that enhance your identity as a source of value" (Sassatelli 150), consumers have to choose and find their identity by choosing commodities. This also fits in the case of Kitty and American Girl that consumers make self-choice with their own value because both products can offer consumers' preference by making them select the parts of faces.

When consumers purchase products, they make choices. As a brand strategist, Thomas Gad, and a brand researcher, Annette Rosencrantz, define that commodities represent consumers' points of view and desire of products and they call it personal branding (xxii). This means that consumers see themselves through products in a certain brand which they can match their brand image. Knowing their preference and trend of consumers' products, producers also know consumers' own choice and preference to increase their sales. Moreover, they can improve their images as consumers have their own flexibility to determine own preference.

Now people make their own version by using company's characters. As a culturist, Celia Lury, says, "'consumer choice' is indeed one of the most important means by which our society thinks about individual agency and autonomy, and makes judgments about individuals" (214). Consumers can make a choice of their favorite parts and can make their own brand. In other words, they can personify themselves in creating a new or modified version of the original character which will express their own individual identity. In other words, the ability to shape dolls appearance represents consumers' self-identity as evident in the Kitty and American Girl doll.

## Notes

1. “Hello Kitty” or “HELLO KITTY” is a registered trademark, and common name for the character is “Kitty.” (Kokumin Kinyu Koko Chosabu 62)

## References

- [1] American Girl. 〈<http://www.americangirl.com/corp/ccorporate.php?section=about&id=2>〉 15 September 2011
- [2] Gad, Thomas, and Annette Rosencrantz. *Managing Brand Me*. New York: Momentum, 2002. xxii.
- [3] Lury, Celia. *Consumer Culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011. p. 214.
- [4] McVeigh, Mark. “How Hello Kitty Commodities the Cute, Cool and Camp.” *Journal of Material Culture*. 2000. pp. 225-45.
- [5] Medina, Veronica. *Theorizing American Girl*. Columbia: University of Missouri, 2007. p. 1.
- [6] Morriss, Andrew. “Selling History with Dolls.” *Foundation for Economic Education*. May 2003. p. 5.
- [7] NHK. “Pursuit! Mystery of Hello Kitty’s Creates a Furor” broadcasted on May 29, 2012.
- [8] Sanrio. 〈<http://www.sanrio.co.jp/>〉 November 28, 2012.
- [9] Sassatelli, Roberta. *Consumer Culture*. London: Sage, 2007. p. 150.
- [10]朝日新聞『スモールギフト・ビッグスマイル』p. 6. 2011年7月8日.
- [11]朝日新聞『甲府のキティ神社、3日で撤去』p.4. 2013年1月29日.
- [12]国民金融公庫調査部『日本の身の回り品小売業』中小企業リサーチセンター、1983年.
- [13]産経新聞『著作権侵害でサンリオ提訴』p. 2. 2010年10月22日.
- [14]産経新聞『ふんどしキティ商標法違反か』p. 3. 2013年6月28日.
- [15]日経新聞『訴訟の費用、震災の寄付に』p. 2. 2011年6月7日.



©The International Academic Forum 2014  
The International Academic Forum (IAFOR)  
Sakae 1-16-26-201  
Naka Ward, Nagoya, Aichi  
Japan 460-0008  
[www.iafor.org](http://www.iafor.org)