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CRISIS

SIGNS, BODIES, INSTITUTIONS



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Том 8 № 1 (2026)

КРИЗИС

ЗНАКИ, ТЕЛА, ИНСТИТУТЫ



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Signs, Bodies, Institutions



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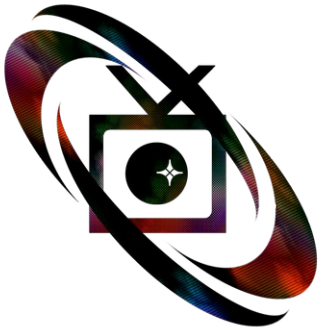

2026

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Dear friends, colleagues, readers, and authors!

Galactica Media: Journal of Media Studies is a periodic academic e-journal without printed forms (since 2019). The journal publishes scholastic articles, reviews, information resources, reports of expeditions, conferences and other scientific materials.

This project is a truly ambitious initiative that serves to disseminate scientific intellectual knowledge and information in the field of media and popular culture (history, cultural studies, anthropology, philosophy, etc.) in the modern world community.

It is not for nothing that we used the epithet ambitious, since from the very beginning of its inception and preparation, it really is such. The project was started in 2018 by a small group of enthusiasts, young scientists whose interests lie in the above-mentioned areas of research.

First of all, we have assembled a truly big international team to become the members of our editorial board, people from different parts of our "small global village" called planet Earth, as media culture theorist Herbert Marshall McLuhan put it. Our editors are leading scholars in the field of media and popular culture from Russia, USA, UK, Spain, Austria, Sweden, India, Sri Lanka, China, Malaysia, Ghana.

Therefore, we chose English (the international language of science) and Russian (as the project is an initiative of Russian scientists) as the working languages of the online journal.

Openness, and peer reviews by leading scholars are the fundamental principles of our project (Ethics). And the digital character of modern international communications made us choose the electronic version of the journal (without physical printing). Based on the above while choosing a platform we preferred an open and free engine called Open Journal Systems, which ideally allows to organize the entire publishing process.

This allowed us to automate each stage of publication through the user registration system.

The names and e-mail addresses entered on the website of this online journal will be used solely for the purposes indicated by the journal and will not be used for any other purposes or passed to other individuals or organizations.

Journal publishes articles on quarterly basis.

Our online edition is devoted to the topical issues in the field of studies of media and mass culture in the broadest coverage of: history, cultural studies, anthropology, philosophy, etc.

The title of the journal was chosen as a reference to the work of the famous theorist of media culture, Herbert Marshall McLuhan, who in his periodization of the invention and assimilation by mankind of mass communications (media) introduced the concept of "Galaxy" (Galaxy of Gutenberg, Galaxy Marconi, etc.).

Aim and Scope

To create a virtual platform for exchange of views and discussions in the field of studies of media and mass culture. We strive to ensure that our network publishing performs an important scientific function – communication and information, which allows not only to accumulate new achievements in this area, but also serves as the basis for new discoveries and insights.

Online edition maintains its principles – to ensure the intercultural dialogue and to reduce the conflict of civilizations. It adheres to the philosophy of non-violence, cultural and religious tolerance. The editorial Board aims at removing language barriers while maintaining respect for the national culture of each nation, residing on the small planet Earth.

All materials submitted to the editors will be carefully selected and sent for double-blind review.

Which does not mean though that any article sent to the editor will be accepted for our online edition. Any unscientific or not based on facts article will be rejected by the editors.

All articles are published FREE, but the fee is not paid to the authors.

Best regards,
Editors

- Certificate of registration issued by Roskomnadzor: ЭЛ № ФС77-75215 since 07 march 2019
- Materials are intended for persons over 18 years old.

Уважаемые друзья, коллеги, читатели и авторы!

Сетевое издание Galactica Media: Journal of Media Studies является периодическим научным изданием, не имеющим печатной формы, и выпускается с 2019 года. В сетевом издании публикуются научные статьи, рецензии, информационные ресурсы, отчеты об экспедициях, конференциях и прочие научные материалы.

Данный проект является поистине амбициозной инициативой, служащей распространению научных интеллектуальных знаний и информации, посвящённых исследованиям в области медиа и массовой культуры (история, культурология, антропология, философия и т.д.) в современном мировом сообществе.

Мы не зря использовали эпитет амбициозный, так как с самого начала его зарождения и подготовки он действительно является таковым. Проект был задуман в 2018 году небольшой группой энтузиастов, молодых учёных, сферой интересов которых оказалась вышеуказанная область научных исследований.

Первым делом мы собрали по-настоящему огромную международную команду, которая представлена в редколлегии сетевого издания и охватывает большинство континентов, как выразился теоретик медиакультуры Герберт Маршалл Маклюэн, нашей «маленькой глобальной деревни» под названием планета Земля. Сюда вошли ведущие учёные в сфере медиа и массовой культуры следующих стран: Россия, США, Великобритания, Испания, Австрия, Швеция, Индия, Шри-Ланка, Китай, Малайзия, Гана.

Поэтому в качестве рабочих языков сетевого издания мы выбрали английский (международный язык науки) и русский (так как проект является инициативой российских учёных).

Открытость и рецензируемость ведущими учёными всех поступающих для публикации материалов являются основополагающими научными принципами нашего проекта (основные этические принципы представлены здесь). А цифровой характер современных международных коммуникаций заставил нас выбрать электронный вариант публикации статей (без физической печати). Исходя из вышеперечисленного в выборе платформы для реализации задуманного, мы остановились на открытом и бесплатном движке под названием Open Journal Systems, который позволяет идеально организовать весь издательский процесс.

Это дало нам возможность автоматизировать каждый этап на пути к опубликованию научных материалов через систему регистрации пользователей.

Имена и адреса электронной почты, введенные на сайте этого сетевого издания, будут использованы исключительно для целей, обозначенных этим сетевым изданием, и не будут использованы для каких-либо других целей или предоставлены другим лицам и организациям.

Мы выходим ежеквартально 4 раза в год.

Сетевое издание посвящено актуальным вопросам в сфере исследований медиа и массовой культуры в самом широком их охвате: история, культурология, антропология, философия и т.д.

Название проекта было выбрано в качестве отсылки к творчеству известнейшего теоретика медиакультуры Герберта Маршалла Маклюэна, который в своей периодизации изобретения и усвоения человечеством средств массовой коммуникации (медиа) использовал понятие «Галактика» (Галактика Гуттенберга, Галактика Маркони и т.д.).

Цель проекта

создание виртуальной площадки для обмена мнениями и дискуссий в области исследований медиа и массовой культуры.

Исходя из цели, мы стремимся к тому, чтобы наше сетевого издание выполняло важные научные функции – коммуникативную и информационную, которые послужат основой для новых открытий и озарений.

Сетевое издание выступает с позиций «идеологии» диалога культур и устранение условий конфликта цивилизаций. Оно придерживается принципов философии ненасилия, культурной и религиозной толерантности. Редакция преследует цель устранения языковых барьеров и уважительного отношения к границам национальной культуры каждого народа, проживающего на маленькой планете Земля.

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Все статьи публикуются в сетевом издании БЕСПЛАТНО, но и гонорар авторам не выплачивается.

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Symbolising the Climate Crisis: A Semiotic Perspective on Public Discourse in Türkiye

Süheyla Ayvaz[1], Sezin Doğan[2], & Elif Kaya Güler[3]

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Abstract

Climate communication has emerged as a distinct form of communication, encompassing public communication activities designed to ensure that information and scientific data about climate change are disseminated in an accessible manner to society and the public. The objective of this research is to elucidate the manner in which climate change communication is constructed in the media at the semiotic level, in the context of public communication, using the local example of Türkiye. In this study, the posters published by the Turkish Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change on 15 May 2024 World Climate Day to draw attention to climate change were subjected to a semiotic analysis using Roland Barthes' concept cluster as an analytical framework. The analysis yielded three dominant themes: the Anthropocene myth, the environmental catastrophism myth and the sustainability myth. The analysis revealed that the Ministry attributed responsibility to individuals, omitted the primary sources of the problem, and employed symbols to evoke fear and emotional attachment. The expressions and symbols used in climate change posters emphasize individual change and movement, and the construction of fear appeal is focused on individuals. This study makes an original contribution to the literature in terms of understanding climate change indicators in the context of public communication, showing that individual change is focused on in creating awareness about the climate crisis. However, the examined posters did not address the destructive effects of the economic systems, government policies, and production processes that underlie the climate crisis.

Keywords

Climate Change; Climate Change Communication; Poster Analysis; Public Communication; Roland Barthes' Model; Semiotic Analysis; Türkiye

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Символизация климатического кризиса: семиотическая перспектива публичного дискурса в Турции

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Аннотация

Климатическая коммуникация сформировалась как особая форма общественной коммуникации, направленная на обеспечение доступного распространения информации и научных данных о климатических изменениях среди населения. Цель данного исследования — прояснить, каким образом медийное конструирование климатической коммуникации осуществляется на семиотическом уровне в контексте публичного взаимодействия, на локальном примере Турции.

В рамках исследования был проведён семиотический анализ постеров, опубликованных Министерством окружающей среды, урбанизации и изменения климата Турции 15 мая 2024 года в честь Всемирного дня климата, с использованием концептуального аппарата Ролана Барта. Анализ выявил три доминирующих мифа: миф Антропоцена, миф экологического катастрофизма и миф устойчивого развития.

Результаты показали, что Министерство возлагает ответственность за климатический кризис на отдельных индивидов, при этом умалчивая о первоисточниках проблемы, и использует символы, призванные вызвать страх и эмоциональную вовлечённость. Символика и вербальные выражения в постерах акцентируют внимание на индивидуальных изменениях и личной активности, а формирование страха адресуется отдельному человеку.

Исследование вносит вклад в осмысление климатической коммуникации в публичном контексте, демонстрируя, что основным инструментом повышения осведомлённости о климатическом кризисе становится акцент на индивидуальных действиях. Вместе с тем анализируемые постеры не затрагивают разрушительные последствия экономических систем, государственной политики и производственных процессов, лежащих в основе климатического кризиса.

Ключевые слова

климатические изменения; климатическая коммуникация; анализ постеров; публичная коммуникация; модель Ролана Барта; семиотический анализ; Турция

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Introduction

Climate change is a difficult concept to define as it encompasses multiple perspectives and discourses, is not temporal in nature and has a global impact across a range of dimensions. Climate communication has emerged as a form of communication that encompasses public communication activities designed to ensure that information and scientific data about climate change are disseminated in an accessible manner to the public.

Climate change, as defined by the United Nations (2024), is described as long-term alterations in temperature and weather patterns, which are frequently attributed to anthropogenic activities (Lynas et al., 2021; Cook et al., 2013). This issue has been identified as critical, with far-reaching impacts on global health, ecosystems and social dynamics (Shivanna, 2022; Ling et al., 2022; Romanello et al., 2022). It is emphasized that, although climate change is a global phenomenon, its effects are not universally experienced; these changes are felt in different ways in different environments, and the frequency and severity of droughts, floods, snowstorms and heat waves are increasing day by day (Ummenhofer & Meehl, 2017). On the other hand, it is also argued that the climate crisis affects all of humanity at the same time (Akarsu, 2020) and that for the first time in human history, human activities (use of fossil fuels, deforestation, unplanned urbanization and industrial processes) have affected the climate on a regional and global scale and this has brought about the problem of global climate change (Kadıoğlu, 2020).

In the academic literature, the concept of climate change is defined as a complex, widespread and uncertain phenomenon that people have difficulty in understanding, comprehending, and associating. This issue is seen as a chain of events that are likely to occur in the distant future, non-locally globally, as well as due to uncertainty, debate, doubt, intuitive morality (Markowitz & Shariff 2012), limited participation, politics, incomplete communication, psychological, social, cultural and institutional reasons, and this situation prevents individuals from taking action to combat climate change (Moser, 2010; Lorenzoni & Pidgeon, 2006).

As scientific knowledge about the causes, impacts, and complexity of climate change increases, so does the need for tools to communicate it (Pidgeon & Fischhoff, 2013; Neset et al., 2010). Uncertainty in scientific communication is often related to closing knowledge gaps. Climate change communication also focuses on uncertainty. On the one hand, this points to the complexity of uncertainties associated with climate change science; on the other hand, it is a matter of how uncertainty is communicated and understood by various audiences (Penz, 2022). Communication about climate change aims to bring scientific knowledge to the public's attention by relating it to everyday life, but climate change challenges and solutions go beyond scientific knowledge, affecting every aspect of socio-environmental health. What is important in the context of climate change communica-

tion is to empower people at a fundamental level, inspiring collective and individual action (Dulic et al., 2016).

Climate communication encompasses social communication activities that aim to make climate change information and related scientific knowledge understandable and relevant to the public. Seeking solutions to climate change problems through changes in public attitudes and behaviour (Wu et al., 2023), climate change communication is increasingly being used to promote sustainable behaviour, and the framing of these communications can significantly alter their impact on recipients (Spence & Pidgeon, 2010). Over the past years, there has been a large increase in publications on communicating climate change to the public. This increase is driven by the significant contribution of individual and household emissions to climate change and the ability of individuals to exert political influence on governments and corporations through their actions as consumers and citizens. Therefore, effective communication is vital for climate change (Ballantyne, 2016).

Climate change communication is linked to several fields that examine attitudes towards risks and strategies that can be used to trigger behaviour change (Kaushal et al., 2022), one of which is public communication. Public communication can be defined as the communication activities that are conducted in an institutionalized manner with the objective of promoting the public interest, reviving civic consciousness, securing public debates, informing the public, raising awareness, understanding the expectations and debates of the public, and protecting the sense of collective belonging (Kurt, 2016). Public communication campaigns are designed to reach a wide target audience for a specific purpose. They comprise regular communication activities conducted over a defined period. Their objective is to convey persuasive and informative content to inform the public (Rogers & Storey 1987), to attract public attention, to raise awareness and to change behaviors in this direction (Koçyiğit, 2022; Örs, 2018).

Climate change communication, which emerged as a different form of public communication, covers social communication activities designed to facilitate the dissemination of climate change-related information and scientific knowledge in a way that is accessible to the public. In this context, the aim of climate change communication is to identify communication strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change for sustainable development, which is thought to be particularly achievable through the participation of the general population in policy dialogues, political influences, and changes in lifestyles (Kaushal et al., 2022).

Communication strategies are crucial for effectively increasing the level of scientific knowledge regarding climate change. To gain and maintain the public's trust in climate change communication, specific strategies are necessary. A trust-based strategy in climate change communication is the most important step for increasing engagement and ensuring credibility. Including evidence that supports the claims in any visual and written content aimed at raising awareness about climate change will help reduce people's doubts. Ensuring transparency of

data and accountability for scientific misconduct is vital as a climate change strategy (Goodwin & Dahlstrom, 2014). As a communication strategy for climate change, it is essential to share not only the quantitative status of scientific knowledge about uncertainty, but also qualitative indicators related to the observational basis of this knowledge. In many communication strategies regarding climate change, a key point that affects people's perceptions is not so much how climate risks are communicated, but rather whether solutions are considered possible. The extent to which people are aware of the technologies and institutions that can provide these solutions may have a greater impact on their perceptions (Patt & Weber, 2013).

Another important point in climate change communication is empowering the audience. As a climate change strategy, showing people that climate change poses a threat to their own communities will motivate them to take action to overcome the threat (Bostrom et al., 2013). In their article, Thompson and Schweizer (2008) emphasize that the most important strategy in climate change communication is recognizing the target audience and linking messages to cultural values and beliefs. To raise awareness about climate change, some of the key strategies include associating messages with cultural values, collaborating with organizations, leaders, and celebrities to strengthen the content, and highlighting concrete actions that can be taken to make a difference. Understanding the target audience for climate change messages is a critical strategy. Knowing the audience's motivations, being aware of their concerns and needs, is essential to make climate change messages more impactful (Markowitz & Guckian, 2018).

The phenomenon of climate change communication has become a subject of interest across a range of academic disciplines, given its growing environmental, social and political ramifications on a worldwide scale. A plethora of studies have been conducted on both digital media (Fariello & Jemielniak, 2025; Denisova, 2025; Mede & Schroeder, 2024; Schäfer & Schlichting, 2018), and traditional media (Günay et al., 2025; Safdar & Butt, 2024; Wu et al., 2024; Carvalho & Burgess, 2005; Boykoff & Boykoff, 2007). Studies showing that the removal of communicative resistance points and social acceptance of the climate crisis is possible through climate communication are one of the notable research areas (Takahashi et al., 2025; Guenther et al., 2024; Lee et al., 2024; Ittefaq, 2024; Monoyios et al., 2024; Moser, 2016; Moser & Dilling, 2011; Nerlich et al., 2010). Political actors' approaches to climate communication, conflicts at the level of discourse and their impact on public opinion are also addressed (Cole et al., 2025; Schwörer, 2024). On the other hand, the role of fictional narratives in climate communication is becoming increasingly important, and storytelling-based approaches are found to increase emotional engagement and action orientation (Mayerson, 2018; Johns-Putra, 2016; Lowe et al., 2006).

In Türkiye, academic studies in this field address the issue on an interdisciplinary level and reveal the potential of climate communication to raise awareness,

initiate public debate and encourage social action in the face of the climate crisis. The media's function of forming public opinion and setting the agenda on the climate crisis has been examined in detail in studies conducted on the basis of traditional and digital media (Hassan, 2024; Uzelgun & Castro, 2015; Şahin, 2020; Ozay & Mustafa, 2022; Günay & Güçdemir, 2022; Tekin Çelik & Hepkon, 2022; Baykal Fide, 2022a; Demircan et al., 2016). In the mainstream media, it has been determined that climate change news is mostly limited to disaster discourses and superficial frames, while solution-oriented, science-based narratives are given limited coverage (Baykal Fide, 2022b; Çoban Keneş, 2024). In studies conducted in the context of political communication, on how policy-making actors construct climate discourse and what was the impact of this discourse on public opinion, the corresponding issues were evaluated through various texts, and the approaches of parties towards climate policies, especially during election periods, were analyzed (Susur & Özkaplan, 2024; Çetin, 2022; Umunç, 2022). Studies conducted in the field of corporate communication and public relations show that private sector and non-governmental organizations reach audiences through sustainability-based campaigns, and it is emphasized that social media strategies have become effective tools in climate communication (Varol & Varol, 2023; Balay Tuncer, 2022; Günay et al., 2018). In order to increase the effectiveness of these communication efforts, narrative strategies such as storytelling and visualization are also used (Yavaş, 2024; Karacaoğlu & Akbaba, 2024).

Research on cultural narratives reveals that the climate crisis is also represented in cinema and literary works and draws attention to the potential of these forms of representation to establish emotional bonds and raise awareness (Yavaş, 2024; Dinvar Pekşen, 2024; Kınam, 2022; Uygur, 2015). In the field of visual communication, it has been examined how the climate crisis is represented in the public sphere with activist discourses and aesthetic codes, especially through tools such as poster design, and the role of these visual narratives in raising awareness has been emphasized (Özdil & Çırak, 2024; Aksoy, 2023; Şahin, 2023; Geçgel & Karaca, 2023; Bürge, 2020; Türe, 2014). In addition, it is seen that media representations of issues such as climate-induced migration are also covered within security, crisis and uncertainty frameworks, as these representations affect the social perception of the climate crisis (Pazarbaşı, 2024). At the individual level, it has been revealed that the relationship between climate change concern and climate action can be transformed into action with the right communication strategies and that this transformation can change depending on the level of knowledge (Kurt & Akdur, 2024).

A general evaluation of the international literature reveals an approach to climate communication that is multidimensional, theoretically based and methodologically diverse. The visual, cultural, digital, and political dimensions are examined as a whole. Within the context of Türkiye, however, this domain remains in its nascent stages of development. Despite the emergence of literature enriched by contributions from diverse academic disciplines, a recurring pattern in studies is

the repetition of certain themes, with methodological diversity remaining limited. In this context, the present study aims to analyze those by focusing on the semiotic analysis of the posters prepared by the Turkish Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. The study thereby seeks to make an original contribution to the field by revealing how public awareness-raising efforts on climate change are shaped through representations. It is anticipated that this study will contribute to the elimination of gaps in the field of climate communication in Türkiye.

The communication activities of public institutions regarding climate change constitute an important step for making changes and improvements regarding both individual and country policies. Posters published regarding climate change can influence the public opinion and pave the way for the formation of sustainable behaviors. In this study, the posters published by the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change regarding climate change are examined in terms of the message they aim to convey at a semiotic level, their meanings and cultural/ideological aspects. In this context, the strategies used within the framework of climate change communication are presented in this study.

Methodology

This research will be conducted in accordance with the qualitative research paradigm and the case study design will be employed for the purposes of analysis. A case study is a qualitative research strategy that begins with the identification of a unique situation and involves an in-depth investigation of that situation. The investigation is limited and identifiable according to certain characteristics, such as a specific time or place (Creswell, 2023). The case in which the research will deepen is determined as 'the communication activities of the Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change of the Republic of Türkiye on 15 May 2024 World Climate Day'. In this context, the objective of this research is to elucidate the message, meanings, and cultural/ideological context that the posters published by the Ministry for World Climate Day seek to convey at the semiotic level. At this juncture, the research questions are as follows:

RQ1: What is the primary message that the posters intend to convey?

RQ2: What textual strategies do posters employ to convey the main message?

RQ3: What visual strategies do posters utilize to convey the main message?

RQ4: What cultural and/or ideological values do posters construct?

The data were collected using the purposive sampling technique, as the research was focused on items with high potential to provide data that would meet the objectives of the study. The data set for the research was constituted by the 9 posters designed by the Ministry on World Climate Day and shared on its offi-

cial Instagram[1] (Owned by Meta, which is recognized as extremist in Russia) and X[2] accounts on the same day. The data were subjected to analysis using Roland Barthes' (2011, p. 184) two-layered myth model (Fig. 1):

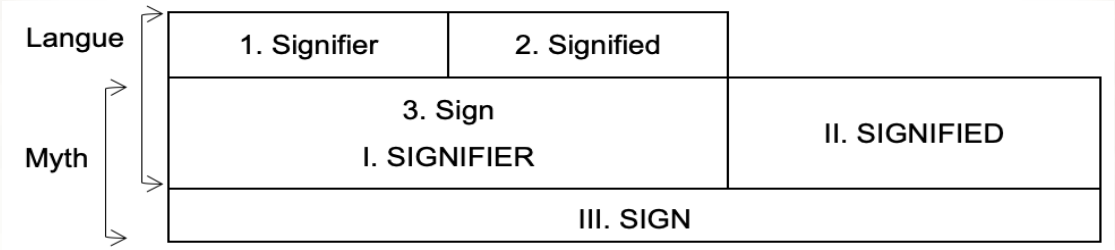

Figure 1. Roland Barthes's myth model

The initial layer of this model comprises the elements of signifier (1), signified (2) and sign (3). In the context of semiotics, the term signifier can be defined as form, the signified as concept, and the sign as signification (Barthes, 2011, pp. 186-189). The term signified in this layer corresponds to the denotation of the sign, the true meaning of a sign, the direct meaning of what it objectively represents (Aiello, 2006, p. 94). The second layer begins with the transformation of the sign (3) of the first layer into a signifier (I), that is, a connotation (Bouzida, 2015), which expresses the symbolic, associative, cultural, coded, ideological, subjective and emotional meaning of an image (Berger, 2014). The signifier, in the form of a connotation, in this layer comes together with another signified (II) to form a new sign (III), which in turn creates myth. The concept of myth refers to ideological values that are presented, reinforced and naturalized as natural, universal and immutable truths. Myths influence the way society perceives, conceptualizes, thinks and interprets the world as a set of interrelated and triggering concepts (Fiske, 2003). Although the terms 'myth' and 'connotation' may appear to be synonymous, there is a distinction between the two. Myth can be defined as a narrative that evokes ideological concepts, whereas connotation refers to the ideological meaning attributed to a particular sign (Aiello, 2006). Accordingly, myths function as meta-narratives (Barthes, 2011).

A considerable number of studies have been published which utilize semiotic methodology and tools to explore the representation of climate change in the media. These studies have typically focused on visual representations in newspapers (Hasan & Norma, 2015; Kangas, 2019; Habib & Zahra, 2024), NGO campaign posters (Puspita, 2014; Harper, 2014; Suciyanto, 2016; Dallyono & Sukyadi, 2019; br Sitorus et al., 2022; Catellani, 2022) and, less frequently, public communication studies conducted by governments (Geçgel & Karaca, 2023). A number of these studies employ a general set of semiotic concepts as opposed to drawing upon the specific contributions of semiotic theorists within their methodological

1 See: https://www.instagram.com/cevre_sehircilik_bakanligi/
2 See: https://x.com/csbgovtr?t=rnSOmeM-PvA-j2sK031Vrg&s=09

approach (Harper, 2014; Geçgel & Karaca, 2023). Conversely, some of them employ diverse sets of concepts from multiple semiotic methodology theorists: Saussure (Puspita, 2014), Peirce (Suciyanto, 2016), Kress and van Leeuwen (br Sitorus et al., 2022; Hasan & Norma, 2015; Habib & Zahra, 2024), Bezemer and Kressin (Dallyono & Sukyadi, 2019). As with the present study, there are few others that employ Barthes' semiotic methodology and concept set. Manzo (2010) analyzed a number of images from five climate action campaigns in the UK between 2007 and 2008, although the exact number of images analyzed is unclear. In a notable study, Bürge (2020) analyzed six random posters with the theme of global warming. Concurrently, Benjaminsen (2021) undertook an analysis of three iconic images, encompassing cracked soil, fence-line contrasts, and satellite images accompanied by colour-coded maps. In a recent study, Habib and Zahra (2024) analyzed thirteen representations of climate change-induced flooding, particularly in Pakistan, published in two monthly issues of Time Magazine in 2022. These studies generally categorized the indicators thematically or analyzed them in a condensed, summary format. As is apparent, the majority of these studies impose restrictions on the data set to be analyzed, and consequently, this study is also subject to a limitation.

A detailed examination of the nine posters was not deemed a viable option due to the constraints of time and word limitations, the potential for repetition, the risk of data overload and confusion, the possibility of overlooking details and compromising the quality of the analysis, and the inability to conduct an in-depth examination. Instead, recurring themes were identified across the nine posters, and four of them, which were deemed to have high representational adequacy, were subjected to a more comprehensive analysis.

Results and Discussion

When 9 posters of the Ministry were analyzed, it was revealed that the posters had recurrent myth themes: The myth of anthropocene, the myth of environmental catastrophism and the myth of sustainability. The posters were analyzed under these headings within the scope of the slogan, sub-heading and visual elements components of the posters by using the concept set of the signifier, signified, sign, denotation, connotation and myth in Barthes' model. Since the slogan was analyzed in Section 3.1, the subsequent analyses will focus mainly on the textual indicators of the other parts of the textual indicators of the posters that function as adverbial complements in the sentence.

The myth of anthropocene

The discussion under this heading seeks to answer the first research question, which is what the main message of the posters is. Although four posters are analyzed due to limitations, the slogan to be analyzed here constitutes the main message of the communication since it is repeated in 9 posters and preferred

as a hashtag #İklimDeğişmedenBizDeğişelim i.e. '*Let us change before the climate changes*') in social media accounts.

Table 1. Denotation analysis of slogan

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Biz değişelim i.e. Let's change (independent clause)	Text Pronoun: 'Biz' (i.e us) Verb: 'değiş' (i.e. change) Suffix: -elim (like let's)	A call for people to change their lifestyles and behaviour, act together, share responsibility and cooperate on climate change, call-to-action
	Visual Capital, bold, sans serif, centred, modern and easily readable font, placed at the top of the poster	Seriousness, importance, urgency, priority
İklim değişmeden i.e. Before the climate changes (dependent clause)	Text Object: 'İklim' (i.e. climate) Verb: 'değiş' (i.e. change) Time suffix: '-meden' (i.e. before)	The critical time when the potential negative impacts of climate change and related disasters have not yet emerged
	Visual Capital letters, thin, sans serif, centred, modern and easily readable font, placed at the top of the poster	Hierarchically, the secondary importance of 'time' (from the independent clause) vis-à-vis 'action'

Connotation of the slogan: The slogan is based on the connotation of collective action. By using the language of 'we', a call for collective action is made between the Ministry and the target audience. Since the impact of individual actions on climate change is not measurable and can be ignored due to their small size, the collective results of actions and the necessity for large-scale change (Banks, 2013) are emphasized. However, the pronoun 'we' implies both that individuals can effect change in themselves and that this change can affect society, so it can in fact be linked to the connotation that individual action will create collective change. Accordingly, if individuals adopted an ethic of environmental sensitivity in their actions, they would have the collective power to prevent climate change. To emphasize this argument, the Ministry has elected to use the pronoun 'we' to highlight the necessity for unity which reiterates the need for collective action throughout the duration of the campaign. These findings overlap with one of the few studies on public environmental communication, which analyses a public service announcement of the German Federal Ministry of Environment. This study similarly emphasizes the construction of meanings such as collective responsibility, unity, cooperation and joint decision-making, and argues that climate protection is only possible through joint action (Geçgel & Karaca, 2023). These connotations are fed by the universal culture in which environmental behaviour is perceived as a global

common responsibility shared by all people in our age (Lowe et al., 2006). This indicates that the target audience is positioned as active actors, as individuals who care about their environment and take action to protect it, who are actively involved in addressing climate change, who respond to these challenges as part of the solution, and who take on a shared ethical responsibility within a collective moral framework (Dallyono & Sukyadi, 2019; br Sitorus et. al., 2022). In this regard, with the acceptance of the threat of climate change, mechanisms such as governments and non-governmental organizations are known to carry out public communication activities by planning personal responsibility campaigns targeting individuals and households (Kent, 2009). The personification of the climate change issue is a common messaging strategy in climate change communication (Smith & Joffe, 2009; O'Neill, 2013). In a literal sense, responsibility is attributed to individuals and the structures that facilitate industrial growth and consumerist behaviour, while the underlying causes of climate change, namely these very structures, are overlooked. A compelling and optimistic narrative is constructed, positing that individual change and choice can save the world. While it advocates for the prevention of climate change as a proactive measure within an optimistic paradigm, it lacks a clear message regarding the specific actions that should be taken to achieve this goal. There is no concrete proposal, such as the protection of green areas, reduced consumption, the utilization of sustainable energy sources, energy saving, and so forth. Research shows that there is a decline in personal interest and sense of responsibility for climate change and that taking action is positively correlated with education, information and finances (Connelly, 2020). However, in this campaign of the Ministry, it is seen that a communication is established on the hidden assumption that the society is aware of this issue and that it is educationally and financially mature. Therefore, it can be said that a paradigm for communication with different social groups has not been determined; on the contrary, society is treated as a homogenous entity.

Mythological analysis of the slogan: The slogan and the entire campaign are constructed within the ideological context of the anthropocene myth, in which the term 'anthropocene' is derived from the Greek word 'anthropos', meaning 'human'. This myth posits that the human species has become a geological force and is therefore responsible for climate change (Rickard, 2015). The human-dominated geological period that began at the end of the eighteenth century is called The Anthropocene Epoch (Zalasiewicz et al., 2011; Crutzen, 2016; Ievdokymov, 2018). This concept is dichotomous, comprising both an accusation against humanity as well as a call to responsibility and action (Lepori, 2015). Media discourses such as this poster, which employs the second meaning, exemplify the repositioning of human beings as the driving force of change in the world (Yusoff & Gabrys, 2011). Therefore, while the question of who developed the technologies that led to The Anthropocene Epoch, who used them, who benefited or suffered from them and, most crucially, who was excluded from this process

remains unanswered, and the necessity to accept accountability for climate change is eclipsed by the universalization of history and responsibility (Lepori, 2015). Furthermore, the choice of names such as 'westernocene' (San Román & Molinero-Gerbeau, 2023), which emphasises the historical and systemic responsibility of the West, or 'capitalocene' or 'econocene', which emphasises the responsibility of the economic paradigm, enables the blame and responsibility to be shifted directly to capitalism or the global economic system, rather than a vague accusation of humanity (Chakrabarty, 2018). In this way, the ideological meaning of this poster attributes to all humanity the consequences of the Enlightenment's ideas of humanity, progress, growth and development and its actions in favour of the few. Conversely, in some parts of the world, those engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry or living in slums are responsible for ecological destruction or over-exploitation of the planet, to varying degrees, in comparison to others (Baskin, 2015). The Ministry's slogan places a universal human community at the centre of climate change and assigns responsibility to it. It does not refer to the connection of climate change to the economic system in the country or to the producers of the main actions that cause it. Nevertheless, it also positions the 'human' as superior in the relationship, once more in relation to colonial attitudes towards the 'liberation' of nature (Harper, 2014).

The myth of environmental catastrophism

This title examines the textual, visual, and ideological message strategies of the myth of environmental catastrophism, which is reiterated as the primary message across all five posters. For this reason, this title is intended to address the second, third, and fourth research questions.



Figure 1. "Let's change before climate changes"[1]

1 See: https://x.com/csbgovtr/status/1790790965294416119?t=k6DoabjrkapCyMJwyd30KA&s=19

Table 2. Denotation analysis of poster 1

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text 'Kutuplardaki buzulların erimemesi, hayvan popülasyonunda dengenin bozulmaması için' (i.e. so that the polar ice caps do not melt and the balance in the animal population is not disturbed)	Text Words: Polar ice, melt, balance, animal population, disturbed Negation suffix: me/ma (i.e., 'not') Visual Thin, sans serif, centred, brown colour, smaller than the slogan, positioned above the slogan, first letter of each word capitalised (A similar design is observed in other posters, and thus the same ones will not be repeated in the subsequent visual analysis; only the different ones will be interpreted.)	To evoke in the minds of the target audience an image in which the vast polar ice sheets remain intact, thus sustaining the existence of a wide variety of polar animals Second in importance compared to the slogan
Visual Water Glaciers Seal Whale Grey	Melted glaciers and grey water up to the horizon A seal on a melted ice floe, closer to the target audience and positioned just to the left in front of the whale, facing left, with its mouth open and appearing to call out A whale close to the target audience, facing towards it, mouth open, further to the right, with its head sticking out of the ocean water mixed with melted glacier ice	Recalling typical images of global warming Symbol of threatened polar animals Species in need of human help Sadness, melancholy, loneliness, helplessness, vulnerability, urgency

Connotation of poster 1: The poster generally carries the connotation that climate change threatens the ecosystem. Climate change is changing the physical environments in ecosystems, which affects organisms in ecosystems in many ways, from how they grow to how they behave (*Climate Change Impacts on Ecosystems...*, 2024). The polar ecosystem is also experiencing some of the strongest climate changes in physical terms (Robinson 2022); in particular, it is losing a lot of glaciers due to warming, which poses a threat to ice-dependent species (Gilg et al., 2012). The poster also focuses on this problem, symbolizing melting ice floes (Carey, 2007) and sad/desperate polar animals as classic images of the reality of climate change

(Moreno-Tarín et al., 2021). Images of melting ice, including icebergs, glaciers, and photographs of polar regions, are a dominant element in public discourse on climate change (Greyson, 2010). Photographic evidence of retreating glaciers and melting polar ice caps reflect both the scale and speed of the climate change problem (Smith & Joffe, 2009). While images of melting glaciers as symbols of climate change signify a fragile world, at the same time, through photography, the real is transformed into the recorded and clearly documented, or in Barthes' words, 'what has been' (Doyle, 2007). In this poster, while images of other species are preferred over the conventional polar bear image which typically illustrates the vulnerability of the ecosystem in the polar regions, the referential system is structured in a similar manner. Just as polar bears, which are the dominant element in the public discourse of climate change (Hansen & Machin, 2008; Owen & Swaisgood, 2008), are condemned to a limited life as boundary objects on the edge of melting glaciers (Born, 2019), isolated and defenseless and in danger, whales and seals are endowed with the same ideological meanings here. It is known that iconic and charismatic animal signs identified with the polar region, such as polar bears, whales, penguins, seals, etc., which are shown under destruction and threat, are preferred because they enable the public to emotionally connect with the situation and are effective in evoking their reaction (Greyson, 2010). As emphasized in another study, facial expressions of polar animals play a key role within the system of signs by facilitating emotional communication with the target audience. Through these expressions, meanings such as seeking help, vulnerability, and resilience are constructed (Habib & Zahra, 2024). It is stated that this helps humanity to be empathically motivated, eliciting public sympathy through a broad narrative that reminds audiences of their own existential threats, while simultaneously fostering a sense of pity and guilt for being complicit in this crisis (Huggan, 2015). This suggests an affective stance, as viewers are prompted to respond emotionally, with images leveraging human emotions to convey climate risk (Dallyono & Sukyadi, 2019; Hasan & Norma, 2015). Such media representations therefore serve to persuade the target audience to pay more attention to environmental issues and habitats, such as saving animals from extinction (Puspita, 2014). However, such signs can increase awareness of climate change, but they can also hinder the understanding of the human dimensions of the crisis, the imagining of solutions, and the imagining of an image in which the world is not heading towards inevitable doom (Dunaway, 2009).



Figure 2. "Let's change before climate change"[1]

1 See: https://x.com/csbgovtr/status/1790789961819570613?t=gkl22pNFPstmChQQ0pNRWw&s=19

Table 3. Denotation analysis of poster 2

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text 'İklim değişikliğine bağlı zorunlu göçlerle kimsenin yerinden yurdundan olmaması için' (i.e. To ensure that no one is displaced by forced migration due to climate change)	Text Words: No one, displaced, forced, migration Textual negativity: olmaması (i.e. to ensure that no one is...)	Imagining a dark future in which people will be forced to leave their habitats
	Visual Brown in colour	Pessimism
Visual Sunset Storks Earth People Burdens Soil Orange and yellow	A sunrise, indicating the moment when the sun appears above the horizon Silhouetted earth, people, storks, burdens and soil Sunset colours	The possibility of a dystopian world where people are forced to leave their homes, just as storks migrate at sunrise to survive climate change, People lined up one after the other, continuity A world where people are forced to leave their places of residence regardless of gender, age or status

Connotation of poster 2: The poster ideologically constructs the connotation that climate migration and thus climate refugees will occur because of drought, flood, sea level rise, desertification, extreme temperatures, forest fires, food crisis, water scarcity and similar natural disasters caused by climate changes through the fear factor. Ecological refugees (Brown et. al., 1976) or environmental refugees are defined as displaced people who are forced to leave (or voluntarily leave) their original habitat to protect themselves from harm and/or to seek a better quality of life (Hinnawi, 1985, p. 4). There are projections that 200 million people (Myers, 2002; Miller, 2017) or even more (Leal-Arcas, 2012) will be displaced by 2050 due to climate change. It is also considered that such numbers are not scientifically sound, leading to ignore the impact of social, economic, political and political structures, and in many cases used as a manipulative tool to influence the political agenda (Jakobeit & Methmann, 2012). Furthermore, it is asserted that the policies developed at the international level on this issue are predicated on a fallacious narrative that includes the assumption that climate change is a significant driver of global migration and, accordingly, it anticipates a substantial number of climate refugees, despite the absence of corroborating evidence (Boas et al., 2019). However, media representations frequently portray members of communities experiencing the impacts of climate change as key figures who emphasize the urgency and seri-

ousness of the problem through the situations they face (Smith & Joffe, 2009). As demonstrated in semiotic analyses of climate change communication in the media, messages suggesting that people will be forced to leave their homes due to inadequate shelter, loss of livelihoods, famine, natural disasters, displacement, and poverty (Harper, 2014; Suciyanto, 2016; Habib & Zahra, 2024) construct the idea of climate change as a threat to the notion of "home" itself (Smith & Joffe, 2009). In this context, it can be argued that the choice of words (e.g., forced, migration, and displacement) and the visual elements symbolizing migration (e.g., the stork, burdens, and sunset (?)) collectively construct the discourse surrounding World Climate Day. This discourse can be seen as a means of influencing the political agenda against the risk of migration that will occur because of climate change.

It is important to note that the discourse does not address the structural problems that contribute to migration; instead, it assigns responsibility to the public. In the media, climate refugees are often portrayed either as victims or as security threats (Venkataraman, 2018). In terms of victimization, this catastrophic narrative about climate change may be salient; however, it may limit the ability of people in Türkiye to connect with the issue, as such experiences remain distant from their local realities. Given that large-scale climate-induced migration is not currently a familiar experience for Turkish citizens, the poster frames victimization primarily through imagery associated with poorer or less developed countries. In this context, the use of the word 'nobody' in the poster can be interpreted as a reference to an anonymous and uncertain foreign other.

In parallel, when the photographic depiction of the poster is analyzed, displacement is observed, since it is difficult to identify the crowd, it is not clear how many people it consists of, and it is not possible to determine where they come from and where they go (Høeg & Tulloch, 2019). In terms of security threats, it can be posited that the emphasis is laid on the potential for migration to Türkiye rather than on the Turkish population. More precisely, it appears to be a reference to the potential for a global migration crisis. It is established that individuals are more likely to engage with messages on posters that consider their personal reference points, including their values, attitudes, beliefs, experiences and local environment (O'Neill & Nicholson-Cole, 2009). Although arresting, startling, attention-getting, amazing, uplifting, upsetting and even shocking images used in posters have the potential to create awareness and encourage action by making the abstract concrete, they can also paralyze and demobilize (O'Neill, 2013). The discrepancy between the images presented by the media and the lived experience can give rise to a phenomenon known as 'climate change fatigue'; this sense of distance can erode trust in both the media and the scientific community (Wang et al., 2017).

Myth analysis of poster 1 and 2: Climate change itself is the most generic name for global ecological catastrophe, and there are many predictions of catastrophe associated with it. These include many ecological disasters such as global warming,

forest fires[1] and desertification[2] which are found in the two posters of the Ministry analyzed under this heading, including melting of glaciers, rising sea water, extinction of polar animals, increase in ecological migrations, and in the other three posters. The five posters designed by the Ministry employed more standardized and generalized visual representations, eschewing the depiction of actual events or locations common for the other forms of media representation (Hasan & Norma, 2015). In the analyzed posters, including those depicting other disasters such as wildfires and droughts, there is an evident presence of apocalyptic scenarios that reflect the prevailing tones of contemporary climate discourse (Manzo, 2010). It is acknowledged that such negative representations of climate impacts dominate the media (O'Neill & Smith, 2014; Kangas, 2019). The myth of environmental catastrophism was previously employed by right-wing discourse to discredit, ascribe blame to, and impede the efforts of activists who warned people about environmental dangers. It was subsequently adopted as a pejorative term in left-wing discourse (Angus, 2013). Currently, however, it is recognized and described in the language of alarmism in numerous instances through appeals to fear in public discourse (O'Neill & Nicholson-Cole, 2009). The posters convey a sense of impending disaster and serve to reinforce the idea of the need for urgent intervention.

In semiotic analyses of climate communication, the messages that time is essential, that immediate action is required and that irreversible dangerous consequences will be encountered in case of delay are of particular interest. In these analyses, the emphasis on urgency emerges as a prominent theme (Bürge, 2020; Habib & Zahra, 2024; Suciyanto, 2016). However, it has been argued that messages concerning the potential for a climate catastrophe are perceived as inconsequential and ineffective due to their frequent reiteration in mainstream media outlets (Romm, 2012). Concurrently, it is also argued that the myth of ecological catastrophism, which is predicated on the appeal of fear, has the potential to instigate eco-anxiety (Jones, 2023). It has been observed that there has been an increase in the level of concern about the potential for future disasters resulting from climate change, particularly in recent times (Pearson, 2024): A global survey conducted in 2021 revealed that over half of individuals within the 16-25 age bracket experienced negative emotional responses to climate change, including feelings of sadness, anxiety and powerlessness. It is established that CO_2 emissions must be reduced by 90% to avert climate change catastrophes. However, as capitalism has evolved in conjunction with oil, coal and natural gas, it has become dependent on them and organized the world accordingly. This has resulted in a state of deadlock within the system (Williams, 2010). Because of this intrinsic feature of the capitalist economy, the implementation of sustainable environmental policies is rendered challenging. Transformation journalists and academics posit that global ecological disasters are an inevitable consequence of an environment in which

1 See: https://www.instagram.com/p/C6_yYs6NCvk/?utm_source=ig_web_button_share_sheet
2 See: https://www.instagram.com/p/C6_zrxKtDG7/?utm_source=ig_web_button_share_sheet

global economic, political and social institutions remain untransformed (Barkdull & Harris, 2014).

The myth of sustainability

This title examines the textual, visual and ideological message strategies of the myth of sustainability which is reiterated as the primary message across all four posters. For this reason, this title is intended to question the second, third and fourth research questions.



Figure 3. "Let's change before climate change"[1]

1 See: https://x.com/csbgovtr/status/1790788133908341005?t=dxphoaPJdzPZSiuSuEGPww&s=19

Table 4. Denotation analysis of poster 3

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text 'Doğal kaynaklarımızın sürdürülebilirliği için' (i.e. For the sustainability of our natural resources)	Textual Words: Natural, resources, sustainability. Possessive suffix: -mızın (like our)	'Natural resources' - evocation of substances such as air, plants, water, minerals and soil The necessity of maintaining the current situation Human responsibility for the future sustainability of natural resources, which are finite and belong to humans
	Visual A shade of blue that harmonizes with the sky	An organic part of nature, positive associations, naturalisation
Visual A wide valley A meander A reflection of the sky on the surface of the river The sky itself Blue and green	A wide valley formed by the reaching of the base level of an arcuate bed A meander formed by the bends made by the river in the wide valley floor due to the decrease in slope A reflection of the sky on the surface of the river	An unspoilt and habitable environment, abundance of air, water and vegetation, a balanced environmental system, interdependence of unpolluted and productive resources, biodiversity, sustainability of the environment

Connotation of poster 3: The poster employs the connotation of ownership of natural resources. The question of who owns natural resources is a highly contentious one. Depending on the context, a variety of entities have been proposed as the rightful owners of these resources, including individuals, institutions, communities, societies, countries, humanity, and even nature itself (Armstrong, 2017). The use of the Turkish phrase "our natural resources" in the first-person plural by an official public institution in Türkiye indicates that the poster directly associates the State of the Republic of Türkiye and its citizens with ownership of natural resources. The visuals in the poster suggest that river waters and agricultural lands are state-owned and that this ownership is shared with the public, as evidenced by the emphasis on "us" in the discourse. This is in accordance with Article 56 of the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye, which states that it is the duty of the state and citizens to improve the environment, protect environmental health and prevent environmental pollution. Nevertheless, this poster also exemplifies the type of state ownership that is included in contemporary ownership regimes, where the state is the primary official owner of natural resources in almost all nation-states around the world (Marchack, 1998). Article 168 of the Constitution definitively establishes state ownership of natural wealth and

resources. It stipulates that these assets are under the sovereignty and control of the state, and that the state has the exclusive right to explore and exploit them. However, the state may, at its discretion, transfer this right to other entities, including legal persons, for a specified period.



Figure 4. "Let's change before climate change"[1]

1 See: https://x.com/csbgovtr/status/1790790479707025515?t=rix16J9zTN-PTPp-HelT9Q&s=19

Table 5. Denotation analysis of poster 4

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text 'Sürdürülebilir gelecek, güvenli yarınlar için (i.e. For a sustainable future, for a safe tomorrow)	Textual Words: Sustainable, future, safe, tomorrow Words with the meaning of future: 'gelecek (i.e. future) and 'yarınlar' (i.e. tomorrows).	The efficient and responsible use of the world's natural resources to meet the needs of present and future generations, the need to make changes today for the future, and the long-term historical and collective benefit
	Visual First line normal and second line italic The letters G and Y are capitalised more than other letters	Dilution of the formal tone of handwritten communication, rejuvenation, emotional and sincere tone
Visual Wind turbines Plains Montains Sky Nature colours	Wind turbines, which convert the energy created by the power of the wind into mechanical energy A landscape comprising plains, mountains and sky	Fertile soils and weather conditions can produce energy by protecting nature, energy obtained from natural resources can prevent climate change and ensure the continuity of the current state of the environment, clean, renewable and sustainable nature resource, wind' can be converted into energy with the support of technology, protection of green areas and clean air is possible with renewable energy, ecosystem will be protected with environmentally friendly applications of technology

Connotation of poster 4: The poster's central premise is that renewable energy is a natural and limitless resource, and that transitioning to this energy system will safeguard the ecosystem and the future of humanity. It is widely acknowledged that the rapid growth of urban populations, the surge in energy consumption, the unsustainability of fossil fuels and the emission of greenhouse gases have collectively precipitated a raft of significant environmental challenges, compelling governments, international organizations, stakeholders and individuals to explore the potential of renewable energy sources (Olabi & Abdelkareem, 2022). The term 'renewable energy resource' is used to describe natural resources that can replenish themselves without any risk of depletion (Owusu & Asumadu-Sarkodie, 2016). Renewable energy employs renewable natural resources, including biomass, wind, solar, tidal, and geothermal energy, to enerate electricity and heat without emitting greenhouse gases (Kaygusuz, 2015). It is currently estimated that 17% of global energy is derived from renewable sources (Why the world must join forces to scale renewable energy..., 2024). Wind energy is one of the renewable energy types that has been in development since the 1970s (Chang et al., 2021). It has the potential

to play a pivotal role in mitigating climate change. It was in the 2000s (Pryor Barthelmie, 2010) that it began to develop rapidly in recent years and has since been recognized as one of the most promising and applicable energy sources (Liu & Barlow, 2017). Concurrently, there has been a notable increase in media discourse on wind energy since 1990 (Stephens et. al., 2009). Visuals of sustainable technologies, such as wind turbines, stand in contrast to depictions of unsustainable technologies like fossil fuel factories and smokestacks (as illustrated in one of the visuals from the Ministry's analyzed campaign[1]). As in Hasan and Norma's (2015) analysis, these representations construct a mental dichotomy of 'foe and friend', symbolizing conflict and choice. As observed by Kangas (2019) in newspaper visuals, the role of color in representing clean technology is also evident in this poster, where wind turbines appear as a natural part of the environment, blending aesthetically into the light, spacious landscape with a blue sky and white clouds, evoking the feel of a watercolor painting. However, renewable energy technologies are predicated on the assumption that there are infinite minerals in nature and are produced through toxic mining activities. In the case of wind energy, for instance, a single wind turbine contains 500 kg of nickel, which requires 100 tons of steelmaking coal to refine. Furthermore, an onshore wind farm necessitates the use of nine times more minerals than an equivalent gas-fired power plant (Nikiforuk, 2023). Furthermore, there are arguments that wind farms require an excessive amount of land and pose a threat to birds, including endangered species (Bradley, 1997). The poster eschews engagement with these debates by employing visual representations of wind turbines and associating a sustainable future with them.

Myth analysis of Poster 3 and 4: The prevention of climate change is a policy objective that is broadly supported at the national and global levels. The notion of sustainability is predicated upon the concept of sustainability as outlined in the 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. The report, entitled *Our Common Future*, examines the global common future through the lens of sustainable energy resources in a social, economic, and environmental context (WCED, 1987). Accordingly, sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (Elum & Momodu, 2017, p. 74). Therefore, the goal of sustainable development is fixed to the future, and this meaning is constructed in the posters. The two examples presented in the Ministry's poster illustrate two distinct but related aspects of this objective. The first example demonstrates the sustainability of natural resources in general, while the second example illustrates a technology that can be used for this purpose. In the remaining two posters that reiterate the concept of sustainability, the referential system is founded upon the sustainability of natural resources, namely water, forests, and air.[2] Consistent with this finding, other studies focusing on media representations of climate change

1 See: https://www.instagram.com/p/C6_ypb3tW-y/?utm_source=ig_web_button_share_sheet
2 See: https://www.instagram.com/p/C6_0DA0N_hr/?igsh=cndjY3BsaGtuYWRq; https://www.instagram.com/p/C6_xwnINPTY/?igsh=MXRzeXN6N2R4NTZu

in the literature similarly highlight how the issue is framed in terms of increasing the risk of extinction or harm to future generations (Suciyanto, 2016), setting future years as targets in public communication (Geçgel & Karaca, 2023), and emphasizing the importance of protecting the environment for the benefit of those future generations (br Sitorus et al., 2022). In line with Kangas's (2019) analysis, these posters also frame climate change as a large-scale technological issue, reflecting and reinforcing a technological approach to the problem.

However, the concept of sustainable development is a modern myth that is perceived as an unattainable ideal, particularly considering the world's growing population. Firstly, it presents a vision of a future society that is environmentally, ethically and economically balanced and equitable. Secondly, it situates itself within a clearly identifiable historical context, namely the 1960s and beyond. Thirdly, it creates its own terminology and narrative, including concepts such as renewable energy and carbon footprint, as well as literature that documents environmental disasters and issues such as the health effects of air pollution (Walker, 2007). Furthermore, as an oxymoron, the term provides an ideological foundation for green capitalism, encompassing both economic growth and the preservation of finite resources (Cock, 2011). Notably, this sustainability discourse incorporates cosmetic environmentalism, which refers to actions aimed at appeasing the public's mounting concerns about environmental issues through superficial and symbolic measures (Robinson, 2004).

Conclusion, Limitations and Future Research

In this article, the posters published by the T.C. Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change for World Climate Day on 15 May 2024 are analyzed with Roland Barthes' concept set using semiotic method. The article focuses on the visual, verbal, and ideological strategies of the posters. It is seen that three themes are repeated in the analysis: Anthropocene myth, the environmental catastrophism myth and the sustainability myth. According to the results, the common slogan 'Let's Change Before the Climate Changes' emphasizes the importance of individual measures as the potential danger of the climate crisis has not yet materialized. The message intended to be conveyed with the slogan focuses on the importance of collective change and action in preventing the climate crisis. By using elements such as the melting of glaciers and climate-induced forced migration, the posters place the overall responsibility for saving the world from the climate crisis and environmental problems on individuals within the framework of fear appeal. However, within the scope of the sustainability myth used by the posters, processes such as environmental policies and the protection of natural resources are not solely the responsibility of individuals; they require the cooperation of governments, the private sector, and international organizations. It is seen that the posters analyzed primarily focus on individual change in raising awareness about the climate crisis. In addition, it is noteworthy that the fact that capitalist

economic policies accelerate ecological disasters is ignored in the posters in addressing the climate crisis and proposing solutions. The posters do not refer to the destructive effects of economic systems, government policies and production processes underlying the climate crisis.

The present research methodology is constrained by its focus on a single country (Türkiye), a specific public institution (the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change), a specific date (World Climate Day on 15 May 2024), and a specific type of media text (poster). Moreover, it is methodologically constrained to semiotics. The context of a specific country and institution may limit the generalizability of its findings. This limitation is significant not only in terms of the sample, but also in terms of the manner in which climate change communication is conceptualized as a form of public communication at the semiotic level. It is evident that forms of public discourse, political paradigms, societal values, institutional norms, and media practices are frequently profoundly entrenched within the specific contexts of individual nations. Consequently, the extent to which the findings can be considered valid across different cultural environments remains a subject of debate. While this limitation does not compromise the validity of the study's results, it does demand a more nuanced and context-sensitive interpretation and application. It is therefore recommended that future studies employ designs of a similar nature in a range of geographical settings in order to enhance the robustness and transferability of the findings.

Further research could also employ multidimensional analysis, encompassing the communication activities of other public institutions, and conducting a comparative analysis of public communication activities across different countries on climate communication. Furthermore, it is suggested that the present analysis serve as a point of departure for future research endeavours. Such endeavours could involve the employment of quantitative methodologies for the purpose of examining the communication activities of the relevant ministry. This examination could be facilitated by the utilization of large-scale data sets. Additionally, future studies could benefit from incorporating focus groups or in-depth interviews to evaluate how such visual materials are perceived and interpreted by different audiences, thereby complementing the semiotic analysis with audience-based insights.

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Humanism and Overcoming Digital Alienation by Russian Teenagers and Young People

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Abstract

Modern authors, including D. Ivanov, Yu. Asochakov, S. Dudnik, note the emergence of a new form of alienation — digital alienation. This form is characterized by individualization of experience and the search for ways to overcome alienation, the determination of communication through digital interfaces, and the absence of collective forms of resistance. Despite the extensive body of work devoted to the problem of digital alienation, this topic remains poorly studied in relation to adolescents and young people. Hence, the goal of the study is to describe the construction of digital alienation through digital practices and practices of overcoming it by adolescents and young people. According to the results of the study, one of the main mechanisms for the formation of digital alienation by adolescents is the mediation of communication through digital interfaces, which creates an unstable communication format. Discipline and supervision, implemented through the notification system of programs on digital devices, also make a significant contribution. The stability of the alienation being formed is due to the perception of digital devices as organically necessary for communication, like one's own body. Adolescents most often overcome alienation by shifting their focus from mediated digital communication to face-to-face interpersonal communication, as well as by refusing notifications or using certain apps. Such practices contribute to the attainment of freedom from interfaces, that is, the attainment of humanism in existential terminology. This article is aimed at researchers in the field of digital alienation, as well as practitioners working with at-risk adolescents, since alienation is a significant risk factor for delinquent behavior.

Keywords

Digital Alienation; Sabotage; Digital Algorithms; Surveillance; Control; Overcoming Alienation; Critical Theory; Adolescents; Young People; Disciplining; Digital Interfaces

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Гуманизм и преодоление цифрового отчуждения российскими подростками и молодежью

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Аннотация

Современные авторы, среди которых Д. Иванов, Ю. Асочаков, С. Дудник, констатируют становление новой формы отчуждения — цифрового отчуждения. Данная форма характеризуется индивидуализацией переживания и поиска путей преодоления отчуждения, обусловленностью общением через цифровые интерфейсы, отсутствием коллективных форм сопротивления. Несмотря на обширный корпус работ, посвященных проблеме цифрового отчуждения, данная тематика остаётся слабо изученной в отношении подростков и молодежи. Отсюда цель исследования — описать конструирование цифрового отчуждения через цифровые практики и техники его преодоления подростками и молодежью. Согласно результатам исследования, один из основных механизмов формирования цифрового отчуждения подростками — опосредование общения цифровыми интерфейсами, создающее нестабильный формат коммуникации. Значимый вклад оказывает также дисциплинирование и надзор, реализуемый посредством системы уведомлений программ на цифровых устройствах. Устойчивость формируемого отчуждения обусловлена восприятием цифровых устройств как органически необходимых для общения, подобно собственному телу. Преодоление отчуждения подростками чаще всего происходит через смещение фокуса от опосредованной цифровой коммуникации к живому межличностному общению, а также через отказ от уведомлений или использования отдельных приложений. Такие практики способствуют освобождению от интерфейсов, то есть обретению гуманизма в экзистенциальной терминологии. Данная статья ориентирована на исследователей в области цифрового отчуждения, а также на специалистов-практиков, работающих с подростками групп-риска, поскольку отчуждение является значимым фактором риска делинквентного поведения.

Ключевые слова

цифровое отчуждение; саботаж; цифровые алгоритмы; слежка; контроль; преодоление отчуждения; критическая теория; подростки; молодежь; дисциплинирование; цифровые интерфейсы

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Введение

Проблема отчуждения и его преодоления несколько раз становились центром дискуссии в науках об обществе в XIX—XX веках, как об этом пишет М. Мусто (2010, с. 79). Первую итерацию связывают с публикацией работ К. Маркса об отчуждении труда: «Товарный фетишизм и его тайна» (1960), «Наемный труд и капитал» (1894) и др. Маркс понимал отчуждение как «такие общественные отношения и такой способ восприятия мира, при которых человек становится отстраненным от самого себя» (Ахметзянова, 2018, с. 63). Видя отчуждение как производное от процесса труда, в который оказывается вовлечен человек в условиях капиталистических отношений, отчуждение у Маркса включало в себя четыре элемента: отчуждение человека от человека, отчуждение человека от своей природы, отчуждение человека от процесса труда и от продукта труда (Aron, 1955).

Ряд авторов (в частности М. Мусто (2010), С. Бахитов (2013)), рассматривают интерес классиков социологии (М. Вебера, Э. Дюркгейма) к теме отчуждения именно в контексте их переосмысления и критики позиции Маркса. Вебер полагает под отчуждением редукцию человека к его производственной и бюрократической функции в условиях все более регламентированного и рационализированного общества (Бахитов, 2013). Дюркгейм видел отчуждение симптомом аномии – устройства общества в условиях смены представлений о должном (Sarfraz, 1997). Оба социолога старались отойти от трудоцентристского понимания отчуждения.

Вторая итерация интереса к проблеме отчуждения возникает в 1950-1960-е годы. Мусто связывает это с публикацией перевода «Экономико-философских рукописей 1844 года» Маркса (2023), который становится предметом для рефлексии ряда ведущих философов того времени (Х. Арендт, Э. Фромм и др.). В этот период авторы экзистенциализма, в частности Ж.-П. Сартр, дают авторскую интерпретацию отчуждения. Сартр понимает под отчуждением онтологическое состояние человека, в котором тот пребывает с рождения. А. Лессинг замечает, что в сартровском экзистенциализме отчуждение раскрывается через три ключевые категории: неотвратимая свобода, смерть, субъектность. Человек свободен в своих действиях и несет сам ответственность за их последствия, он не может их разделить с кем-либо еще, а потому отчужден в этом от других людей. Точно так же человек не может с кем-то разделить свою собственную смерть или свою личность (субъектность) (Lessing, 1976). Такое определение отчуждения позволяет разработать целостную теорию интерпретации личных психологических переживаний человека, о чем пишет Е. Шетулова, однако оно препятствует учету социальных факторов и пониманию отчуждения как социального явления (2013). На это же указывали и советские заочные оппоненты экзистенциалистов: Т. Ойзерман (1965), И. Нарский (1983), Э. Ильенков (1984) и др. Большее

внимание к социальному контексту можно обнаружить в работах авторов критической социальной теории, которых относят к числу постмарксистов: Э. Фромм, О. Негт, А. Клюге, Г. Маркузе и др. Основные изменения, привнесенные данными авторами в концепцию отчуждения в этот период, таковы: внимание к повседневности; понимание коммуникации как практики, конституирующей отчуждение; уход от труда как ключевой категории в пользу категорий потребления и надзора. Подробнее данные изменения будут рассмотрены ниже.

Новый виток интереса к проблеме отчуждения, как на это указывают Ю. Асочаков и Д. Иванов, приходит в современных работах с появлением цифрового отчуждения (2023). Цифровое отчуждение характеризуется индивидуализацией переживания отчуждения, опосредованием коммуникации цифровыми интерфейсами, ведущей ролью цифровой коммуникации и расщеплением физического и цифрового я. При наличии существенного объема работ, посвященных проблеме цифрового отчуждения (Лешкевич, 2019; Веселов & Скворцов, 2021; Жулего и др., 2019; Солдатова, Нестик & Рассказова, 2018), цифровому отчуждению подростков и ранней молодежи уделяется значительно меньше внимания исследователей. Оно заслуживает более детального рассмотрения, поскольку отчуждение подростков и молодежи обладает рядом самостоятельных отличительных черт, о чем пишут, хоть и в психологическом ключе, Т. Молодцова и С. Шалова: «Еще более остро оно [отчуждение] переживается детской психикой, когда еще полностью не сформированы убеждения и мировоззрение» (2019, с. 294). Проблема отчуждения подростков и молодежи требует особенного внимания ввиду социальных последствий для собственной жизни, резюмируют Молодцова и Шалова: «Эта проблема актуальна для подростков, т. к. у них идет самое интенсивное формирование модели социального поведения» (2010, с. 294). О. Попова видит в отчуждении подростков и молодежи фактор риска делинквентного поведения. Используя методику С. Мадди (который опирается на Э. Фромма в понимании отчуждения) в адаптации Е. Осина, Попова демонстрирует, что у подростков и молодежи группы делинквентного поведения статистически значимо выше уровни отчуждения от себя, от членов семьи, от учебной деятельности, от других людей и от общества в целом, в сравнении с нормотипичной группой (2010, с. 153). В. Беликов с соавторами также понимают проблему отчуждения как фактор риска отклоняющегося поведения и обнаруживают, что выводы о существовании такой связи справедливы и для цифрового отчуждения (2022). Более детального рассмотрения, замечают Беликов с соавторами, заслуживают практики преодоления цифрового отчуждения подростками и молодежью, а также выявление механизмов влияния цифровых практик на формирование отчуждения.

Цель статьи, отсюда, заключается в подробном описании практик формирования цифрового отчуждения подростков и молодежи, а также путей его преодоления.

Проблема отчуждения в критической теории

Детальное рассмотрение проблемы отчуждения стоит начать с работ авторов критической социальной теории, поскольку именно с их трудами связывается акцентирование внимания на вопросе вклада коммуникации в формирование отчуждения, актуального при рассмотрении цифрового отчуждения. В 1961 году Э. Фромм публикует работу «Марксова концепция человека», в которой реконцептуализирует идею отчуждения, привнеся в нее измерение гуманизма (1992). Категория гуманизма выступает для Фромма возможной точкой соприкосновения экзистенциального (индивидуального) уровня отчуждения и марксистского (социетального). Определение гуманизма в контексте рассматриваемой нами проблемы следует давать от обратного – через отрицание гуманизма эпохи Просвещения, как об этом пишет Ю. Беспечанский. Философы эпохи Просвещения отказываются от идеи предопределенности человеческой судьбы божественным вмешательством в пользу эссенциалистского взгляда на человека. Религиозная предопределенность, отсюда, сменяется природной. Человек начинает пониматься ведомым своими инстинктами, биологическими процессами в организме (2013). Фромм вслед за философами экзистенциализма, от которых он и заимствует концепт гуманизма, выступает категорически против. Гуманизм – это предоставление человеку свободы действовать по своей собственной воле. Именно такую идею Фромм обнаруживает у Маркса: «Маркс начинает с идеи о том, что человек – сам творец своей истории» (1992, с. 380). А отчуждение, под которым Фромм понимает «такой способ восприятия, при котором человек ощущает себя как нечто чуждое» (1992, с. 101), оказывается следствием ограничений, накладываемых на человека. Преодоление отчуждения возможно через активную деятельную позицию, в которой человек ощущает собственную субъектность.

Г. Маркузе акцентирует внимание на социальном изменении, которое следует учитывать при анализе отчуждения. Речь идет про автоматизацию и опосредование повседневности людей машинами, которая оказывается еще сильнее подчинена институтам капитализма — среди них Маркузе упоминает и капиталистическое государство: «В настоящее время политическая власть утверждает себя через власть над процессом машинного производства и над технической организацией аппарата» (2003, с. 15).

Маркузе полагает важным обратить внимание на рационализацию и алгоритмизацию, как на новые современные ему процессы, которые способствуют усилению отчуждения. В своей аргументации Маркузе обращается к монографии по истории и эпистемологии науки П. Бриджмена, где изложен сюжет о трансформации понимания длины в физике. Бриджмен констатирует кризис

абстрактных дедуктивных определений и показывает, что в современной физике длина начинает определяться как результат операции измерения (1928). Маркузе видит в этом редукцию категории абстрактного в целом к наблюдаемому и измеримому. Отсюда, полагает он, идеализм уступает позиции бихевиоризма в общественных науках, а изучение человека и общества редуцируется до повышения точности фиксации наблюдаемого поведения (2003, с. 10-21). Эта рационализация, видит Маркузе, не ограничивается эпистемологией науки, она образует логику интерпретации повседневности. Идеологии и религиозные учения уступают место капиталистической алгоритмизации (2003, с. 22–24). Если понимать под современными цифровыми алгоритмами социальных сетей частный случай капиталистических алгоритмов и проявление капиталистической рациональности, то Маркузе задолго до их появления понимает в них угрозу персональной свободе человека.

О. Негт и А. Клюге привносят в дискуссию об отчуждении тезисы о вкладе коммуникации в отчуждение. Совместная работа двух философов критической теории началась в 1962 году с обсуждения в «Группе 47» роли кинематографа и, более широко, массовой культуры в социальных изменениях и конструировании социального порядка (Langston, 2008). Ключевые монографии, в которых философы рассматривают тему отчуждения, таковы: «История и панегирик (нем. “Geschichte und Eigensinn”)» (2016), «Публичная сфера и опыт: к вопросу о буржуазной и пролетарской публичной сфере (анг. “Public Sphere and Experience: toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere”)» (1993). Вторая монография представляет собой развернутой критический ответ на диссертацию Ю. Хабермаса «Структурная трансформация публичной сферы» (Вербилович, 2013). В частности, критике подвергается идея коммуникативного действия и отсутствие должного внимания Хабермаса к существующим ограничениям, накладываемым на такое действие в условиях тотальности контроля агентов капиталистического дискурса над публичной сферой:

> «Утрата публичной сферы [...], а также ограниченный доступ рабочих в их существующих организациях к каналам коммуникации вскоре заставили нас задаться вопросом, могут ли существовать какие-либо эффективные формы контрпубличной сферы, противостоящие буржуазной публичной сфере» (перевод — авт.) (Negt & Kluge, 1993, p. 41).

Из тезиса Негта и Клюге проистекают два важных следствия: (1) отчуждение происходит через ограничение свободного коммуникативного акта и может быть, соответственно, преодолено через обретение свободы высказывания; (2) ограничения коммуникации носят тотальный характер из-за самого устройства публичной сферы, построенного в интересах доминирующей капиталистической парадигмы.

О специфике цифрового отчуждения

Возрождение интереса к проблеме отчуждения в настоящее время связано с необходимостью теоретической рефлексии нового явления — цифрового отчуждения. В условиях общества постмодерна отчуждение все больше требует осмысления не как объективный экономический процесс, а как переживаемое состояние человека: «[…]отчуждение есть аффект, и он встроен в комплекс аффектов, которые образуют ресентимент, или мстительную зависть, входящую в социально-психологическое основание борьбы масс за эмансипацию» (Микиртумов, с. 41–42). Этим же обусловливается индивидуализация переживания отчуждения людьми. Отечественные исследователи выделяют несколько процессов, которые стоят за формированием новой формы отчуждения. Е. Труфанова среди таких процессов видит расщепление целостной субъектности человека на виртуальную (отчуждаемую) и физическую субъектность:

> «В цифровых взаимодействиях происходит отчуждение зафиксированной цифровым образом информации о субъекте, и эти данные начинают жить своей независимой жизнью в цифровом мире. Часть информации отчуждается добровольно и осознанно, люди сами сообщают ее о себе, но часть попадает в цифровые архивы либо через третьи руки недобросовестным путем, либо человек передает ее Сети неосознанно, не предполагая, что ее будут собирать и хранить» (2024, с. 223).

В обозначенном Труфановой тезисе важно подчеркнуть его синонимичность тезису о сохранении субъектности в работе Фромма. Понимание себя как цельного и деятельного субъекта и Фроммом, и Труфановой связывается с преодолением отчуждения. Труфанова указывает на обретение власти алгоритмов и цифровых интерфейсов, которые самостоятельно могут принимать решение, какие данные сохранить о пользователе, и куда их передать. Общение онлайн отличается от оффлайн- общения возможностью конструировать новую идентичность, далекую от своей собственной. Это создает риски утраты субъектности, на что указывают Л. Шайгерова с соавторами, говоря об амбивалентных последствиях такой практики: «Экспериментирование с новыми идентичностями онлайн может оказывать стимулирующее влияние, способствующее более глубокому познанию себя и самораскрытию, но также приводить к отчуждению и изоляции» (2022, с. 95).

Беликов с соавторами связывают рост отчуждения с цифровым контролем. При этом их выводы справедливы применительно к подросткам и молодежи. Исследователи пишут: «[…] социум с помощью социальной сети, средств массовой информации, экономических инструментов заставляет подростка скрывать свое “Я”, делает свободу личности не просто иллюзорной, но и опасной для самого существования личности» (2022, с. 374). Т. Лешкевич полагает, что, кроме цифрового контроля, отчуждению способствует и сама форма цифрового общения, которая создает у пользователей иллюзию заме-

щения живого личностного общения: «Цифровое отчуждение обусловлено тем, что сетевые взаимодействия позиционируют себя как самодостаточный тип бытия, замещающий реальные связи и отношения, живое личностное общение и способы самореализации» (2019, с. 137). Эти изменения требуют адекватной теоретической рефлексии и сонастройки концептуальных моделей, о чем пишут Д. Иванов и Ю. Асочаков: «[современные теории требуют] соединения новой концепции отчуждения, сфокусированной на виртуализации и алгоритмизации, с концепцией исторической динамики капитализма, движимого диалектикой господства и эмансипации» (2023, с. 12). Отечественные социологи замечают, что необходимо «[...] не да[ть] ей [теории отчуждения] выродиться в ритуальный аффирмативный дискурс» (2023, с. 12). Об опасности позитивных оценок пишет и С. Дудник, когда констатирует, что значительная часть современных теоретиков склонны приводить излишне оптимистичные прогнозы о последствиях цифровизации, не учитывая в должной мере феномен отчуждения (2020, с. 20).

Поскольку современные авторы связывают формирование отчуждения с практиками ограничения свободы, важно привнести в дискуссию о цифровом отчуждении концептуальное осмысление таких практик.

М. Фуко описывает в своих работах три сосуществующих механизма установления власти/ограничения свободы, из которых наиболее подходящим для анализа взаимоотношения подростков, молодежи и цифрового пространства является дисциплинарный механизм (2013). Классическими пространствами дисциплинирования Фуко называет тюрьмы, армии и монастыри: «Издавна существовали многочисленные дисциплинарные методы – в монастырях, армиях и ремесленных цехах» (Фуко, 2013, с. 163). Однако многие авторы рассматривают сквозь призму концепции дисциплины цифровые пространства (Capodivacca, Giacomini, 2024). Дисциплинарный механизм характеризуется своей направленностью на получение контроля над телом и временем индивида для извлечения той или иной выгоды (Платонова, 2022). Цифровые пространства, как и предполагается дисциплинарным механизмом власти, создаются с нуля, а их инфраструктура сконструирована таким образом, чтобы получать наибольшую выгоду от пользователей этих пространств. Выгодой в данном случае является прибыль от рекламы, продажи товаров, в том числе данных самого пользователя. Для получения наибольшей выгоды необходимо, чтобы пользователь как можно больше времени проводил в цифровых пространствах и регулярно в них возвращался.

В рамках дисциплины за индивидом закрепляется место, что в цифровых пространствах может считаться регистрацией пользовательского аккаунта, а также присуждением других знаков, отличающих одного пользователя для другого. На распределенном месте за индивидом осуществляется цифровой надзор, под которым понимаются как технологии сбора данных о пользователе, так и алгоритмы, призванные удерживать пользователя

в цифровом пространстве. Круговорот сбора информации, её последующего использования и повторного сбора на основе использования в рамках дисциплины описывается с помощью терминов познаваемого и полезного тел, где познаваемое тело — это модель, создаваемая с целью получить понимание, как наиболее эффективно получать пользу от индивида, а полезное тело — это модель, которая создается дисциплинарными механизмами (Фуко, 2013).

Другой важной в данном контексте техникой дисциплины является соединение тела индивида с инструментом. Инструментом в данном случае является любое устройство, позволяющее иметь доступ в Интернет. Устройство выступает проводником дисциплины для материального тела пользователя, по возможности контролируя его движения. Контроль может осуществляться при помощи таких технологий, как, например, всплывающие уведомления, направленные на удержание либо на возвращение внимания индивида на устройство и, как следствие, изменение положения его тела в пространстве (Кравченко, 2021). Таким образом, хотя цифровое отчуждение может не являться целью дисциплинарных механизмов, его можно назвать их результатом.

Практики преодоления цифрового отчуждения

Д. Иванов пишет о последовательном сокращении социальной группы, рассматриваемой левыми мыслителями в качестве основы революционного движения по преодолению отчуждения. В рамках первой итерации внимания социальных теоретиков к проблеме отчуждения (К. Маркс, М. Гесс и др.) революционная масса состояла из рабочих и их семей и оценивалась в десятки миллионов человек. В период второй итерации (Э. Фромм, Г. Маркузе и др.) надежды левых мыслителей возлагались на активистские группы (группы за устранение расовой дискриминации, экологические активисты и др.), а их объем мог быть оценен в сотни тысяч – миллионы человек. Третья итерация (Д. Берри, С. Дудник и др.) характеризуется надеждой на отдельных разрозненных индивидов, практики переживания и преодоления отчуждения которых будут разниться от одного человека к другому. (Иванов, 2023, с. 29) Иванов описывает их следующим образом: «Социальными партизанами (движения по преодолению отчуждения) становятся те относительно немногочисленные маргиналы, кто практикуют “малые исходы” в направлении поствиртуализации: [...] саботажники, препятствующие нормальному выполнению алгоритмов, отстающие от заданных ими ритмов или, напротив, опережающие их» (2023, с. 30). Преодоление отчуждения, таким образом, связывается с саботажем – нарушением работы алгоритмов контроля и надзора над человеком, сбора информации, о которых пишет Труфанова (2024, с. 223).

Выборочная совокупность

Исследование проводилось с участием подростков и молодежи в возрасте от 14 до 25 лет. Участниками исследования выступили городские жители, в первую очередь жители Санкт-Петербурга и его ближайших окрестностей (в том числе в Ленинградской области): коренными жителями Санкт-Петербурга были 11 информантов, Ленинградской области и ближайших пригородов Санкт-Петербурга – 3 информанта; приезжими в связи с различными жизненными обстоятельствами были 8 человек. Средний возраст составил 18 лет, 18 человек были женского пола, 4 человека – мужского; 11 человек обучались в высшем учебном заведении, 6 человек – в школе, 2 человека – в колледже; 7 человек работали и 15 человек не работали. Всего к участию в исследовании было привлечено 22 человека. Все участники выборочной совокупности ежедневно пользовались социальными сетями. В выборочной совокупности должны были быть представлены сценарии использования разных цифровых устройств: стационарного компьютера, ноутбука, планшета, смартфона, умного телевизором. Каждое из устройств должно было присутствовать как минимум у одного участника выборочной совокупности. Для определения объема выборочной совокупности был использован метод насыщения. Рекрутирование информантов было прекращено исследовательской группой после обнаружения во время новых интервью ответов, повторяющих полученные в более ранних интервью.

Теоретическая модель

Цифровое отчуждение представляет собой переживаемое подростками и молодежью состояние, обусловленное опосредованностью общения цифровыми интерфейсами и устройствами, и ограничение его свободы посредством действий алгоритмов, а также надзора других пользователей. Под цифровыми интерфейсами будут пониматься пользовательские интерфейсы программного обеспечения, а под цифровыми устройствами – электронные устройства, на которых такое программное обеспечение может быть установлено (телефоны, планшеты, компьютеры, телевизоры и т.д.).

Резюмируя изложенные выше тезисы, можно обозначить основные контуры теоретической модели исследования.

Цифровые интерфейсы и другие пользователи дисциплинируют человека. Действия пользователей, направленные на подрыв и разрушение существующих алгоритмов надзора и организации общения, должны приводить к преодолению отчуждения и, соответственно, гуманизму, как состоянию свободы от существующих цифровых ограничений. Графически теоретическая модель может быть изображена следующим образом (Рисунок 1):

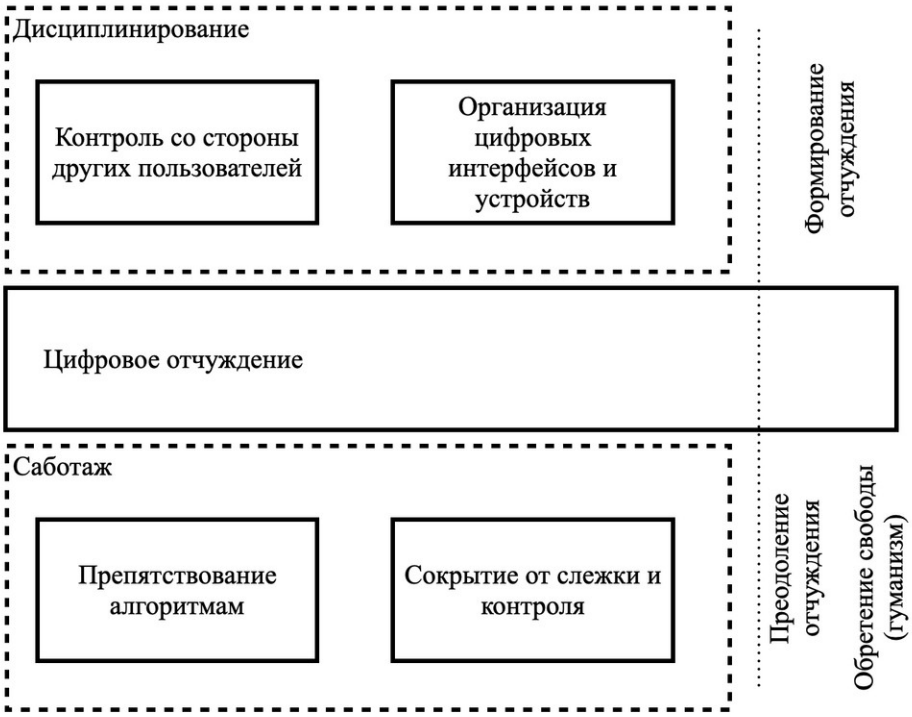

Рисунок 1. Теоретическая модель формирования и преодоления цифрового отчуждения

Figure 1. Theoretical model of the formation and overcoming of digital alienation

Методика исследования

С информантами были проведены интервью. Гайд интервью содержал следующие блоки: сведения информанта о себе; опыт использования социальных сетей; взаимодействие пользователя с цифровыми устройствами (планшет, компьютер, телефон). Сбор данных проводился в период с 12-го по 22-е июня 2024 года. Обработка и анализ результатов проводились с помощью программного обеспечения “ATLAS.ti”. Для обработки данных использовалось тематическое кодирование. Авторами были выделены коды, описывающие практики конструирования отчуждения, дисциплинирования; практики преодоления дисциплинирующего воздействия алгоритмов и надзора.

Объектом исследования выступают цифровые практики подростков и молодежи. *Предметом исследования* является цифровое отчуждение и его преодоление, выраженные в цифровых практиках.

Цель исследования: описать конструирование цифрового отчуждения через цифровые практики и техники его преодоления подростками и молодежью.

Задачи исследования:

1. Выделить основные цифровые практики подростков и молодежи, сопряженные с конструированием отчуждения.
2. Проанализировать влияние цифровых интерфейсов и надзора на формируемое отчуждение.
3. Описать практики преодоления цифрового отчуждения и формирования гуманизма подростками и молодежью.

Исходя из изложенных тезисов и построенной теоретической модели, можно сформулировать несколько *гипотез*:

H1: Ведущим механизмом формирования цифрового отчуждения является опосредование и форматирование общения цифровыми интерфейсами и устройствами. Формат общения через цифровые устройства оказывается нестабильным и потому ведет к разрывам в общении.

H2: Устойчивость опосредования общения цифровыми устройствами и интерфейсами происходит из убежденности информантов, что эти устройства и интерфейсы органически облигатны, т. е. столь же необходимы им для общения, как их собственное тело.

H3: Смещение фокуса (отвлечение) от опосредованной цифровыми интерфейсами и устройствами коммуникации способствует преодолению отчуждения.

Практики конструирования цифрового отчуждения

Информанты упоминают несколько инструментов, посредством которых цифровые интерфейсы и устройства органически интегрируются в общение, опосредуя его. Органическая интеграция здесь, по Фуко, означает, что информанты видят эти интерфейсы облигатным элементом для общения, как и интерфейсы собственного тела (речь, глаза и т.д.). Информант НК описывает, что цифровые интерфейсы создали новый формат общения – постоянное соприсутствие людей в коммуникации через возможность в любую минуту отправить сообщение и получить его. Без цифрового интерфейса такое общение невозможно:

> [когда оказываюсь без телефона] некомфортно [...] и все мессенджеры – сообщения от друзей, с которыми ты не хочешь терять связь ни на минуту, и есть такая возможность – всё это в телефоне, и я. конечно, чувствую некомфортно [себя, когда оказываюсь без телефона]. (НК Ж 20)[1]

О таком формате общения пишет и информант РК. Отсутствие мгновенного ответа здесь воспринимается как игнорирование или пренебрежение со стороны другого человека:

1 Здесь и далее информанты закодированы следующим образом: двухбуквенный код информанта, пол, возраст

> Для меня, если мне поступило сообщение, я на него отвечаю [сразу же], и когда мне не ответили в течение некоторого времени – меня прям бесит это! Я думаю, это – быстрее-быстрее-быстрее [...] хотя, может, человеку [которому было отправлено сообщение] вообще все равно. (РК Ж 19)

Формат мгновенного общения – бытия постоянно «на связи» – создает у информантов фрустрирующую иллюзию, что они общаются недостаточно в сравнении со своими знакомыми, о чем рассказывает информант ММ:

> В какой-то момент появляется какой-нибудь гиперактивный человек, [...] например, твоя подруга, у которой [...] миллиард знакомых – она там, тут, она уже тут, [...а ты] только сидишь, думаешь – тебе, наверное, вот этого не хватает – вот этой открытости в общении. (ММ Ж 17)

Это фрустрация усиливается, если информанты отмечают, что в социальных сетях они занимают преимущественно пассивную позицию, только потребляя контент, и не инициируют общение самостоятельно. На это указывали ряд информантов:

> Я очень пассивный пользователь интернета я обычно не пишу людям, на которых я подписана. (ЕБ Ж 18)

> [...] ну я редко, я редко коммуницирую [...] (ВГ Ж 18)

Информантом РК был описан сценарий коммуникации, при котором он вступает в большое число чатов с множеством людей, однако сам в них коммуникацию не инициирует и не считает это важным и приоритетным, используя свой телефон преимущественно для потребления контента:

> Не важно, сколько мне кто написал, скорее [я использую свой телефон] для просмотра контента, для развлечения себя. [...] У меня много чатов, в которых я сейчас состою, и там многие мне пишут, но [...] и без людей, и без вот этих сообщений, в принципе, [мне] абсолютно нормально. (РК Ж 19)

Вторым инструментом органической интеграции оказывается опосредование коммуникации при помощи инструментов, существующих только в цифровом интерфейсе — они позволяют, по мнению информантов, выразить эмоции или переживания, которые нельзя или очень затруднительно выразить иначе. Речь идет о мемах, стикерах и др.:

> У меня есть такая [...] фишка при общении с людьми, [...] меня даже моя одногруппница называет человеком-мемом [...], мне очень нравится [...] под какие-то ситуации искать мемы и скидывать их. То есть, условно, я вспоминаю какой-то мем, забиваю его в поисковике. [...] как бы можно иногда сказать эту фразу [из мема], но в оригинале будет смешнее, либо, может, человек не поймет этого мема, а я так все знаю. (ВК Ж 19)

Некоторым из информантов сложно справляться с темпом и объемом коммуникации, который задается цифровыми интерфейсами, и их фрустрация проявляется в утрате сил и ресурсов для общения. Так об этом рассказывает информант НН:

> Конечно, это [утрата интереса] бывает достаточно часто. И скорее это даже не к какому-то делу, а к общению с некоторыми людьми, хотя они мне ничего плохого не делают. То есть просто я понимаю, что я не могу. Просто не хочу. У меня руки не поднимаются, ничего. (НН Ж 16)

Формирование отчуждения цифровыми интерфейсами и надзором

Информанты прибегают к физиологическим метафорам для описания практик взаимодействия с цифровыми интерфейсами и устройствами. Они сравнивают цифровые практики с курением, а отказ от них вызывает тревогу. Дисциплинирование интерфейсами, отсюда, выступает инструментом биополитики, по Фуко, объектом воздействия которой оказывается тело человека:

> Когда ты не можешь сам себя развлечь, при том что я достаточно нормально сама с собой могу обходиться [...] как курение, наверное, такая привычка. (РК, Ж, 19 лет)

> Если я осталась где-то в незнакомом месте без телефона, то, ну, понятное дело, что будет чувство тревоги [...]. (АМ, Ж, 17 лет)

Некоторые из информантов в том же ключе физиологических метафор пишут про цифровые интерфейсы и практики взаимодействия с ними как о части физиологических привычек. Установка будильника органически связана с засыпанием, а звонок будильника – с пробуждением:

> Именно без мессенджера и там будильников каких-то, функций, которы[е] непосредственно связаны с какими-то даже физиологическими привычками формально просто и какими-то [...] коммуникационными – я правда не смогу. (НК, Ж, 20 дет)

Цифровые интерфейсы интегрируются в офлайн практики информантов. Действия в офлайне начинают казаться неполными и требовать их дополнения через параллельное взаимодействие с цифровыми интерфейсами. Некоторые из информантов указывают, что это позволяет им справиться с негативными переживаниями от проблем с концентрацией внимания:

> Я, вот, люблю параллельно [с использованием цифровых устройств] что-то делать. То есть, если, например, чтобы что-то слушать и понимать, мне надо еще параллельно что-то делать [через цифровые интерфейсы]. (ВГ, Ж, 18 лет)

> Ну, концентрация. Мне кажется, у всех в наше время проблемы с этим. Потому что [...] делаю я домашку, да? А почему бы параллельно не полистать какие-нибудь шортсы [короткие видео] и так далее? (ДА, Ж, 18 лет)

Взаимодействие с устройствами и интерфейсами может занимать гораздо больше времени, чем участники исследования изначально планировали, поскольку некоторые из них утрачивают ощущение времени при взаимодействии с устройствами:

> [Утрата чувства времени началась] Когда я вот училась в школе, то есть чуть больше года назад. [...] Я могла просто прийти домой [...] в 2–3 часа дня, [...]

что-то сесть, ну, втыкать, и такая, – ой, время уже, там, 8–9 вечера. (НН, Ж, 16 лет)

Обращаясь ко второму инструменту формирования отчуждения, надзору: его проявления можно обнаружить в уведомлениях. Речь идет и об уведомлениях, на которые респонденты сами подписывались (как оповещения о выходе видео), и о сгенерированных соцсетями без участия пользователя (например, напоминания, что какой-либо контент-мейкер выложил пост). Информанты по-разному описывают влияние уведомлений. Некоторые упоминают, что уведомления их раздражают – этот тезис будет подробнее раскрыт в следующем параграфе. Некоторые из информантов, наоборот, указывали, что оповещения обладали императивной властью над ними и их вниманием:

Пришло уведомление, я машинально тыкаю на него, даже не осознавая. На той же учёбе, например, сижу: пара, вроде интересно, приходит уведомление, новое видео, тык, всё. Я отключилась от того, что говорит преподаватель. (ДА, Ж, 18 лет)

Саботаж: практики преодоления цифрового отчуждения

Можно обозначить несколько типичных сценариев преодоления отчуждения информантами. Первый из них связан с разрушением контролирующего воздействия уведомлений. Информанты, которые ограничивали уведомления, описывали их как раздражающие и усугубляющие их проблемы с концентрацией внимания. Практики борьбы с уведомлениями варьировались от избирательного отказа от ненужных уведомлений до их полной блокировки. Такие действия были гуманистическими, а объектом гуманизма оказывались сами пользователи — субъекты данных действий.

Я даже уведомления от Телеграма [мессенджер] отключила по той причине, что [...] в какой-то момент я слишком погрузилась в экранчик телефона, и мне нужно было радикально как-то уменьшить экранное время [...] и заходить на те или иные платформы не потому, что пришло уведомление. (ДА, Ж, 18 лет)

У меня только те [уведомления включены], где важные, где с финансами связаны: пополнить – [...] подписка «ВК Музыка» [приложение для прослушивания музыки] – я плачу; еще за «МТС» [оператор мобильной связи] подписку за телефон плачу. Если я соглашусь на уведомления какие-либо левые – я все это потеряю, забуду и сильно расстроюсь. Мне и так тяжело с концентрацией внимания – меня очень это сильно раздражает. (НК, Ж, 20 лет)

В исключительных ситуациях информанты старались физически отстраниться от цифровых устройств, выключали их или отключали уведомления:

Я, когда читаю, я его [телефон] куда-нибудь убираю и ставлю на беззвучный, чтобы он меня не беспокоил. (ВД, Ж, 18 лет)

Менее радикальной стратегией был отказ от использования отдельных приложений. Информант НК не видит иных способов справиться с дисциплинирующим влиянием приложения для просмотра коротких видео:

> С «Клипами» [приложение для просмотра коротких видео] просто [...] пытаюсь не заходить вообще – это единственный вариант, потому что, если ты уже залип [...] Мне тяжело бороться с залипаниями: в «Клипах», в «Шортсах» [приложения для просмотра коротких видео], вот в этих всех коротких видео – это просто надолго для меня [...]. Могу час сидеть, полтора часа сидеть, просто листать – пока они не закончатся. (НК, Ж, 20 лет)

Важно заметить, что приведенные выше практики информанты не применяли по отношению к кому-либо другому, то есть объектом и субъектом гуманистического действия выступали они сами. Некоторые из информантов находят эффективными в преодолении дисциплинирования практики глубокой вовлеченности и погружённости в любимое занятие или живое офлайн общение. В таких ситуациях они ощущают свободу от контроля со стороны цифровых интерфейсов и устройств. В терминологии Фромма погружённость в любимое занятие является, тем самым, гуманистическим действием.

> [Во время] выезд[а] на дачу я вообще забываю о телефоне, потому что у меня есть там работа, у меня есть то дело, которым я занимаюсь, которое мне нравится. (АС, М, 16 лет)

> Если я одна без телефона и вообще никого не знаю тут, [...] тогда, конечно, немного неудобно, некомфортно. Если я с теми же подругами, друзьями в какой-то компании, где мне комфортно, я комфортно себя чувствую. (НН. Ж, 16 лет)

Заключение и дискуссия

Цифровые интерфейсы трансформируют коммуникацию участников исследования. Цифровая коммуникация описывается как процесс непрерывного соприсутствия, информанты могут в любой момент написать своим цифровым визави, а также ждут моментального ответа от них, отсутствие которого они могут воспринять в качестве игнорирования или пренебрежения. Это выводы согласуются с приводимыми тезисами К. Поливановой и Д. Королевой о том, что цифровое и офлайн общение создают непрерывную ткань коммуникации (2016). Такая непрерывность общения создает давление на информантов. Они испытывают усталость из-за сложностей поддержания темпа такого общения, а также фрустрацию из-за того, что не способны поддерживать общение в столь же большом объеме, какой якобы есть у их друзей. Такое опосредованное цифровыми устройствами и интерфейсами общение отчуждает информантов друг от друга. Совокупно это выводы позволяют подтвердить гипотезу H1.

Полезное тело, по Фуко, в соответствии с приведенными результатами исследования и их интерпретацией, конструируется из двух взаимно интегрированных тел цифровых интерфейсов и устройств, а также физического тела информантов. Информанты описывают цифровые интерфейсы как столь же неотъемлемые инструменты для общения, как их собственное тело, обращаясь

к физиологическим метафорам зависимости, тревоги, физиологических привычек, что подтверждает гипотезу H2. Эти результаты могут быть соотнесены с широкой группой работ, обращающихся к концепции киборга для описания и интерпретации практик взаимодействия пользователей, цифровых устройств и интерфейсов, например, в работах В. Сантос и У. Вальдивиесо (2021), С. Ганнаро и Д. Келлнера (2022).

Практики преодоления отчуждения, действительно, оказываются индивидуальными, как на это указывали Д. Иванов и Ю. Асочаков (2023). Информанты не объединяются в борьбе с раздражающими их инструментами контроля в виде оповещений, фрустрирующим высоким темпом общения. Они стараются, что подтверждает гипотезу H3, отдалиться от дисциплинирующего влияния устройства, переключить свое внимание на какое-то внешнее занятие. Тем самым информанты обретают свободу от контролирующих цифровых интерфейсов — состояние гуманизма в терминологии исследования. Однако ввиду отсутствия кооперации между подростками и молодежью в обеспечении свободы, объектом и субъектом гуманистического действия выступает один и тот же человек. Например, информанты никогда не указывали, что отключали уведомления своим друзьям или знакомым, то есть не проявляли к ним гуманизм такого рода.

При сопоставлении полученных результаты с таковыми в работах других авторов заслуживает упоминания исследование А. Нестеровой и Д. Кичман о субкультуре хикикомори. Субкультура представлена преимущественно подростками и молодежью, испытывающими глубокое чувство отчуждения от физического мира; общение представителей данной субкультуры практически полностью происходит в цифровом пространстве. Авторы оценивают численность субкультуры в 2% от общей численности молодежи. Показатели уровня отчуждения данной группы по методике измерения отчуждения Е. Осина по всем субшкалам (от себя, от общества, от семьи, от работы, от людей) практически двухактно превышают таковые для контрольной группы при уровне статистической значимости $p<0,05$ (Нестерова & Кичман, 2022). Схожие данные о распространённости приводятся (2%) и в работе Я. Лякиной, А. Федорова, А. Тео. В студенческой среде, отмечает авторы, такая крайняя степень отчужденности может наблюдаться у 20% генеральной совокупности (2023, с. 260). В исследовании С. Васюра и Д. Бяковой доля студентов с выраженной отчужденностью составила около 33%. Уровень отчуждения в данной группе оказался на 3 пункта выше (7,54 против 10,44) при $p<0,001$ (2024, с. 8). Таким образом, можно ожидать, что выраженность описываемых в данной статье явлений в крайних формах может быть у 2-20% молодежи, а в умеренных — у около 30%.

Заслуживает внимания сопоставление этих данных с зарубежными исследованиями. А. Атароди с соавторами приводят данные о зависимости использования мобильных телефонов и уровне социального отчуждения.

Они обнаруживают, что «коэффициент корреляции между зависимостью от мобильных устройств и социальным отчуждением студентов составил 0,65», что позволяет говорить о значительном вкладе цифрового общения в переживаемое отчуждение (Atarodi, Rajabi & Atarodi, 2020, с. 4). С. Сарвоно с соавторами измеряют отчуждение студентов в Индонезии, опираясь на феноменологический подход в методологии. Они выявляют, что использование цифровых интерфейсов в образовании приводит к накапливающемуся чувству фрустрации, которое в дальнейшем формирует стойкое отчуждение от процесса образования и, в конечном итоге, отчуждение от преподавателей и коллег-студентов (Sarwono, Sudarmiani & Nugraha 2022). Г. Зилка приходит к противоположным результатам о взаимосвязи цифрового общения и переживаемого отчуждения подростками-мигрантами в Израиле. Цифровое общение оказывается фактором, которое, наоборот, снижает уровень отчуждения (2021). Можно ожидать, что анализируемые в нашем исследовании взаимосвязи будут устойчивыми для разных культур, однако кейс Израиля демонстрирует, что точнее на это можно будет указать по итогам межстранового сравнительного исследования.

Ограничения исследования и направления дальнейшей работы

Среди ограничений важно упомянуть связанные с выборочной совокупностью. В число информантов не вошли подростки и молодежь, проживающие в других регионах России (кроме Санкт-Петербурга и Ленинградской области), подростки младше 14 лет, а также были недостаточно представлены информанты мужского пола. В дальнейших исследованиях видится важным учитывать при формировании выборочной совокупности материальный достаток семьи информантов, населенный пункт проживания.

Ограничения также накладывает теоретическая рамка анализа проблемы, поскольку в ней не рассмотрены в должной мере ситуации повседневного взаимодействия, которые можно встретить в работах по фрейм-анализу (Andersson, 2022) или символическому интеракционизму (Ictech II, 2014).

Качественный дизайн исследования не позволяет оценить количественную распространенность обнаруживаемых явлений и закономерностей. Очевидно, что общение посредством цифровых интерфейсов находят фрустрирующим не все подростки и представители молодежи, однако оценка масштабов данного явления может быть произведена через привлечение количественной методологии с использованием валидированных шкал оценки фрустрации и отчуждения человека от человека, что и может стать направлением для дальнейшей работы.

Заслуживает внимания упомянутый в литературном обзоре надзор пользователей друг за другом как инструмент контроля и формирования отчуждения. Как пишет З. Бауман, в современном цифровом обществе надзор всех

за всеми оказывается одним из ведущих факторов развития отчуждения. Интересным, отсюда, видится рассмотреть это явление применительно к подросткам и молодежи и их использованию цифровых интерфейсов.

Заявления авторов

Согласие с политиками и положениями сетевого издания

Все авторы данной рукописи были уведомлены и согласны с действующими политиками и положениями сетевого издания, изложенными на вебсайте.

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Нечаева В. В. — обзор литературы о теории дисциплинирования, интерпретация результатов в призме теории дисциплинирования, сбор, транскрипция и кодирование результатов

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Политика в отношении препринтов и предыдущих версий

Авторы подтверждают, что нет препринта/рабочей версии.

Конфликт интересов

Конфликтов нет.

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Singlism on Unmarried Women in Malaysia: Impoliteness Study of Social Media Discourse

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Abstract

Single women in Malaysia often face societal pressure, as being single and childless can lead to discrimination, stigmatization, and stereotyping. Social media posts worsen the issue. Users are allowed to freely and publicly comment without seeing one's face, while their identities remain safe-guarded. This study examines how social media users oppose women who choose to remain single, specifically analyzing impolite comments directed at them. A discourse analysis approach was employed to analyze comments retrieved from a Malaysian celebrity's Facebook[1]**, Instagram**, and Twitter posts, where she expressed her intention to remain single for life. Using the frameworks of Culpeper's (2011) (non)conventionalised impoliteness formulae, the findings reveal that commenters frequently used unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions, followed by sarcasm, innuendo, mimicry, insults, silencers, negative expressives, and pointed criticism or complaints. Social factors such as sexuality, religion, descent, and old age were highlighted by those who disagreed with the celebrity's choice to remain single. Through linguistic analysis, this study illustrates how singlism manifests on social media through impoliteness. These findings provide insight into societal attitudes towards single women in Malaysia.

Keywords

Singlism; Societal Pressure; Unmarried Women; Stereotypes; (Non)Conventionalised Impoliteness

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1 A social network owned by a company recognized as extremist in the Russian Federation. Hereinafter, it will be marked with the symbol ** (the editorial office is required to indicate this).

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Синглизм в отношении незамужних женщин в Малайзии: исследование невежливости в дискурсе социальных сетях

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Аннотация

Незамужние женщины в Малайзии часто сталкиваются с социальным давлением: безбрачие и отсутствие детей становятся причиной дискриминации, стигматизации и стереотипизации. Социальные медиа усиливают данное явление, поскольку пользователи получают возможность свободно и публично высказываться, оставаясь при этом анонимными. Настоящее исследование рассматривает, каким образом в социальных сетях критикуются женщины, выбирающие безбрачие, с особым акцентом на анализе невежливых комментариев в их адрес.

В качестве эмпирической базы были собраны комментарии с Facebook[1]**, Instagram** и Twitter одной малайзийской знаменитости, заявившей о намерении оставаться незамужней на протяжении всей жизни. Методологически работа опирается на дискурсивный анализ с использованием типологии (не)конвенционализированных формул невежливости Дж. Кулпепера (2011).

Результаты показывают, что наиболее частыми стратегиями становятся навязчивые и некорректные вопросы и/или пресуппозиции, за которыми следуют сарказм, инсинуации, пародирование, оскорбления, «заглушающие» реплики, негативные экспрессивы и открытая критика или жалобы. Социальные факторы, такие как сексуальность, религия, происхождение и возраст, особенно выделяются в комментариях оппонентов.

Таким образом, лингвистический анализ демонстрирует, каким образом синглизм проявляется в социальных медиа через дискурсивные практики невежливости. Полученные результаты позволяют глубже понять общественные установки в отношении незамужних женщин в Малайзии.

Ключевые слова

синглизм; социальное давление; незамужние женщины; стереотипы; (не)конвенционализированная невежливость

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1 Социальная сеть, принадлежащая компании, признанной экстремистской на территории Российской Федерации. Здесь и далее будет обозначаться значком ** (редакция обязана указывать это).

Introduction

Stigma, stereotype, and discrimination are often encountered by single adults, and are known as singlism (dePaulo & Morris, 2005). In a more recent year, it was reported that single adults, especially women, undergo more social discrimination compared to couples. Specifically, single adults do not receive as much social support as those who have partners (Girme et al., 2022), as they are constantly urged by society to settle down and get married in order to conform to the standard norms (Himawan et al., 2018; Wulf, 2000).

Independence and freedom are often the main reason women remain single. In fact, high academic qualifications and promising careers give women a sense of independence because they can fully support themselves economically and do not need to rely on anyone (Ibrahim, 2016; Nai Peng, 2007). To illustrate, women in Pakistan choose to stay single because they do not want to lose their freedom to make decisions or to forgo their careers and be financially dependent on their husbands. They also do not trust men and are afraid of the responsibility of having to take care of their husbands and children if they get married (Rafiq et al., 2022). Similarly, in Malaysia, a study on single Malay women unveiled how they are comfortable being single as they are educated and financially independent (Azmawati, 2011). The Chinese community in Malaysia also exhibits a higher inclination towards remaining unmarried as they often prioritize independence (Nai Peng, 2007). This leads to a large population of single women in the country.

According to Nai Peng (2007), 83% of female Chinese, 70% of female Indians, and 68% of female Malays remain single. In more recent years, Yusof (2018) reported that the number of married Malaysians has declined from 200,274 to 190,532 within a year. As education and career achievements increasingly empower individuals by providing them with financial independence and freedom, the population of single adults continues to increase, thus reflecting a shift in societal expectations surrounding marriage.

Single adults nowadays are being pressured by the questions “Why are you still single?”, “Do you have a partner?”, or “When are you getting married?” Apparently, it is considered normal in Asia to inquire about one’s marital or relationship status during an informal conversation (Himawan et al., 2018). Most importantly, these questions were often asked by their family members, friends, and colleagues (Sharp & Ganong, 2011). Single adults are often stressed by the need to justify their marital status and prepare an answer to defend themselves from negative perceptions about being single as well as to prevent them from being questioned further (Sharp & Ganong, 2011). Yet there is no correct way to respond to these intrusive queries. Culturally, those who raise such questions believe it is an act of expressing concern and care, without realizing how it affects the addressees.

Based on the cultural norms and beliefs in Malaysia, singleness is often viewed as a taboo (Azmawati et al., 2015), especially for women. Although being single and

childless is acceptable, single women still face discrimination and stigma in society (Sharp & Ganong, 2011). In fact, single women in Malaysia who are in their 30s are often labelled as '*anak dara tua*' (Ibrahim, 2016), the Malay equivalent phrase for 'old maid'. Studies show that single women in Pakistan often experience social exclusion, are discriminated by family and friends, and are condescended by society as unwanted subjects. Such instances not only have a negative impact on women's psychological and emotional health (Sultana et al., 2021; Sher & Saleem, 2023), it can also lead to the oppression of women.

While many single women may view their marital status as a sensitive topic of discussion (Ibrahim, 2016), a Malaysian celebrity and scholar, who shall be addressed as 'Dr X' in this paper, took the opposite direction when she announced on her Facebook[1]**, Instagram**, and Twitter accounts that she hopes to remain single forever. Ultimately, her posts have sparked various comments and views from social media users. For context, the said celebrity is a former international beauty pageant winner. Not only is she a singer, actress, music composer, TV host, and model, she is also an esteemed academician with several postgraduate degrees (Alhamzah, 2022). On that note, despite her achievements in life, she is urged by society via social media to get married. Unlike face-to-face interviews, social media users can freely "offend, attack, defame, and harass others" on social media while still safeguarding their identity (Hardaker & McGlashan, 2016, p. 92). Such acts may lead to cyberbullying and publicly offending the victims' faces. In this instance, the occurrence of impoliteness may be noticeable.

The questions on marital status, discrimination and stigma in society, and the societal pressure on single women, particularly in the social media context, are the societal issues that need to be highlighted. Thus far, many studies have focused on examining responses from single women through interview sessions (e.g., Azmawati et al., 2015; Hancock, 2017; Ibrahim, 2016; Rafiq et al., 2022; Sharp & Ganong, 2011) and surveys (e.g., Nai Peng, 2007). Yet, studies on the stereotypes of single women on social media in the Malaysian context are still fairly scarce. Therefore, examining the offensive responses retrieved from social media posts such as Facebook**, Instagram**, and Twitter are vital because they allow social media users to fully express their views without the need to mitigate them.

This study examines how society perceives women who choose to remain single. Specifically, it aims to explore how singlism is constructed through language on social media by analyzing impolite comments directed at the said celebrity's posts and women who have chosen lifelong singlehood.

Social Norms on Single Women

There are many reasons why society, especially in Asia, urges single women to get married; one is age (Ibrahim, 2016). Because 25 is the age at which most women are married, studies indicate that most single women in this age group have

1 A social network owned by a company recognized as extremist in the Russian Federation. Hereinafter, it will be marked with the symbol ** (the editorial office is required to indicate this).

been judged socially (Azmawati et al., 2015; Himawan et al., 2018; Sharp & Ganong, 2011); thus, the age has become a social norm for marriage. Women also seem to be faced with more pressure as they have passed the marriageable age because they will encounter stigmatization and discrimination issues (Gui, 2020). By the age of 30, most women would have started their own families with children. Society believes that it will be more difficult for women to conceive a child if they are still not married by this age (Ibrahim, 2016). Hence, those who do not follow this norm are considered failures in life (Reynolds & Taylor, 2005). As Ahmad and Masud (2013) pondered why single women are being viewed as losers instead of single men, Levitt (2010) stressed that single men have more freedom than single women, "including staying outside of wedlock" (Ahmad & Masud, 2013, p. 2), something that single women are not allowed to do. Such a perception creates negative stereotypes about single women as well as gender bias.

Another reason for marriage is to avoid unlawful sexual intercourse. In Asia, engaging in premarital sexual activity is widely considered immoral and a cultural taboo (Kwok & Kwok, 2023). Hence, the only way for individuals to satisfy their sexual needs while simultaneously maintaining their dignity and sense of worth is through marriage (Manap et al., 2013). This perspective stems from the traditional belief that women should keep their virginity until marriage to avoid bringing shame to their families (Hennink et al., 1999). In some Asian countries, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, couples (especially Muslims) found engaging in sexual intercourse before marriage can face legal repercussions due to the illegality of premarital sex under Sharia law (Lim, 2021; Mao, 2022). These legal restrictions and cultural taboos often lead to societal pressure on single adults to seek marriage.

Culture and religion play significant roles in shaping individuals' attitudes toward marriage, especially in Asian contexts. In Liu's (2023) study on Chinese society in China, one participant revealed that her parents expected her to complete her education, secure employment, and get married soon, mainly to assist her brother's material well-being. These expectations reflect the concept of a woman being a 'destined giver' (Liu, 2023, p. 5). Such cultural norms can restrict women's freedom in making personal life choices. Correspondingly, in the context of traditional Malay culture and religion, marriage is not merely an option but a societal necessity. Building a family at a specific age is the norm for women because single women may be seen as incomplete (Ibrahim, 2016). Azmawati et al. (2015) found that 200 unmarried women in Peninsular Malaysia perceive marriage as a religious obligation. Consequently, they hold onto the hope of eventually marrying if they find the right partner. Similarly, in Indonesia, societal norms and cultural standards dictate that unmarried adults are perceived as a social issue that goes against accepted norms. Consequently, single adults often encounter societal pressures, including nagging, stereotypes, discrimination, and stigmatization related to their marital status (Tengkilisan & Limanta, 2022). These cultural and reli-

gious influences highlight their significant role in shaping attitudes towards marriage and personal choices regarding marital status in various Asian societies.

While many single women are perfectly content by themselves and do not seek any life partners, they have been categorized as the abnormal community as they have passed the suitable age group for marriage (Ibrahim, 2016). Coupled with the increasing number of single adults in Malaysia, the number of divorce cases is also rising. Marriage and Divorce Statistics of Malaysia showed 47,272 divorce cases in 2020 and 43,934 cases in 2021, with the most common divorce cases in the age group of women between 30 and 34 (*Marriage and Divorce Statistics, Malaysia*, 2022).

Despite society's benchmark that being married with children is the definition of a successful and happy life, the statistics prove that a married life does not guarantee happiness. And yet, single women are singled out by society if they do not adhere to societal norms.

Sexist Language and Sexism Towards Single Women

Single women often face more pressure and scrutiny than single men. For instance, single women in China who prioritize careers over starting a family due to their higher educational and economic status are regarded by society as self-centred. In contrast, single men in similar circumstances are seen as responsible and even more desirable (Qian & Qian, 2014). This gender-based discrimination can sometimes be observed through sexist language.

Women's marital status is often indicated by their titles, namely 'Mrs' (married), 'Miss' (unmarried), and 'Ms' (neutral); whereas the title 'Mr' for men does not reveal their marital status, as it applies to both married and unmarried men. This disparity reflects sexism, as the titles for women can create additional societal pressure (Omenugha, 2007; Chinyelu, 2020). Similarly, in Pakistani society, the word 'larki' is commonly used to refer to a girl or unmarried woman under 30, while 'shakhs' (person) and 'mard' (man) refer to men who are mature and in adulthood. This difference reveals a male-dominated, sexist social structure (Sher & Saleem, 2023).

Sexism can be apparent either directly or indirectly. According to Mills (2008), direct sexism involves overt expressions of discrimination, insults, or marital titles targeting women. Indirect sexism, on the other hand, is more subtle because it is conveyed through irony, innuendo, presupposition, or humour, which serve to mediate or deny responsibility for the expression.

Although indirect sexism is harder to identify due to its subtle nature, it may have a more harmful effect on its victims (Chinyelu, 2020). Expressions such as insults, discrimination, irony, innuendo, presupposition, or humour fall under the category of impoliteness, as they can damage or attack a person's face value. These expressions are also common on social media. For instance, Pratama's (2018) study on comments from a YouTube video in Indonesia shows that sexist language is prevalent on social media. It reveals that users often employ sexist language to discredit women through negative comments, which frequently contain harsh or

impolite words aimed at derogating them. This not only shows that impoliteness is common in social media comments, but also in derogating women. Our study, therefore, focuses on how instances of impoliteness arise when social media users express their thoughts about single women.

Impoliteness Triggers

Impoliteness refers to "the use of strategies to cause social disruption" rather than to "maintain social harmony" (Culpeper, 1996, p. 350). In 2011, Culpeper used a bottom-up approach to develop conventionalized impoliteness formulae, based on data from the Oxford English Corpus (OEC). These formulae examine contexts in which interactants "display an understanding that something impolite was expressed" and "the metadiscourse concerning behaviours understood to be impolite" (Culpeper, 2011, p. 133). The types of impoliteness triggers and examples that emerged from his data are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of conventionalised impoliteness (Culpeper, 2011)

No.	Conventionalised impoliteness	Examples
1.	Insults	
	Personalised negative vocatives	You fucking pig!
	Personalised negative assertions	You disgust me!
	Personalised negative references	Your stinking arse!
	Personalised third-person negative references	She's nutzo!
2.	Pointed criticisms or complaints	That is rubbish!
3.	Unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions	Which lie are you telling me?
4.	Condescension	That's childish!
5.	Message enforcers	Listen here!
6.	Dismissals	Get lost!
7.	Silencers	Shut it!
8.	Threats	I'll box your ears if you don't [x]
9.	Negative expressives (curses or ill-wishes)	Go to hell!

In addition, Culpeper (2011) also identified non-conventionalised impoliteness triggers based on "59 reported impoliteness events that did not involve conventional impoliteness formulae" (p. 155). These triggers, also known as implicational impoliteness, refer to instances where impoliteness was implied in the data. They are form-driven, convention-driven, and context-driven implicational impoliteness.

Form-driven implicational impoliteness occurs when implied messages or implicatures arise from an action's formal, surface, or semantic components, which lead to adverse effects on some individuals. This type of impoliteness is also a form of off-record impoliteness. Examples include the use of insinuation, innuendo, snide comments, and mimicry (Culpeper, 2011).

Convention-driven implicational impoliteness is divided into internal and external types. Internal convention-driven impoliteness includes synchronic and diachronic subtypes. Synchronic subtype arises from multimodal mismatches (Culpeper, 2011), such as when a speaker's words conflict with their tone or manner. In contrast, the diachronic subtype occurs due to mismatches between conventionalised politeness and conventionalised impoliteness formulae. External convention-driven impoliteness, on the other hand, results from mismatches between a behaviour's projected context and its actual context of use (Culpeper, 2011). This often involves teasing, sarcasm, harsh jokes, and humour (Rabab'ah & Alali, 2020).

Context-driven implicational impoliteness can be categorized into unmarked behaviour and absence of behaviour. Unmarked behaviour refers to situations where impoliteness is inferred from the context, although it is unlikely to be explicitly interpreted as impolite. Absence of behaviour occurs when expected actions are omitted in a particular context, resembling the withholding of politeness.

Studies have employed impoliteness triggers to examine instances of impoliteness on social media. For instance, Pung and Mohd Faizal's (2023) study revealed that both culture and communication platforms can influence impoliteness on social media. They identified the prevalence of impoliteness triggers such as the use of pointed criticism, insults, negative expressive, and unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions in tweet replies. Similarly, Rabab'ah and Alali (2020) found that both conventionalised and non-conventionalised impoliteness triggers were used by social media users in comment sections to attack the face of article writers on Al-Jazeera's Arabic news website. These impolite instances are ubiquitous in social media comments, especially when anonymity and freedom enable users to voice their thoughts without concern for preserving another's face (Hardaker & McGlashan, 2016). Therefore, impoliteness triggers are used in this study as a theoretical framework to analyze impolite comments on social media.

Method

This study employs discourse analysis to examine social media comments about Dr. X's decision to remain single, focusing on those opposing the idea of women staying single. Discourse analysis allows us to explore written texts on social media, which reveals patterns of language use that reflect societal views (Paltridge, 2006). Specifically, this approach assists the study in examining how impolite language on social media constructs societal attitudes toward unmarried women.

This study adopts Culpeper's (2011) conventionalised and non-conventionalised impoliteness triggers to analyze the impolite comments targeted at women who choose to remain single. The types of conventionalised impoliteness triggers are as follows:

1. Insults
    a) Personalised negative vocatives
    b) Personalised negative assertions
    c) Personalised negative references
    d) Personalised third-person negative references
2. Pointed criticisms or complaints
3. Unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions
4. Condescension
5. Message enforcers
6. Dismissals
7. Silencers
8. Threats
9. Negative expressives (curses or ill-wishes)

The following are non-conventionalised impoliteness:

1. Form-driven implicational impoliteness
2. Convention-driven implicational impoliteness
3. Context-driven implicational impoliteness

As this is a qualitative study, numerical data are not prioritized. The frequencies and percentages presented are only intended to highlight trends or prominent linguistic patterns that emerged from the findings.

Data: Comments from Dr X's Facebook**, Instagram**, and Twitter Posts

The data for this study were retrieved from the comments on three of the said celebrity's Facebook** posts, two Instagram posts, and one Twitter post where she had expressed her intention to remain single for life. Table 2 shows the details of the data source and the number of comments on the aforementioned topic.

Table 2. Details of data source and number of comments

Sources	Date of posts	Number of comments	Total
Facebook**	11th January 2023	367	488
	12th January 2023	27	
	14th January 2023	94	
Instagram**	11th January 2023	134	204
	12th January 2023	70	
Twitter	11th January 2023	5	5
Total			697

A total of 697 comments were collected from the moment the posts went viral. The first post, "*Zaman ini tak perlu kahwin*" (In this era, there is no need to get married), was on January 11, 2023[1]. There were 367 comments on Facebook****, 134 comments on Instagram**[2], and 5 comments on Twitter[3]. The second post was on January 12, 2023, when the celebrity reposted the article "*Semoga Bujang Selamanya*" (Hope to stay single forever), an article from XTRA, a local e-tabloid, and there were 27 comments on Facebook**[4] and 70 comments on Instagram**[5]. On January 14, 2023, she reposted another trending article from XTRA regarding this topic, which led to a total of 94 comments on Facebook**. In sum, there were 697 comments in total.

Based on comments made by social media users, this study found that they are either against, in support of, or neutral about her posts. Since this study focuses on singlism in Malaysia, the comments were filtered to include those targeted at the celebrity or against single women in general, including replies and emoticons, which led to a total of 88 relevant comments. Comments that are irrelevant to the post (e.g., praising her authored book), supporting her decision to stay single, and neutral responses, were excluded from the data. The celebrity and all commenters' names and profile pictures are anonymized.[6]

Analysis and Results

The commenters in the data employed both conventionalised and non-conventionalised impoliteness formulae in their comments (see Table 3). The table illustrates the prevalence of unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions, followed by external convention-driven implicational impoliteness, form-

1 See: https://www.Facebook.com/drsoowinccifanpage/posts/pfbid0LyiFr2bd4Ez1jReAHnSRNvsyxSj7PdHiY8vb23smiBKJKvjMm5Boo8wcfhd7qGiUl
2 See: https://www.Instagram.com/p/CnR0a7KJvHt/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=
3 See: https://twitter.com/soowincci/status/1613182149561286656
4 See: https://www.Facebook.com/drsoowinccifanpage/posts/pfbid0UfWQTKRefPLENxzPE2HBvRxZq4gfnYRoGJRimj21PQLco33W7XeaEPDAoSFZK23fl
5 See: https://www.Instagram.com/p/CnTsAXuLSEC/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=
6 Dr X refers to the said celebrity; whereas, C refers to the commenter (e.g., C1 is Commenter 1).

driven implicational impoliteness, silencers, insults, negative expressive, and pointed criticism/complaint.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage of Impoliteness Formulae

Impoliteness formulae		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Unpalatable questions and/or presuppositions	37	42%
2.	External convention-driven implicational impoliteness (sarcasm, teasing, harsh/bitter jokes/humour)	28	32%
3.	Form-driven implicational impoliteness	10	11%
4.	Silencers	6	7%
5.	Insults: Personalised third-person negative reference	4	5%
6.	Negative expressive (e.g., curses, ill-wishes)	2	2%
7.	Pointed criticism / complaint	1	1%
Total		88	100%

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that insults in the form of personalized negative vocatives, negative assertions, and negative references, dismissals, message enforcers, threats, condescension, internal convention-driven, and context-driven implicational impoliteness formulae were not observed in the data. The examples of comments with impoliteness are displayed in the following sub-sections.

Unpalatable Question and/or Presupposition

It is commonly believed that humans have a need to satisfy their sexual desires and reproductive needs, which are traditionally thought to be fulfilled through marriage (Ibrahim, 2016). Given that sex is considered one of the basic human needs (Maslow, 1943; 1954), there is often an assumption that couples are happier than single adults because those who are single cannot lead a satisfying life without a romantic and sexual relationship (dePaulo & Morris, 2005). The following example demonstrates the said assumption via the use of presupposition.

Commenters presuppose Dr. X's marital decision by assuming that she may be faking or is hesitant to engage in a serious relationship, possibly due to past disappointments with men. They often express disagreement with the said celebrity or cast doubt, interpreting her posts as jokes with words and phrases like '*mungkin*' (maybe), 'I guess', and '*gurau je*' (just joking). These presuppositions touch upon personal and intimate topics, such as sexual desires or intercourse, reflecting their scepticism towards her decision and highlighting society's denial of women who choose to remain single. In response to this scepticism, many commenters humorously framed their impolite comments as jokes to indirectly insinuate their opinions about Dr. X.

Example 1 shows how commenter, C1, brings up sexual reasons to justify the celebrity's decision, on her behalf.

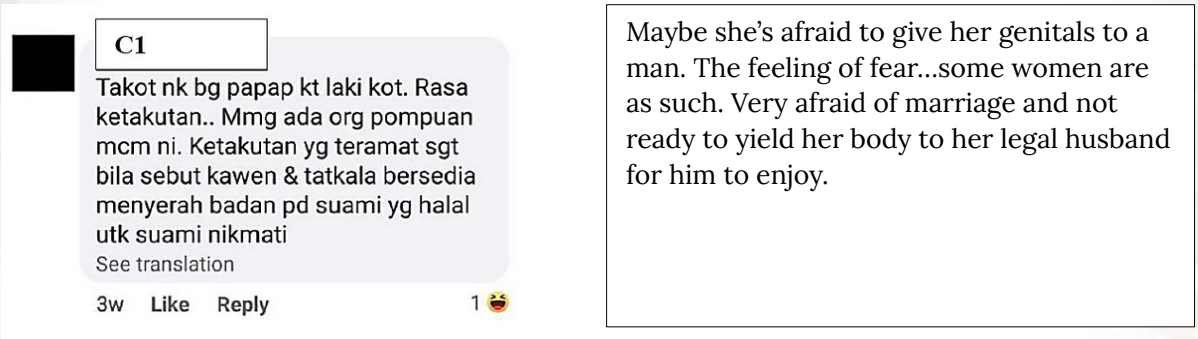

Figure 1. Example 1

C1 makes several presuppositions about Dr. X's attitudes towards engaging in sexual activity and her role as a single woman. These presuppositions are evident through the use of the particle '*kot*' (maybe) in the statement "*takot nk bg papap kt laki kot*" (Maybe she's afraid to give her genital to a man), which presupposes that she may be hesitant or afraid to engage in sexual activity. Furthermore, the word '*papap*' is a profane term that refers to female genitals and is used to allude to sexual activity.

Moreover, the comment "*memang ada org pompuan mcm ni*" (some women are as such) reflects gender stereotypes and bias towards single women, as C1 asserts the assumption that single women fear sexual intercourse. The statement "*menyerah badan pd suami yg halal*" (yield her body to her legal husband) implies a submissive role for women in a man's world. Instead of emphasising the enjoyment of sexual intercourse for both men and women within marriage, the comment "*utk suami nikmati*" (for him [the husband] to enjoy) suggests the commenter's view that marriage primarily exists for men to legally derive pleasure from sexual activity, and that women are expected to prioritise their husband's pleasure in sexual activity.

This comment aligns with Liu's (2023, p. 5) findings that women are often portrayed as "destined givers". It also implies that women are expected to fulfil certain roles in society rather than having the freedom to make independent life choices. Ultimately, the fact that another user found this comment humorous and reacted with a laughing emoticon indicates that it serves as provocative social action, prompting particular responses from other social media users (Haugh, 2017).

External Convention-Driven (Sarcasm)

The belief that all single adults will end up lonely is a stereotype. Some commenters sarcastically suggested that Dr. X should consider building an old folks' home specifically for unmarried individuals. This implies that staying single leads

to loneliness and vulnerability in old age. Evidence of sarcasm can be seen in the following example.

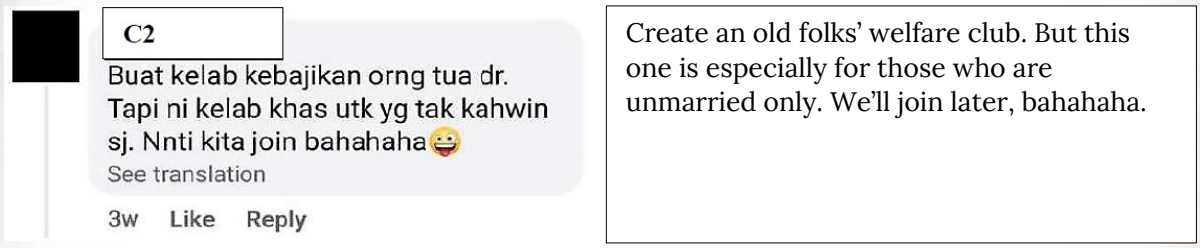

Figure 2. Example 2

C2's comment may contain sarcasm, as it not only suggests creating a club for older people but specifies for those who are unmarried, followed by laughter ("bahahaha") and the tongue-out emoticons at the end of the comment to indicate humour. The utterances "*kelab kebajikan orng tua*" (old folks' welfare club) and "*khas utk yg tak kahwin sj*" (especially for those who are unmarried only) rest on the assumption that those who are married are less likely to end up in an old folks' welfare club during old age because they will be taken care of by their children, reflecting the mindset of the society. In other words, this comment not only appears to tease Dr. X's posts but also single adults in general. This finding aligns with Keltner et al.'s (2001) definition of teasing as it can be conveyed indirectly.

Form-Driven Implicational Impoliteness

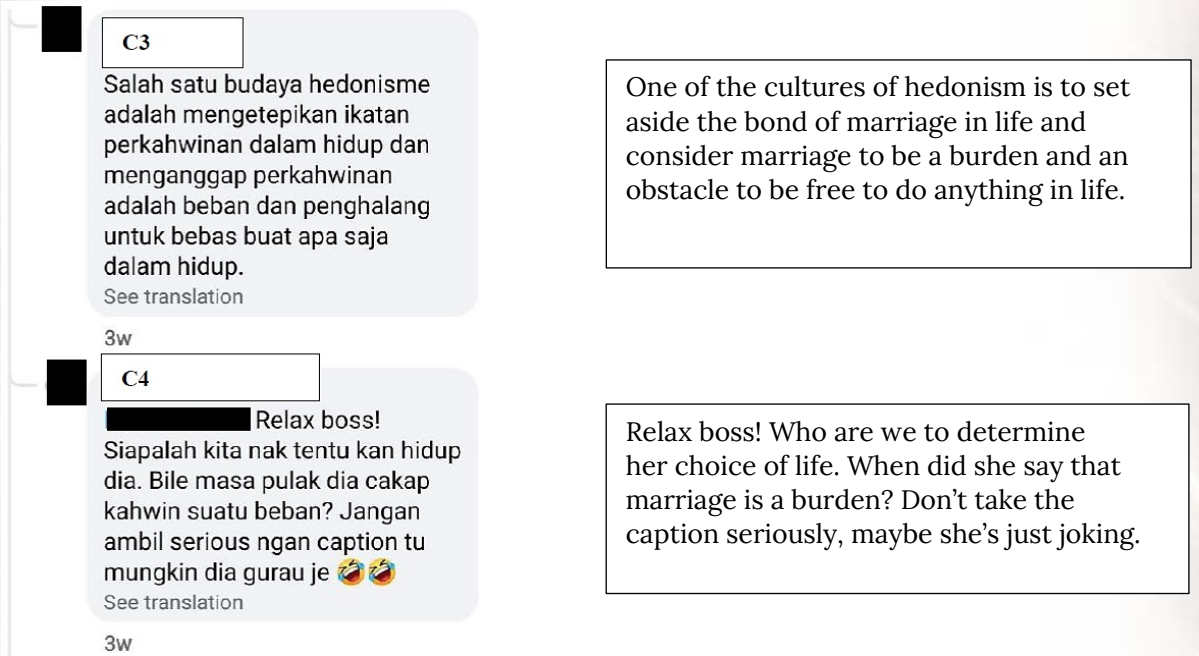

Figure 3. Example 3

Innuendo involves conveying an implied message through implicature in specific types of social behaviour (Bell, 1997). It usually hints at someone indirectly by relying on the addressee to infer the intended meaning based on context and subtle cues.

In Example 3, C3 does not specify a target but conveys a negative view of unmarried individuals by defining hedonism. Essentially, it implies that those who avoid marriage do so for hedonistic reasons. C3 flouts the Maxim of Quantity by relying on the reader to infer what is left unsaid. Without knowledge of the specific cultural context, the reader may not grasp the intended message. This comment insinuates that Dr. X's post promotes hedonism, even though it seems neutral on the surface. This interpretation is reinforced by C4's reply, who requests C3 not to take Dr. X's post seriously. The reply further suggests that C3's comment carried an impolite implication. The implicit message, framed as a general statement about hedonism, aligns with what Culpeper (2011) describes as off-record impoliteness.

Apart from insinuation, mimicry is another form-driven implicational impoliteness observed in the data, as it involves "a caricatured re-presentation" (Culpeper, 2011, p.161). Impolite mimicry reflects someone's behaviour rather than their thoughts or utterances, similar to Sperber and Wilson's (1986) concept of echoic irony. The following comments mimic the sentiments expressed by Dr. X in her original posts, either to present alternative viewpoints or to offer a humorous take on the subject of being single. In these comments, the term '*buaya*' (crocodile) humorously distorts the original posts.

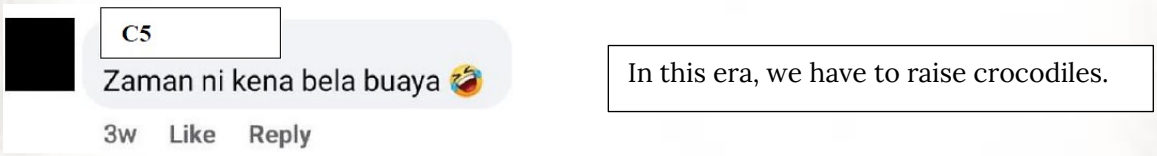

Figure 4. Example 4

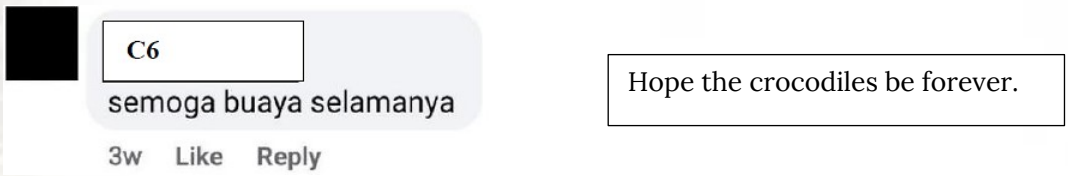

Figure 5. Example 5

Dr. X's original posts were titled "*Zaman ni tak perlu kahwin*" (In this era, there is no need to get married) and "*Semoga bujang selamanya*" (Hope to stay single forever). However, commenters often mimic these titles by rephrasing them and inserting the word '*buaya*' when responding. For instance, in Example 4, C5 substitutes "*tak perlu kahwin*" (no need to get married) with the assertion "*kena bela buaya*" (have to raise crocodiles), accompanied by a rolling-on-the-floor-laughing emoji to convey humour. Similarly, C6 in Example 5 replaces the word '*bujang*' (single) with '*buaya*' (crocodile) to make a snide remark. While '*buaya*' literally means

crocodile in Malay, in this context, it refers to the Malay idiom '*buaya darat*', which describes to men who engage in affairs with women and are unfaithful (Atmawati, 2018). Essentially, the use of this term prompts an impolite inference that indirectly critiques Dr. X's posts in a subtle manner.

Silencer

Some commenters perceive Dr. X's posts as an attempt to popularise the single life and regard it as heresy. Despite Dr. X posting on her personal social media pages, commenters employed imperative statements such as "keep it to yourself", "*kalau tak mau kawen diam je*" (If you don't want to marry, just keep quiet), and "*tak payah keluar kenyataan*" (no need to make a statement) to urge her to keep her decision to herself or refrain from publicly voicing it on social media, potentially to discourage others from following her example.

The following example can be seen as the commenter's attempt to discourage Dr. X from expressing her thoughts or choices via the use of a silencer.

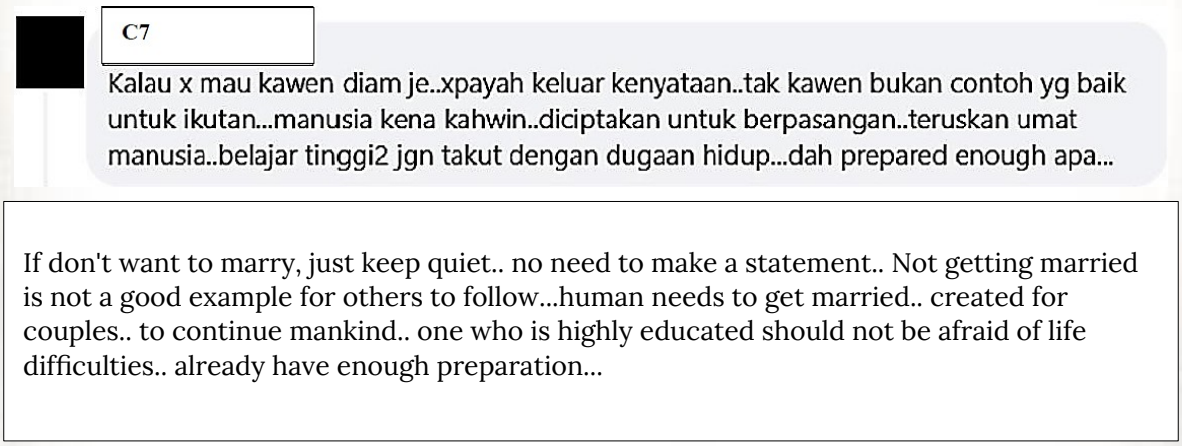

Figure 6. Example 6

Impoliteness can be observed through the use of the silencer "*Kalau x mau kawen diam je*" (If don't want to marry, just keep quiet). C7 directs Dr. X to keep quiet and refrain from publicly making the statement about remaining single for good. Given that one has the right to post their views on their Facebook** page, regardless of whether it is public or private, such a directive can be considered as the commenter's attempt to silence Dr. X to post her view.

As this is a celebrity's Facebook** profile that has many followers, C7's concern about Dr. X's statement becoming a trend in society is evident when he uses the negative statement "*tak kawen bukan contoh yg baik untuk ikutan*" (not getting married is not a good example for others to follow). This negative statement may serve to express his disagreement with the said celebrity in expressing her marital stance on social media and dissuade her from sharing her opinion on this topic publicly. He continues with a general statement about mankind needing to get

married ("*manusia kena kahwin*"), which Penelope (1990) calls 'dummy it', as the use of reference pronouns is not specified (Wood & Kroger, 2000). The commenter may be making a sweeping generalisation for all individuals. Furthermore, the use of the modal verb '*kena*' (have to) rests on the assumption that it is not an option for humans to choose to stay single. Still, there is an obligation to get married to produce the next generation ("*teruskan umat manusia*"), including those who are highly educated.

Insult

Insults can include derogatory statements and implications with the intention to produce a display of low value at the target (Culpeper, 2011). In this study, only personalised third-person negative reference insults categorised in Culpeper's (2011) conventionalised impoliteness formulae were identified. An example of insult can be observed in the following example.

Age is often considered an important factor that can affect one's fertility rate, especially for women. It is also a common societal belief that getting married and conceiving a child at a younger age can be more conducive to starting a family (Ibrahim, 2016). At the time Dr. X posted her decision on social media, she was 36 years old. Hence, she has surpassed what is often considered the marriageable age, as studies indicate that women typically marry and have children between the ages of 25 to 30 (Azmawati et al., 2015; Gui, 2020; Himawan et al., 2018; Ibrahim, 2016; Sharp & Ganong, 2011).

The following example annotates how C8 makes an impolite comment using insults from the personalized third-person negative reference.

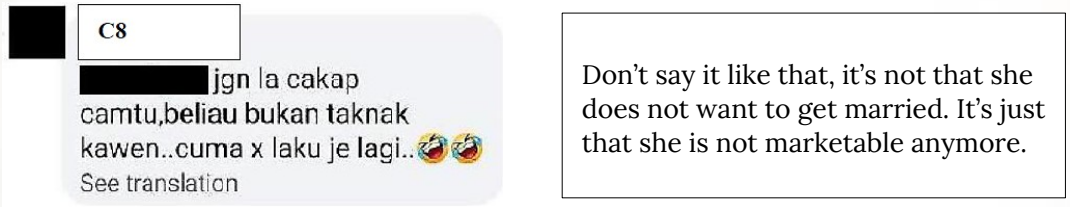

Figure 6. Example 7

Example 7 is a reply to another user's comment on Dr. X's post. It was selected due to the view that the commenter made towards single women, particularly Dr. X. C8 implies how Dr. X does not want to get married because she is "not marketable anymore" (*x laku*). This response resembles addressing someone as an 'old maid' (Ibrahim, 2016). Nevertheless, instead of addressing the comment directly at her, C8 comments in the third person's point of view by employing the word '*beliau*', referring to Dr. X from the formal pronoun 'he/she'. Hence, the third-person negative reference insult is formed.

Negative Expressive (Ill-Wishes or Curses)

Commenters also expressed their disapproval of Dr. X's decision by resorting to ill-wishes or curses. An example of this can be seen in Example 8.

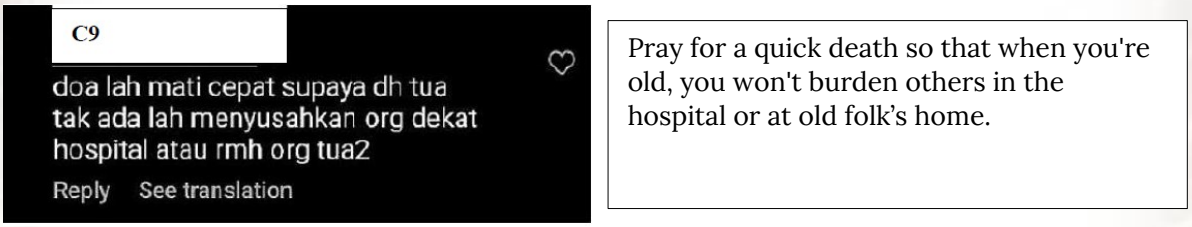

Figure 8. Example 8

The statement "*doa lah mati cepat*" (pray for a quick death) is a negative expression conveying C9's ill-wishes towards Dr. X. The utterance '*dh tua*' (when you're old) and '*menyusahkan org dekat hospital atau rmh org tua2*' (burden others in the hospital or at old folk's home) could be a form of stereotype towards single adults, portraying them as a burden to society because they do not have children to rely on in their old age. His comment strongly disapproves Dr. X's decision to stay single. Such a comment could also be considered a form of disrespecting others' choices.

Nevertheless, the ill-wishes or curses found in this study were not as severe as the ones found in Culpeper's (2011) corpus. This finding aligns with Rabab'ah and Alali (2020), where the factors contributing to such findings could be the type of audience and the mode of communication, given that the conversation occurs asynchronously on a social media platform.

Pointed Criticism or Complaint

Pointed criticism is usually presented in pessimistic and distorted proportions (Rabab'ah & Alali, 2020).



Figure 9. Example 9

In relation to responses about the celebrity's choice of singlehood, Example 9 demonstrates how C10 criticises the celebrity's personal choice of being single, claiming it is an act of cruelty, "*Kejamnya Doc*" (Doc, you're so cruel). Furthermore, the use of the particle '*-nya*' by C10 can also intensify the negative references directed towards her. It is interesting to observe how the commenter addresses Dr. X with respect, "Doc", which acknowledges her as a PhD holder, the academician

that she is, while also criticising her personal choice to remain single as a cruel thing to do.

Discussions

Table 4 shows examples of impoliteness triggers found in the data corresponding to Culpeper's (2011) (non)conventionalised impoliteness formulae.

Table 4. Examples of impolite comments in the data

	(Non)conventionalised impoliteness formulae	Examples of impolite comments	Translations
1.	Unpalatable questions and/or presupposition	Ayat seseorang yg cuba pujuk hati..berpura2 tak perlukan teman tapi dalam hati kesunyian..jangan tipu diri sendiri dr..	The words of someone trying to console the heart... pretending not to need a companion, but deep down feeling lonely.. don't deceive yourself, dr.
		So, u expecting a God to be your husband? Gtfoh! Try to see how many women wasted their lives in club, minah rempit, prostitutions and many more. Same ish different story🤦	
		Bodoh ke	Is she stupid?
2.	External convention-driven implicational impoliteness (Sarcasm / teasing)	*laa. Bila bab laki pulak korng jgak yg meroyan entah apa2. Smpai membabitkan org yg tk besalah pulk tu. Typical perempuan. Kita paham, korng mana pernah salah* 😂	When it comes to men, you don't care about anything. Until it involves innocent people. Typical women. We understand, when did you ever make mistake.
		knapa lak dok sorang2. Banyak je rumah rumah org tua skrang ni. Duk je lah situ 🤣	Why should you stay alone? There are many old folk's homes these days. Just stay there.
		Ya ya. Klu yg fikir x yah kawen, silakan. Cari kwn dikalangan bukan manusia. Ada je pun.	Yes yes. If you think you don't need to get married, please go ahead. Find friends who are non-humans. They exist.
3.	Form-driven	*Zaman ni kena bela buaya* 🤣	In this era, we need to raise crocodile.
		Ramai juga lelaki takut nak kahwin...kalau tengok perempuan zaman sekarang pun, memang menakutkan. Perkara yang tak baik dan buruk sering dilabel pada lelaki...lelakinitulah,lelaki inilah. Padahal lelaki adalah asas kepada semua yang dinikmati para wanita. Yang memastikan keselesaan dapat dinikmati.	Many men are also afraid to get married... if you look at women today, it's really scary. Things that are negative are often labelled on men... that man, this man. Whereas men are the basis of everything that women enjoy. That ensures comfort can be enjoyed.
		Selalunya yg cakap nak bujang sepanjang hayat ni dia le yg cepat kahwin...	Usually, the ones who say they want to be single for the rest of their lives are the ones who get married quickly...
4.	Silencer	bro...baca komen awal aku...i dont care and dont want to know your choice in life...married or not for whatever the reason....but keep it to yourself la, instead of telling getting married is no longer	Bro...read my earlier comment...I don't care and don't want to know your choice in life... married or not for whatever the reason....but keep it to yourself, instead of telling getting

		relevant or as beban. You tak nak kawin...up to you lah, tapi jangan lah kata kawin ni tak bagus.	married is no longer relevant or as burden. You do not want to get married... up to you, but don't say that marriage is not good.
5	Insults: Personalised third-person negative references (in the hearing of the target)	Dah tak ada nafsu tu.. Dah tua dah	No more lust Already old
6.	Negative expressive (e.g., curses, ill-wishes)	Klu sengaja x nak kahwin NERAKA la jawabnya	If you intentionally don't want to get married, the answer is HELL.
7.	Pointed criticism / complaint	Kejamnya Doc	Doc, you're so cruel

Upon analysis, the data also reveal several differences when compared to Culpeper's (2011) corpus on instances of English impoliteness, such as the form of address and the use of colloquial language.

Some commenters may perceive themselves as subordinates to Dr. X, not only due to her celebrity status but also because of her academic qualifications (holding a doctorate) and her position in academia (as an associate professor). Thus, some expressed their respect by addressing her with honorifics such as 'Dr', 'Prof', or '*beliau*' (the formal pronoun for 'he/she') in this informal context. However, there were also commenters who may have viewed themselves as equals to Dr. X, addressing her more informally as '*amoi*' (younger sister).

It is observed that commenters often use colloquialisms and/or code-switching to their mother tongue when committing a face-threatening act. The absence of pronouns in their impolite comments indicates the use of colloquial language. For example, "*Klu sengaja x nak kahwin* NERAKA *la jawabnya*" (If [missing pronoun] intentionally don't want to get married, HELL is the answer). This finding aligns with Rabab'ah and Alali's (2020) that the use of colloquial language in impolite comments might make the face-threatening act "more real and expressive" (p. 32).

Conclusions

This study sheds light on the prevalence of impoliteness in comments made by social media users towards single women. Based on the analysis of linguistic features in social media users' comments, this study found various impoliteness triggers employed by commenters to attack the face of women who decide to remain single, which could reflect sexism. The commenters' responses on Dr X's posts also revealed various social factors, including sexuality, religion, descent, and old age. These factors are emphasised by those who disagree with her decision to remain single. These comments reflect the commenters' mindsets, perceptions, or ideologies on one's marital status. Consequently, individuals who deviate from the societal norms of marriage become subjects of stereotype effects, potentially leading to singlism and sexism towards single adults, especially single women. It is essential to comprehend how singlism is constructed through impoliteness on social media to address these stereotypical issues and promote greater accept-

ance of individual choices in society. Therefore, society should not intervene in one's personal marital decision, as marriage should be a choice rather than an obligation.

Theoretically, this study can contribute to the field of pragmatics by examining how social media users employs impoliteness discourse to respond to women who choose not to marry. Practically, this study can serve as a catalyst for raising awareness about the importance of accepting individuals' marital statuses without perpetuating negative stereotypes.

Further research might delve into the way single women are treated in the workplace in Malaysia. Apart from marital status, other societal pressures, such as parental status, academic qualifications, or career choices, warrant investigation in future studies.

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Signal-Based Brand Positioning on Bank Landing Pages: A Comparative Analysis of Traditional Banks and Neobanks in the B2B Segment

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Abstract

In the context of digital transformation in the banking sector, landing pages have become essential communication channels for brand interaction with business audiences. However, little research has explored how different types of banks — traditional and digital-only (neobanks), Russian and international — use multimodal elements (text, imagery, and layout) on their landing pages to construct brand positioning in the B2B segment. This study aims to identify and compare positioning signals on landing pages targeting small and medium-sized business clients. The methodology draws on Emmanuel Mogaji's signal-based positioning model and the multimodal social semiotic discourse framework developed by Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen. The analysis of 24 bank landing pages reveals that traditional banks emphasize institutional stability, experience, and signals of values and origins through national or industry-specific affiliations. In contrast, neobanks highlight technological advancement, accessibility, and emotional closeness while avoiding explicit national-cultural identification. Russian banks more frequently rely on state-related trust signals — such as central bank licenses and participation in federal programs—whereas international banks focus on social proof, including customer testimonials, third-party ratings, and global branding strategies. The findings contribute to the fields of digital marketing, branding, and multimodal discourse studies, offering practical insights for professionals working with financial interfaces in business communication.

Keywords

Signal-Based Positioning; Landing Page; Bank Branding; Multimodal Discourse Analysis; Social Semiotics; Traditional Banks; Neobanks; Digital Marketing; Visual Communication; B2B Communication

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Сигнальное позиционирование банковских брендов: на примере лендингов традиционных банков и необанков для бизнеса

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Аннотация

В условиях цифровой трансформации банковской сферы лендинги (посадочные страницы) становятся важными каналами для коммуникации с аудиторией. Однако недостаточно изученным остается вопрос о том, как различные типы банков (традиционные и необанки, российские и зарубежные) используют мультимодальные элементы лендингов (текст, изображение, структура) для позиционирования бренда в бизнес-сегменте (B2B). Целью исследования является выявление и сравнительный анализ сигналов позиционирования, используемых банками на посадочных страницах для малого и среднего бизнеса. Методология базируется на модели сигнального позиционирования Э. Могаджи и социально-семиотическом мультимодальном дискурс-анализе Г. Кресса и Т. ван Левена. Результаты анализа 24 лендингов показали, что традиционные банки чаще делают акцент на институциональной стабильности, опыте и выражают сигналы ценностей и корней через национальную или отраслевую принадлежность. Необанки, в свою очередь, подчёркивают технологичность, доступность и эмоциональную близость, избегая явной национально-культурной идентификации. Российские бренды активнее опираются на государственные коды доверия (ссылки на лицензии ЦБ РФ, участие в госпрограммах и системно значимый статус), зарубежные — на социальные доказательства (отзывы клиентов, рейтинги, цитаты) и глобальную универсальность. Исследование представляет интерес для специалистов по цифровому маркетингу и брендингу, а также для лингвистов и исследователей мультимодального дискурса.

Ключевые слова

сигнальное позиционирование; лендинг; банковский брендинг; мультимодальный дискурс-анализ; социальная семиотика; традиционные банки; необанки; цифровой маркетинг; визуальная коммуникация; B2B-коммуникация.

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Введение

В условиях цифровой трансформации банковской сферы лендинги (от англ. landing page — «посадочная страница») становятся неотъемлемой частью B2B-коммуникации (от англ. business-to-business — услуги или товары для бизнеса). Эти специализированные онлайн-страницы направлены на выполнение конкретного действия (регистрация, заявка, покупка) (Петроченков & Новиков, 2023; Попова, 2024) и одновременно служат площадкой, формирующей имидж финансовой организации в глазах целевой аудитории через сигналы позиционирования (Williams et al., 2019; Mogaji et al., 2023). Исследования показывают высокую конверсионную эффективность лендингов по сравнению с традиционными корпоративными сайтами (Карпова & Назаров, 2015), а также их способность адресно взаимодействовать с сегментированной аудиторией через подбор релевантных визуальных и текстовых средств (Чугунова & Королева, 2017).

В многоканальной коммуникации консистентность образа компании становится фактором, определяющим доверие пользователей и эффективность цифровых сервисов (Magno & Cassia, 2019). Особенно остро эта задача стоит перед новыми цифровыми банками (необанками), которые изначально лишены репутации в офлайн-среде и полагаются исключительно на онлайн-каналы. Кроме того, традиционные банки всё чаще выводят на рынок собственные цифровые подбренды — приложения-необанки, стремясь адаптироваться к новым пользовательским паттернам и ожиданиям (Mogaji & Nguyen, 2024).

Семиотический подход позволяет интерпретировать визуальные и вербальные сигналы бренда как знаки определённых типов. Ещё Ч. С. Пирс (2000) разделял знаки на иконические, индексальные и символические в зависимости от характера связи обозначаемого и обозначающего. Применительно к брендингу это означает, что элементы лендинга (логотипы, образы, слоганы) могут выступать в роли икон (непосредственно напоминают объект), индексов (указывают на причинно-смысловую связь с брендом) или символов (условные знаки, смысл которых обусловлен соглашением и культурным контекстом). Р. Барт (1996) вводит понятие мифологий бренда: рекламные сообщения и легенды фирм создают вторичный пласт значения, встраивая в восприятие марки культурно обусловленные мифы. Благодаря этим коннотациям потребительский образ бренда наполняется социальными смыслами, выходящими за рамки утилитарных свойств товара. Когнитивная теория бренда дополняет семиотический анализ, фокусируясь на структурировании знаний о бренде в сознании потребителя. В модели брендового капитала К. Л. Келлера (2005) бренд предстает как совокупность ассоциаций и образов (brand knowledge), которые формируют ценность марки. Любые сигналы – от дизайна веб-страницы до слогана – служат стимулами для активации этих ассоциаций,

укрепляя осведомлённость и желаемый образ бренда в памяти аудитории. Аналогично, в призме идентичности Ж.-Н. Капферера (2007) сигналы рассматриваются как материальные воплощения ключевых граней бренда – его «физики», личности, ценностей, отношений и отражения в глазах потребителя. Каждая коммуникация на лендинге транслирует элемент ценностного ядра бренда, поддерживая целостность идентичности.

Социология потребления, в свою очередь, акцентирует роль контекста: потребитель выступает активным интерпретатором культурных кодов, считывая символику бренда через призму собственного опыта и социальной среды. Согласно взглядам М. Холбрука и Э. Хиршман, потребление имеет характер символического обмена, где ценность бренда во многом определяется тем, какие значения и эмоции разделяются между членами общества при использовании продукта (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Г. Маккракен описывает процесс «переноса значения», в котором маркетинговые коммуникации перемещают культурные смыслы в товар: атрибуты бренда на лендинге наполняются идеологическими и ценностными коннотациями, которые потребители декодируют в соответствии со своими социальными представлениями (McCracken, 1986). Наконец, в русле концепции культуры потребления Э. Арнольда и К. Томпсона бренды рассматриваются как часть культурного дискурса: восприятие сигналов бренда зависит от коллективных представлений, норм и ценностей, разделяемых потребительскими сообществами (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

За последние годы теоретико-методологическая база анализа брендов в цифровой среде значительно расширилась. Исследования Ч. Бланксона и С. П. Калафатиса систематизировали стратегии позиционирования в промышленном маркетинге (Blankson & Kalafatis, 2019), а Э. Могаджи с соавторами выявили наиболее частотные сигналы позиционирования на главных страницах B2B-компаний — компетентность, прошлый опыт, репутацию и доверие, клиентоориентированность и ценностную идентичность (Mogaji et al., 2023). Эти признаки отражают применение теории сигналов М. Спенса в брендинге: организация сознательно демонстрирует определённые характеристики, чтобы повлиять на восприятие аудитории (Spence, 1973).

Применение социально-семиотического подхода Г. Кресса и Т. ван Левена (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) позволяет рассматривать лендинги как мультимодальные тексты, где каждый элемент — от структуры блоков до визуальных метафор — несёт значимую смысловую нагрузку и участвует в позиционировании бренда. Работы М. В. Загидуллиной (2019), С. Поульсена (2020), В. Е. Чернявской (2021), Е. С. Кара-Мурзы и Я. В. Сидоренко (2024) и других исследователей подтверждают важность комплексного анализа мультимодальных текстов, способных транслировать ценности и конструировать идентичность бренда в восприятии пользователя. Так, С. Поульсен описывает, как дизайн интерфейса сам по себе становится высказыванием о бренде (Vigild

Poulsen, 2022), а фирменный стиль трактуется как нарратив, представляющий историю бренда через тексты, изображения и мифологемы (Connelly et al., 2011). Прикладные работы по цифровому дизайну банковских сервисов подчёркивают важность единого стиля (цветов, шрифтов, тональности) как ключевого фактора доверия и узнаваемости (Soti, 2022; Hintze, 2023; Kreger, 2025). Кроме того, в условиях цифровых платформ пользователь становится не только реципиентом, но и соавтором коммуникации, немедленно реагируя на бренд и вовлекаясь в него в реальном времени (Suheimat et al., 2018; Bapat & Kannadhasan, 2022).

При этом большинство существующих работ сосредоточено либо на B2B-секторе, либо на отдельных аспектах банковского цифрового маркетинга — таких, как пользовательский опыт в онлайн-банкинге. Недостаточно изучен вопрос мультимодального позиционирования банковских брендов на собственных сайтах в сравнительной перспективе: как отличаются стратегии коммуникации у традиционных банков с офлайн-историей и у необанков, опирающихся исключительно на цифровые каналы. Также актуален географический аспект — возможны ли различия между российскими и зарубежными банками в визуальных и вербальных акцентах.

Цель настоящего исследования — выявление и интерпретация сигналов позиционирования банковского бренда на лендингах, ориентированных на клиентов малого и среднего бизнеса с применением сравнительного анализа сигнальных стратегий в зависимости от типа банка (традиционный/необанк) и его географической принадлежности (российский/зарубежный).

Для достижения цели поставлены следующие задачи:

- описать и классифицировать основные сигналы позиционирования, реализуемые на лендингах банков;
- сопоставить частотность и формы выражения сигналов у четырёх групп банков (традиционные/необанки; российские/зарубежные);
- выявить особенности реализации сигналов в рамках мультимодального анализа;
- оценить влияние институционального и культурного контекста на сигнальные стратегии брендинга в B2B-сегменте.

В качестве гипотезы выдвигается комплекс следующих предположений:

- необанки и традиционные банки используют разные доминирующие сигналы позиционирования, отражающие их стратегические задачи;
- российские и зарубежные банки различаются по степени акцента на институциональные, государственные или универсальные формы доверия;

- мультимодальные особенности (композиция, цвет и др.) усиливают сигнальные маркеры и зависят от типа института и его аудитории.

Исследование опирается на сочетание контент-анализа и мультимодального дискурс-анализа, что позволяет интерпретировать как частотные, так и семиотически насыщенные формы выражения сигналов, формирующих позиционирование бренда.

Материалы и методы

В качестве концептуальной рамки настоящего исследования использована модель сигнального позиционирования, разработанная Э. Могаджи и его коллегами (Mogaji et al., 2023) для анализа B2B-коммуникаций на корпоративных сайтах. Эта модель основана на положениях теории сигналов в маркетинге (Spence, 1973) и предполагает, что организации стратегически размещают на веб-страницах вербальные и визуальные элементы, выполняющие функцию сигналов, транслирующих позиционирование бренда.

В рамках модели выделяются пять ключевых сигналов позиционирования:

- компетентность (“we can do it” / «мы можем это сделать») — демонстрация профессионализма и технологических возможностей;
- прошлый опыт (“we did it before” / «мы уже делали это раньше») — указание на историю, опыт и масштаб;
- репутация / доверие (“what they say about us” / «что о нас говорят») — надёжность, подтверждённая отзывами, наградами, партнёрствами;
- клиентоориентированность / доступность (“we are here for you” / «мы здесь для вас») — акцент на удобство, прозрачность и простоту взаимодействия;
- ценности и корни (“we are proud of our roots” / «мы гордимся своими корнями») — отсылка к идентичности, происхождению, социальной роли бренда.

Эти сигналы изначально разрабатывались для оценки восприятия B2B-коммуникаций на официальных сайтах брендов, однако их применение к лендингам банков оправдано тем, что посадочные страницы выполняют как информативную, так и имиджевую функцию и представляют собой сфокусированные среды трансляции ключевых преимуществ, ассоциативных и статусных маркеров бренда. Выбор именно этой типологии обусловлен её балансом между маркетинговой и семиотической операциональностью. Кроме того, типология позволяет отразить институциональные особенности банков (например, уровень формализации корпоративных ценностей или акцент

на партнёрство), что делает её применимой в сравнительном межкультурном анализе лендингов.

Сигналы реализуются как в тексте (слоганы, формулировки, обращения), так и визуально (фотографии, иконки, цвет, компоновка элементов). Применение социально-семиотического подхода (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) позволяет рассматривать лендинг как мультимодальный текст, где каждая модальность (язык, изображение, композиция) участвует в формировании имиджа бренда.

Согласно Кressу и ван Левену, визуальное значение включает три аспекта:

- репрезентационное (что изображено),
- интерактивное (как изображение взаимодействует с аудиторией),
- композиционное (как структурированы элементы страницы).

В исследовании применён смешанный методологический подход, сочетающий количественный контент-анализ и качественный мультимодальный дискурс-анализ, что позволило оценить как частотность, так и характер выражения сигналов.

Для анализа были отобраны 24 лендинга банковских продуктов для бизнеса, представленных на официальных сайтах банков в виде отдельных промостраниц:

1) *российские традиционные банки* (обладающие офлайн-инфраструктурой: отделения, офисы, филиалы): «Сбер»[1], «ВТБ», «Альфа-Банк»[2], «Газпромбанк»[3], «РСХБ» («Россельхозбанк»)[4], «ПСБ» («Промсвязьбанк»)[5];
2) *российские необанки* (цифровые): «Точка»[6], «Модульбанк»[7], Blanc[8], «Т-Банк»[9], «Ozon Банк»[10], «Локо-Банк»[11];
3) *зарубежные традиционные банки*: Barclays[12], HSBC[13], Bank of America[14], Wells Fargo[15], J.P. Morgan[16], Deutsche Bank[17];

1 См.: https://www.sberbank.com/ru/s_m_business_alt
2 См.: https://alfabank.ru/sme
3 См.: https://www.gazprombank.ru/business
4 См.: https://www.rshb.ru/business
5 См.: https://www.psbank.ru/Business
6 См.: https://tochka.com
7 См.: https://modulbank.ru/start
8 См.: https://blanc.ru
9 См.: https://www.tbank.ru/business
10 См.: https://finance.ozon.ru/business
11 См.: https://www.lockobank.ru/business
12 См.: https://www.barclays.co.uk/business-banking
13 См.: https://www.business.us.hsbc.com/en/business-banking
14 См.: https://www.bankofamerica.com/smallbusiness
15 См.: https://www.wellsfargo.com/biz
16 См.: https://privatebank.jpmorgan.com/nam/en/services/banking/business-banking
17 См.: https://www.deutschewealth.com/en/our-capabilities/bank-for-entrepreneurs.html

4) *зарубежные необанки*: Revolut[1], Monzo[2], Mercury[3], N26[4], Novo[5], Nubank[6].

Отбор кейсов производился по следующим критериям: 1) наличие лендингов, адресованных малому и среднему бизнесу; 2) представительность в четырёх кластерах: российские традиционные банки, российские необанки, зарубежные традиционные банки, зарубежные необанки. Такой выбор обеспечил сбалансированность корпуса с точки зрения институциональной и географической диверсификации.

Для каждого сайта фиксировались:

- наличие сигналов по пяти категориям;
- формы их выражения (текстовые, визуальные);
- типовые элементы (CTA-кнопки, логотипы партнёров, отзывы, слоганы, фотографии, структура страницы).

После количественной фиксации сигналов проводился их качественный разбор:

- как каждый сигнал реализован у разных типов банков;
- какие применяются образы и тоны коммуникации;
- каким образом композиция страницы и визуальные акценты усиливают соответствующий сигнал.

Анализ позволил оценить, как банки из разных групп структурируют свои посадочные страницы для формирования целевого образа в B2B-коммуникации. Комбинированный подход обеспечил верификацию как наличия сигналов, так и особенностей их мультимодального воплощения.

Результаты исследования

Ниже представлен анализ присутствия указанных сигналов на лендингах банков, ориентированных на малый и средний бизнес.

Российские необанки

В рамках первого блока лендинга, отражающего наиболее абстрактное и обобщённое сообщение — будучи зоной «идеала» (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), цифровые банки используют *сигнал компетентности*, обозначая технологичность и широкий функционал. Так, «Модульбанк» акцентирует скорость («открытие счёта за 5 минут», «решение за 15 минут»), а «Ozon Банк» указывает на интеграцию с крупной экосистемой («для продавцов Ozon»). «Локо-Банк»

1 См.: https://www.revolut.com/en-DE/business
2 См.: https://monzo.com/business-banking
3 См.: https://mercury.com
4 См.: https://n26.com/en-eu/business-bank-account
5 См.: https://www.novo.co/business-banking
6 См.: https://www.nubank.com.br/empresas

формирует образ универсального решения, предлагая сразу несколько тарифов для разного масштаба бизнеса; при этом упоминает многолетнюю историю («30 лет на рынке»). Минималистичный Blanc подчёркивает, что является «банком для любых сфер бизнеса», визуально транслируя идею «цифрового чистого листа», то есть способности «сделать всё онлайн».

Сигнал прошлого опыта чаще подаётся через статистику и внешние связи, чем через дату основания. Например, «Ozon Банк» указывает на «высокий кредитный рейтинг», а «Модульбанк» использует рекомендации клиентов и упоминания в отраслевых рейтингах («Лучший банк для бизнеса по версии Markswebb, FinWin и самих предпринимателей»). Визуально такие сигналы могут сопровождаться изображениями трофеев, иконками рейтинговых агентств (см. Рисунок 1). Однако подобные элементы встречаются нерегулярно и чаще — в нижней части страницы, соответствующей зоне «реала» в визуальной грамматике Кресса и ван Левена (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), то есть области, где подаются конкретные, эмпирически верифицируемые сведения. Таким образом, сначала предлагается «идеальное» решение, а затем оно конкретизируется опытом и доказательствами.

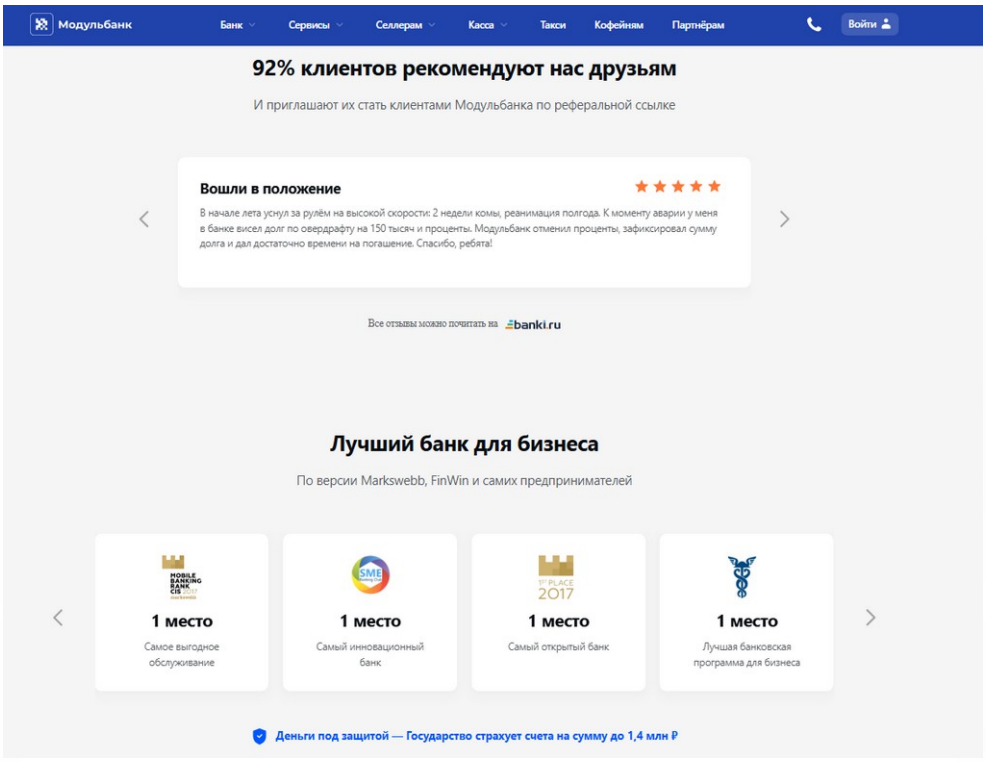

Рисунок 1. Лендинг «Модульбанка»

Figure 1. Landing page of Modulbank

Репутация и доверие подтверждаются ссылками на премии, партнёрства и страхование вкладов. «Точка» приводит данные о различных наградах

(например, «Народный рейтинг»), а «Ozon Банк» упоминает об интеграции с маркетплейсом. Визуально доверие подкрепляется иконками брендов-партнёров, логотипами рейтингов. Прямые отзывы клиентов встречаются реже; вместо этого используются обобщённые формулы типа «Клиент дороже денег» («Точка») и данные о количестве клиентов.

Сигнал доступности и клиентоориентированности реализуется через упоминание поддержки 24/7, бесплатных горячих линий, курьерской доставки документов и онлайн-заявок; визуально — через иконки онлайн-чата, смартфонов, цифровых интерфейсов. «Точка» подчёркивает, что вопросы решаются «за один разговор», «Локо-Банк» акцентирует «расчётный счёт за 15 минут», «Т-Банк» делает ставку на круглосуточное обслуживание и добавляет кнопку целевого действия (CTA — Call to Action) в каждый блок. «Ozon Банк» обещает «деньги за 1 рабочий день» и «реальных людей в поддержке», а Blanc — минималистичен в дизайне, создавая впечатление, что всё организовано максимально просто и удобно.

Сигналы ценностей и корней выражены умеренно. «Т-Банк» упоминает статус «системно значимого» и тот факт, что находится на рынке 15 лет; другие делают акцент на лицензию ЦБ и связь с отечественным законодательством (упоминание ИП, ООО, 115-ФЗ). Этнические и культурные коды почти не используются, однако юридическая принадлежность к РФ подчёркивается и выступает в роли локального идентификатора.

Таким образом, коммуникация направлена на то, чтобы скомпенсировать молодость бренда за счёт акцента на инновации, цифровую доступность и доверие, подтверждённое рейтингами и клиентскими метриками.

Зарубежные необанки

Revolut, Monzo, Mercury и другие активно транслируют *сигнал компетентности*, подчёркивая технологичность и широту функционала. Например, Monzo обещает, что бизнес-счёт “ is packed with everything you need” («упакован всем необходимым»), а Revolut заявляет: “Manage Your Finances” («Управляйте своими финансами»), дополняя призыв перечнем услуг (мультивалютные счета, API-интеграции и др.). На визуальном уровне это подкрепляется скриншотами приложений, графиками и интерфейсами, символизирующими экспертность и контроль. Композиционно часто используется структура: слева — вербальное описание проблемы, справа — визуальное решение (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Сигнал опыта реализуется не через дату основания, а через социальные доказательства (отзывы клиентов, рейтинги, цитаты): Monzo указывает на “600,000+ businesses with us” («более 600 000 бизнесов с нами»), Revolut — на статистику экономии за первые месяцы использования. Mercury иллюстрирует опыт через логотипы известных клиентов (Stripe, Shopify), выстроенные в симметричный ряд, что визуально символизирует доверие и масштаб.

Репутационные сигналы используют как ссылки на авторитет, так и формы доверия в формате отзывов. Monzo подчёркивает, что лицензирован FCA (Financial Conduct Authority — Управление по финансовому регулированию и надзору Великобритании) и PRA (Prudential Regulation Authority — Управление пруденциального регулирования при Банке Англии) и гарантирует защиту вкладов через FSCS (Financial Services Compensation Scheme — Схема компенсации финансовых услуг). Эти данные представлены либо иконками, либо текстом в подвале страницы — как визуальный индекс надёжности. Отзывы размещаются в блоках с историями клиентов (Revolut, Mercury), оформлены карточками с цитатами и фото клиентов, что создаёт эмоциональное доверие.

Сигнал доступности выражен в сообщениях о простоте и скорости: “Open an account in 8 minutes” («Откройте счёт за 8 минут») — N26; “92% of business accounts opened the same day” («92% счетов открываются в тот же день») — Monzo. На лендингах встроены блоки с ответами на популярные вопросы и кнопки призыва к целевому действию (CTA), повторяющиеся после каждого смыслового блока. Визуально часто используется flat design (плоский минималистичный дизайн без объёмных эффектов), белый фон и светлая палитра, символизирующая прозрачность (см. Рисунок 2). Изображения команд и предпринимателей добавляют персонализированный акцент, а упоминания поддержки 24/7 усиливают ощущение доступности.

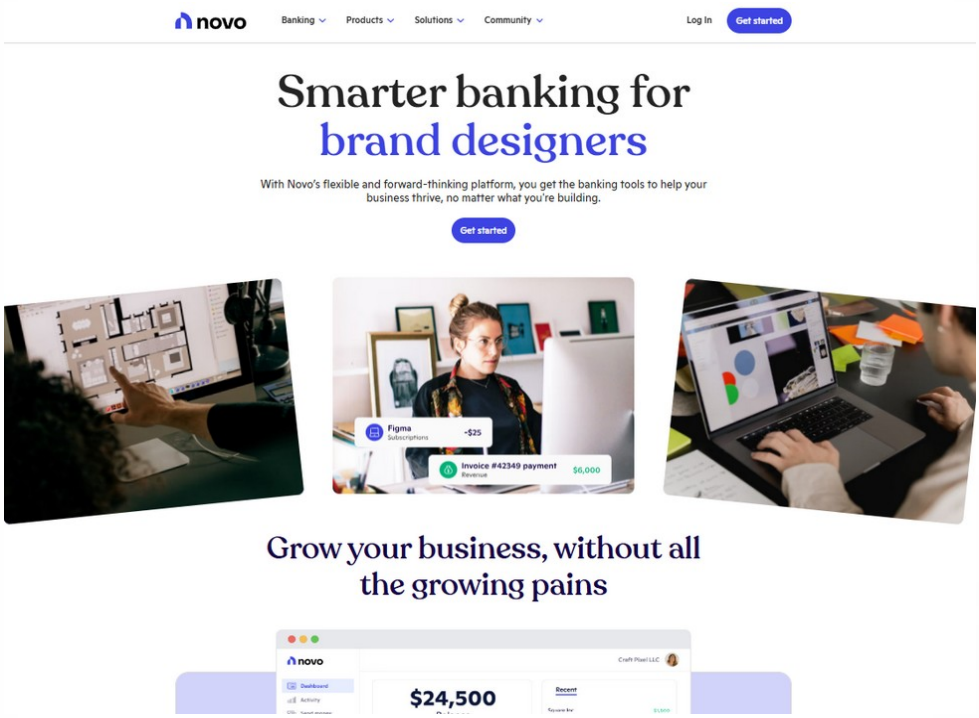

Рисунок 2. Лендинг Novo

Figure 2. Landing page of Novo

Сигнал ценностей и корней представлен не через национальные образы, а через миссию (формулировка предназначения или основной цели бренда): в основном транслируется возможность упростить жизнь бизнесу с услугами этого банка и открытость для самых малых бизнес-сегментов (Mercury акцентирует, что создан для стартапов, а Novo подчеркивает услуги для фрилансеров и самозанятых). Что касается локальной идентичности, то это может косвенно выражаться через происхождение и приверженность местным стандартам регулирования: Monzo упоминает местные организации (FSCS и регуляторов FCA и PRA), N26 декларирует банковскую лицензию Германии.

Таким образом, зарубежные необанки выстраивают позиционирование на основе технологичности, опыта, гибкости и визуальной открытости. Они избегают явной национально-культурной идентификации, фокусируясь на миссии, функциональности и доверии.

Традиционные российские банки

«Сбер», «Альфа-Банк», «ВТБ», «Газпромбанк», «РСХБ» и «ПСБ» реализуют *сигнал компетентности* через широкий спектр сервисов для бизнеса: от расчётно-кассового обслуживания и эквайринга до кредитования (в том числе в рамках льготных программ), депозитов, лизинга, гарантий и аккредитивов. Услуги доступны как офлайн (в отделениях), так и онлайн (через мобильные приложения и интернет-банки). «ВТБ» и «РСХБ» делают упор на поддержке специализированных сегментов (гособоронзаказ, агросектор), в то время как «Сбер» и «Альфа-Банк» предлагают экосистемные решения, включая онлайн-бухгалтерию и цифровую подпись. Композиционно используется структура «идеальное — реальное»: вверху — обобщающие тезисы, ниже — подробности (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Сигнал опыта чаще всего транслируется через узнаваемость бренда и многолетнее присутствие на рынке, без необходимости в прямой статистической верификации. «ВТБ», «Альфа-Банк» и «ПСБ» дополнительно подчёркивают признание в профессиональных рейтингах (например, Markswebb). «РСХБ» и «ПСБ» делают акцент на господдержке и участии в ключевых отраслях. Визуально сигнал передаётся через узнаваемые фирменные цвета. Таким образом, опыт крупных банков воспринимается как данность.

Репутационные сигналы проявляются в большей степени косвенно: упоминания о наградах, попадание в топ-рейтинги и ссылки на государственные программы заменяют активное использование клиентских отзывов. Большинство исследуемых лендингов имели в конце страницы раздел «Новости», что может ассоциироваться с экспертностью организации.

Сигнал доступности выражен множеством цифровых решений: горячие линии, круглосуточная поддержка, мобильные приложения, онлайн-формы («Оставить заявку», «Получить реквизиты счёта за 5 минут»), а также выездные менеджеры и сетка тарифных пакетов, адаптированных под разные категории бизнеса. Это формирует восприятие заботы и оперативности.

Сигнал ценностей и корней выражается через указание лицензии ЦБ, участие в национальных программах и позиционирование как системно значимых или отраслевых банков: «Сбер — надёжный банк для каждого», «ВТБ» — опора госсектора, «Газпромбанк» — банк энергетики, «РСХБ» — аграрного комплекса, «ПСБ» — оборонной промышленности. Цветовая гамма, фирменные логотипы и формальный тон коммуникации усиливают восприятие институциональной устойчивости (см. Рисунок 3).

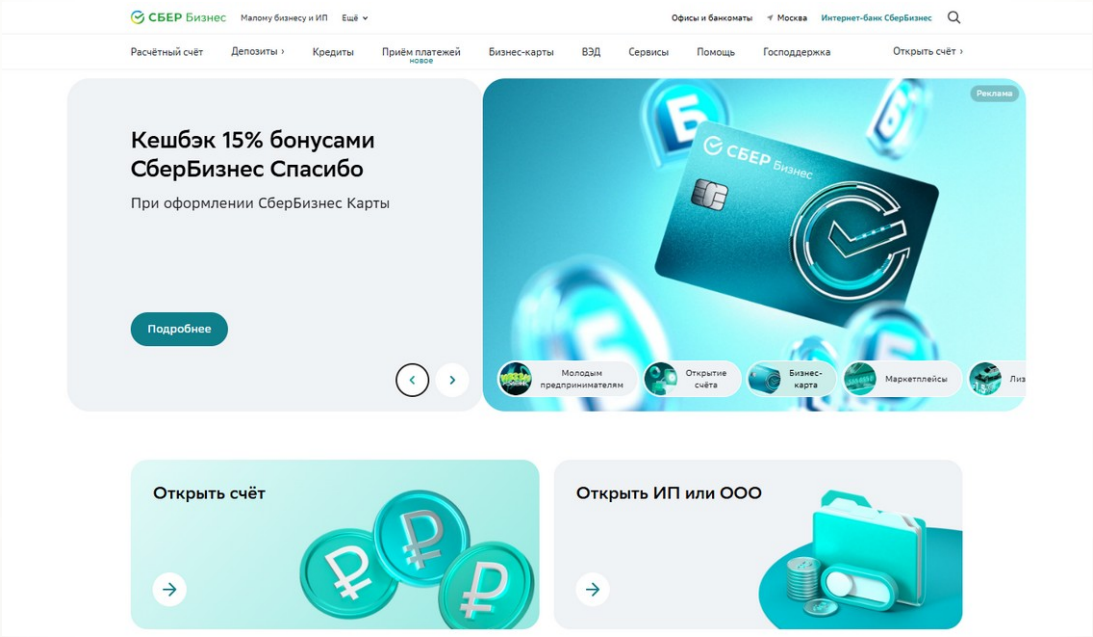

Рисунок 3. Лендинг «Сбера»

Figure 3. Landing page of Sber

Таким образом, традиционные российские банки строят доверие через сочетание универсальности сервисов, долгой истории, государственной аффилиации и акцента на надёжность. Их коммуникация опирается на институциональную репутацию, масштабы бизнеса и демонстрацию готовности к сопровождению клиента на всех этапах его развития, сохраняя при этом формальный и структурированный облик.

Традиционные зарубежные банки

Barclays, HSBC, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, J.P. Morgan и Deutsche Bank реализуют *сигнал компетентности* через широкий спектр финансовых решений: от стандартных текущих счетов и кредитования до персонализированных транснациональных стратегий управления капиталом. Barclays, Wells Fargo и Bank of America акцентируют универсальность предложений для малого и среднего бизнеса, тогда как HSBC, J.P. Morgan и Deutsche Bank ориентированы на высококапитализированные компании и предпринима-

телей, подчёркивая индивидуализацию (“tailored support” — «индивидуальная поддержка») и сопровождение сложных сделок. Компетентность подкрепляется визуальными средствами: строгой типографикой, консервативной палитрой (тёмно-синий, серый, белый) и визуальными маркерами институциональной стабильности (например, небоскрёбы).

Сигнал опыта выражается преимущественно через исторические отсылки (“over 300 years” — «более 300 лет» у Barclays, “170 years” — «170 лет» у Wells Fargo) и масштаб обслуживаемой клиентской базы (“millions of businesses” — «миллионы бизнесов» у Bank of America). Эти сигналы выражаются преимущественно текстово; визуально опыт поддерживается модульной структурой сайтов, сдержанной подачей информации и минимизацией динамических эффектов. Такие элементы чаще всего размещаются в нижней части страницы — зоне «реального», согласно модели визуальной грамматики (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Сигнал ценностей и корней выражен у американских банков через прямые отсылки к поддержке малого бизнеса (“Supporting America’s small businesses” — «Поддержка американского малого бизнеса») и обозначение участия в национальных системах страхования (например, FDIC). Европейские банки (Deutsche Bank, HSBC) акцентируют международные компетенции в сочетании с региональной адаптацией, визуально маркируемой через нейтральные палитры и упоминания локальных стандартов. Эмблемы — орёл Barclays (см. Рисунок 4), флаг Bank of America — выступают как символы преемственности.

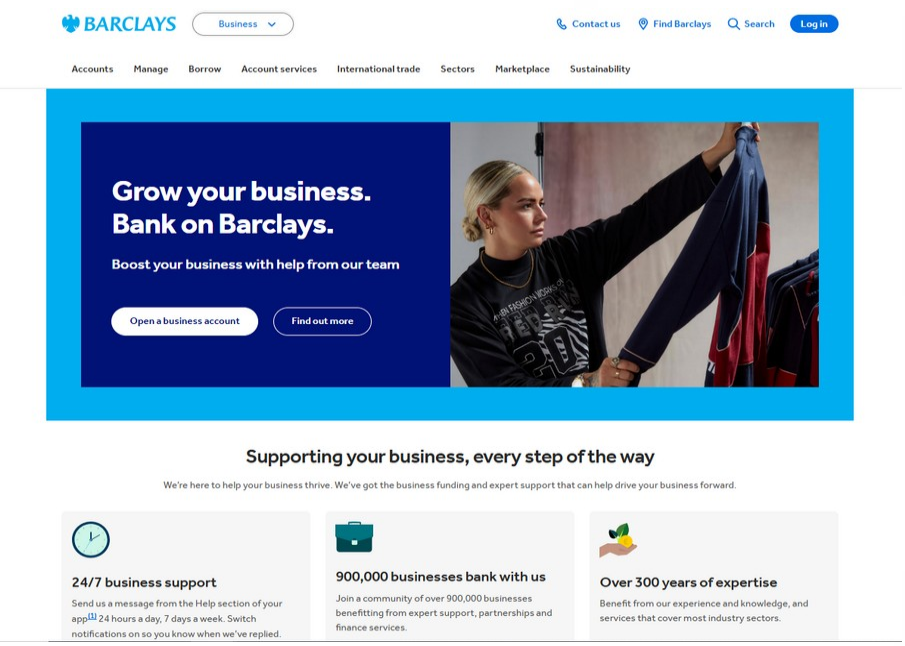

Рисунок 4. Лендинг Barclays

Figure 4. Landing page of Barclays

Таким образом, традиционные зарубежные банки строят коммуникацию на доверии, институциональной устойчивости и архитектуре бренда. Их лендинги минимизируют внешние доказательства в пользу структурной строгости и акцента на преемственность.

Количественный анализ сигналов позиционирования

Каждый сигнал позиционирования оценивался по бинарному признаку наличия на лендинге. Для четырёх групп банков подсчитывалось количество лендингов, на которых был зафиксирован каждый сигнал. Итоги представлены в таблице 1.

Table 1. Presence of positioning signals on bank landing pages

Таблица 1. Представленность сигналов позиционирования на лендингах банков

Сигнал	Зарубежные необанки	Российские необанки	Зарубежные традиционные банки	Российские традиционные банки
Компетентность	6/6	6/6	6/6	6/6
Прошлый опыт	4/6	3/6	5/6	4/6
Репутация / доверие	5/6	5/6	4/6	3/6
Доступность/ Клиентоориентированность	6/6	6/6	4/6	5/6
Ценности и корни	3/6	2/6	6/6	6/6

Анализ показывает, что *сигналы компетентности* и *прошлого опыта* обладают высокой степенью представленности во всех группах. *Компетентность* транслируется на 100% лендингов (6 из 6 во всех группах), подтверждая её статус базового элемента B2B-коммуникации. При этом *сигнал прошлого опыта* менее универсален: он зафиксирован на 4 из 6 лендингов зарубежных необанков, 3 из 6 российских, 5 из 6 зарубежных традиционных и 4 из 6 российских традиционных банков. Это говорит о вариативности подходов к демонстрации институциональной истории.

Более рельефно выраженные различия наблюдаются в *репутационном сигнале*, который включает внешнюю валидацию через отзывы, рейтинги и упоминания в авторитетных источниках. Этот сигнал чаще используется необанками (по 5 из 6 в обеих подгруппах), чем традиционными банками (4 из 6 у зарубежных и 3 из 6 у российских), что указывает на стремление новых брендов компенсировать ограниченную институциональную историю через демонстративное доверие.

Сигнал клиентоориентированности / доступности также преобладает у необанков (6 из 6), в то время как среди традиционных банков он варьируется: 4 из 6 у зарубежных и 5 из 6 у российских. Это отражает стратегию акцента на простоте взаимодействия и цифровых каналах у новых игроков.

Наиболее контрастным стал *сигнал ценностей и корней*: он отмечен на 6 из 6 лендингов традиционных банков в обеих странах, но лишь на 3 из 6 у зарубежных необанков и 2 из 6 у российских. Это, вероятно, отражает стремление необанков дистанцироваться от национального или культурного контекста в пользу универсальности и технологического образа.

Заключение

Анализ лендингов показал, что для всех четырёх групп банков — зарубежных и российских, традиционных и необанков — характерно наличие элементов, соответствующих пяти ключевым сигналам позиционирования: компетентность, прошлый опыт, репутация и доверие, клиентоориентированность и доступность, а также ценности и корни. Однако степень выраженности этих сигналов и способы их реализации существенно различаются в зависимости от типа банка, его целевой аудитории и контекста функционирования.

Сигнал компетентности оказался универсальным: он присутствует на 100% исследованных лендингов, независимо от происхождения, возраста и масштаба банка. Это подтверждает его фундаментальное значение в B2B-коммуникации в банковской сфере и указывает на его статус ключевого элемента позиционирования.

Сигнал прошлого опыта чаще обнаруживается у традиционных банков, обладающих длинной историей и способных апеллировать к количественным индикаторам (например, числу клиентов). Необанки реже используют этот сигнал в явной форме, компенсируя его демонстрацией инновационности и цифровой зрелости, нередко через блоки с наградами и рейтингами.

Сигналы репутации и доверия варьируются по стилю выражения. Традиционные банки, как правило, опираются на институциональные маркеры: лицензии, участие в государственных программах, статус системно значимых организаций. В отличие от них, зарубежные необанки делают акцент на социальной валидации — отзывах, историях клиентов, цитатах и визуальной репрезентации доверия. Российские необанки демонстрируют гибридную стратегию, совмещая формальные атрибуты с точечным внедрением элементов обратной связи.

Сигналы доступности и клиентоориентированности сильнее выражены у необанков. Они активно используют язык выгоды, визуальные упрощения, интуитивные интерфейсы, поддержку 24/7 и CTA. Традиционные банки адаптируют эти элементы к своим каналам коммуникации, однако делают это в более сдержанном, формальном стиле, соответствующем их институциональной идентичности.

Сигналы, связанные с ценностями и корнями, оказались наименее эксплицитными. У традиционных банков они чаще маркируются через цветовую палитру, логотипы, участие в нацпрограммах и отраслевую специализацию. У необанков такой сигнал проявляется реже и преимущественно в форме

миссий (например, помощь в развитии бизнеса, презентуемая через истории клиентов). Это позволяет предположить, что акценты на ценности выносятся за рамки главной страницы — в разделы «О нас» или другие каналы корпоративной коммуникации.

Таким образом, брендинг банков формируется через разное соотношение универсальных и специфичных сигналов, отражая стратегию позиционирования каждого типа института. Коммуникация строится либо на акценте институциональной надёжности и масштаба, либо на гибкости, доступности и вовлечённости в диалог с клиентом. Это демонстрирует наличие различных коммуникационных стратегий в цифровом позиционировании B2B-банков, сочетающих в себе типовые и уникальные маркеры бренда.

Дальнейшие исследования могут быть направлены на эмпирическую проверку восприятия сигнальных элементов с помощью поведенческих методов, а также на изучение динамики изменения лендингов во времени и кросс-культурных различий в сигнальных стратегиях. Перспективным также представляется применение разработанной типологии к другим B2B-сегментам (страхование, логистика, IT), что позволит оценить универсальность модели и выявить отраслевые особенности мультимодального позиционирования.

Заявления автора

Согласие с политиками и положениями сетевого издания

Автор данной рукописи был уведомлен и согласен с действующими политиками и положениями сетевого издания, изложенными на веб-сайте.

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From Strength to Self-Care: Reconstructing Masculinity in Men's Grooming and Self-Care Advertising

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Abstract

This study explores the evolving portrayal of masculinity in men's grooming advertisements by Gillette, Dove Men+Care, and Axe from 2013 to 2023, focusing on Indian and global campaigns in a cross-cultural context. Drawing on Connell's (1995) multiple masculinities, Anderson's (2009) Inclusive Masculinity Theory, Kreicbergs' (2023) consumer typology, and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Jewitt, 2009), the research examines how advertising reconstructs masculinity. While traditional hegemonic masculinity remains in earlier campaigns, more recent ones incorporate emotional openness, caregiving, and fluidity. This study highlights the intersection of advertising, culture, and evolving gender representations.

Keywords

Masculinity; Advertising; Cross-cultural Context; Gillette; Dove Men+Care; Axe; Gender Representation; Multimodal Discourse Analysis; Consumer Culture

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От «силы» к уходу за собой: реконструкция маскулинности в рекламе средств по уходу за собой и косметических средств для мужчин

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Аннотация

В данном исследовании в межкультурном контексте рассматривается эволюция изображения мужественности в рекламе средств по уходу за собой для мужчин от Gillette, Dove Men+Care и Axe с 2013 по 2023 год, с акцентом на индийские и глобальные кампании. Опираясь на теорию множественной маскулинности Коннелла (1995), теорию инклюзивной маскулинности Андерсона (2009), типологию потребителей Крейцберга (2023) и мультимодальный дискурс-анализ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Jewitt, 2009), исследование анализирует, как реклама реконструирует маскулинность. В то время как традиционная гегемонная маскулинность сохраняется в ранних кампаниях, более поздние кампании включают эмоциональную открытость, заботу и гибкость. Это исследование подчеркивает пересечение рекламы, культуры и меняющихся представлений о гендере.

Ключевые слова

маскулинность; реклама; межкультурный контекст; Gillette; Dove Men+Care; Axe; гендерное представление; мультимодальный дискурс-анализ; потребительская культура

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Introduction

Over the past two decades, scholars have increasingly examined the evolving role of masculinity in advertising. Research suggests that masculinity is now strategically marketed as a commodity, with various representations tailored for consumer appeal (Scheibling & Lafrance, 2019, pp. 222–239). This phenomenon, termed branded masculinity (Alexander, 2003, pp. 535–554) underscores how corporate brands construct and sell specific ideals of masculinity, shaping consumer behaviour through strategic messaging. Within consumer capitalism, brands capitalize on insecurity, aspiration, and identity formation, persuading men that masculinity itself can be curated through the selection of particular products. As a result, masculinity has become one of the most frequently utilized social resources in advertising (Zayer et al., 2020, pp. 238–260), playing a crucial role in shaping cultural norms and expectations surrounding male identity.

However, masculinity in advertising is not static. Traditional hegemonic masculinity, characterized by strength, control, and dominance, has long been the dominant archetype in marketing. Yet, as societal attitudes toward gender, identity, and self-expression evolve, brands face increasing pressure to diversify their portrayals of masculinity. With heightened conversations around gender inclusivity and progressive masculinity, brands are reconfiguring their messaging to reflect a more nuanced, multidimensional vision of manhood (Scheibling & Lafrance, 2019, pp. 222–239; Zayer et al., 2020, pp. 238–260). This shift is particularly evident in men's grooming advertisements, where notions of self-care, vulnerability, emotional strength, and individuality are gradually redefining traditional masculine ideals.

This study explores the reconstruction of masculinity in contemporary media advertising, focusing on Indian as well as global male grooming and self-care products as a case study. (Barlett et al., 2008) In the context of this study, grooming refers to the set of practices and products aimed at enhancing and maintaining men's physical appearance, including shaving, skincare, hairstyling, and hygiene routines. While traditionally associated with discipline and outward presentation, grooming has increasingly intersected with the broader concept of self-care—a term that encompasses emotional well-being, personal expression, and mental health. In contemporary advertising, these practices are no longer just about appearance but are positioned as integral to modern masculinity, reflecting a shift from rigid gender norms toward more inclusive and multifaceted portrayals of male identity. As media increasingly portrays muscular, idealized male bodies, men face heightened pressure to conform, leading to lower body satisfaction, self-esteem, and body esteem, as supported by two meta-analyses (Barlett et al., 2008). These ideals are reinforced through commercials, magazines, and even action figures, contributing to negative self-perceptions and harmful behaviours. However, modern advertising's more inclusive framing of masculinity suggests a complex,

evolving narrative—one that both challenges traditional norms and reinforces appearance-based pressures.

As a global leader in men's grooming, Gillette has a long history of shaping cultural perceptions of masculinity. With a presence in over 140 countries, the brand has demonstrated an ability to adapt its marketing strategies to different cultural and regional contexts. In India, Gillette's advertising has traditionally aligned with aspirational masculinity, portraying confidence, success, and refinement. However, in recent years, the brand has experimented with more emotionally driven storytelling, engaging with themes of fatherhood, mentorship, and self-acceptance. Globally, Gillette has also evolved its portrayal of masculinity, moving beyond performance-driven messaging to embrace social responsibility and emotional depth. Through qualitative analysis of Gillette's advertisements over the past decade, this study aims to uncover how traditional and evolving notions of masculinity are portrayed and marketed to consumers across cultures. It also examines how the shifting global trends influence localized narratives in India, offering a broader perspective on branded masculinity across cultures.

To enhance the universality and relevance of this research, the study will also incorporate a comparative analysis of other prominent men's grooming brands, including Axe, and Dove Men+Care. Furthermore, given the increasing dominance of digital media, the study will explore contemporary media formats like social media content – campaigns, posters, reels, to assess their impact on masculinity representation. Additionally, an international perspective will be integrated to contrast how brands in different cultural contexts—such as Gillette, Axe, and Dove Men+Care (Global and Indian contexts)—navigate shifting gender norms in their advertising.

By expanding the scope beyond one brand and traditional advertising formats, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of branded masculinity in the contemporary media landscape. It will explore how brands balance cultural expectations, consumer behaviour, and evolving gender discourse to shape their portrayal of masculinity. In doing so, the study will address three key research objectives:

1. How do traditional ideals of masculinity appear in the advertising strategies of Gillette and other leading men's grooming brands?
2. How are the ideas of masculinity shaping the marketing strategies of grooming brands changing, and what effects do these portrayals have on consumers?
3. How do contemporary media formats—such as social media and influencer content—use multimodal strategies to construct and communicate masculinity in grooming advertisements?
4. What similarities and differences in gender representation emerge from a comparison of Indian and international men's grooming advertisements?

This research contributes to the ongoing discourse on gender representation in advertising, offering insights into the dynamic interplay between corporate branding, masculinity, and shifting cultural values. Ultimately, this study moves beyond mere description of changing advertising trends to critically ask: Is masculinity genuinely changing, or are corporations primarily adapting their portrayals to fit societal expectations? What is the profound "so what" of this shift? This essay argues that the relationship is far more complex: corporations, driven by societal pressure (e.g., #MeToo), strategically adapt their messaging, which in turn re-narrates and re-commodifies masculinity itself. By rigorously analyzing these processes, this paper will empower readers to critically evaluate commercial media's role in the co-construction of gender, offering a nuanced framework for studying media, masculinity, and consumer culture.

Theory and Literature on Masculinity Portrayal in Advertisements

The representation of gender in advertising is a longstanding site of cultural production and social negotiation. Advertising not only reflects prevailing societal norms but also functions as a powerful agent in shaping them. In particular, the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements has historically adhered to hegemonic ideals—privileging traits such as dominance, stoicism, physical prowess, and heterosexual assertiveness. As contemporary cultures become more reflective of gender diversity and inclusivity, the terrain of masculinity in advertising is undergoing significant transformation.

Traditional Masculinity and the Hegemonic Ideal

Seminal works such as those by Connell (1995, 2005) and Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) lay the theoretical groundwork for understanding masculinity as a hierarchical, socially constructed phenomenon. Connell (1995) identifies multiple masculinities—hegemonic, complicit, subordinated, and marginalized—with hegemonic masculinity positioned as the culturally exalted standard that legitimizes male dominance and the subordination of women and non-hegemonic men. This model has been instrumental in decoding the mechanisms through which media, including advertising, sustains patriarchal norms.

Connell's (1995) framework is rooted in sociological inquiry and centres on the power dynamics that shape masculine identities. Hegemonic masculinity maintains cultural dominance, complicit masculinity benefits from this system without overtly enforcing it, subordinated masculinity is devalued—often linked to non-heteronormative expressions—and marginalized masculinity is shaped by intersections of race, class, and exclusion from the hegemonic ideal.

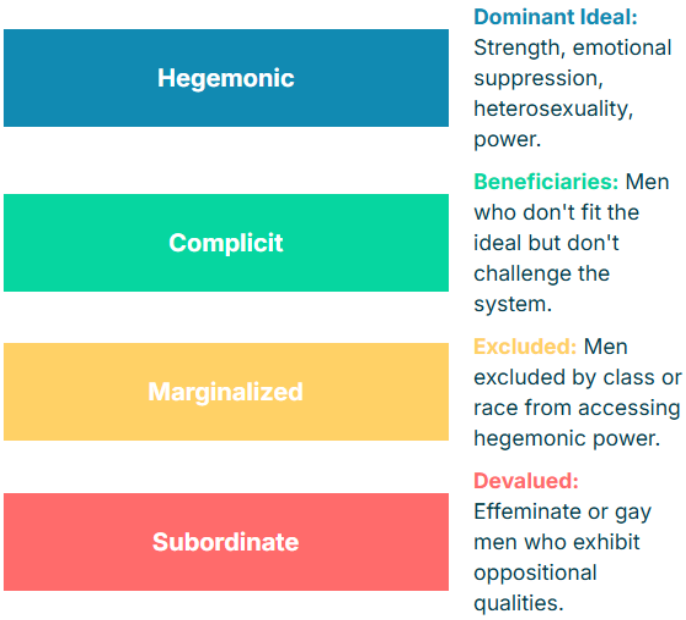

Figure 1. Connell's (1995) Hierarchy of Masculinity

Early empirical studies (Schroeder & Zwick, 2004, pp. 21-52; Ahlstrand, 2007) demonstrate how advertising reinforces gender stereotypes by presenting men as powerful narrators and women as submissive or decorative. In India, similar patterns are evident. Research by Das (2011, pp. 208–222), Kakade & Javalkar (2020), and Sharma & Bumb (2021, pp. 236–255) exposes the recurring portrayal of women in domestic or sexualized roles, while men are shown as rational, strong, and professionally capable. These portrayals not only reflect but perpetuate deep-rooted gender hierarchies. Research conducted by Shivani and Kumari (2012) reviewed gender portrayals in advertising across various regions, including India, and found that traditional gender roles persist despite efforts to address stereotypes. A historical context of gender stereotypes in advertising is explored by Grau and Zotos (2016, pp. 761–770). They analyzed how descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes perpetuate gender inequities. The article is a valuable resource for understanding the pervasive influence of gender stereotypes in advertising and its consequences. Ghosh (2016, pp. 15-166) applied Critical Discourse Analysis to show how advertisements reflect socio-economic factors influencing gender portrayals.

Masculinity in Media and Its Societal Impact

Building on Connell's (1995, 2005) framework, scholars like Kailing (2014) and Muldrow (2018) delve into how media representations of masculinity affect social behaviour and identity formation. Kailing (2014) applies Bandura's (1971) Social Learning Theory to argue that advertising models ideal masculine behaviour—dominance, emotional detachment, and physical aggression—which audiences then

internalize. Muldrow's (2018) content analysis of male-targeted magazines further supports this claim, showing how different types of publications emphasize either objectified male beauty or hegemonic traits like strength and stoicism. These limited portrayals contribute to toxic masculinity, body image issues, and emotional suppression among men (Mahalik et al., 2003; Pope et al., 2000). West and Zimmerman (1987, pp. 125–151) stress upon the significance of the ethnomethodological foundation of omnirelevance, i.e., the relevance of gender in every social situation. Butler (1990) develops a poststructuralist notion on gendered subjectivity by drawing upon the performativity and materiality of gender. Butler's conception of 'doing gender' focuses more on how gender is performed to real and imagined audiences. Gender being an integral part of individual identity as well as social structure, one can never not do gender. Essentially, both theories challenge the idea of gender as a fixed, natural attribute, highlighting instead its performative and socially constructed nature. Drawing upon this performative nature of gender and its potential for both stability and subversion, masculinity can be viewed as a socially enacted identity constructed through repeated behaviours rather than inherent traits. The orthodoxy–heterodoxy–cacodoxy framework views masculinity as a continuum of performances, with increasing deviation from tradition met with greater social risk.

Inclusive Masculinity and Hybrid Identities

Recent scholarship highlights the fragmentation and reconfiguration of masculinity, challenging earlier rigid constructions. Anderson's (2009) Inclusive Masculinity Theory, grounded in declining homophobia, suggests younger generations are embracing emotional intimacy, physical affection, and gender inclusivity. Connor et al. (2021) identify four global trends signaling this shift: Inclusivity, Emotional Intimacy, Physicality, and Resistance to traditional norms, reflecting broader cultural challenges to hegemonic ideals and the emergence of hybrid masculinities combining strength with sensitivity.

This evolving discourse is notably salient in consumer culture. Kreicbergs (2023, pp. 135-151) offers a typology for advertising, distinguishing between traditional (aggression, emotional repression), hybrid (blending dominant and nurturing traits), and modern (equality, vulnerability, self-expression) masculinities based on consumer perception, distinct from Connell's (1995) sociological power-based framework. However, Bridges & Pascoe (2014, pp. 246–258) critically argue that hybrid masculinities, by incorporating marginalized elements, can paradoxically reinforce gender inequality by devaluing marginalized identities and obscuring power structures.

While Anderson's (2009) theory has been influential, recent global developments suggest its linear progress narrative is not universal. Bridges & Pascoe (2014) and others note an uneven decline of homophobia, with resurging anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment in many regions, including parts of India and the Global North. Furthermore, inclusive masculinity is increasingly commodified for corporate branding

rather than structural change. Thus, Anderson's framework must be situated within today's contested, politically volatile landscape, where inclusivity and backlash coexist.

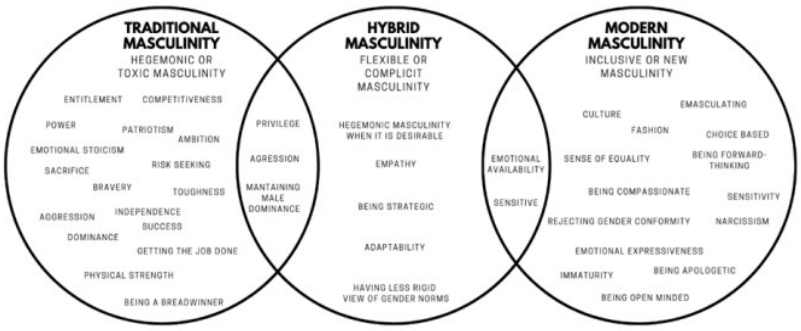

Figure 2. Types of masculinity and their key characteristics, behaviours and rhetoric (Source: Kreicbergs (2023, pp. 135-151))

The Role of Advertising in Shifting Masculine Ideals

Recent campaigns such as Gillette's "The Best a Man Can Be" and Lynx's "Is It OK for Guys?" exemplify efforts to reframe masculinity. Scholars such as Trott (2022, pp. 1417–1434), Bogen et al. (2021, pp. 101–112), and Knudsen & Andersen (2020) analyze these campaigns to explore how masculinity is rhetorically reconstructed. Gillette's campaign, though praised for its moral stance, was criticized for its paternalistic tone. In contrast, Lynx adopted a dialogic and empathetic approach, encouraging men to reflect on their identities without overt judgment. The contrasting reception of these campaigns underscores the complexities involved in negotiating masculinity through advertising.

These insights are echoed in archetype-based analyses by Kreicbergs & Ščeulovs (2022, pp. 21–38), who show that brands leveraging emotionally expressive archetypes like the Lover or Everyman tend to foster stronger consumer engagement than those that adhere to heroic or authoritarian masculinity tropes. Consumers today increasingly value authenticity, vulnerability, and emotional nuance in male portrayals.

Consumer Perceptions and Generational Shifts

There is a generational dimension to these shifting ideals. Research by Lingnau (2023) and Kreicbergs & Ščeulovs (2023, pp. 299–304) finds that younger men—especially Gen Z and Millennials—are critical of traditional masculine portrayals and prefer more diverse, inclusive representations. Yet, even as many express discomfort with hegemonic masculinity, traditional images continue to influence purchasing behaviour. This tension between aspiration and action suggests that change is underway, but incomplete.

Moreover, gendered responses to advertising vary. Knutson & Waldner (2017) found that while female participants responded more favourably to "menvertising"

that challenged masculine stereotypes, male participants often maintained neutrality or ambivalence—reflecting an entrenched cultural normalization of hegemonic ideals.

Regional Specificities and the Indian Context

While global advertising trends increasingly support gender diversity, regional disparities remain. Gogoi & Sinha's (2024, pp. 1–36) multimodal analysis of outdoor ads in Patna, India, highlights how masculine norms in advertising remain firmly tied to power, authority, and occupational dominance. These portrayals are deeply embedded in local cultural and linguistic semiotics—colour, gaze, text, and spatial design—reinforcing masculinity as the default identity of strength and leadership, while relegating femininity to domesticity and beauty.

Masculinity Beyond the Male Body

Adding further complexity, Halberstam & Halberstam (1998, pp. 1–43) argues that masculinity is not inherently tied to the male body. His work on female masculinity illustrates how masculine traits can be performed by individuals of any gender, subverting traditional binaries and expanding the spectrum of gender identity. This theoretical lens is crucial for understanding the increasing appearance of non-binary and gender-nonconforming figures in contemporary advertising.

The literature suggests that masculinity in advertising is undergoing a profound transformation. From reinforcing hegemonic ideals to embracing emotional authenticity and diversity, advertising now serves as both a site of resistance and reinforcement. While early research focused on the damaging effects of rigid portrayals, more recent work explores how advertising can serve as a platform for social change. Yet, the adoption of inclusive masculinity is uneven, influenced by generational, regional, and cultural factors.

The present study contributes to this evolving discourse by examining the portrayal of masculinity in men's grooming and self-care advertisements from 2013 to 2023. By employing both Connell's (1995, 2005) power-based framework and Kreicbergs' (2023) consumer-centric typology, this work aims to illuminate the nuanced ways in which masculinity is being reconstructed—not only as strength, but as self-care, empathy, and identity in flux.

Theory and Literature on Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) offers a powerful theoretical framework for examining how meaning is constructed through the interplay of multiple semiotic modes, such as language, images, layout, colour, and design, within media texts. This approach, grounded in the works of scholars like Jewitt (2009), Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), allows for a nuanced exploration of how visual and textual elements collaborate to shape meaning in advertisements, particularly in relation to the reconstruction of masculinity.

In the context of Gillette India's advertisements, MDA enables a critical analysis of how masculinity is both visually and textually represented. Rather than focusing solely on the language used, MDA examines how the meaning is conveyed through a variety of semiotic modes. These include body language, colour schemes, camera angles, visual symbolism, and layout. For instance, the portrayal of men in positions of power, authority, or vulnerability, alongside their attire, expressions, and the framing of shots, works in conjunction with accompanying text and narration to construct a specific understanding of masculinity. Whether through close-up shots that convey strength or vulnerability or wide-angle shots that position the subject as dominant or introspective, the combination of these elements directly influences the viewer's interpretation of masculine identity.

This approach goes beyond simply examining whether advertisements reinforce traditional ideals of masculinity—such as physical strength, stoicism, and dominance. It also considers whether they challenge these norms by presenting alternative, more inclusive representations of masculinity, such as emotional sensitivity, caregiving, or allyship. Advertisements from Gillette, Axe, and Dove Men+Care, for example, not only promote products but also engage in identity construction by aligning the male subject with particular social values, aspirations, and behavioural norms. This multimodal approach provides a lens through which to interrogate the embedded ideologies within these advertisements, as noted by Jewitt (2009), who emphasized how social meanings in multimodal texts are shaped by societal conventions and cultural expectations.

A powerful example of this can be seen in advertisements that pair images of men engaging in traditionally feminine roles, such as a father comforting his child, with messages about grooming. This juxtaposition challenges traditional associations of masculinity with emotional detachment and promotes a reimagining of masculine roles through both visual and linguistic elements. Through MDA, these advertisements become more than just promotional materials; they act as cultural texts that contribute to the ongoing negotiation and reconstruction of masculinity in contemporary media.

This framework allows for an in-depth exploration of how semiotic resources —ranging from image composition to layout design—are selectively configured to align masculinity with emerging social values. By unpacking the strategies employed in these advertisements, MDA reveals how they both reflect and shape evolving gender norms. Moreover, the analysis demonstrates how contemporary media can simultaneously challenge and perpetuate dominant ideologies of gender, offering a deeper understanding of the ways in which gender identities are constructed, communicated, and understood in the public sphere.

When applied to the analysis of advertisements, MDA also draws from Halliday's (1978, 1989, 2009) social semiotic theory, which identifies three key communicative functions—ideational, interpersonal, and textual. These functions are visually realized through image composition, as noted by scholars like Joyce and

Gaudin (2007) and Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). In this context, advertisements become a site where ideologies surrounding gender and masculinity are not merely communicated through text but are also visually constructed through carefully composed images that engage the viewer both intellectually and emotionally.

The integration of multimodal strategies in advertisements aligns with the work of Machin and Thornborrow (2003, pp. 453–471), who discussed how magazines like Cosmopolitan use multimodal elements to promote values such as independence and power, often through physical appeal and social skills rather than intellectual capacity. In a similar vein, advertisements like those from Gillette India and other global brands – Dove Men+Care and Axe – strategically deploy visual and linguistic elements to align men with desirable social values. By incorporating multimodal discourse analysis, we can explore how these advertisements are not just about selling products but about promoting specific constructions of masculinity in the public eye.

Thus, MDA becomes a critical tool for understanding the evolving portrayal of masculinity in advertisements, allowing for an analysis that recognizes the complex ways in which visual, textual, and design elements contribute to the broader cultural discourse around gender. Through this lens, advertisements become powerful sites of ideological negotiation, shaping and reshaping societal understandings of what it means to be masculine in contemporary media.

Methodology

For the sake of this research, we first took up commercial campaigns of three multinational male grooming products and self-care brands, namely, Gillette, Axe, and Dove Men+Care, spanning from 2013 to 2023. These advertisements, which included not only TV commercials and ad posters but also contemporary media content, including digital marketing, social media contents like social media posts, videos, reels, and challenges—created by consumers rather than the brand itself, were handpicked from YouTube and various social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, etc. (links have been provided at the reference) and then, directly transcribed for analysis. From the advertisement narratives, we tend to delve into how Gillette India advertisements use masculine and feminine gender representations in their narratives as a part of their marketing efforts to persuade the consumers. We also try to locate any sort of change in the representations of masculinity and gender roles in the Gillette India advertisements over the years.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section presents and analyses the data collected from commercial campaigns of three multinational male grooming and self-care brands—Gillette, Axe, and Dove Men+Care—spanning from 2013 to 2023. For the scope of this research, particular emphasis is placed on Gillette's advertisements, analyzing how

the brand employs gender representations as a marketing strategy to shape consumer perception. The findings from this analysis will be contextualized within broader discussions on gender representation in advertising and marketing.

Diachronic Case Study of Masculinity in Gillette India's Advertising Campaigns

In this section, we present a diachronic analysis of Gillette India's advertisements which reveals a progressive shift in the portrayal of masculinity.

Case Study 1: 2013 – Shave or Crave

This campaign rigidly endorsed hegemonic masculinity by linking male desirability to a clean-shaven appearance, implying female validation. It functioned as complicit masculinity by enforcing patriarchal grooming norms and branded masculinity by commodifying male identity. Multimodally, the slogan, imagery, and "challenge–solution–result" placard normalized a narrow, appearance-driven male ideal.

Case Study 2: 2014 – #MyRoleModel

While primarily reinforcing hegemonic and complicit masculinities through the father-son dynamic valuing toughness, this campaign subtly introduced modern/inclusive masculinity by featuring the son's emotional reflection. MDA highlighted the use of nostalgic visuals and Rahul Dravid's authoritative voice to construct a traditional, strength-based masculinity.

Case Study 3: 2015 – The Best A Fan Can Get

This campaign presented a diverse portrayal incorporating hegemonic (Rahul Dravid's discipline), marginalized (blind fan challenging physical prowess), subordinate (son's caregiving), modern/inclusive (emotional openness), and branded masculinities. Multimodal elements like emotional pacing and soft visuals emphasized resilience and relational bonds, broadening the definition of masculinity.

Case Study 4: 2016 & 2017 – Manscaping Tips & Gillette BODY

These campaigns reconfigured norms by portraying hegemonic (control, hygiene), complicit (adherence to evolving grooming), subordinate (normalizing body grooming), hybrid (feminine traits in masculine frame), modern/inclusive (individuality), and branded masculinities. MDA revealed how clean aesthetics and bold typography normalized male body grooming as a masculine act, challenging taboos.

Case Study 5: 2018 – BeerBiceps Shaving Tips

This influencer campaign integrated hegemonic (physical strength), complicit (daily grooming), subordinate (supporting marginalized grooming), hybrid (self-care with traditional traits), modern/inclusive (diversity in grooming), and branded

masculinities. Visually, minimalist close-ups emphasized care, while Allahbadia's conversational tone and upbeat music positioned grooming as self-expression.

Case Study 6: 2019 – #ShavingStereotypes

This campaign reimagined gender roles by challenging hegemonic masculinity and introducing female, modern/inclusive, hybrid, and branded masculinities, showcasing women in a male-dominated profession. MDA highlighted how authentic visuals, progressive dialogue ("a razor doesn't know the difference between a boy and a girl"), and traditional music juxtaposed cultural norms with evolving values.

Case Study 7: 2019 – Man Enough

Employing Lt Col M K Sinha's narrative, this campaign challenged hegemonic ideals by celebrating subordinate (vulnerability), hybrid (authority with vulnerability), modern/inclusive, and branded masculinities. MDA revealed how soft lighting, visible scars, and father-son interactions redefined strength as emotional depth and ethical responsibility.

Case Study 8: 2022 – #EngineeringChang

This campaign redefined masculinity through Prashant Gade's story, challenging associations of male worth with financial success. It elevated subordinate (compassion), hybrid (leadership without dominance), modern/inclusive, and branded masculinities. Multimodal analysis showed close-ups of Gade's work and empathetic interactions, framing masculinity as purpose-driven and compassionate.

Diachronic Case Study of Masculinity in Gillette's (Global) Advertising Campaigns

In this section, we present a diachronic presentation and analysis of the advertisements used by Gillette (global) for their campaign. Gillette's global advertising also demonstrated a significant evolution from reinforcing traditional ideals to embracing more inclusive and emotionally nuanced representations.

Case Study 9: 2013 – "Man of Steel": How Does Superman Shave?

This campaign reinforced hegemonic (strength, perfection) and complicit masculinities by inviting emulation of a heroic ideal through grooming. It subtly hinted at hybrid masculinity but largely offered a narrow portrayal. MDA noted how humanizing Superman and using intimate close-ups promoted authenticity.

Case Study 10: 2014 – BODY Razor Campaign

This ad modernized grooming while reinforcing hegemonic (discipline, physical perfection) and complicit masculinities, and introduced hybrid masculinity

by incorporating grooming practices associated with femininity. MDA showed rugged landscapes and confident male figures emphasizing durability and control.

Case Study 11: 2016 – Fusion ProShield – NFL Linemen

This campaign reinforced hegemonic (protectors, physical dominance) and complicit masculinities, suggesting hybrid masculinity by integrating shaving into hypermasculine sports. MDA highlighted playful contrasts and bold text to convey strength and self-expression.

Case Study 12: 2017 – TREO™ Assisted Shaving

This campaign radically redefined masculinity by positioning caregiving as a masculine act, challenging hegemonic norms and valorizing emotional vulnerability. It affirmed complicit, marginalized, subordinate, hybrid, modern/inclusive, and branded masculinities. MDA detailed intimate visuals, a personal voiceover, and gentle interactions reframing masculinity as empathetic and nurturing.

Case Study 13: 2018 – Solomon Thomas – #HisBigDay

Featuring NFL player Solomon Thomas, this campaign challenged hegemonic masculinity by highlighting emotional vulnerability and father-son bonding. It engaged marginalized (Black male identity), affirmed subordinate, and embodied hybrid, modern/inclusive, and branded masculinities. MDA showed intimate embraces and a focus on shared milestones, shifting branding from performance to connection.

Case Study 14: 2019 – We Believe: The Best Men Can Be

Gillette's "We believe: the best men can be" razors commercial takes on toxic masculinity

"First Shave" (A father helping his transgender son shave for the first time) – Highlighting the importance of inclusivity in masculinity.

Gillette / First Shave – The Story of Samson

"The Best Men Can Be" partnerships – Collaborations with organizations like the Boys & Girls Clubs of America to promote positive role modelling.

Gillette #TheBestMenCanBe

This controversial campaign marked a critical shift by directly addressing "toxic masculinity" (critiquing hegemonic). It celebrated subordinate (care, vulnerability), marginalized (transgender, racialized identities), modern/inclusive, hybrid, and branded masculinities. Sub-campaigns like "First Shave" (transgender son) and "The Best Men Can Be" partnerships further reinforced inclusivity and positive role modelling through multimodal contrasts and emotional narratives.

Case Study 15: 2022 – Moms Know Us

This campaign reimagined masculinity by centring maternal influence and a mother-son bond, reflecting female, modern/inclusive, subordinate, hybrid, and branded masculinities. MDA showed a simulated text exchange using emojis and a selfie to convey care, convenience, and emotional authenticity in everyday interactions.

Case Study of Masculinity in Other Multinational Brand's Advertising Campaigns

In this section, we analyze case studies of advertisements of several other multinational men's grooming product and self-care brands to examine the shift in global and Indian marketing towards a more nuanced portrayal of masculinity, grounding the analysis in Connell's framework of masculinity studies (1995) and CDA (Fairclough, 2001 and Van Dijk, 1993, pp. 249–283).

Dove Men+Care – Case Study

Launched in 2010 to celebrate authentic masculinity, Dove Men+Care consistently focuses on emotional masculinity and caregiving.

Case Study 16: 2018 – #DearFutureDads (Dove Men+Care – Global Context)

#DearFutureDads Campaign | Dove Men+Care

This campaign advocated for paternity leave, reimagining masculinity by foregrounding fatherhood, caregiving, and emotional presence. It challenged hegemonic ideals, affirming complicit (balancing work/domestic roles), subordinate (emotional intimacy), modern/inclusive (gender equality), hybrid, and branded masculinities. MDA showed images of fathers bonding, personal testimonials, and emotive music to redefine masculinity and advocate for change.

Case Study 17: 2023 – #ManEnoughToCare (Dove Men+Care – Indian Context)

#ManEnoughToCare | Dove Men+Care

This campaign redefined masculinity by centring caregiving, tenderness, and emotional presence as masculine virtues. It challenged hegemonic norms, while reflecting complicit, affirming subordinate, exemplifying hybrid, aligning with modern/inclusive, and leveraging branded masculinities. MDA highlighted images of fathers nurturing children and language emphasizing tenderness as strength, promoting a progressive view of masculinity.

Axe – Case Study

Axe, historically known for hypermasculine, attraction-based grooming, has undergone a notable transformation towards celebrating individuality and self-expression.

Case Study 18: 2016 – AXE – Find Your Magic (AXE – Global Context)

Axe – Find Your Magic

This campaign marked a clear break from hyper-heteronormative portrayals by embracing a plural, inclusive vision. It challenged hegemonic masculinity, affirmed subordinate (queer identities, drag performers), emphasized individuality (over dominance), exemplified hybrid, and reflected modern/inclusive masculinities. MDA showed a voiceover juxtaposing conventional traits with unique expressions, subverting traditional masculinity through diverse visuals and empowering tone.

Case Study 19: 2021 – The New Axe Effect (AXE – Global Context)

The New Axe Effect

This campaign signaled a sharp departure, redefining masculinity as inclusive, diverse, and emotionally expressive. It rejected hegemonic and complicit masculinities, foregrounding inclusive (queer, non-binary, racially diverse identities), affirmed subordinated (emotional vulnerability), and showcased hybrid masculinities. MDA highlighted direct voiceovers, diverse visuals, and energetic music to promote universal attraction and self-affirmation.

Axe – Indian Context

Still leans towards attraction-based messaging but incorporates urban self-expression themes. Axe India advertisements mostly embodied hegemonic masculinity, and/or complicit masculinity. The storyline that most of these commercial follows typically revolves around the brand's signature theme of attraction and confidence. Axe has long been known for using humour and exaggerated scenarios to appeal to young men, often linking the product to enhanced appeal and social dominance. The advertisement typically ends with the tagline or brand message, emphasizing that Axe deodorant is the key to unlocking the ultimate masculine appeal, reinforcing the idea that using the product will give men access to idealized masculinity—strong, attractive, and dominant.

However, influenced by the global campaigns, Axe India in 2018 shifted towards urban self-expression themes with advertisement posters in social media (Facebook and Instagram).

Case Study 20: 2018 – Make Your Own Rules (AXE – Indian Context)

Influenced by global campaigns, Axe India shifted towards urban self-expression. This campaign redefined masculinity by rejecting hegemonic norms in favour of self-expression, creativity, and authenticity. It affirmed inclusive, modern, subordinate, hybrid, and branded masculinities. MDA showed bold lighting, confident gestures, and a quote challenging traditional career expectations, promoting a modern masculinity rooted in self-expression and independence.

Discussion

The diachronic analysis of the multinational men's grooming products and self-care brands' advertising strategy indeed reflects a significant evolution in how the brands approaches the concepts of masculinity and gender relations. Advertisements increasingly portray evolving masculinities, impacting societal norms beyond consumerism. By showcasing caregiving, emotional intelligence, and vulnerability, these campaigns challenge patriarchal structures and promote gender equality. This shift from hegemonic to inclusive masculinities influences identity formation and destabilizes rigid gender binaries, fostering a more equitable understanding of gender roles in public and private spheres.

Addressing the "So What?": Masculinity in Flux, or Corporate Calculation?

A core finding of this research is that the observed shifts in masculine portrayal are not simply a reflection of an independently changing masculinity, nor are they purely cynical corporate adaptations to superficial trends. Instead, they represent a dynamic and complex co-construction driven by the interplay of genuine societal shifts and strategic corporate responses.

For example, the dramatic transformation of Axe from its hyper-sexualized, "conquering women" imagery to its "Find Your Magic" and "New Axe Effect" campaigns directly exemplifies this tension. This change was not solely a spontaneous internal evolution of "masculinity itself." Rather, it was a direct corporate adaptation to a societal demand for more authentic and inclusive portrayals, fuelled by shifting consumer values and a growing rejection of toxic masculinity. The widespread impact of the #MeToo movement, in particular, served as a powerful external catalyst, forcing brands like Gillette to undertake radical re-evaluations of their messaging. Gillette's "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" campaign (2019), which directly critiqued bullying and harassment, was a stark example of a brand responding to acute societal pressure. The "so what" here is that corporations, as powerful cultural institutions, are not merely mirrors but active participants in the ongoing re-narration and re-commodification of masculinity. By analyzing how these specific multimodal strategies are employed (as shown in the detailed case studies), this paper reveals the mechanisms through which brands aim to align themselves with contemporary social values, often seeking to retain market relevance and capture new consumer segments who demand more progressive ideals.

The Evolution of Masculinity in Gillette India's Advertising

Gillette India's campaigns evolved from reinforcing hegemonic masculinity (2013–2015) to challenging stereotypes (2019–2022).

Table 1. Diachronic representation of masculinity in Gillette India advertisements.

Year	Campaign Title	Types of Masculinity Represented
2013	Shave or Crave	Hegemonic, Complicit, Branded, Performative
2014	#MyRoleModel	Hegemonic, Complicit, Modern/Inclusive (subtle), Branded
2015	#TheBestAFanCanGet	Hegemonic, Marginalized, Subordinate, Modern/Inclusive, Branded
2016–17	Gillette BODY / Manscaping Tips	Hegemonic, Complicit, Subordinate, Hybrid, Modern/Inclusive, Branded
2018	BeerBiceps Shaving Tips	Hegemonic, Complicit, Subordinate, Hybrid, Modern/Inclusive, Branded
2019	#ShavingStereotypes (Barbershop Girls)	Female Masculinity, Modern/Inclusive, Hybrid (implied), Branded
2019	#ShavingStereotypes – Man Enough	Hegemonic (critique), Subordinate, Hybrid, Modern/Inclusive, Branded
2022	#ShavingStereotypes – EngineeringChange	Subordinate, Hybrid, Modern/Inclusive, Branded

Overall Shift in Gillette India's Advertising

Gillette's India campaigns show a shift from promoting hegemonic masculinity (2013–2014) focused on physical appearance and toughness, towards embracing plural masculinities emphasizing emotional depth and care (2015). This evolved to normalizing self-care and inclusive masculinity (2016–2017), leveraging influencers to promote modern ideals (2018), explicitly challenging gender stereotypes (2019), and finally framing masculinity as social responsibility (2022), reflecting a broader cultural move from conformity to individuality and relational identity within the Indian context.

The Evolution of Masculinity in Gillette's (Global) Advertising

Gillette's advertisements reflect the evolution of masculinity over time, shifting from reinforcing hegemonic ideals to gradually embracing more inclusive and emotionally nuanced representations. While earlier campaigns emphasized strength, control, and grooming as a mark of masculinity, later campaigns introduced caregiving, emotional depth, and social responsibility. The 2019 campaign stands out as the most radical critique of traditional masculinity, while 2022 highlights changing gender roles in caregiving. However, elements of hegemonic masculinity remain present, ensuring Gillette's branding remains aspirational and commercially viable.

Table 2. Diachronic representations of masculinity in Gillette's international advertisements

Year	Campaign Title	Types of Masculinity Represented
2013	Man of Steel – How Does He Shave?	Hegemonic, Complicit, Branded, (Limited) Hybrid
2014	Gillette BODY – The First Razor for the Male Terrain	Hegemonic, Complicit, Hybrid, Branded, (Limited) Modern
2016	Fusion ProShield – ShieldMove (NFL Linemen)	Hegemonic, Complicit, Hybrid, Branded, (Limited) Modern
2017	TREO – Razor for Caregivers	Subordinate, Complicit, Marginalized, Hybrid, Branded, Modern/Inclusive
2018	#HisBigDay – Solomon Thomas (Father-Son Bond)	Hegemonic, Marginalized, Subordinate, Hybrid, Modern/Inclusive, Branded
2019	We Believe – The Best Men Can Be (Main + First Shave)	Subordinate, Marginalized, Modern/Inclusive, Hybrid, Branded
2022	Moms Know Us	Subordinate, Female Masculinity, Hybrid, Modern/Inclusive, Branded

Overall Shift in Gillette International's Advertising

Gillette's advertising in India shifted from reinforcing traditional, dominant masculinity (2013–2016) focused on control and success through grooming, to introducing diverse masculinities embracing care, vulnerability, and varied identities (2017–2019). This further evolved to fully inclusive and fluid models (2022) incorporating female masculinity and relational aspects, broadening the definition of masculinity beyond traditional boundaries.

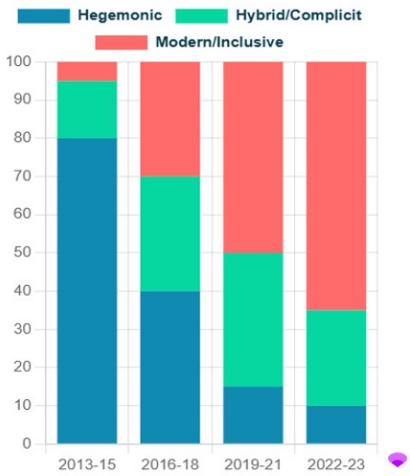

Figure 3. Gillette's Journey: From Hegemony to Plurality

Overall Shift in Dove Men+Care and Axe's Advertising: Comparative Analysis

Dove Men+Care consistently centres its narratives on fatherhood, caregiving, and emotional presence, emphasizing modern, relational, and ethical masculinity that blends care with strength. Axe, conversely, has strategically rebranded from hegemonic and hypersexual masculinity to celebrate individuality, queerness, and emotional authenticity, leveraging branded masculinity as a tool for self-expression. Both brands align with inclusive and hybrid masculinities, with Dove leading in ethical caregiving and Axe in liberation through self-styled identity.

Table 3. Evolution of Masculinity in Advertisements (comparing Dove Men+Care and Axe)

Year	Brand	Campaign Title	Types of Masculinity Represented
2016	Axe	Find Your Magic	Modern/Inclusive, Subordinate, Complicit (slight hint), Hybrid, Branded
2018	Dove Men+Care	#DearFutureDads	Subordinate, Complicit, Hybrid, Modern/Inclusive, Branded
2018	Axe	Make Your Own Rules	Modern/Inclusive, Subordinate, Hybrid, Branded
2021	Axe	The New Axe Effect	Inclusive, Subordinate, Hybrid, Branded; Rejection of Hegemonic & Complicit
2023	Dove Men+Care	#ManEnoughToCare	Subordinate, Complicit, Hybrid, Modern/Inclusive, Branded

Overall Brand Strategy

It is crucial to acknowledge that shifts in gender representation—such as the increasing portrayal of emotional openness or self-care in men—do carry political weight, particularly in regions, where non-conforming gender identities face resistance or repression. The growing visibility of inclusive masculinity in ads may both reflect and provoke tensions in societies grappling with evolving gender norms. As anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments gain traction in various parts of the world, future research should investigate how advertising either resists or reinforces these political currents, and what this means for the future of gender representation in media. These findings further suggest that the teleological assumptions embedded in Inclusive Masculinity Theory—in which declining homophobia is expected to produce more inclusive gender representations—require re-examination. In a global climate where homophobia is resurging and cultural polarization is intensifying, the relationship between branded masculinity and genuine inclusivity appears increasingly unstable. Future research should thus engage with more flexible, intersectional models of masculinity that acknowledge the persistence of structural inequalities and the ways that market-friendly narratives of "inclusive

masculinity" may coexist with, or even obscure, ongoing forms of exclusion and backlash.

By 2023, the three brands occupy distinct positions. Dove champions care, Axe focuses on individuality, and Gillette balances social responsibility with traditional aspirational themes. The article text should be formatted according to this template. It is recommended to use the IMRAD structure (Introduction, Methods and Methodology, Results, and Discussion). However, as practice shows, this is not necessarily the case for social science and humanities research. Simply orient your work around this structure, but each subsection can be named as required by the organization of your research.

Conclusions

This study has undertaken a critical examination of masculinity as represented in multinational grooming and self-care advertisements between 2013 and 2023, with a comparative focus on Indian and global campaigns. Drawing on Connell's (1995, 2005) theory of multiple masculinities, Anderson's (2009) Inclusive Masculinity Theory, Kreicbergs' (2023) consumer-centred typology, and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Jewitt, 2009), the findings reveal both convergence and divergence in how masculinities are constructed, negotiated, and commodified across sociocultural contexts.

The Indian and global campaigns studied share a trajectory that reflects a broader destabilization of hegemonic masculinity. Both begin with representations rooted in dominance, stoicism, and heterosexual desirability, but gradually incorporate subordinate, inclusive, and hybrid masculinities. However, the modalities and rhetorical strategies through which this transition is articulated differ substantively between contexts.

Globally, particularly in campaigns by Gillette and Axe, the critique of hegemonic masculinity is often direct and ideologically explicit. Campaigns such as 'We Believe: The Best Men Can Be' and 'The New Axe Effect' confront toxic masculinity, promote gender inclusivity, and centralize marginalized identities, including queer, transgender, and racialized masculinities. These campaigns often employ high-impact multimodal strategies—contrapuntal imagery, emotionally charged narration, and confrontational tone—to position masculinity as fluid, relational, and ethically accountable. While Anderson's (2009) framework of inclusive masculinity remains useful for explaining how some campaigns normalize emotional openness, vulnerability, and physical affection, its underlying assumption of declining homophobia requires careful reconsideration. As this study demonstrates, branded representations of inclusive masculinity emerge in an era marked not only by progressive change but also by resurgent homophobia and gender backlash. The resulting portrayals are thus shaped by both market logics and socio-political tensions, raising important questions about the limits and possibilities of such representations in fostering genuine cultural transformation.

In contrast, Indian campaigns, especially those by Gillette India, employ a more culturally embedded approach. Rather than overtly repudiating hegemonic masculinity, they reconfigure it from within, blending traditional symbols of authority—fatherhood, military service, cricket—with emergent traits such as empathy, caregiving, and emotional literacy. The deployment of hybrid masculinity (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014, pp. 246–258; Kreicbergs, 2023) is thus more strategic and conservative, allowing for the integration of non-hegemonic traits without destabilizing culturally dominant norms. Campaigns such as '#ShavingStereotypes' and '#EngineeringChange' do not dismantle hegemonic ideals outright but instead recast them within aspirational narratives of national pride and familial responsibility.

This distinction is further reinforced through semiotic analysis. Global advertisements often foreground identity politics through stark visual contrasts, intersectional casting, and activist framing. Indian advertisements, by contrast, rely heavily on emotional storytelling, familiar relational archetypes (father-son, mentor-disciple), and culturally resonant visual registers (e.g., village barbershops, cricket fields). While both sets of campaigns utilize MDA's ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions to reconstruct masculinity, the global context privileges the ideational (social critique and disruption), whereas the Indian context leans into the interpersonal (relational bonding and continuity).

Despite these differences, both contexts participate in the logics of branded masculinity (Kreicbergs & Ščeulovs, 2022, pp. 21–38), wherein progressive masculinities are commodified as aspirational identities aligned with consumer choice. Whether framed as social responsibility (Gillette), emotional strength (Dove Men+Care), or self-expression (Axe), these campaigns construct masculinity as a site of identity labour mediated through consumption. In this sense, the brands do not merely reflect cultural change—they actively curate and commercialize evolving gender norms.

The "So What?": Implications for Media and Masculinity Studies

This research offers crucial insights for scholars by moving beyond mere descriptive accounts of advertising trends to a critical analysis of their underlying dynamics and implications.

1. Challenging Linear Change: The study argues shifts in masculinity are a complex interplay between societal demands (e.g., #MeToo impact, youth values) and corporate strategies for relevance. It shows how societal expectations drive corporate adaptation, which then re-narrates and re-commodifies masculinity, pushing media studies to scrutinize corporate "inclusivity" performativity.
2. Elevating Multimodal Analysis (MDA): By applying MDA to diverse ad campaigns, this paper demonstrates how subtle visual, linguistic, and auditory cues construct new masculine ideals. This empowers

researchers to deconstruct commercial messages, revealing how brands signal (or feign) alignment with progressive values, offering a robust methodology for understanding embedded ideologies shaping gender identities in media.

3. Reframing Branded Masculinity: This paper posits branded masculinity as a significant cultural force, not merely a marketing phenomenon. Brands actively produce and circulate gendered identities, compelling researchers to view commercial media as a dynamic site of gender negotiation, production, and consumption, fostering a critical lens on corporate influence and ethics.
4. Contextualizing Global Gender Discourse: The cross-cultural comparison (India vs. Global) is paramount, revealing that "inclusive masculinity" adoption is context-dependent, adapted to local nuances. This avoids universalist assumptions in gender studies, urging contextual specificity and underscoring that "progress" is contested and regionally shaped.
5. Criticality Towards Commodification: Crucially, this paper argues "inclusive masculinity" is increasingly commodified for corporate branding, not just genuine change. It cautions against uncritical celebration of progressive ads, highlighting that corporate "inclusivity" can coexist with or obscure ongoing exclusion and backlash. This fundamentally reshapes how scholars should approach claims of gender progress in advertising, demanding deeper inquiry into whether portrayals translate to substantive behavioural shifts or remain primarily a "branded performance."

The ownership and corporate positioning of Gillette (Procter & Gamble) and Dove/Axe (Unilever) significantly shape the narratives and shifts in masculinity portrayed in their advertising. As a U.S.-based corporation, P&G's Gillette has leveraged American cultural discourses—such as #MeToo and ethical consumerism—to reposition masculinity as socially accountable, reflecting its broader brand strategy centred on moral leadership and social responsibility. In contrast, Unilever's dual branding strategy—through Dove's emotional, caregiving masculinity and Axe's edgy, youth-oriented inclusivity—demonstrates a calculated segmentation approach, aligning each brand with different facets of evolving male identity. The multinational scope of both companies enables them to adapt these narratives to local markets, but the core messaging is influenced by their global brand architecture, stakeholder expectations, and corporate social values, thereby framing masculinity as both a moral and marketable asset.

This study contributes to a growing body of scholarship that positions advertising as a central arena in the discursive reconfiguration of masculinity. While Connell's (1995) model remains foundational in diagnosing structural power relations, it is through the integration of Anderson's (2009) inclusive masculinity, Kreicbergs' (2023) consumer-centric lens, and MDA's multimodal methodology that

we can understand the granular shifts in how masculinities are visually and linguistically constructed, contested, and marketed across cultural contexts.

In sum, the portrayal of masculinity in advertising is increasingly marked by plurality, fluidity, and emotional nuance. However, the degree and manner of this transformation remain contingent on regional socio-cultural norms, generational shifts, and market dynamics. Indian campaigns show an incremental, culturally grounded negotiation with progressive masculinities, while global campaigns are more likely to adopt direct, intersectional critiques. Future research might explore audience reception and the durability of these representations—probing whether the commodification of inclusive masculinity translates into substantive shifts in gendered behaviours, or whether it remains, ultimately, a branded performance.

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The first author, Jyoti Kumari contributed to the data collection and analysis and was responsible for writing the original draft of the manuscript. The second author, Namrata Paul contributed equally to the data collection and analysis and participated in writing the original draft of the manuscript. The third author, Dr. Sanjukta Ghosh supervised the research process and contributed to the review and editing of the manuscript.

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Sibel: A Female Character Who Quietly Writes a Feminist Manifesto

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Abstract

In film narratives, the concept of silence is sometimes conveyed to the viewer in a metaphorical context, and sometimes silence is presented visibly. In this film analysis, while examining sound as a concept on the basis of the content of the film, attention is drawn to the female character's inability to speak. In the study, how the issue of voice and inability to speak, which is important in psychoanalytic film theory research, can be made sense of from a feminist perspective is considered in detail. From this point of view, Kaja Silverman's *The Acoustic Mirror* (1988), one of the feminist film theorists, draws the framework of the film analysis. Within the framework of the study, the concepts of identification and emasculation, along with the issues of inability to speak and voice, are opened to questioning through the female character. In this respect, Annette Kuhn's *Women's Picture* (1982), Part: III *Rereading Dominant Cinema: Feminism and Film Theory*, the importance of the representation of female characters with their states of existence and lack in films in which they are focused on silence is hinted at, and it is reminded again that the 'invisible of the visible' emerges as a central issue in feminist film analysis. The 'invisibility of the visible' makes the female character more visible in her representation associated with silence or inability to speak. The 'language' that mediates Sibel's speech also causes people to perceive her existence as dangerous. With the questions arising from this study, how Sibel is presented as a mute character in the film from a feminist perspective and the importance of the representation of female characters who cannot speak in terms of feminist film practice are opened to discussion.

Keywords

Silence; Feminist Film Theory; Psychoanalytic Film Theory; Representation; Female Character

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Аннотация

В нарративах кино молчание может быть представлено как метафора или выражено визуально. В данном фильмоведческом анализе, сосредоточенном на звуке как концепте, особое внимание уделяется неспособности женского персонажа говорить. Исследование детально рассматривает, как проблема голоса и немоты, центральная для психоаналитической теории кино, может быть осмыслена с феминистских позиций. Теоретическую рамку задаёт работа Кайи Силверман *The Acoustic Mirror* (1988), где анализируются механизмы репрезентации женского голоса и молчания.

В исследовании через образ женского персонажа подвергаются критическому рассмотрению концепты идентификации и эмансипации, а также проблематика голоса и его отсутствия. Особое значение имеет обращение к Аннет Кун (*Women's Pictures*, 1982, часть III: *Rereading Dominant Cinema: Feminism and Film Theory*), где подчёркивается важность репрезентации женских персонажей через их состояния присутствия и отсутствия в фильмах, сосредоточенных на теме молчания. Отмечается, что «невидимое видимого» выступает ключевым понятием феминистского киноведческого анализа: оно усиливает видимость женского персонажа через его связь с молчанием или неспособностью говорить.

«Язык», опосредующий речь Сибель, становится также источником восприятия её существования как опасного. Вопросы, поднятые в рамках данного исследования, касаются репрезентации Сибель как немого персонажа с феминистской точки зрения и значимости образов женщин, лишённых голоса, для феминистской кинопрактики.

Ключевые слова

молчание; феминистская теория кино; психоаналитическая теория кино; репрезентация; женский персонаж

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Introduction

Silence has been an important concept that has been questioned since the beginning of cinema history. This context paves the way for the voices that exist to be imagined and allows the viewer to embark on a philosophical journey. In the patriarchal world order, it has always been the man who speaks, shouts, calls, dominates, raises his voice while dominating, and declares his domination while raising his voice, while women have been the representative of silence. Feminist film theories attach importance to the concept of voice in this context, and voice plays an important role in the representation of female characters. In addition to the cinematic analysis of the voice in the film narrative in the context of the film's form, the use of the concept of voice in the content of the film requires different narrative strategies. In this important distinction, the point to be considered when analyzing the film is the approach and the context in which the voice in the film should be viewed.

The study focuses on the story of *Sibel* (Çağla Zencirci and Guillaume Giovanetti, 2019), a character who has a voice, a whistle and cannot realize the act of speech. Janet McCabe, *Feminist Film Studies: Writing The Woman Into Cinema* (1983), under the title of *Difficulties in Speaking*, she mentions that feminist film theory falls into a dilemma while trying to explain women in the context of the 'other'. Psychoanalysis, semiotics, and conceptual models become important in this context to understand the unconscious ideology of the patriarchy. According to McCabe, psychoanalysis attempts to analyze the distinction between signs and language, as well as the texts that ideology brings about the spectator and identification (McCabe, 2005, p. 116). In this film analysis, how the issue of voice and inability to speak, which is important in psychoanalytic research, can be made sense of from a feminist perspective has been considered in detail. From this point of view, Kaja Silverman's The *Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (1988), one of the feminist film theorists, draws the framework of the film analysis. Within the framework of this study, the concepts of inability to speak, voice, identification and emasculation are opened to questioning through the female character. With the questionings that emerge from this study, how Sibel is presented as a mute character in the film and the importance of the representation of female characters who cannot speak in terms of feminist film practice are discussed.

Sound is one of the elements that determine human existence as a reflection of the music that comes from within life, but it is also a concept that confronts us in the issue of non-existence and turns the ontological structure upside down. The digital native of the postmodern world still seeks silence. Apart from the cinematic analysis of the voice in the film narrative in the context of the film's form, the use of the concept of voice in the content of the film is different. In this important distinction, the point to be considered while analyzing the film is how to look

at the voice in the cinematographic context. In this film analysis, sound as a concept is analyzed on the basis of the content of the film, while attention is drawn to the female character's inability to speak. The focus is on the story of a character who has a voice, a whistle, but cannot realize the act of speaking.

With regard to the influence of sound in cinema, it is important to remember that the sound track can make clear, contradict or obscure visual events. Therefore, the sound track is in in active relationship with the image track (Bordwell & Thompson, 2011, p. 270). Likewise, according to Michel Chion, image and sound are based on cultural and aesthetic codes as well as psycho-physiological factors (Chion, 1994, p. 21). With the importance attributed to the voice in cinema, the feminist approach underlying the presentation strategy of hearing the woman's voice in the representation of the female character also shows what a silent character can convey to the viewer and what it can make them think.

Methodology

The discourses of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan, who contributed to the development of psychoanalytic film theory, have brought along many debates. The questioning of Freudian and post-Freudian thought in the context of films has been discussed controversially since the 1960s. Journals such as *Cahiers du Cinema*, *Screen*, *Camera Obscura* published film articles with different methodologies in the 1960s and 70s. Cahiers critics Louis Althusser, Roland Barthes, Julia Kristeva developed their ideas based on the ideas of Jacques Derrida. In the 1980s, Christian Metz subjected Jacques Lacan to a post-Freudian reading (Gabbard & Gabbard, 2009, p. 302).

Lacan placed language at the center of psychoanalysis. Language is seen by Lacan as the reading of the unconscious. Therefore, the unconscious is subjected to a linguistic reading. Apart from the theorists mentioned above, many theorists have tried to analyze films in a psychoanalytic context with different methods and in the context of different ideologies. Since the films analyzed based on Freud and Lacan are interconnected with various film theories, it is possible to analyze the films from many perspectives. Hugo Mauerhofer, in his work *The Psychology of Cinematic Experience* (1949), argues that the so-called cinema shares many things with the dream state. For Mauerhofer, it is important that passivity, comfort and withdrawal from reality can be experienced in both states. Susan Langer (1953) is one of those who argue that cinema exists in a dream state (Stam, 2014, p. 176).

David Bordwell, as cited by Glen O. and Krin Gabbard, argues that a more traditional formalist analysis based on fewer theories should be applied. Bordwell also explains that he finds the grand theories of the so-called SLAB discourse (Saussure, Lacan, Althusser, Barthes) insufficient (Gabbard & Gabbard, 2009, p. 313). Theorists who can reverse Bordwell's thoughts and make a significant contribution to film theories with their discourses are feminist film theorists. The reason is, feminist film theories contribute to many film theories with the issues they are

based on and the concepts they question, and they can offer important implications to different disciplines. At a time when feminist film theories were intensely debated, B. Ruby Rich (1998) categorized films made by women: affirming films (films that legitimize women's movements, e. g. *Union Maids* 1976, Jim Klein, Miles Mogulescu, Julia Reichert), corresponding films (films that incorporate the auteur into the film, e. g. *Film About a Woman Who* 1974, Yvonne Rainer), medusa-vian films (praising the potential of feminist texts to blow up the law, such as *A Very Curious Girl* 1969, Nelly Kaplan), corrective realism films (films that incorporate feminist features and target a wide viewer, such as *The Second Awakening of Christa Klages* 1978, Margarethe von Trotta) (Stam, 2014, p. 187). While different examples of these film genres have been proliferating over the years, feminist film theorists have continued to broaden their topics. Both the proliferation of film examples and the diversification of feminist film theorists' discourses mediate the transformation of the existing indicators of women. In this study, the film is analyzed from a Lacanian perspective within the framework of psychoanalytic film theory and questions are produced from a feminist perspective.

Film Plot

The film tells the story of Sibel, a mute character who cannot speak, and focuses on her life in the village. Sibel, who became mute at the age of 5 as a result of a febrile illness, communicates with everyone by whistling. Since everyone in Kuşköy knows the whistling language, it is not difficult to communicate with Sibel. In the film where a mute female character communicates with a whistle, the silence of the female character is not entirely attributed to her. While the difficulties of not being able to speak are made sense of through the element of sound, the representation of the female character by identifying her with silence allows for questioning in the context of feminist film practice.

Inside the Inability to Speak is the Ability to Utter the Most Precious Sentences. On Sibel's Inability to Speak

The film opens with an illuminated image of the head of a skeletal X-ray and the accompanying whistle. A close-up of large, worried eyes leads to Sibel. Sibel, alone in the forest, shoots with a rifle in her hand and then starts running fast. With her green shirt, her kerchief around her neck, her rifle in her hand, her confident movements and quick actions, Sibel is like a soldier protecting her own space. She jumps into a deeply dug earthen pit and drops the intestines from her bag into the soil. She cleans her hands by rubbing them on the soil and then runs with fast movements into a hut hidden in the forest, where she removes her shoes from under a board and replaces them with the ones on her feet. For the first four minutes of the film, we watch Sibel with a subjective and moving camera. No dialog is heard until this time. For the first four minutes, the viewer only hears the sounds

of Sibel's movements and the sounds of nature. We see Sibel again when we switch to women collecting tea in the mountainous area among the greenery. Sibel goes to a teenage girl and is rebuffed by the girl, saying "go away, you jinx, my children will be like you". While none of the women present react to this situation, Sibel sadly walks away from the girl. In its first minutes, the film conveys to the viewer that Sibel cannot speak and that she is ostracized in her neighborhood because of this situation. Using the conventions of contemporary narrative cinema, the film gives the viewer a clue about its cinematography with elements of this narrative structure in the first minutes. In the first chapter of *The Acoustic Mirror*, in *Lost Object* and *Mistaken Subjects*, Silverman begins to explain her ideas by stating that classical narrative cinema reactivates the trauma of symbolic castration (Silverman, 1988, p. 1).[1] Radically deconstructing Silverman's idea, Sibel signals at the beginning of the film how the conventions of classical narrative cinema will be dislodged.

Sibel, who lives with her sister and father, is not only responsible for household chores but also undertakes many tasks outside the home. In addition to collecting tea, hunting in the forest, chopping wood, lighting fires and other such tasks, Sibel also undertakes all the work in the private sphere. Although she is not a formal employee of the public sphere, she is the expert of a vast heterotopia such as the forest and she is a free traveler in this area. Sibel communicates with the people in the village and her family through whistling, and everyone understands and responds to her communication. Sibel is not actually the silent one, she is the one who has a voice but cannot speak. This point is important in terms of the representation of the female character. Because it is one thing for a female character to be represented by silence and another for her to express herself through a communication channel other than speech. However, the character's inability to speak like individuals who can communicate in a healthy way pushes her to the marginalized side of society, where she has no voice. Silverman emphasizes the importance of the representation of the female voice in the presentation of male subjectivity to the viewer in Hollywood. According to her, the female body, like the female voice, is also the signifier of incompleteness, as it shows the man all the information he knows about castration (Silverman, 1988, p. 39). Sibel is unable to speak, but in her whistling communication she is able to utter more important sentences than most people who can speak. Kuhn in *Women's Picture* (1982), Part III *Rereading Dominant Cinema: Feminism and Film Theory*, discusses the importance of films in which the female characters are focused with silence for feminist discourses. According to her the states of existence and lack are important in representation in this context, and the "invisible of the visible" emerges as a central issue in feminist film analysis (Kuhn, 1994, p. 71). The "invisibility of the visible" actually makes the female character more visible in relation to the inability to speak in the representation of her character. The viewer finds a way to internalize Sibel's

1 Castration: surgical removal of the testes (see orchiectomy); less commonly, it can indicate removal of the ovaries (see ovariectomy) (*Castration*, 2018).

happiness, sadness and troubles through her inability to speak, and these become embedded in the skin of the film.

The only person in the village with whom Sibel can communicate sincerely is Narin, who is known as the village madman. Sibel goes to Narin from time to time, helps her, listens to her and takes what she says seriously. Taking this mentally unstable character seriously is not a wise thing to do, but Sibel believes, or perhaps wants to believe, in her reality and truthfulness, because Narin is the only person in the village who treats Sibel the best and tries to communicate with her sincerely. From the opening of the film to Sibel's dialog with Narin, the viewer goes through a process of making sense of Sibel and her life. The answers to many questions such as how Sibel lives in the village, what she does, with whom she communicates, what she shares with her family, where she goes, how she knows the village, how she acts, how she communicates with the people in the village, how the village views Sibel become clear at the beginning of the film, in the introduction.

The plot of the film continues with Sibel's encounter with a wounded man (Ali) while she is waiting for her prey in the forest. Sibel and Ali briefly engage in a physical struggle. Ali pounces on Sibel like a lion, the king of the jungle, and with saliva dripping from his mouth, he turns into an animal that has found its prey. Weakened by the open wound on his body, he falls to the ground without harming Sibel. Sibel drags Ali to her cabin in the forest and treats his open wound with herbs. She forces the medicine and water into Ali's mouth and makes him drink it. Ali is a man wanted in the village as a deserter. Sibel sees the gendarmerie but says nothing to them. In fact, on another day in the forest, Sibel tries to stitch Ali's open wound with a needle she burns in a flame. The anxiety, difficulty and struggle in Sibel's eyes during the act of stitching the open wound are shown in close-up. Sibel is almost tangling Ali.

According to Susan Hayward, the stitching system connects the viewer to the filmic text. Lacan uses this term in the context of the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious, where the troubled fusion between the imaginary and symbolic orders takes place (Hayward, 2012, p. 121).[1] In the bond between Ali and Sibel, in the interpretation of the conscious and unconscious, the viewer becomes increasingly attached to the filmic text (in Sibel's act of sewing Ali up), while the characters experience a chaotic relationship between the imaginary and symbolic orders in which love and violence exist. This intense and striking form of relationship with a man she has never met offers a foretaste of what Sibel, the focal point of the film, will experience emotionally. Silverman states that stitching theorists draw attention to what is missing in classical narrative cinema. Explaining

1 Imaginary and Symbolic: The Imaginary is that state of being in which the infant has no sense of being a subject distinct from other people or the external world and no sense of their place in human culture. After the infant's entry into the Symbolic (the world of language, culture, and morality), they can return to the wholeness of the Imaginary only in fantasy. The achievement of symbolization marks the beginning of ego differentiation and is associated with the infant's entrance into the world of language, culture, law, and morality (*Imaginary*, 2018, *Symbolic*, 2018).

the phallus as the speaking subject, Silverman adds that it is the unseen narrator, referring to a transcendent imagining, hearing and speaking (Silverman, 1988, p. 30). In this context, while Ali's phallus is being watched by Sibel, she is also prevented from being a speaking subject. Silverman's concern about what is 'missing' in film theory is also related to male subjectivity. In this respect, she draws attention to the importance of discussing sexual differences and representation through suture theory (Silverman, 1988, p. 2). One of the most important things that give subjects their subjectivity is the reality of what, with whom and how the subject establishes a form of relationship. In this context, Sibel is the one who cannot speak but becomes a speaking subject through her actions. One of the functional conditions for her to become a speaking subject is that she has lines of escape that she creates herself.

The forest is Sibel's escape from life and people. She is the owner of the forest, and her father, when describing Sibel to the gendarmerie, says, "Sibel is the one who knows these places best". When she urinates in the forest, she catches the eye of Ali who is watching her, but she does not hide anywhere, she does not run away, she continues to urinate. Because Sibel is the guardian of the forest. Therefore, she does not mind being spied on. In Hollywood narratives and classical narrative structure conventions, it is the woman who is spied upon and who is looked at and enjoyed while being spied upon. In cases where the male viewer's gaze is active, it is the man who both enjoys and desires. However, Sibel's confident stance towards the observer and her gaze without averting her eyes deconstruct the gaze of the beholder. In this context, the gazed is not the pleasured. The beholder becomes castrated by the beholder. Silverman associates castration with the lost object (Silverman, 1988, p. 10). The object lost when Ali is castrated by Sibel is his masculinity. Masculinity reinforces the position of the man as the bearer of power in classical narrative cinema. The fact that Ali's masculinity is presented concretely, nakedly, defenselessly, hinders his power. It is also important to consider the position of the female viewer at this point, since the female viewer looks at Ali from Sibel's point of view. Silverman, who explains identification with the concepts of voyeurism, exhibitionism and narcissism, states that the female subject acts as a mirror reflection on the male subject. In this context, the female subject causes the mirror reflection effect by playing an active role in the male subject's not only castration but also exhibitionism, narcissism and reflectivity (Silverman, 1988, p. 27). On the basis of Silverman's ideas, when we re-analyze the moments in which the viewer and Sibel establish identification, it can be said that the male subject is castrated.

Sibel is a character who can tell people many things with her eyes without speaking even though she is paralyzed. When she sees Ali bathing naked in the forest, she does not hesitate to look at him. While Ali is bathing with his back turned, he is unaware that Sibel is spying on him. She hides behind a tree and spies on Ali. In this film narrative, it is the male character who is looked at and spied upon.

The fact that it is the male character whose naked body is presented on the film screen is a challenge to classical narrative conventions; because, in classical narrative cinema, it is the woman whose naked body is presented. The woman's body is the signifier and the object of spectacle. The perspective that woman can only be an object of desire is tried to be internalized in classical narrative cinema. Sibel, who does not want to take her eyes off Ali, has a desirous feeling towards Ali. In the film, the conventions of the classical narrative cinema structure regarding the representation of the body, desire, the gazer and the observer are inverted, and the female character is the one who looks, observes and desires to be observed.

According to Allan Casebier, the first stage of feminist film theory was concerned with how the image of women in a particular film reflected or distorted the reality of the situation of women in the society in which the film was made. There was an assumption that stereotypical images of women contributed to women's acceptance of their fate. The second phase of feminist film theory was inspired by poststructuralism. The first stage of feminist film theory was partly rejected in the second stage of feminist film theory, because the first stage was thought to ask questions that reflected naivety. Christine Gledhill writes about the slight shift from the first to the second stage,

> "on the grounds that we cannot understand or replace sexist images of women with progressive ones without considering how narrative, genre, lighting, and mise-en-scène operate, the focus on characters and stereotypes has given way to a semiotic/structuralist concern with textural production. Try to construct such images and their meanings" (Casebier, 2009, pp. 120–121).

In line with Casebier and Gledhill's ideas, Sibel, who allows for the transformation of the stereotypical female image, presents a character that contributes to feminist representation not only through her presentation but also through her relationship with the male character.

During Sibel's visit to Narin, Narin's statement that 'men can't light that fire, women can is a discourse' that reveals a feminist perspective. In this film, the idea that men are the ones who do, who are the doers, who are the factors is transformed. Although the fact that Sibel's father Emin is the village headman and the gendarmerie moves around the village on law enforcement duty reminds us that the mechanisms of power are concentrated in men, women are shown as the ones with the mighty power. Sibel's being ostracized by the women in the village, not being embraced by her sister, and being belittled by the women of the village by being called "left at home" because she is mute are the subject of discussion in the context of what women do to women. However, what needs to be emphasized here is how the film narrative presents these situations and what it shows to the viewer at the end of the film. It cannot be said that there is no presentation of a feminist point of view for female characters, as the situations pointed out by these controversial situations at the end of the film allow the female characters to be made sense of. According to Vivian Sobchack, writing on behalf of Merleau-Ponty's

philosophy, the existential phenomenological nature of cinema is strongly related in one way or another to (a) the cinematographic image. Its perceptual and psychological reality; (b) the shooting phase of filmmaking; (c) the image itself, (d) the cinematographically presented space; (e) the mise-en-scene with its camera image and movement (which Sobchack equates with cinematic "becoming" as his primary existential phenomenological concern, "language" identified with cinematic editing), and finally (f) the proposed dual experiential presence of a film as not only a visible object but also as a perceiving ("watching") subject. This last-mentioned presence does not include the viewer's experience of the filmmaker's artistic expression, subjectivity, personality or style as conveyed by a film, nor the accompanying aesthetic realities as traditionally theorized, which are completely excluded from the phenomenological equation (Yacavone, 2016, pp. 171–172). In terms of feminist film phenomenology, when the presentation of the female characters in the film is considered again, the viewer's encounter with the reality of the existing masculine codes as well as the power of the signs that deconstruct the codes, which lie in the ontology of cinematography, to influence each other.

The night Sibel goes to the henna night with her sister Fatma is an important break in the film narrative in the context of the transformations of Sibel experiences. The moment when Sibel will experience another turning point coincides with a night of traditional customs and rules. Sibel, who goes to the henna night with her exaggerated make-up, is humiliated and dismissed by Fatma in front of everyone. At that moment, Fatma insults Sibel so loudly that her shouting interrupts the song 'they shouldn't build houses on high, high hills'. Both the rules of social order and the sound flowing in a rhythmic tempo are interrupted. The interruption of the song is caused by the existence of Sibel, who questions traditional customs and traditions. Sibel is as disturbing as she is disruptive. The question of why the presence of a woman who harms no one is so disturbing can be discussed in this context. In fact, it is not Sibel who is disturbing, it is the people of the village who are disturbed because the realities of social judgements are reflected to the society through Sibel's existence. The hypocrisy of the village people, the humiliation of those who do not think like them, the otherisation of those with disabilities remind them of their own realities and shame every time they see Sibel. She functions both as a mirror and as an anti-hero in their eyes. She is the one who cannot speak but expresses with her actions what needs to be spoken and said. While overcoming the obstacles, courage and self-confidence that life offers her, she is also the one who exposes the unwritten rules of the order.

The subjective camera angles follows Sibel as she runs to the forest, her heterotopia of peace, crying because she is humiliated in public. In the darkness and uncanny of the night, the viewer moves towards the depths of the forest from Sibel's point of view. The use of the camera with this technique is important for the identification between the viewer and Sibel. The viewer, like Sibel, can have the feeling of running away from people's malicious feelings, lack of understanding

and cruelty. According to Silverman, in male-dominated narrative cinema, the male subject who cannot speak is the one who hides (Silverman, 1988, pp. 38). The film Sibel, with its use of the structure of contemporary narrative cinema and its content that tells the story of women from the female point of view, does not hide the female character who cannot speak, but openly focuses its story on the basis of this character.

On the night when Sibel is humiliated by Fatma, she hugs and gets close to Ali, who, like her, is questioning life and whom she feels close to, in her cabin in the forest. Sibel is a character who experiences her body without questioning. This state of hers brings to mind the free-spirited female characters in Agnes Varda's films. Like the female characters of Varda, one of the most important feminist directors of the French New Wave, Sibel listens to her own soul. Sibel reminds us of *Mona*, the protagonist of *Vagabond* (1985), with her 'own hut', 'own forest' and 'own body'. For her, the judgements of the social order are impure. Despite her inability to speak, what Sibel thinks about society and the patriarchal order is mentally concretised by the viewer in screen time. In this context, even the question of how necessary speech is in life becomes debatable. In a world where male domination continues, people talk, but which violence against women or attacks against women can they find solutions to? People talk, but can they create a universe where women's existence is respected? The film narrative not only shows Sibel's life to the viewer, but also makes it possible for the viewer to continue questioning beyond the filmic time.

When it is time for Ali, whose wounds have healed, to leave, he asks Sibel to do him one last favour and asks her to bring him a birth certificate. Sibel steals a birth certificate from the documents belonging to her father at home and fulfils Ali's last request. In this way, Sibel not only violates the prohibitions on the rules attributed to women by the social order, but also disregards the official rules and commits a legal offence and becomes a partner in Ali's crime. The rumour that Sibel meets a man in the forest gradually spreads in the village. The women of the village march on Sibel during a tea-gathering moment. With discourses such as 'Who is the man you are secretly seeing in the forest?', 'Your mother would be ashamed', they press Sibel on the one hand, and on the other hand they come towards her and do violence to her. The moment when Sibel is mute and cannot speak is almost forgotten. Sibel is not in a position to explain herself even with a whistle. In the face of harsh sentences and violence that humiliate, denigrate and denounce her, Sibel represents a subaltern who is not only unable to speak but also is not allowed to speak. All the wheels of social judgements operate through Sibel and begin to turn at an endless speed. She is judged and punished without even being asked why she lived in the forest, what she encountered, what she experienced. This moment is one of the greatest violence that people show her. She starts to run with difficulty, her face covered in bruises, and again she goes to the forest where she feels safe, to Ali. Now in that heterotopia there is also the man she is in love

with. However, she cannot find Ali in the hut, she goes to Narin and learns from her that Ali is gone. This time the feeling of insecurity hits Sibel in a different place. The man she helped has left without informing her. Now, it is time for Sibel to scream. She sits there crying, the forest echoes with her silent screams. Freud, following in the footsteps of Friedrich W. Joseph Schelling, calls the uncanny 'something that is revealed when it should have remained hidden and concealed'. One is ashamed to use one's voice because it reveals to the other a hidden intimacy, a shame not of psychology but of structure. Likewise, Joan Copjec calls this shame 'ontological shame' (Dolar, 2013, p. 83). According to Mladen Dolar, the voice is at the indeterminable point that is simultaneously inside and outside the law, therefore it is always an emergency threat (Dolar, 2013, p. 169). And Sibel's scream is actually the ontological scream of the social order's oppression of Sibel. What needs to be thought about shame is which approach underlies the state of domination that makes the individual feel ashamed. This train of thought marks patriarchal discourses and ongoing silent codes.

In the cinematic context, seeing Sibel's crying in silence brings us closer to her inner screams. This cinematographic perspective of the director paves the way for a different identification between Sibel and the viewer. How can a scream be silent, how can one cry in silence, what does that silence signify? Perhaps that silent scene, which lasts for a short time but is long in the context of screen time, gives us the moment when the viewer's questioning reaches its peak. The psychological, mental and physical violence people use against Sibel is one of the most important moments in which the viewer identifies with Sibel. In the articles about how Edward Munch paint *The Scream* (1893), it is explained how he lived a chaotic life and in what kind of a state of mind he painted this. When we look at the *The Scream*, what we see are actually traces of Munch's experiences and feelings. The pains of that incomprehensible mind have been put into complex colours in a it. In the moments when Sibel cries out but we cannot hear her voice, it becomes possible to look at the pain behind that moment. The film narrative gives the oscillation of the most intense feelings of voice, inability to speak and identification in the scene where Sibel cries without a voice.

How will Sibel's father, whom she trusts the most and who supports her the most, treat Sibel after the rumours in the village? After this reality is revealed, the question of how the father's law will work comes to the fore. Emin is Sibel's biggest support and trusted person in life. He protects her even in front of her sister, does not let her say anything and allows her to do many things, until her sister Fatma tells their father that Sibel has been meeting and seeing a man in the forest. At first, Emin does not want to believe this reality, but when the people of the village gossip about it among themselves, he decides to take a stand against his daughter and refuses to let her go to the forest. Although we do not see the father's law visibly and emphatically in the film, the presence of the father is revealed at some points. Sibel, who is determined to go to the forest despite her

father's opposition, breaks the father's law. Sibel encounters the gendarmerie again and reiterates through her father that she did not see anyone in the forest. The gendarmerie tries to make Sibel confess the truth by saying 'how can you harbour terrorists'. However, Sibel is determined not to talk, and her father is sure that Sibel is hiding something. According to Lacan, the law of the father is the law of language, the entry into the symbolic order. Sibel, as the one who violates the symbolic order, becomes the one who opposes the father's law. Silverman, who presents Kristeva's thoughts in her study, explains that the father signifies the symbolic with her discourses. In the relationship between desire and the compulsory power of the symbolic, Kristeva says that tears are passed from mother to daughter, and suggests that this situation depends on the law of the father (Silverman, 1988, p. 110). Fantasia, which Kristeva explains as 'choral fantasia', is related to the speaking subject. According to Kristeva, referenced in *Revolution in Poetic Language* (1974), it is the woman-as-speaking-subject who occupies the position of the man (Silverman, 1988, p. 113). In the context of Kristeva's ideas, we can say that Sibel, by opposing her father and the bearers of power, occupies the domination of men with her nonspeaking, non-speaking subjectivity. However, this occupation is disturbing in the face of the judgements of the village people and the internalisation of Fatma by the village people develops in relation to Sibel. After a while, the attitude towards Sibel starts to be reflected on Sibel's sister.

When the family, who will come to see Fatma, informs Emin that they do not want Fatma, it is understood that there is a thaw towards the end of the film. An apocalypse will break out in the house and all the difficulties and questionings that have been knotted are moving towards being resolved with this event, perhaps towards what can never be resolved. That moment presents the most important tension between the father and Sibel. The father, who has infinite trust in Sibel, shouts at her saying 'you have ruined our honour' and clearly reveals that his trust in her has been shaken. The place of the concept of honour in the social order is revealed through the father's discourse, finding out that the indicators attributed to women are structured under masculine domination.

Although he does not have much dialogue with Sibel, it can be perceived that the father character knows Sibel well and understands her feelings. When her father says 'They beat him to death in front of Narin's eyes!' about Ali who ran away, he actually asks why and how she believed in that man. You believed and trusted, but your trust was shaken, Emin's words are another expression of this, which is why he is angry with Sibel. Because he always made it clear that he also trusted her intelligence. This situation experienced by Sibel has overthrown Emin's sense of trust and positive thoughts towards her. Emin, who does not want Sibel to go to the forest anymore, advises her to go to the field. However, Sibel disobeys her father again. In a moment of stubbornness, her father approaches her violently for the first time, pushing her towards the car and touching her body roughly.

At that moment Sibel puts the pistol she took from her father's trousers to her own head and says, 'Kill me'. Sibel, who is blamed, shouted at, pushed and subjected to violence, reacts to the violence the most and shakes her father's power by pointing his own pistol at her own head. The father is emasculated at this point. The phallic signifier pistol owned by the father is taken by Sibel and made to point at herself in a daring way.[1] Sibel shouts out the discourse of 'I choose and approve even my own death, you don't have the courage but if you are going to kill me, kill me now'. Sibel has neither voice nor sentences. In this scene, she shows a character structure that is confident and courageous enough to choose her death. Again, the viewer questions whether the necessity of speech is within the needs of life.

The violent dialogue with her father causes Sibel to run to the forest where she feels sheltered. She stabs the snake she sees in the forest with a piece of wood and takes all her pain out on the snake. As she kills the snake, she kills the pains, anxieties and questionings about what is inside her. The snake is also a phallic object. In this context, the killing of the snake by Sibel can be read as killing the power of the father. Here, when the viewer who identifies with Sibel is considered from the Lacanian perspective, it even affects the process of questioning the self of the viewer who encounters his/her own self.

In Lacan's painting, which he defines as the 'contained eight', the situation that is assumed to cover the other when one half of the curve is unfolded is explained as identification. Lacan says that the surface folds itself over a point that can be structurally defined according to a certain relation to itself, which must be explained when folded over itself. This fold line symbolises the function of identification (Lacan, 2017, p. 285). The viewer, who identifies with the character, actually folds himself in a self-folding state of being. Therefore, even though Sibel is unable to speak, what she wants to speak is embodied in the mind, soul, and language of the viewer.

After these thaws, Sibel goes home and hugs Fatma and accompanies her to school. The people of the village accuse Sibel of dishonour and shout and complain at her. Her father whistles and tells the village people to shut up and stands by his daughters and supports them. Sibel and her father take Fatma to the school bus in front of the tea-gathering women and take a firm stance in defiance of the village and social judgements. Fatma's getting on the bus with her apron and going to school also points to a very important reference in terms of content. Girls of school age, who have not completed their mental and physical development, are married off in the village. However, the place where they should exist is school. The film ends with Sibel and the young peasant girl, who at the beginning of the film describes Sibel as inauspicious, looking at each other with hope and love. Despite everything, Sibel is the one who resists, smiles

1 Phallus: the penis or an object that resembles the form of the penis. As a symbolic object, the phallus often represents fertility or potency (*Phallus*, 2018). Based on the concept of the phallus, the phallic signifier is used in the sense of a signifier that indicates the phallus.

and stands tall at the end of the film. In terms of feminist film practice, the fact that the female character meets life with hope despite all difficulties presents an important film content to the viewer. In a film that breaks the classical narrative conventions, while the viewer ends the screen time with hope, perhaps it also implies that many things will transform in the village. What is important is the visibility that supports the paving the way for affirmative transformations regarding women.

Conclusion

The film Sibel is the presentation behind the visible. The struggle of a woman character, who cannot speak, with life is presented to the viewer through various events and situations. The viewer has the opportunity to question many things, from the necessity of speaking in communication, to the importance of sound, to the philosophy of silence, outside of filmic time. On the other hand, there is also praise for silence. The most important point that the film narrative presents to the viewer in terms of feminist film theories is the state of overcoming all the difficulties faced by a woman character who cannot speak in an effort to exist. This is such a state that neither the shouting father makes her listen to him, nor the judgements of the society surround her mind, nor the people who humiliate her treat her badly against all they do. Sibel is the most humane, understanding and agile of all the talking people in the village. In films that focus on women's stories, female characters are presented to the viewer with their troubles, sorrows and problems, but traces of their hope, of the origin of their hope, is not a common example of representation in Turkish cinema. In this respect, the film Sibel confronts the viewer with a different example of a female character against the coded female character stereotypes of classical narrative cinema. Within the framework of feminist film practice, this example of a female character is important for the creation of various radical female characters. Silverman's remarks on the female voice were also interpreted by Paula Rabinowitz, who reiterated the idea that women in contemporary narrative cinema can be presented through alternative cinematic strategies in avant-garde films. In the films of directors such as Yvonne Rainer, Chantal Akerman, Bette Gordon and Laura Mulvey, women can speak from outside their bodies. In the presentation of the body and the voice, the representation of the female subject in male-dominated cinema is criticised, and attention is drawn to the existence of a deconstructed or psychoanalytical feminist 'sophisticated' point of view in the films of the directors cited as examples (Rabinowitz, 1990, p. 160). Apart from the works of the directors exemplified by Rabinowitz, it is possible to see the naivety of the female point of view in the representation of the female character and the presentation of the body and voice by many female directors in the world cinema in the 2000s.

When important philosophical texts are analysed, the process of making sense of silence in itself is a concept that philosophers attribute value to and that touches many things related to existence. When the reason for Sibel's mute status is inter-

preted as her inability to speak, an even greater value can be attributed to her. She is the one who struggles with her eyes and actually speaks without using the whistle even while communicating at the most striking moments of her life. The sounds of life are on her side. And her inability to speak is the most important source of this struggle.

The fact that Sibel whistles without being able to speak also calls into question the philosophical context of her use of language. Sibel's use of language brings instrumentalist language theory to mind. The message, command or thought transmitted by whistling, the person receiving this message, command or thought... According to Paul Feyerabend, 'Language is a tool. The concepts of language are tools.' These are described by looking at how they function (Feyerabend, 2002, p. 168). The whistle is also an important tool of communication, and the concepts belonging to it are also tools. Sibel, who can tell what she wants to the people around her by whistling, is a woman who can use the communication tool and its concepts well. In his article "Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations", in which he explains and comments on Ludwig Wittgenstein, Feyerabend reveals the close connection between language and thought by citing Wittgenstein's reference 'Language is already thought, nothing is hidden' (Feyerabend, 2002, p. 182). Sibel has a language that enables her to speak and express her thoughts, and this language not only explains everything but also causes her to be seen as a dangerous 'other' by the people of the village – because Sibel's language is a structure that transcends thoughts as well as existence and clearly reveals a notable stance towards life. This language, which mediates Sibel's speech, also mediates people's perception of her existence as dangerous. Not being able to speak has never been so dangerous...

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Guns, Gore, and Glory: A Content Analysis of Escalating Violence in Indian War Cinema (1990-2020)

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Abstract

This study investigates the evolving portrayal of violence in Indian war films over a thirty-year period (1990–2020), analyzing shifts in frequency, intensity, and moral framing. Employing a quantitative content analysis of twelve stratified, high-rated films from IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes, the research operationalizes violence through four dimensions: weapon typology, duration of battle scenes, intensity of gore, and violence against non-combatants. Findings reveal a marked escalation in both the quantity and graphic nature of violent depictions in the later period (2006–2020), with statistically significant increases in small arms usage, prolonged battle sequences, and higher gore ratings, while violence toward civilians remains constant. The study applies the theories of Aestheticization of Violence and Just War Cinema to demonstrate how modern Bollywood war films stylize brutality while legitimizing it through nationalistic and moral narratives. These findings highlight a cinematic shift toward hyper-realistic and ideologically charged portrayals of war, raising critical questions about the normalization of violence, the ethics of visual storytelling, and the sociopolitical implications of media militarism. This research fills a critical gap in non-Western media studies and contributes to broader discourses on the intersection of entertainment, propaganda, and cultural memory.

Keywords

Violence; War Films; India; Gore; Bollywood; Hindi films; Depiction of Violence; Violence in War Movies; IMDB; Rotten Tomatoes

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Оружие, кровь и слава: контент-анализ эскалации насилия в индийском военном кино (1990–2020)

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Аннотация

Данное исследование анализирует трансформацию репрезентации насилия в индийском военном кино за тридцатилетний период (1990–2020), фокусируясь на изменении частотности, интенсивности и моральной рамки изображаемого насилия. С применением количественного контент-анализа двенадцати стратифицированных высокооценённых фильмов (по данным IMDb и Rotten Tomatoes) насилие операционализируется через четыре аналитических параметра: типология вооружения, продолжительность боевых сцен, степень натуралистичности (gore) и насилие в отношении некомбатантов.

Результаты демонстрируют значительное усиление как количества, так и графичности сцен насилия в более поздний период (2006–2020), что выражается в статистически значимом росте использования стрелкового оружия, увеличении продолжительности батальных эпизодов и повышении показателей натуралистичности, при этом уровень насилия в отношении гражданского населения остаётся стабильным.

Теоретической рамкой исследования выступают концепции эстетизации насилия и «справедливого военного кино» (Just War Cinema), позволяющие выявить, каким образом современные болливудские военные фильмы стилизуют жестокость, одновременно легитимируя её через националистические и моральные нарративы.

Полученные данные фиксируют сдвиг в сторону гиперреалистичных и идеологически насыщенных изображений войны, что ставит критические вопросы о нормализации насилия, этике визуального повествования и социополитических измерениях медиального милитаризма. Исследование восполняет важный пробел в не-западных медиаисследованиях и вносит вклад в более широкий академический дискурс на пересечении индустрии развлечений, пропаганды и культурной памяти.

Ключевые слова

насилие; военные фильмы; Индия; натуралистичность; Болливуд; фильмы на хинди; репрезентация насилия; насилие в военном кино; IMDb; Rotten Tomatoes

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Introduction

The depiction of violence in Indian war movies serves as a potent tool for political propaganda, subtly shaping viewers' perceptions and reinforcing political agendas. These films often dramatize real-life military conflicts, such as the Indo-Pak cross-border violence, to create compelling narratives that promote a jingoistic and nationalistic perspective (Raj & Suresh, 2022). Bollywood war movies like *Uri: The Surgical Strike* utilize stylized violence to evoke a sense of patriotism and justify military actions, thereby influencing public opinion and reinforcing the notion of a nationalistic identity (Aravind, 2023). Additionally, the portrayal of historical and biographical narratives in these films often aligns with the political ideologies of the ruling regime, promoting a monolithic national identity based on Hindutva principles (Gopinath, 2025). This strategic use of cinema not only entertains but also subtly indoctrinates viewers, making them more susceptible to the political messages embedded within the films. By presenting a masculinized and heroic image of soldiers, these movies reinforce traditional gender roles and nationalistic fervor, thereby further entrenching the political narratives they aim to propagate (Christensen & Haas, 2015; Ritzenhoff & Kazecki, 2014). Thus, Indian war movies act as powerful instruments of propaganda, shaping public perception and advancing political agendas through their depiction of violence and heroism.

War films, a prominent genre in contemporary cinema, vividly depict the multifaceted nature of conflict, often focusing on battles that occur on land, sea, or in the air. These films are not just about the physical confrontations but delve deeply into themes such as survival, camaraderie among soldiers, sacrifice, and the profound moral and ethical dilemmas posed by war. They frequently highlight the inhumanity and futility of war, reflecting on its devastating impact on society and individuals (Binns, 2017; Zheng, 2021). The portrayal of war in films serves as a powerful medium for exploring and disseminating national ideologies and historical narratives, as seen in various cultural contexts (Sjølyst-Jackson, 2013). Characters in these films become familiar to the public, often embodying the heroism and trauma associated with military conflicts, which in turn shapes public perception and collective memory (Ritzenhoff & Kazecki, 2014). War films also address the psychological and emotional toll on soldiers, providing a lens through which audiences can understand the complexities of war and its aftermath (Peebles, 2021). The genre's ability to combine action, visual spectacle, and deep emotional conflict makes it a dynamic and influential form of entertainment that resonates with audiences worldwide (Binns, 2017).

Media violence refers to the explicit visual depiction of physical aggression between individuals, excluding off-screen acts of violence. This type of content is prevalent in various forms of media, including films, which can influence audience behavior and perceptions. Research indicates that exposure to media violence can

lead to increased aggression and desensitization to violence among viewers (Bushman & Whitaker, 2012; Fanti et al., 2009). Studies on Indian cinema, including Bollywood, reveal that violent content is often depicted in a manner that normalizes and glamorizes aggressive behavior (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Mahalakshmi & Lavanya, 2023). This trend is concerning as it can lead to viewers becoming more accepting of violence as a means to achieve goals, potentially encouraging real-world aggression (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006). Furthermore, the portrayal of protagonists engaging in violent acts more frequently than antagonists in some Indian films suggests a troubling narrative that justifies violence for the sake of heroism or justice (Mahalakshmi & Lavanya, 2023). This depiction can have significant implications for societal attitudes towards violence, reinforcing the notion that violence is an acceptable solution to conflicts.

This research aims to analyze the extent of violence depicted in Indian films across two distinct periods, focusing on the differences in frequency and intensity of violence, the use of implements of violence, and the portrayal of gore in war films. The study examines six Indian films selected based on ratings from IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes. By comparing films from an earlier period (1990-2005) with those from a later period (2006-2020), the research aims to identify trends and shifts in the portrayal of violence. These trends may reflect broader socio-cultural and political changes in India, such as the rise of muscular nationalism and the impact of global influences. This analysis is crucial as it provides insights into how cinematic portrayals of violence have evolved over time and the potential impact these changes may have on audiences.

The implications of this study are multifaceted. Firstly, understanding the evolution of violence in Indian films can shed light on broader societal changes and the shifting cultural landscape. For instance, previous research has shown that media violence can influence viewers' perceptions and behaviors, potentially leading to increased aggression and desensitization to violence. By identifying specific trends in the depiction of violence, this study can inform discussions on protecting vulnerable audiences such as children and adolescents. Additionally, the findings can contribute to the academic discourse on the role of cinema in reflecting and shaping societal norms and values, particularly in relation to violence and aggression.

Objectives

1. To examine the evolution of violent content in war films by comparing the frequency, type, and duration of violent acts between earlier (1990-2005) and later (2006-2020) war films.
2. To assess the changes in the depiction of gore and violence against noncombatants in war films over time.

Literature Review

Researchers have long been concerned about the impact of media violence in war movies on societal behavior, particularly focusing on the potential for such content to incite real-world violence. Studies have shown that exposure to violent media, including films, can contribute to increased aggression and violent behavior, although it is not the sole cause (Bushman & Anderson, 2015; Huesmann & Taylor, 2006). The portrayal of violence in media has been a subject of public concern since the inception of these forms, with particular attention to its effects on children. Despite extensive research, there remains disagreement on the conclusiveness of these findings and the appropriate policy implications (Tulloch & Tulloch, 1998). Researchers have also noted that the context in which violence is depicted can influence its impact on viewers, with some depictions carrying greater risks than others (Timmer, 2011).

Violence in movies and war films can be broadly defined as the depiction of physical force intended to harm or kill, often accompanied by graphic imagery of injury or death. Gore, a subset of violence, refers to the explicit portrayal of bloodshed and bodily harm, often in a detailed and graphic manner (Bartsch & Mares, 2014). In war films, violence and gore are used to depict the brutal realities of combat, aiming to provide a realistic portrayal of the horrors of war. This can include scenes of battle, injuries, and death, often intended to evoke strong emotional responses from the audience (Binns, 2017; McDonald, 2015). The depiction of violence in these films is not merely for shock value but often serves to underscore the narrative's themes of heroism, sacrifice, and the moral complexities of war (Binns, 2017; Zietsma, 2013).

Hollywood and Bollywood approach the depiction of violence and gore in war movies differently. Hollywood war films, such as *Saving Private Ryan* and *Full Metal Jacket*, often emphasize realistic and graphic portrayals of combat to highlight the chaos and brutality of war (Binns, 2017; McDonald, 2015). These films use advanced special effects and detailed cinematography to create immersive and impactful scenes of violence, often reflecting nationalistic and idealistic themes (Binns, 2017; Zietsma, 2013). In contrast, Bollywood war films, while also depicting violence, tend to incorporate a more stylized and dramatized approach. Films like *Uri: The Surgical Strike* use violence to create a video-game-like atmosphere, often serving political propaganda and ideological narratives (Raj & Suresh, 2022). Despite the presence of violence in Bollywood films, there is a notable lack of comprehensive studies examining its depiction compared to Hollywood, which has been extensively analyzed for its portrayal of violence in various genres (Singh, 2020; Zinck, 2019). This gap highlights the need for more research into how Bollywood represents violence and its potential impact on audiences.

Research has shown that violence in movies has increased substantially over the last few decades, yet its direct correlation with societal violence remains inconclusive (Markey et al., 2015). Theoretical and empirical analyses have explored

various dimensions of violence and war in media, including historical patterns, cultural perspectives, and political implications (Karatzogianni, 2013). Additionally, studies have examined how war films use violent imagery to shape masculine subjectivities and critique nationalistic narratives (McDonald, 2015). Audience interest in violent media content has also been investigated, revealing that viewers may seek out gory content for its meaningfulness and reflection of reality (Bartsch & Mares, 2014). However, these studies predominantly focus on Western contexts, particularly Hollywood, and often overlook the unique cultural and historical contexts of other regions, such as India.

The existing literature has several gaps, particularly in its limited exploration of non-Western war films (Singh, 2020). Indian war movies, for instance, have not been extensively studied, despite India's rich history of conflict and its burgeoning film industry. This lack of research leaves a significant gap in understanding how Indian war films portray violence and gore, and how these portrayals have evolved over time. By focusing on Indian war films, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of global cinematic trends and the cultural specificities that influence the depiction of war and violence. To address this gap, we formulated the following hypothesis: H1: War films from the later period (2006-2020) contain significantly more gore and violence compared to war films from the earlier period (1990-2005). This hypothesis aims to fill the existing research void by examining the evolution of violent content in Indian war movies, thereby contributing to a better understanding of global media trends.

The portrayal of gore and violence against noncombatants in war films has seen a notable increase in both Hollywood and Bollywood. In Hollywood, the escalation of graphic violence can be linked to the broader cultural and political climate, especially post-9/11. The "war on terror" has significantly influenced Hollywood's narrative, leading to films that emphasize high-tech spectacles and graphic depictions of violence, often reflecting real-life fears and threats (Boggs & Pollard, 2006, 2008). This period witnessed a rise in films that not only depicted intense violence but also explored themes of patriotism and militarism, as evident in movies like *Rambo IV* and *Charlie Wilson's War* (Boggs & Pollard, 2008). The trend towards more graphic and prolonged depictions of violence is also evident in the way these films handle the psychological and physical impacts of war on both soldiers and civilians, aiming to provide a visceral experience for the audience (Philpott, 2010).

In contrast, Bollywood's depiction of war and violence has been deeply intertwined with the rise of muscular nationalism and the socio-political ascendancy of Hindutva forces in the 2010s. Bollywood war films have increasingly showcased the soldier's body as a symbol of national strength and masculinity, often marginalizing non-masculine and non-combatant figures (Aravind, 2023). This period has seen a shift towards more intense and prolonged scenes of violence, reflecting the broader cultural narratives of impending national threats and the valorization of military power. However, previous research has not extensively covered

the long-term portrayal of such violence in Bollywood, creating a gap that this study aims to fill. By examining the intensity and duration of violence in Bollywood war films from 2006 to 2020, this study seeks to understand how these depictions have evolved and what they reveal about contemporary socio-political dynamics. Consequently, based on the aforementioned literature, we have formulated the second hypothesis as H2: The intensity and duration of violence, along with the depiction of gore and violence against non-combatants, have risen in war films from the later period (2006-2020).

Violence and Gore in Bollywood War Films: Theoretical Perspectives

This study employs two theoretical frameworks—Aestheticization of Violence and Just War Cinema—to analyze the inclusion of violence and gore in Bollywood war films. The Aestheticization of Violence theory suggests that filmmakers use violence to create visually and emotionally compelling narratives that captivate audiences (Ma et al., 2020; der Derian, 2010). Additionally, the Just War Cinema theory posits that films often depict violence as a legitimate and necessary means to achieve moral ends, reflecting societal norms and values (Finlay, 2017). These theories help explain why producers and filmmakers focus on violent content while often neglecting to address its potential negative effects on viewers.

The Aestheticization of Violence theory posits that filmmakers use violence to create visually and emotionally compelling narratives that captivate audiences (Ma et al., 2020; der Derian, 2010). This theory is evident in Bollywood war films, where violence is often stylized to enhance the cinematic experience. The combination of violence and aesthetics creates a paradoxical experience for the audience, subverting stereotypes about violence and evoking new aesthetic experiences both physically and psychologically (Ma et al., 2020). This approach can be seen in the use of elaborate fight sequences, dramatic explosions, and intense battle scenes that are designed to be visually striking and emotionally engaging. The aestheticization of violence in Bollywood war films serves to draw viewers into the narrative, making the depiction of violence not just a plot device but a central element of the film's artistic expression.

Just War Cinema theory, on the other hand, suggests that films often depict violence as a legitimate and necessary means to achieve moral ends, reflecting societal norms and values (Finlay, 2017). This theory is also applicable to Bollywood war films, which frequently portray violence as justified within the context of defending the nation or achieving a greater good. These films often align with the principles of Just War Theory, which balances the ideal of peace with the reality that violence and bloodshed occur in an imperfect world (Patterson, 2007). Bollywood war films typically emphasize the heroism and moral righteousness of the protagonists, who are depicted as fighting for a just cause. This portrayal reinforces societal

beliefs about the legitimacy of violence in certain contexts, particularly in defense of the nation or in the pursuit of justice.

The intersection of these two theories in Bollywood war films can be seen in the way violence is both aestheticized and morally justified. The aestheticization of violence makes the depiction of gore and brutality more palatable and engaging for the audience, while Just War Cinema provides a moral framework that legitimizes the use of violence. This dual approach allows filmmakers to create compelling narratives that resonate with viewers on both an emotional and ethical level. By combining visually stunning depictions of violence with themes of moral righteousness, Bollywood war films are able to captivate audiences and reinforce societal norms about the acceptability of violence in certain contexts (Clément et al., 2017; Clément, 2023). This blend of aesthetic and ethical considerations ensures that the portrayal of violence in these films is both impactful and thought-provoking.

Methodology

In for data collection purpose, quantitative content analysis of Indian war films was conducted. The films were chosen from two online websites: IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes. The Internet Movie Database (IMDb) is an online database that contains information about movies, television, video games, celebrities, and film production. With a database of over two million films, this website offers an extensive amount of information about the film, including the actors, the movie's beginning, the runtime, ratings and reviews, awards, and so on (Gosselt et al. (2015). This website is frequently visited by movie enthusiasts from all around the world seeking information on movies. 'Rotten Tomatoes' is another website about movies and movie reviews that originated in the United States. Its primary goal is to provide movie-related comments, ratings, information, and other related resources to the public[1] (Fatemi & Tokarchuk, 2012).

This study employed quantitative content analysis to evaluate the frequency of violence depicted in Indian war films from 1990 to 2020. The population encompassed all Indian war films, examining three distinct decades: 1990–2000, 2001–2010, and 2011–2020, to investigate how the portrayal of violence has evolved over time. The sample consisted of Indian war films as noted in the table below (Table 1):

1 See: *About Rotten Tomatoes*. (2024, February 4). Rotten Tomatoes. https://www.rottentomatoes.com/about

Table 1. Categorization of War and Historical Films by Release Decade

1990-2000	2001-2010	2011-2020
Prahaar: The Final Attack (1991)	Shaheed-E-Azam (2002)	Madras Cafe (2013)
Kshatriya (1993)	The Legend of Bhagat Singh (2002)	Haider (2014)
Tirangaa (1993)	LOC: Kargil (2003)	Welcome 2 Karachi (2015)
Param Vir Chakra (1995)	Agni Pankh (2004)	Airlift (2016)
Border (1997)	Lakshya (2004)	Mohenjo Daro (2016)
Train to Pakistan (1998)	Mangal Pandey: The Rising (2005)	The Ghazi Attack (2017)
Earth (1998)	Yahaan (2005)	Kesari (2019)
	1971 (2007)	Uri: The Surgical Strike (2019)
	Lamhaa: The Untold Story of Kashmir (2010)	War (2019)
		Panipat (2019)

The stratified random sampling was used to select the movies for their analysis. We divided the population of Indian war movies into two strata based on the decade of release: 1990-2005 and 2006-2020. Then, we randomly selected six movies from each stratum; only those films from each decade are selected which have more than 7.0 rating on IMDb and more than 70% of audience score on Rotten Tomatoes. Resulting in a sample of 12 movies.

1. 1990-2005: Border (1997), Earth (1998), Prahaar: The Final Attack (1991), Shaheed-E-Azam (2002), Lakshya (2004), The Legend of Bhagat Singh (2002),
2. 2006-2020: 1971 (2007), Madras Café (2013), Haider (2014), Airlift (2016), The Ghazi Attack (2017), Uri: The Surgical Strike (2019)

Unit of Analysis: The unit is the depiction of violence scenes and timespan of scenes in war films.

Coding Scheme: Prior to the coding process, a pilot study was conducted by analyzing *Border* (1997), *Lakshya* (2004), and *Uri: The Surgical Strike* (2019) to refine the coding framework and enhance coder reliability. This preliminary analysis facilitated the operationalization of key indicators of violence, which were subsequently applied to all selected films.

The study categorized violence into four primary dimensions:

1. Implements of violence (types of weapons and means of attack)
2. Ratio of battle scenes to total film duration
3. Gore intensity (extent of visible injury and mutilation)

4. Violence directed at non-combatants (attacks on civilians, women, children, and infrastructure)

These coding dimensions were adapted from Monk-Turner et al. (2004) and refined to suit the context of Indian war cinema.

Operationalization of Violence Indicators

Implements of Violence

Violence was classified based on the means through which it was enacted. The following six categories were used:

- Hand-to-hand combat: Physical altercations, including punches, kicks, use of the butt of a gun, and other direct physical force.
- Blades: Weapons such as knives, swords, and bayonets.
- Primary firearms: The principal weapons used in the depicted conflict, corresponding to the historical accuracy of the war setting (e.g., muskets for colonial wars, M16 rifles for modern conflicts). To ensure consistent measurement, each trigger pull – regardless of the number of bullets discharged – was counted as a single shot.
- Small arms: Handguns, revolvers, and pistols.
- Artillery: Large-scale weaponry such as tanks, cannons, anti-aircraft systems, and mortars.
- Explosives and bombs: Grenades, landmines, flamethrowers, missile strikes, and aerial bombardment.
- Each instance of the above categories was meticulously recorded and quantified for comparative analysis.

Ratio of Battle Scenes to Film Duration

To assess the intensity of battle sequences, the total duration of combat scenes was measured in seconds and then divided by the overall runtime of the film. For example, if a scene shows a battle that lasts for 5 minutes, the length of violence for that scene was 300 seconds. This produced a battle intensity ratio, allowing for standardized cross-film comparisons.

Gore Scale

To gauge the severity of depicted violence, the five-point gore scale (adapted from Monk-Turner et al., 2004) was employed:

1. Minimal gore: Minor wounds with negligible bloodshed.
2. Moderate gore: Visible bleeding and open wounds.
3. Severe gore: Profuse bleeding, gunshots to arteries, or significant bodily injury.

4. Extreme gore: Graphic injuries such as decapitations, amputations, or severe burns.
5. Maximal gore: Intense mutilation, exposure of internal organs, or incineration to the extent of skeletal exposure.

A gore rating was computed by dividing the total number of gory incidents by the accumulated score across all instances. For example, if a scene shows a minor wound with some blood, the gore for that scene was 1. If a scene shows a severed limb or a headshot with a lot of blood, the gore for that scene was 5.

Violence Against Non-Combatants

This category encompassed acts of violence directed towards civilians, children, women, animals, and civilian infrastructure. Instances were coded separately, ensuring a clear distinction between combatant and non-combatant violence. For example, if a scene shows a soldier killing a civilian, the violence directed at non-combatants for that scene was 1. If a scene shows no violence against non-combatants, the violence directed at non-combatants for that scene was 0. Each occurrence was systematically documented and aggregated for comparative assessment.

Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher viewed each movie before training the coders to help establish categories and act as a pretest for code reliability. Three coders independently assessed the same films to establish inter-coder reliability, and Cohen's kappa was calculated to measure agreement among coders. A high level of inter-coder reliability (above 0.80) was maintained to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation. The study applied descriptive statistics, independent samples t-tests, and comparative analysis to examine trends in war film violence.

Results

Six films were released in the first time period comprising 16 years, i.e., 1990-2005, which is our earlier period; and six films were released in 2006-2020, which is termed as the later period. Table 2 examined the frequency of violence scenes in war films during two distinct time periods: the earlier period and the later period. In the earlier period, the most common categories of violent scenes were primary, small, and artillery, with frequencies of 280, 136, and 64, respectively. The presence of hands and blades was depicted in 75 and 23 scenes, respectively, whereas the bomb scenes were shown 49 times throughout the films. In contrast, there was a considerable increase in the frequency of violent scenes throughout the later period. The primary and small violence scenes remained popular, with an increase in number as 289 and 230, respectively. Moreover, there was a notable increase in the number of hand-to-hand combat and bomb scenes,

with frequencies of 100 and 53, respectively. However, there was a slight decrease in the artillery frequency, which stood at 51.

Looking at the mean differences in implements of war between these two periods, we found that movies released in the earlier period had 15.67 instances of hand-to-hand combat, compared to 16.67 in the later period. A significant mean difference was found between these two periods (earlier compared to later) for blades (3.83/7.17), artillery (10.67/8.50), or explosives (8.17/8.33). Moreover, for primary (46.67/46.5) weapons and small arms (26.00/37.83), there was more violence in war films from the later period compared to those released earlier (see Table 2).

Table 2. Incidence of Implements of Violence, Length of Violence in Film, Gore and Violence to Noncombatants in Selected Films

Incidents of Violence							
Movie Title	Release Year	Hand	Blades	Primary	Small	Art	Bombs
Earlier Period							
Border	1997	15	6	70	42	28	18
Earth	1998	12	4	9	4	3	5
Lakshya	2004	9	5	82	27	32	17
Prahaar: The Final Attack	1991	17	4	18	08	0	0
Shaheed-E-Azam	2002	12	2	24	14	1	3
The Legend of Bhagat Singh	2002	22	2	77	41	0	6
Later Period							
1971	2007	14	4	27	24	0	5
Madras Café	2013	22	5	60	51	1	9
Airlift	2016	31	24	78	42	35	18
Haider	2014	11	4	35	41	3	6
The Ghazi Attack	2017	4	0	8	0	4	5
Uri: The Surgical Strike	2019	18	5	81	72	8	10

The proportion of battle scenes relative to the total movie length saw an increase over the two observed periods (see table 3). In the later period, films

featured an average of 27.67 minutes of battle sequences, whereas earlier films had a lower average of 26.00 minutes. Additionally, the depiction of gore became more prominent, with later films having an average gore ratio of 10.83, compared to 8.67 in earlier war movies. Violence against non-combatants shows no change, with later films averaging 12.5 instances, compared to 12.5 in earlier releases. Following this, we analyzed notable differences in the use of weaponry, the proportion of battle scenes in relation to the overall film, the intensity of gore, and the portrayal of violence against noncombatants between the two time periods (see Table 2).

An analysis of war implements across different decades revealed notable distinctions in hand-to-hand combat ($t = 3.35$; $p = 0.028$), blade usage ($t = 4.36$; $p = 0.012$), artillery ($t = -3.22$; $p = 0.291$), and explosives ($t = 3.95$; $p = 0.017$). Additionally, significant differences emerged in the usage of primary weapons ($t = 2.98$; $p = 0.02$) and small arms ($t = 3.40$; $p = 0.004$). War films from 2006 to 2020 depicted more intense combat and gunfire than those from 1990 to 2005. Moreover, it is likely that the classification of primary weapons was more conservative in later films due to the complexity of tracking automatic gunfire. The portrayal of small arms, particularly handguns, was also more prevalent in modern war movies compared to those produced in earlier decades.

Gore was analyzed based on two factors: frequency of occurrence and severity. We found no significant difference in the number of gory instances between different decades (see table 3). However, there was a notable difference ($t = 7.23$; $p = 0.002$) in the overall gore rating when comparing older and more recent films. While the overall number of gory scenes remained relatively stable across time periods, the intensity and explicit nature of these depictions have significantly evolved over the years. Additionally, we observed a non-significant difference ($t = 1.47$; $p = 0.425$) in the portrayal of violence against non-combatants, highlighting no change in how war films depict the impact on civilians over time. This unexpected stability in non-combatant violence, despite the overall escalation in violent content, suggests a distinct narrative function for civilian depictions. The amount of violent content in modern war films has become increasingly prevalent, with a growing focus on realism and graphic intensity. Not only did our findings indicate that the overall quantity of violence in war films has increased over time, but they also suggest that the graphic detail and realism in these scenes have intensified.

Based on the findings, both hypotheses are supported, confirming that war films from the later period (2006-2020) exhibit significantly higher levels of violence, gore, increased duration of battle sequences, the higher frequency of intense combat scenes, while there is no difference in the depiction of non-combatant violence when compared to that from the earlier period (1990-2005).

Table 3. Length of Violence in Film, Gore and Violence to Noncombatants in Selected Films

				Noncombatants			
	Length of Violence		Gore				Total (Women, Children, Civilian Structures & Animals)
Movie Title	Length of Film (Mins)	Violence Min/Sec	%*	N	Scale	Rating	
				Earlier Period			
Border	170	35/25	34.7	5	17	3.4	7
Earth	110	19/15	29.1	7	14	2.0	15
Lakshya	178	38/50	12.5	6	22	3.6	4
Prahaar: The Final Attack	168	17/15	17.1	8	20	2.5	12
Shaheed-E-Azam	173	14/33	14.0	11	21	1.9	19
The Legend of Bhagat Singh	156	26/00	27.7	15	23	1.5	18
				Later Period			
1971	160	16/00	16.7	11	29	2.6	4
Madras Café	130	35/52	47.1	9	27	3	16
Airlift	130	34/23	26.1	7	19	2.71	19
Haider	160	24/23	15	7	25	3.57	5
The Ghazi Attack	123	21/00	17.7	10	15	1.5	6
Uri: The Surgical Strike	138	31/50	23.6	12	37	3.8	15

*% shows the percentage of violence in film (running time divided by time devoted to violence in the film)

Discussion

The results of this study reveal a clear escalation in the depiction of violence in Indian war films from the earlier period (1990–2005) to the later period (2006-2020), supporting both hypotheses. Modern films exhibit significantly

more frequent and intense portrayals of violence, marked by increased use of hand-to-hand combat, primary firearms, small arms, and explosives. The average duration of battle scenes also rose considerably, accompanied by a notable rise in the severity of gore and the frequency of violence against noncombatants. While the overall number of violent instances grew, the intensity and graphic nature of these scenes suggest a shift toward more visceral and realistic depictions of war. These changes reflect evolving cinematic strategies that embrace hyper-realism and spectacle, signaling a broader transformation in how violence is both represented and consumed in contemporary Indian war cinema.

These results align with previous studies that highlight the escalation of media violence over time and its potential psychological and societal effects (Bushman & Anderson, 2015; Huesmann & Taylor, 2006). The findings are particularly relevant in the context of Bollywood's evolving cinematic strategies, where war films have increasingly served as tools of political propaganda, reinforcing nationalistic ideologies and justifying military actions (Aravind, 2023; Raj & Suresh, 2022). The significant increase in the use of primary firearms and explosives further highlights the trend towards hyper-realistic portrayals of combat, similar to the stylistic elements observed in Hollywood war films (Binns, 2017; McDonald, 2015).

The escalation of violence in Indian war films from 2006–2020 can too be interpreted within India's evolving socio-cultural and political landscape. The period saw the rise of muscular nationalism and Hindutva ideologies, which emphasized a strong, militarized national identity, as reflected in films like *Uri: The Surgical Strike* (2019) (Gopinath, 2025). Additionally, post-9/11 global geopolitics and India's increasing integration into global media markets may have influenced filmmakers to adopt hyper-realistic and spectacular portrayals of violence, akin to Hollywood trends (Boggs & Pollard, 2008). The liberalization of India's economy and media in the 1990s, coupled with heightened Indo-Pak tensions, likely amplified nationalistic narratives, encouraging graphic depictions of military heroism to resonate with audiences facing perceived external threats. These socio-cultural shifts provide a critical lens for understanding why violence has become more visible, suggesting that the quantitative trends are not merely stylistic but deeply rooted in India's changing political and cultural dynamics.

The findings of this study can be explained through the theories of Aestheticization of Violence and Just War Cinema. The Aestheticization of Violence theory posits that filmmakers utilize violence as a creative and cinematic tool to engage their audiences (Ma et al., 2020; der Derian, 2010). This is evident in Bollywood war films, where violence is often stylized, with dramatic battle sequences and visual spectacle enhancing the emotional impact of the narrative. The increased use of high-impact weaponry and prolonged battle sequences in modern war films aligns with this theory, as filmmakers seek to captivate audiences through heightened realism and spectacle. Bollywood war films from 2006–2020 frequently frame military conflicts as righteous struggles, aligning with nationalistic narratives that

promote patriotism and militarism (Aravind, 2023). This justifies the increased depiction of violence and non-combatant casualties, as the narratives position such acts within a framework of national defense and heroism.

The unchanged depiction of violence against non-combatants across both periods presents an intriguing deviation from the overall trend of escalating violence. This stability suggests that Indian war films may deliberately limit violence against civilians to maintain an ethical anchor within their narratives. Civilians often serve as a symbolic subject – the protected entity for whose sake military violence is justified – aligning with Just War Cinema principles that legitimize violence through moral frameworks (Finlay, 2017). By keeping non-combatant violence constant, filmmakers may ensure that audiences can identify with the protected civilian population, thereby justifying the protagonists' violent actions as necessary for national defense. This finding highlights a narrative constraint in Bollywood war films, where excessive civilian harm could undermine the moral legitimacy of the depicted violence and disrupt the nationalistic narratives that these films propagate.

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, there are several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the sample size of 12 films may not fully represent the breadth of Bollywood war films over the examined periods. A larger dataset could provide a more comprehensive understanding of trends in war film violence. Secondly, the study relies on quantitative content analysis, which, while useful for measuring frequency and intensity, does not capture the nuanced ways in which violence is contextualized within narratives. Third, the lack of qualitative contextual analysis limits the study's ability to interpret the narrative purposes of violent imagery, such as its potential to alienate audiences in anti-war contexts. Fourth, the novel finding that violence against non-combatants remained unchanged over time introduces a critical dimension to the study of Indian war cinema. This stability highlights the role of civilians as a narrative and ethical cornerstone, serving as the figurative subject for whose protection violence is enacted. This "protected subject" is essential for justifying military violence within the political and nationalistic narratives of Bollywood war films. The consistent depiction of civilian violence suggests that filmmakers strategically avoid excessive harm to non-combatants to maintain audience identification with the moral righteousness of the protagonists' actions.

Theoretically, this finding enriches the application of Just War Cinema theory by highlighting how ethical constraints shape violent portrayals in non-Western contexts. Practically, it raises questions about the societal impact of such narratives, particularly how they reinforce militaristic ideologies while preserving a moral facade. The unexpected stability in non-combatant violence suggests that quantitative content analysis alone may not fully capture the narrative and ideological roles of civilians, necessitating broader methodological approaches. Future qualitative narrative analyses could explore how civilian characters are framed to evoke audience empathy, further elucidating the interplay between violence, ethics,

and propaganda in Indian war films. Furthermore, future research could incorporate qualitative analyses to explore the thematic and ideological implications of violent depictions in greater depth. Lastly, this study does not account for audience reception or psychological impact, which are crucial factors in understanding the broader implications of media violence.

The results of this study have significant implications for both media studies and public discourse on violence in entertainment. The increasing prevalence and intensity of violence in Indian war films suggest a growing normalization of violent imagery, which may contribute to desensitization among viewers (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006; Bushman & Whitaker, 2012). This aligns with broader concerns about media violence influencing real-world aggression and shaping public attitudes toward militarism and nationalism.

From a cinematic perspective, the findings highlight the evolving role of Bollywood in propagating political ideologies. The shift toward more intense and graphic depictions of war can be seen as a reflection of India's changing socio-political landscape, where nationalistic narratives have gained prominence (Biswas, 2025; Gehlawat, 2024). These trends highlight the need for critical media literacy initiatives to help audiences engage with war films more analytically, recognizing the ideological messages embedded within them. While the quantitative findings demonstrate a clear escalation in the frequency, intensity, and gore of violence in Indian war films from 2006–2020, the meaning of this increased visibility is inherently tied to the narrative context of each film. Violent imagery may serve varied purposes, such as glorifying military heroism in nationalistic narratives or, conversely, alienating audiences to critique war's brutality, as seen in Brecht's epic theater or cinematic movements like *Dogme* 95 and the *Greek Weird Wave* (Mosse, 2024; Vrbančić, 2009). For instance, films like *Haider* (2014) may employ graphic violence to underscore the tragic human cost of conflict, potentially distancing viewers to provoke anti-war reflection, whereas *Uri: The Surgical Strike* (2019) stylizes violence to evoke patriotic fervor. This contextual variability suggests that the quantitative increase in violence does not uniformly promote militarism but may reflect diverse ideological intents.

Integrating qualitative contextual analysis could further validate these findings by elucidating how violence aligns with or challenges the films' narrative goals, enhancing the study's interpretive depth. Moreover, comparing Bollywood's representation of war and violence with that of Hollywood, Chinese, and other regional cinemas may reveal cultural distinctions in war storytelling. Additionally, investigating how regulatory bodies like the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) in India evaluate and control violent content in war films can shed light on media governance and the ethical obligations involved in filmmaking.

Conclusion

This study reveals a significant escalation in violence, gore, and battle duration in Indian war films from 2006–2020 compared to 1990–2005, reflecting a shift toward hyper-realistic and ideologically charged portrayals of war. Notably, the unchanged depiction of violence against non-combatants highlights a narrative strategy to preserve civilians as an ethical anchor, justifying military violence within nationalistic frameworks. This novel finding highlights the complexity of violence portrayal in Bollywood war cinema, where ethical constraints coexist with escalating brutality. These trends raise critical concerns about the normalization of violence, the blurring of simulation and reality in postmodern war films, and their broader societal implications, particularly in reinforcing militaristic and nationalistic ideologies. Further research into narrative framing and audience reception is essential to fully understand these dynamics.

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Man without Capital: Cultural Dispossession and Neoliberal Survival in Turkish Cinema Between 1980-1990

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Abstract

This article investigates how Turkish cinema transformed under neoliberal restructuring following the 1980 military coup, proposing "Neoliberal Realism" as a new conceptual framework to describe the cinematic narratives of the 1980s. While Turkish cinema from 1960 to 1980 was shaped by collective struggles and social realism, the post-1980 era witnessed a departure toward individualized narratives marked by alienation, moral compromise, and economic survival. The research aims to analyze how neoliberal logics redefined narrative structures, character formations, and symbolic capital in Turkish cinema between 1980 and 1990. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's theories of field, habitus, and cultural capital, the study offers a close reading of selected films—such as *The Naked Citizen*, *The Wheel*, and *The Honest One*—to decode how characters navigate a commodified social reality. The findings show that neoliberal realism replaces revolutionary cinema with depoliticized storytelling, where social mobility is no longer tied to labor or merit but to media visibility and spectacle. This shift also illustrates how cultural capital becomes devalued under economic liberalization. The article contributes to the literature by bridging cinema studies with sociology, offering a multidisciplinary analysis of Turkey's cinematic and ideological transformation. This article introduces the original concept of Neoliberal Realism to explain how Turkish cinema of the 1980s internalized and reflected neoliberal rationalities through narrative and character transformation. By shifting the analytical focus from comparative periodization to the symbolic consequences of economic liberalization, the study offers a novel contribution at the intersection of film studies and political sociology.

Keywords

Turkish Cinema; Neoliberal Realism; Social Realism; Cultural Capital; Political Economy of Cinema; Bourdieu; Media Visibility; Symbolic Violence; Urban Transformation; 1980 Military Coup

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Человек без капитала: культурная утрата и неолиберальные стратегии выживания в турецком кино 1980–1990-х годов

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Аннотация

Статья анализирует трансформацию турецкого кино в контексте неолиберальной перестройки, последовавшей за военным переворотом 1980 года, и предлагает концепт «неолиберального реализма» как аналитическую рамку для описания кинематографических нарративов 1980-х. Если в период 1960–1980 годов турецкое кино формировалось под влиянием коллективных движений и традиций социального реализма, то после 1980 года наблюдается переход к индивидуализированным повествованиям, отмеченным отчуждением, моральными компромиссами и логикой экономического выживания. Цель исследования — проанализировать, каким образом неолиберальные установки переопределили нарративные структуры, типажи персонажей и формы символического капитала в турецком кино 1980–1990 годов. Опираясь на теоретический аппарат Пьера Бурдьё — понятия поля, габитуса и культурного капитала, — автор осуществляет детальный анализ ключевых фильмов десятилетия, включая “The Naked Citizen”, “The Wheel” и “The Honest One”, чтобы показать, как персонажи осваивают и переосмысливают товаризированную социальную реальность. Результаты исследования демонстрируют, что неолиберальный реализм вытесняет революционное кино деполитизированными повествованиями, в которых социальная мобильность больше не связана с трудом или заслугами, а определяется степенью медиавидимости и участием в спектакулярных форматах. Этот сдвиг указывает на обесценивание культурного капитала в условиях экономической либерализации.

Статья вносит вклад в научную дискуссию, соединяя подходы киноисследований и социологии, и предлагает междисциплинарный анализ идеологической и кинематографической трансформации Турции 1980-х годов. Вводя оригинальное понятие неолиберального реализма, работа объясняет, каким образом турецкое кино данного периода интериоризировало и отражало неолиберальные рациональности через трансформацию нарратива и персонажей. Сместив фокус с периодизации на символические последствия экономической либерализации, исследование предлагает новое видение на пересечении политической социологии и исследований кино.

Ключевые слова

турецкое кино; неолиберальный реализм; социальный реализм; культурный капитал; политическая экономия кино; Бурдьё; медиавидимость; символическое насилие; урбанистическая трансформация; военный переворот 1980 года

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Introduction

The central claim of this article is that Turkish cinema of the 1980s constitutes a distinct cinematic mode termed Neoliberal Realism, through which cultural dispossession, symbolic impoverishment, and economic precarity are narratively rendered within the context of post-1980 neoliberal transformation. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus, and cultural capital, the article argues that film narratives of this period mark a paradigmatic shift from collectivist resistance to individualized adaptation, wherein social mobility is no longer determined by labor or merit, but increasingly by Spectacularization of Precarity, performance, and mediatized recognition. By conceptualizing cinema as a site where neoliberal rationalities are both represented and internalized, the article seeks to demonstrate how Turkish films of the 1980s function as cultural texts that reflect and reproduce the structural logics of neoliberalism in everyday life.

To understand the neoliberal transformation of the 1980s, it is essential to trace the historical and economic-political ruptures from the foundation of the Turkish Republic through the post-World War II period, and examine their cinematic reflections. Turkey's early industrialization, shaped by the 1929 Great Depression, led to a mixed economy model grounded in statism and public investment, which persisted until military interventions in 1960, 1971, and especially 1980 redirected the country toward liberal and eventually neoliberal policies (Bila, 2020). While some sources trace neoliberal tendencies back to the Democrat Party's rise in 1950—with its emphasis on privatization and market liberalization at the expense of labor rights—the 1980 military coup marked a decisive shift, institutionalizing neoliberalism by weakening state regulation and aligning with global economic norms. This shift was accelerated by the January 24, 1980 economic decisions and the Özal administration, though it became more contested during the coalition governments of the 1990s (Erdoğan, 2023, pp. 302–303). After the mentioned decisions signalled a decisive turn toward official neoliberalism, structural adjustments imposed by global lenders pushed liberalization, real devaluations, import deregulation, and wage suppression to the forefront of economic policy (Kazgan, 2008, pp. 195–196).

From the 1980s onward, neoliberalism—marked by aggressive privatization, tax cuts, monetarist inflation control, and public spending reductions—began reshaping global economic structures (Steger, 2004, p. 65). International financial institutions like the IMF and World Bank actively promoted this shift, conditioning their support on policy compliance. These reforms often led to relative poverty, shrinking public services in education and health, and diverting budgets away from the non-capitalist sectors. This shift inaugurated an era where market logic reigned supreme. Public enterprises were dismantled, state investments curbed, and restrictions on interest rates, exchange controls, and foreign capital flows were lifted. Foreign investments, now unregulated, largely bypassed the real economy

in favor of financial speculation, deepening Turkey's integration into the global neoliberal order (Uçkaç, 2010, p.427).

Different sources see the neo-liberal process as a gain. The affirmative view of neoliberalism highlights its modernizing effect on Türkiye's economy, particularly under Turgut Özal in the 1980s. His reforms shifted the country from protectionism to a liberal, export-driven model, promoting privatization and global market integration. Özal fostered an entrepreneurial spirit, especially in conservative Anatolian cities like Kayseri, Konya, and Gaziantep, where traditional tradesmen evolved into globally competitive business leaders. These new entrepreneurs stood out through innovation, institutionalization, and strategic planning, marking a departure from earlier, small-scale economic models (Varol, 2018, pp. 8–10). The table below summarizes the cultural characteristics of Türkiye's political process from the 1950s to the 1990s and facilitates the understanding of periodic changes:

Table 1. Structural Historical-Political Atmosphere in Türkiye (1960-1990) and its impact on Turkish cinema

Period	Political Climate	Economic Structure	Social & Cultural Trends	Impact on Cinema
1960-1980 (Social Realism Period)	- 1960 military coup led to political instability and constitutional reforms. - 1971 military memorandum increased state repression. - Rise of leftist movements, student protests, and unionization.	- State-led economy with protectionist policies. - Urbanization and rural-to-urban migration accelerated. - Wealth gap widened, fueling class struggles.	- Growth of workers' movements and socialist thought. - Intellectual and artistic expressions leaned towards social critique. - Folk and protest music became popular.	- Social Realist films focused on class struggle, land ownership, and migration. - Films critiqued capitalism, corruption, and inequality.
1980-1990 (Neo-Liberal-Realism Period)	- 1980 military coup brought strict authoritarian rule. - Political parties were dissolved, press was censored. - Neoliberal policies under Turgut Özal shifted Türkiye towards a free market.	- Privatization and deregulation of the economy. - Increased foreign investment and consumer culture. - Rising unemployment and wealth disparity.	- Rise of individualism and consumerism. - Political activism was suppressed, leading to depoliticization. - Mass media promoted entertainment over resistance.	- Neo-Liberal-Realist films depicted individual struggles, moral corruption, and economic survival. - Themes of existential crises, resignation, and social alienation prevailed.

After the 1980 military coup Türkye experienced a depoliticization process. According to Pösteki, liberal economic policies were implemented in the 1980s, a consumer culture was formed, state-owned enterprises were privatized, import restrictions were lifted and the country opened up more to the outside world. However, the inflation problem could not be resolved and the gap between the rich and the poor increased. Therefore, it is possible to see the reflections of all these changes in Turkish cinema in the 1980s. According to Sever, the most distinctive feature of the 1980s was the tendency to have a luxurious life in the easy way, to consider every means valid to reach a higher status, and to differentiate by buying expensive and branded products, becoming widespread in daily life. Expressions such as "turning the corner, being a fixer" became indicators expressing the general mentality of this period. An apolitical human type that does not know it's real problems and needs, disrespects labour, has developed. As a result of the globalization policy of capital a new type of person has emerged who is individualistic and selfish, greed for money is above all else, a man believes that his status increases as he consumes, and substitutes being visible for thinking. After the famine and gas cylinder-oil-fuel queues experienced in the 1970s, the abundance promised by the economic policy of the 80s has led to the establishment of a consumer culture. The population in the cities has increased; the cities that are the living spaces of the masses who have adopted the consumer culture through fashion, advertising and the media industry have also changed (Cited in Kaplan, 2022, p. 271–273) For example, Zeki Ökten continued his realistic attitude and produced social-political criticism through the films he shot throughout the 80s such as *Attack on Interest* (Faize Hücum 1982), *Wrestler* (Pehlivan, 1984), *Plaintiff* (Davacı 1986), *The Poor Man* (Yoksul, 1987), *Queer World* (Düttürü Dünya, 1988). Films such as these show a new cultural approach centred on the neo-liberal economy (Kaplan, 2022, p. 271–273).

In the 1980s, Turkish cinema shifted from overt political engagement to more personal and symbolic narratives, influenced by censorship and depoliticization as mentioned above. Atıf Yılmaz played a key role in this transformation through his "socio-fantastic" films—*Vasfiye is Her Name* (Adı Vasfiye, 1985), *Oh Belinda* (1986), *My Dreams, My Love and You* (Hayallerim, Aşkım ve Sen, 1987), and *Devil, My Friend* (Arkadaşım Şeytan, 1988)—which merged surreal elements with critiques of social norms. *Oh Belinda*, for instance, tells of an actress who becomes the housewife she plays in a commercial, satirizing the constructed roles of consumer culture. These films metaphorically addressed the socio-economic anxieties of the neoliberal era, including rising individualism and economic precarity (Can, 2016, pp. 16-23).

Turkey's post-1950 trajectory reveals a tension between democratic ambition and incomplete modernization. Despite constitutional reforms, the absence of sustained educational and cultural integration hindered the development of modern individuality and economic resilience. Industrialization remained limited, urban

migration intensified socio-spatial inequalities, and unemployment grew. By the 1980s, these structural challenges began to shape cinematic narratives, portraying themes like precarious labor, child work, and survival under urban pressure—yet this cinematic phase remains underexamined.

This article introduces "Neoliberal Realism" as a conceptual lens to explore the transformation of Turkish cinema following the 1980 military coup and the implementation of neoliberal economic reforms. Rather than emphasizing auteur styles or production contexts, the focus shifts to narrative structures, character development, and the socio-economic imaginaries that emerged during this period. Drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus, and cultural capital, the study examines how cinema became a symbolic arena where individuals grappled with the pressures of deregulation, precarity, and commodified visibility. Films such as *The Lucky Worker* (Talihli Amele, 1980), *The Treadmill* (Dolap Beygiri, 1982), *The Honest One* (Namuslu, 1985), *The Tenant* (Kiracı, 1987), and *The Teacher* (Öğretmen, 1988) reveal how economic dispossession and institutional collapse shaped the lived experiences of characters, offering insight into how neoliberal logic restructured not only labor and housing but also subjectivity itself.

In this regard, the central argument of this paper is that Turkish cinema in the 1980s articulated a new narrative mode—Neoliberal Realism—that internalized the logic of neoliberal transformation through individualized stories of economic dispossession, symbolic struggle, and precarious survival. This term is introduced to describe a shift away from the collectivist ethos and class consciousness of earlier social realist cinema toward depoliticized portrayals of characters negotiating crises in housing, labor, masculinity, and visibility within an increasingly commodified society. These cinematic forms, we argue, reflect how neoliberal rationalities reshaped not only institutions and economic relations, but also emotional life, cultural values, and the social imagination itself.

This paper argues that Turkish cinema of the 1980s exhibits a distinct narrative formation that we define as "Neoliberal Realism", a mode that internalizes and dramatizes the socio-economic effects of neoliberal transformation through stories of cultural dispossession, moral disorientation, and individualized survival. Unlike prior periods characterized by collective resistance and social critique, the films of this era portray characters whose symbolic capital, ethical integrity, and institutional affiliations are rendered obsolete within a commodified and depoliticized field. This conceptual shift—rooted in Bourdieu's theoretical triad of field, habitus, and capital—allows for a deeper analysis of how cinema narrates the emotional, economic, and symbolic fractures of post-1980 Turkish society.

The originality of this research lies in its formulation of Neoliberal Realism as a new analytical category that bridges media aesthetics with political economy. Rather than foregrounding production contexts or auteurism, the study develops a sociologically grounded reading of narrative, space, and character in Turkish films between 1980 and 1990, arguing that these works collectively visualize the restruc-

turing of everyday life under neoliberal logic. In other words, while cinematic analyses often rely on frameworks such as social realism, postcolonial realism, or subjective realism, this article offers an original contribution by conceptualizing and applying the notion of neoliberal reality as a distinct narrative mode. Rather than focusing on production contexts or auteurist tendencies, the study emphasizes how neoliberal logic is embedded in the narrative structures and character trajectories of films produced in Turkey during the 1980s. By foregrounding narrative analysis over industrial or formalist concerns, and by examining relatively underexplored cinematic texts, this article advances a rare and much-needed perspective on how neoliberalism restructures not only economic life but also cinematic imagination.

Methodology

Methodologically, this study adopts a dual-layered strategy. First, it uses Kracauer's theory of cinema as a mirror of social reality to briefly contextualize the social realist tradition (1960–1980) as a narrative precursor. Second—and mainly—it applies close content analysis to selected films from 1980 to 1990, interpreting character behavior, narrative structures, and thematic tensions through the lens of Bourdieu's concepts of field, habitus, and symbolic capital.

> "(...) But the most important point is that through the increased symbolic power of television overall, and, among the competing kinds of television, the increased influence of the most cynical and most successful seekers after anything sensational, spectacular, or extraordinary, a certain vision of the news comes to take over the whole of the journalistic field. Until recently, this conception of the news had been relegated to the tabloids specializing in sports and human interest stories. Similarly, a certain category of journalists, recruited at great cost for their ability immediately to fulfill the expectations of the public that expects the least-journalists who are necessarily the most cynical, the most indifferent to any kind of structural analysis, and even more reluctant to engage in any inquiry that touches on politics-tends to impose on all journalists its 'values,' its preferences, its ways of being and speaking, its 'human ideal.' Pushed by competition for marketshare, television networks have greater and greater recourse to the tried and true formulas of tabloid journalism, with emphasis (when not the entire newscast) devoted to human interest stories or sports. No matter what has happened in the world on a given day, more and more often the evening news begins with French soccer scores or another sporting event, interrupting the regular news. Or it will highlight the most anecdotal, ritualized political event (visits of foreign heads of state, the president's trips abroad, and so on), or the natural disasters, accidents, fires and the like. In short, the focus is on those things which are apt to arouse curiosity but require no analysis, especially in the political sphere (Bourdieu, 1998, pp. 50-51)"

In this passage, Bourdieu anticipates what would later become a hallmark of neoliberal media culture: the colonization of public discourse by market logics of visibility and competition. Television, in his view, no longer functions as a medium of information or civic debate but as a field structured by the pursuit of attention, profit, and affective immediacy. The "most cynical and successful seekers after

anything sensational" embody the neoliberal ethos of performativity—where success depends on exposure rather than substance, and information is replaced by spectacle. Under neoliberalism, screens transform into economic and symbolic markets in which visibility becomes capital itself. Journalistic and cultural production align with commercial imperatives, producing what Bourdieu calls symbolic violence: the normalization of superficiality and the depoliticization of thought. In this sense, the passage illustrates the shift from critical mediation to consumable affect, from collective meaning-making to individualized entertainment—a process that extends beyond television into today's algorithmic and platform-driven screen culture.

This approach allows for a nuanced reading of how neoliberal pressures—such as deregulation, labor precarity, and visibility economies—are cinematically encoded not through direct political allegory, but through everyday struggles and emotional fragmentation. Each film is treated as a cultural artifact shaped by and responding to the symbolic violence of neoliberal transformation. In order to explore how Turkish cinema of the 1980s internalized and visualized the structural logic of neoliberal transformation, this study is guided by the following research questions:

a) How do selected Turkish films from the 1980s narrativize the socio-economic effects of neoliberal restructuring on individual subjectivity and everyday life?

b) What defines Neoliberal Realism as a narrative mode in the selected films, and in what ways does it depart from the aesthetic and ideological patterns of earlier social realist cinema?

c) How can Pierre Bourdieu's conceptual triad of field, habitus, and symbolic capital be employed to analyse the ways characters negotiate institutional collapse, cultural dispossession, and symbolic violence in post-1980 Turkish cinema?

In the first phase, a general historical and thematic overview is provided for the 1960–1980 period. Drawing on Siegfried Kracauer's theory of cinema as a mirror of social reality, this section outlines the socio-political conditions, directorial tendencies, and cultural characteristics of key films that emerged during the social realist wave. Thematically, these films reflected collective struggles such as class conflict, labor rights, rural-urban migration, and poverty, often influenced by Italian and French neorealism. Rather than detailed scene analysis, this portion serves as a critical narrative cartography to understand how Turkish cinema once articulated structural inequalities through collectivist frameworks.

The core focus of the article, however, lies in the 1980–1990 period, a decade shaped by Türkiye's official transition to neoliberal economic policies following the 1980 military coup and the January 24th economic reforms. Here, the methodology shifts from contextual mapping to close content analysis, with an emphasis on how neoliberal rationalities are inscribed into film narratives—not in terms of

production processes, but through character behavior, plot structures, and everyday struggles depicted on screen.

Using Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) concepts of field, habitus, and particularly cultural capital, the article explores how characters respond to themes such as precarious labor, union erosion, wage suppression, the rise of finance capital, overwork, media commodification, and moral compromise. These themes are analysed through scene-level observation, dialogue, and dramatic tension in a corpus of selected films including *A Sip of Love* (Bir Yudum Sevgi, 1984), *The Naked Citizen* (Çıplak Vatandaş, 1985), The *Honest One* (Namuslu, 1985), and others. Through this lens, the study decodes how individual characters embody or resist neoliberal subjectivities, and how the accumulation—or deprivation—of cultural capital becomes central to their survival strategies.

The 1980–1990 period in Turkish cinema marks a critical shift from collective struggles of social realism toward individualized narratives shaped by neoliberal economic realities. The films listed in *Table 2: Classification of Turkish Films by Period and Theme (with Neo-liberal context*, 1980–1990) reveal characters grappling with precarious labor, systemic corruption, hyperinflation, and the erosion of traditional social structures etc. Works such as *A Sip of Love* and *The Naked Citizen* depict economic survival and symbolic poverty through female labor and absurd commodification of identity, while *The Plaintiff* and *The Honest One* highlight a justice system and bureaucratic ethics deeply compromised by market logic. These films serve as cinematic responses to a rapidly neoliberalizing society where financial anxiety, rent burdens, and overwork dominate personal lives. The saturation of economic distress in everyday spaces—from homes to workplaces—aligns with Bourdieu's framework of cultural and economic capital struggles within the social field. Within the scope of the article, the neoliberal reality of the following films will be analysed through the reflection of the neoliberal policies of the period on the daily lives of the characters:

Table 2. Classification of Turkish Films by Period and Theme (with Neo-liberal context, 1980–1990)

Period	Thematic Category	Original Film Title (English)	Key Themes
1980–1990	Precarious Labor & Domestic Strain	*Bir Yudum Sevgi* (A Sip of Love, 1984)	Precarious female labor, domestic alienation, economic survival
		Çark (The Wheel, 1987)	Insecure labor, overwork, loss of dignity
		Talihli Amele (The Lucky Worker,1980)	Capitalist fantasy, escape from poverty
		Dolap Beygiri (The Treadmill,1982)	Labor as absurd routine, economic stagnation

Systemic Corruption & Institutional Collapse	*Namuslu* (The Honest One, 1985)	Systemic corruption, erosion of ethical capital
	Zübük (The Crook, 1980)	Populism, political fraud, institutional decay
	Davacı (The Plaintiff, 1986)	Commodification of justice, failure of public trust
Economic Crisis & Survival	*Çıplak Vatandaş* (The Naked Citizen, 1985)	Hyperinflation, symbolic poverty, self-commodification
	Yoksul (The Poorman, 1987)	Working-class despair, shame, invisibility
	Çark (The Wheel, 1987)	Precarious working conditions, lack of union representation, and rising unemployment
	Düttürü Dünya (Queer World, 1988)	Fame industry, media as survival mechanism
Masculinity & Family Under Strain	*Yakışıklı* (The Handsome One, 1987)	Masculinity under economic strain, mobility illusion
	Kiracı (*The Tenant*, 1987)	Housing crisis, rent anxiety, class stress
Public Services & State Neglect	Öğretmen (The Teacher, 1988)	Precarious public employment, state abandonment
	Faize Hücum (Strike the Interests, 1982)	Interest economy, speculative finance

According to Gorski, Bourdieu's concept of the field denotes the space of expression for what he defines as forms of capital. Bourdieu's concept of field benefits from the meta-theoretical tendency that social identities are constructed through oppositions with others and that their sociological characteristics require them to be positioned in a comprehensive field consisting of opposing relations. Bourdieu's concept of field is the unit of analysis in methodological language, and it consists of various units of observation. These units that construct the concept of field are mainly expressed as individuals, organizations, communities, social interactions. In traditional methodological language, it is not possible to observe fields directly. In order to observe fields, it is possible to obtain the results by using empirical data that continue their functions in mutual relations.

According to Brubaker and Bourdieu, cultural capital is a form of capital that, alongside economic capital, shapes individuals' positions in social space. It is acquired gradually, starting from birth. Cultural capital is expressed as all the practices that the agent acquires and reinforces throughout his/her social life in social space, especially in educational institutions and family institutions, from birth. Bourdieu tries to explain the differences with cultural capital. With these differences, cultural capital is tried to be understood and the aim is to reveal

the differences that cannot be explained by economic inequalities in cultural practices and educational performances. (Cited by Kaplan & Yardımcıoğlu, 2020, p. 25). Atkinson, Balaj and Eikemo make in-depth detections on this subject:

> "The class structure of a social order can be conceived of as a field – which Bourdieu (1984) called the 'social space' – and is, in capitalist societies, structured by possession of economic capital (money and wealth) and cultural capital (embodied and credentialised mastery of legitimated symbol systems), and secondarily the social capital of connections and networks. Class habitus is the seat of various strategies to accumulate – or challenge the worth of – money and wealth but also credentials and masteries, the font of specific cultural tastes adapted to the possibilities given by social location and the perceptual grid through which we categorise and judge the activities and tastes of others. It is forged first in the domestic sphere, through parent–child relations, and indeed strategies can be intergenerational, involving activities toward improving or maintaining not only one's own position but the capital holdings of one's offspring (Bourdieu, 1996a; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, Cited by Atkinson, 2024, pp.2.-3)"

> "According to Bourdieu and Wacquant (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), acknowledging that "capital can take a variety of forms is indispensable to explain the structure and dynamics of differentiated societies." In "The Forms of Capital" (1986) Bourdieu differentiates between four types of capital. First, economic capital is directly convertible into money and material assets. Second, cultural capital can exist in three forms: in embodied disposition (habitus), in an objectified state as cultural goods and in an institutionalised state, the most prominent of which is educational qualifications. Third, social capital represents material and non-material resources that individuals can mobilise from mutual recognition as members of a group. Fourth, symbolic capital is the form each capital can assume when it is recognized as legitimate. Bourdieu introduces physical capital as a form of cultural capital, which he refers to as "heavily disguised" embodied cultural capital. Generally, Bourdieu understands physical capital as the acquisition of habits of body comportment through socialisation in sports, patterns of food consumption and etiquette (Bourdieu, 2013, cited by Balaj & Eikemo, 2022, pp.1216-1217)"

The selected corpus of post-1980 Turkish films—such as *The Handsome One* (Yakışıklı, 1987), *The Naked Citizen* (Çıplak Vatandaş, 1985), *The Honest One* (Namuslu, 1985), *Strike the Interests* (Faize Hücum, 1982), *The Teacher* (Öğretmen, 1988), *The Tenant* (Kiracı, 1987), *The Lucky Worker* (Talihli Amele, 1980), and The *Treadmill* (Dolap Beygiri, 1982)—offer a cinematic terrain in which neoliberal economic rationality encounters and restructures the individual's habitus. Each film dramatizes the dissonance between inherited dispositions and the emerging neoliberal field, where previously valued forms of cultural capital are rendered obsolete or non-convertible.

In *The Handsome One*, for instance, the protagonist's inability to secure housing or fulfil the traditional role of provider, despite his physical appeal and presumed social desirability, reveals the impotence of symbolic and embodied capital in a field now dominated by monetary value. A scene where wealthy Iranian and Arab tenants offer hard currency for rent, displacing Turkish locals, crystallizes Bourdieu's insight that habitus—here rooted in republican middle-class expecta-

tions—collides with a transformed urban field governed by foreign exchange, speculation, and exclusion. Marriage itself is deferred, linking private intimacy to macroeconomic forces.

The *Naked Citizen* amplifies this alienation. The protagonist's frantic engagement in eight different jobs is emblematic of precarity—a foundational condition of neoliberal labor markets. His eventual breakdown and symbolic act of stripping in public illustrate a loss of both economic and symbolic capital. His labor is no longer valorized; rather, it is fragmented, absurd, and invisible. In Bourdieu's terms, the character becomes a "man without capital or symbolically dispossessed subject" in a social space where even self-worth must be marketable. The only remaining path to visibility is mediatization—his notoriety, once exposed by television, grants him economic opportunity. This reflects the neoliberal valorization of visibility over substance, performance over competence.

Similarly, *The Honest One* critiques the moral inversion of the neoliberal field. The protagonist's honest behaviour is met with suspicion, and he is falsely accused of corruption. Ironically, this accusation increases his social value, as honesty has become economically irrational. Symbolic capital—in the form of ethical integrity—is not only unrewarded but punished. This inversion reveals a deep fracture between inherited habitus and a new field where corruption has become normative.

Strike the Interests offers a critique of financialization. The film centers on retirees who survive solely through interest-bearing bank accounts—an economic practice symptomatic of neoliberal economies in which labor no longer guarantees subsistence. The elderly, once bearers of institutional cultural capital, are now reduced to passive investors. Finance replaces social production; economic value is abstracted from work and grounded in speculation.

In *The Teacher*, the protagonist's relocation to a metropolitan school exposes the erosion of the welfare state's symbolic authority. Despite his position as a civil servant—a role historically associated with stability and moral standing—his salary cannot cover transportation, forcing him to walk to work and take on undignified side jobs. The degradation of public employment echoes Bourdieu's assertion that the state's withdrawal from the cultural field diminishes the value of institutional capital and leaves symbolic laborers socially orphaned.

The Tenant furthers this motif, as inflation and currency devaluation render middle-class salaries insufficient. In this film, hyperinflation is not merely an economic condition but a narrative force that erases the material foundations of the petite bourgeoisie. The character's symbolic expectations (home, marriage, stability) are shattered, as economic capital becomes the sole arbiter of social worth.

The Treadmill critiques the speculative logic of the emerging finance economy. Through its depiction of the character's entrapment in a meaningless labor cycle, the film allegorizes how personal savings and economic hopes are absorbed and dissolved by banking institutions and informal financial networks.

Here, the film speaks directly to the rise of finance capital, which extracts surplus not through production but through systemic exploitation of economic precarity and misinformation.

Finally, *The Lucky Worker* and *The Naked Citizen* both depict media spectacle as the only viable escape from poverty. Social mobility is no longer linked to merit, labor, or education, but to public visibility—being featured on television becomes a substitute for structural change. Bourdieu's critique of the *illusio* of the media field—where visibility creates symbolic value independent of institutional validation—is played out in these narratives, warning of a society where performative capital overtakes all else.

Across these works, neoliberalism appears not as an abstract policy set but as a force that reshapes daily life, relational structures, and subjective possibilities. When read through Bourdieu's conceptual toolkit, these films become ethnographic documents of a society where cultural capital is devalued, habitus is misaligned with new social demands, and symbolic violence becomes normalized. The cinema of this era thus reveals not only what neoliberalism does to institutions, but what it does to people—how it rewrites the coordinates of dignity, agency, and identity on screen.

Nezih Erdoğan (1998) highlights a key difference between Turkish cinema—especially Yeşilçam—and the classical realist model developed by Hollywood. Hollywood aims to create a seamless illusion of reality by hiding the traces of production. Its style, often called "classical realism," is built on strategies that make the audience forget they are watching a film: characters never look at the camera, editing cuts are hidden by redirecting attention, and the narrative flows smoothly to maintain realism. In contrast, Yeşilçam adopts a hybrid cinematic attitude. It blends Hollywood's classical realism with elements of traditional Turkish visual and narrative culture—such as shadow plays, miniatures, and popular folk theater. Even when Yeşilçam shamelessly reproduces Hollywood-style plots, the visible traces of low-budget production and cultural references give the films an unexpected sense of authenticity. While Hollywood tries to fully integrate the viewer into the film's narrative world through carefully constructed perspectives and visual coherence, Yeşilçam often remains indifferent to such requirements. Characters might appear in flat, frontal compositions, lacking visual depth, and narrative conventions might be broken or stylized. In this way, Yeşilçam does not aim to replicate reality, but instead creates its own culturally specific version of it—one that is openly artificial, performative, and local.

According to Arslan (2017) The question "Whither Yeşilçam?" echoed frequently throughout the 1980s and 1990s—until it became clear that Yeşilçam, Turkey's once-thriving popular film industry, had indeed come to an end. More than just a production center, Yeşilçam represented a distinctive mode of filmmaking, one that developed its own indigenous cinematic language, markedly different from Western filmmaking norms. Rather than adhering to the rigid rules of Hollywood's

continuity editing and immersive illusionism, Yeşilçam cultivated a modest yet inventive storytelling approach. While some of its stylistic features—such as the absence of dubbing, visible continuity errors, or rudimentary special effects—were shaped by practical and economic limitations, they also reflected a deeper connection to Turkey's longstanding literary and performative traditions. In this sense, Yeşilçam's cinematic style was not simply a product of constraint, but also a cultural continuation of local narrative forms.

Building on Erdoğan's analysis of Yeşilçam's hybrid and culturally rooted approach to cinematic realism, Arslan reinforces the idea that Yeşilçam was more than a mere film industry—it was a unique narrative tradition shaped by local aesthetics and constraints. Both scholars underscore how Yeşilçam's stylistic departures from Hollywood were not solely technical shortcomings, but rather expressions of a culturally embedded cinematic language that eventually faded amid broader transformations in Turkish cinema. The article will also take these approaches into account when analyzing the films.

Common Cultural Features of Social Realism of Turkish Cinema between before 1980s

The 1950s in Turkey marked a turbulent convergence of politics and popular culture, shaped by the conservative-liberal policies of the Democrat Party under Adnan Menderes. With its pro-American stance in foreign policy and support for liberal economics, the party undermined many of the early republican reforms, such as the closure of Village Institutes and People's Houses, and a symbolic return to Ottoman-Islamic traditions—exemplified by reinstating the Arabic call to prayer. The suppression of opposition, press censorship, and the eventual establishment of a parliamentary inquiry commission triggered widespread unrest, culminating in the military coup of May 27, 1960. This political climate directly influenced cinematic narratives, as melodramatic tropes became a vehicle for expressing deep-seated social anxieties. Films like *My Stone Grave* (Mezarımı Taştan Oyun, 1951) and *The Daughter of the Harlot* (Kahpenin Kızı, 1952) employed obsessive characters, heightened moral conflict, and a distinct sense of fatalism, drawing not only from Ottoman-Islamic motifs but also from the Arab melodrama tradition, mirroring Turkey's simultaneous cultural flirtation with both Egypt and the United States, and these films brought themes such as female sexuality, violence, and class conflict into the melodramatic narrative, reflecting the emotional and ideological complexities of the 1950s of Türkiye (Teksoy, 2008. p. 43). Cinema of this era reflected Turkey's ideological contradictions, blending rural conservatism with urban modernity. Archetypal characters—like the cruel rich man or golden-hearted prostitute—embodied the tension between realism and fantasy. Films such as *Ezo the Bride* (Ezo Gelin, 1955) and *The Blemish* (Leke, 1957) explored themes of honor, class, and gender. Though not overtly critical, these films, as Teksoy (2007) suggests, offer ethnographic insight into a society caught between East and West.

The liberal climate established by the 1961 Constitution following the 1960 military coup catalyzed the emergence of social realism in Turkish cinema, allowing filmmakers to confront pressing social issues such as poverty, labor exploitation, migration, and inadequate public services. This era marked a cinematic awakening where directors used the screen as a reflective surface for the struggles of the working class and the marginalized. Seminal works like Ertem Göreç's *The Bus Travelers* (Otobüs Yolcuları, 1961) and *Those Awakening in the Dark* (Karanlıkta Uyuyanlar, 1964), Halit Refiğ's *Birds of Exile* (Gurbet Kuşları, 1964) and *Four Women in the Harem* (Haremde Dört Kadın, 1965), Duygu Sağıroğlu's *The Unending Road* (Bitmeyen Yol, 1965), and Lütfi Akad's *Law of the Borders* (Hudutların Kanunu, 1966) exemplify this socially engaged cinematic turn. These films did not merely dramatize individual hardship but positioned personal stories within broader class dynamics, regional inequalities, and urban-rural divides, articulating a new visual grammar for a society in transition.

This movement declined after the 1971 military memorandum, as films turned to "savior" figures amid growing political and economic turmoil. For instance, The *Tarkan* film series[1] reflects the 1970s in Türkiye—a decade of economic and political turmoil—by offering mythological heroism as psychological escape. While rooted in the social realist era, *Tarkan* diverges by channelling public anxiety into a savior narrative, fulfilling a collective need for reassurance (Tunç, 2022, pp. 144–145).

Turkish Cinema of the 1960-1980 period consists of films that are political, focused on family relations and religion; they reflect the problems of society, and frequently feature the phenomenon of migration. While Halit Refiğ's *Birds of Exile* (Gurbet Kuşları, 1964) film witnesses the migration event and the events experienced during this process, Yücel Çakmaklı's *Crossroads* (Birleşen Yollar, 1970) emphasizes the fact that worldly pleasures, money, and luxury are transient, and that what is permanent is the necessity of achieving inner peace by fulfilling religious duties. Yılmaz Güney's *Hope* (Umut, 1970) film is a perfect reflection of the saying "Hope is the bread of the poor". While the film incorporates scenes inspired by real life, it depicts how poverty pushes individuals toward actions they would not normally consider, erodes their mental and moral consciousness in the pursuit of wealth, and implies that material gains can be achieved through symbolic or abstract assets (Tugen, 2014, p. 175). The cinema of the 1970s is characterized by these exemplary films.

While the 1960–1980 period in Türkiye is typically associated with social realist cinema, some scholars suggest alternative categorizations such as "national" or

1 *Tarkan* is a cult film series consisting of five films adapted from the fictional character Tarkan, created by Sezgin Burak in his comic book series. Preparations for the first Tarkan film began in 1969, and it was released in the same year. The final installment premiered on November 1, 1973. The first Tarkan film was directed by Tunç Başaran. The sequel Tarkan: Silver Saddle, Tarkan: Blood of the Vikings, Tarkan: The Golden Medallion, and Tarkan: The Mighty Warrio were directed by Mehmet Aslan. The series also carries the qualities of historical cinema, featuring themes such as the efforts of Attila, Emperor of the Huns; Genseric, King of the Vandals; and Valentinian, Emperor of Rome, to seize the magical sword of Mars, the God of War.

"religious" cinema, reflecting ideological diversifications within the era. Despite these terminological debates, the dominant cinematic tendency remained socially engaged, especially up to 1965, with films often shaped by leftist thought and a sense of intellectual responsibility aligned with Marxist ideals. As economic crises deepened and public interest in social issues declined, filmmakers increasingly explored alternative cultural frameworks. The "national cinema" movement, led by figures like Halit Refiğ, sought to counter Western influences by drawing on Turkish traditions and Kemal Tahir's interpretations of Marxism and the Asiatic mode of production. However, this effort to construct a classless, culturally rooted cinematic identity struggled to resonate with broader audiences and faced criticism for idealizing Ottoman heritage and overestimating the cinematic potential of traditional arts (Kırtepe, 2019, pp. 113–115).

According to Yarar Aksoy (2023, p. 87), the socialist realism movement in Turkish cinema during the 1960s led to the production of films that explored socio-economic and socio-political issues such as migration, poverty, and post-industrial conflicts. Despite the economic challenges faced by the Turkish film industry in the 1970s, directors like Yılmaz Güney, Yavuz Özkan, Lütfi Akad, and Şerif Gören created influential political films. The 1980s, however, marked a completely different era due to the military coup and shifts in the political economy. These transformations, as in other art forms, were reflected in filmmaking as well. Additionally, economic and political shifts, censorship, strict regulatory measures, and self-censorship significantly impacted film production and distribution.

1961 constitution brought to the fields of art and thought, and "Social Realism" movement that attempted to address and explain the social problems and the characteristics and relationships of the people who formed this structure, began to emerge in Turkish cinema. (Yılmaz, 2011, pp. 48–49). In the 1960s and 1970s, Turkish cinema closely reflected the country's social and political realities, particularly through socially conscious films that raised awareness of class inequality, injustice, and cultural-identity contradictions (Duyan, 2023, pp. 336–227).

Directors like Yılmaz Güney took this activist spirit further, as seen in *Friend* (Arkadaş, 1974), which portrayed class and identity struggle and opposed bourgeois values through a Marxist lens. Instead of individual heroism, Güney emphasized collective consciousness and revolutionary potential, aligning with the broader leftist movements of the era. Thus, the cinema of this period served not just as entertainment, but as a powerful medium for critique, solidarity, and social transformation.

In 1970s Turkish cinema, rapid urbanization and westernization reshaped gender roles and social narratives. Films like *My Proof Lover* (Vesikalı Yarim, 1968) portrayed marginalized women with social realism, while arabesque films—especially those featuring Orhan Gencebay—depicted conflicted masculinity torn between rural values and modern life. These stories often centered on emotional

intensity, self-sacrifice, and male vulnerability, reflecting the identity crisis and societal pressures of the era (Büyücek, 2024, p. 712–714).

Turkish cinema in the 1960s and 1970s often addressed themes of identity, ideology, and cultural conflict. Films like *Traveler of the Same Road* (Aynı Yolun Yolcusu, 1972) and *My German Lover* (Almanyalı Yarim, 1974) reflect the earlier period's focus on religion, immigration, and cross-cultural tensions, often exploring societal contradictions through social realist storytelling. Similarly, *My Country* (Memleketim, 1974) examines East–West identity crises through the lives of Turkish professionals abroad, promoting loyalty to national values over Western admiration.

Siegfried Kracauer evaluates cinema as a reflection of the collective subconscious of society and positions it as one of the most powerful tools that depict social reality. According to Kracauer, cinema directly conveys the general mood and collective experiences of society by making invisible social dynamics, ideological orientations and socio-economic conditions visible (Kracauer, 1960). In this context, the films of social realist Turkish cinema in the 1960s in Türkiye present a direct reflection of social realities and deal with phenomena such as economic inequality, immigration, urbanization problems and class contradictions with a bold and realistic narrative.

According to Maule, Italian Neo-realism, which occupies an extremely important place in both theory and practice in the context of the relationship between cinema and reality, and which came to life with the ideas of Cesare Zavattini, whom Bazin and Kracauer also praise, and the films of directors such as Vittorio De Sica, Roberto Rossellini, and Luchino Visconti, is an important cinematic experience. Considered the pioneer of the form of filmmaking also called art cinema today, Italian Neo-realism, which consists of socially determined and sensitive intellectuals who have a strong stance on the practical aspects of filmmaking, had their first professional experiences in the film industry during the years of Mussolini's fascist regime and took it upon themselves to tell the tragic and painful events of post-war Italy in their films. According to Wagstaff, Italian Neorealists pioneered various innovations in terms of narrative and aesthetics. As Bazin and Kracauer often say, they brought the content to the forefront and made the plot almost invisible. However, they frequently used realistic cinematographic styles such as long shots, plan sequences, fixed cameras and uncomplicated angles, and preferred to not shoot in studios and use streets and natural light instead of artificial lighting there (cited in Olgunsoy, 2021, pp.123–124).

According to Kracauer's theory of cinema, realism should be analyzed not only thematically but also through formal preferences. Shooting films in natural locations, choosing non-professional actors, and foregrounding ordinary dialogues from daily life in scenarios establish strong emotional bonds with the audience and facilitate empathy with social reality (Kracauer, 1960). From this perspective, Turkish films in 1960s such as *Dry Summer* (Susuz Yaz, 1963), *Revenge of the Snakes* (Yılanların Öcü 1962), and *Birds of Exile* (Gurbet Kuşları 1964) perfectly match Kracauer's

understanding of realism. These films presented the social realities of the period with raw, unfiltered, and powerful visual images, allowing the audience to confront social issues.

From the late 1960s onward, discussions of revolutionary cinema in Türkiye began to intersect with the principles of the Third Cinema, emphasizing the political dimension of film alongside its artistic qualities. These debates explored how cinema could function as a tool to expose cracks within dominant systems and serve revolutionary purposes. Even before the term "Third Cinema" gained prominence, several films—such as *Beyond the Nights* (Gecelerin Ötesi, 1960) by Metin Erksan, *Bus Passengers* (Otobüs Yolcuları 1961) and *Karanlıkta Uyananlar* (Those Who Wake Up in the Dark, 1965) by Ertem Göreç, *The Neverending Road* (Bitmeyen Yol 1965) by Duygu Sağıroğlu, *Dry Summer* (Susuz Yaz, 1963) and *Revenge of the Snakes* (Yılanların Öcü, 1962) by Erksan—were evaluated through this lens. A generation of young filmmakers, often described as activist filmmakers, produced politically engaged short films, documentaries, and newsreels despite limited resources, driven by anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist ideals rooted in socialist thought. Although many continued working in cinema into the 1970s, they struggled to establish a coherent national cinematic language aligned with their revolutionary vision. After the 1971 military memorandum, the Turkish Young Cinema movement disbanded, leaving Yılmaz Güney as the sole figure to sustain revolutionary cinema in feature-length form. His 1970 film *Hope* is recognized as the first true example of Third Cinema in Türkiye and significantly influenced the cinematic language of the next generation (Esen, 2007, cited in Cantaş & Koluaçık, 2023, pp.1777–1778).

In the context of 1970s "militant cinema", Yavuz Özkan's films *The Mine* (1978) and *The Railway* (1989) stand out for foregrounding themes such as social transformation, justice, and political struggle. These films initiate a critical discourse around these issues by portraying the stories of workers situated at the lower strata of Türkiye's socio-economic hierarchy. Both works can be considered "militant" in structure due to their direct engagement with class struggle and their political commitment. Özkan compels the audience to confront their own realities, fostering a link between the events portrayed on screen and the viewers' lived experiences. This approach cultivates an awareness of capitalist exploitation and underlines the necessity of labor unionization as the only path to overcoming such systemic oppression. In both films, this message is conveyed with clarity and urgency. Özkan advocates for a bottom-up societal transformation, emphasizing that genuine change is only possible through organized, collective class-based struggle (Cantaş & Koluaçık, 2023, p.1778).

Feudalism was the subject of some films from the 1970s. In the films *Polite Feyzo* (Kibar Feyzo, 1978), and *Male Beauty Miserable Bilo* (Erkek Güzeli Sefil Bilo, 1979), the landowners were portrayed through the character of Maho Ağa (feudal

lord), a cunning and untrustworthy man who had no intention of sharing his power. There is no question of being angry at the self-interested, fraudulent landowner portrayal created in the films; because what is in question is the tragicomic ignorance of the villagers who could not realize this fact for a long time. (Şen, 2019, p. 714).

Religion and search for religious identity was also a central theme in 1970's Turkis movies; for instance, in *Traveler of the Same Road* (1972) by Turgut Demirağ, which contrasts two imam (Islamic prayer leader) figures. The traditional imam promotes rote learning and resists change, while the younger one engages youth through arts, sports, and vocational training. Though his modern methods gain local support, he is eventually removed, and the old imam returns. The mufti (a senior Islamic scholar) influences events behind the scenes, adding ambiguity. Unlike typical religious portrayals, the young imam prioritizes moral development over dogma. Demirağ, with a background in both agriculture and cinema, presents religion through a social and legal lens rather than a purely spiritual or political one.

Religion also featured prominently in Ömer Lütfi Akad's 1970s migration trilogy —*The Bride* (Gelin, 1973), *Wedding* (Düğün, 1973), and *Blood Money* (Diyet, 1974)— which portrays the impact of rural-to-urban migration on individuals and national identity. The films explore economic hardship, labor commodification, and the challenge of preserving traditions in urban settings. Drawing from Kracauer's social realism, Akad reveals how religion and patriarchy both oppress and provide moral structure, highlighting the complex interplay between tradition and modernity in migrant experiences.

Influenced by Italian Neo-realism, Turkish cinema saw a major shift in the late 1960s with the rise of socialist realist films, diverging from mainstream Yeşilçam melodramas. This new wave focused on class conflict, urban poverty, and internal migration, placing these issues at the heart of the narrative. Unlike earlier vague portrayals, these films directly depicted the hardships of rural migrants in Istanbul, using the city as both setting and symbolic force. With a documentary-like style and culturally rooted aesthetics, Social Realist cinema highlighted everyday struggles and critiqued the socio-economic and political structures of the time (Can, 2016, pp. 16–23).

In sum, the cultural framework of Turkish social realist cinema between 1960 and 1980 reveals a complex interplay between tradition and transformation, collective identity and structural constraint. These films not only portrayed class tensions, migration, and rural hardship but also articulated a critical consciousness rooted in lived experience. The period's cinematic output functioned as a cultural testimony to social fractures and aspirations, drawing from oral traditions, theatrical conventions, and neorealist aesthetics. By foregrounding the symbolic weight of everyday life—through archetypes, moral dilemmas, and spatial metaphors—this body of work provided a narrative archive of Turkey's evolving socio-political landscape. This legacy of social realism would serve as a crucial point of reference

for the narrative shifts that occurred in the neoliberal era, offering both continuity and contrast in the cinematic portrayal of social reality.

The density of politically engaged films produced between 1960 and 1980 reflects not only a culturally vibrant period in Turkish cinema but also a unique alignment between social reality and cinematic form. Enabled by the relatively liberal atmosphere of the 1961 Constitution and influenced by international cinematic currents such as Italian Neorealism, Third Cinema, and Marxist aesthetics, Turkish filmmakers of the era—particularly figures like Yılmaz Güney and Lütfi Akad etc.—used the medium to articulate collective grievances, from class oppression to urban migration, labor exploitation, identity, and gender inequality. The intellectual climate fostered by institutions like *Turkish Cinematheque* provided exposure to French, Italian, Soviet and Latin American cinematic models, reinforcing the function of cinema as a site of ideological contestation and resistance. Film thus became a visual manifesto of societal critique, mirroring the aspirations of a politically mobilized generation.

Findings: Narrative and Cultural Analyses of Neo-Liberal Realist Scenes in Turkish Cinema between 1980 and 1990

The 1980 military coup shattered ideological landscape of Turkish society. As state repression silenced dissent and neoliberal policies commodified daily life, cinema underwent a narrative fracture. The once outspoken protagonists of Social Realism dissolved into passive, alienated figures, trapped in existential crises and moral decay. Neo-Liberal-Realist films abandoned the call for revolution and instead portrayed individual struggles for survival in a system that normalized corruption and inequality. Linear plots of resistance morphed into fragmented, cyclical tales of disillusionment, where characters were no longer agents of change but mere spectators of an oppressive reality. In this period after 1980s, Turkish cinema ceased to ask, "How do we change society?" and instead whispered, "How do we survive it?"

According to Meral Gündoğdu, Turkish cinema addressed the 1980 coup primarily through themes such as imprisonment, torture, "a revolutionary struggling to survive after prison," or "a revolutionary who realizes their mistake." However, the influence of the coup is not only evident in films that criticize revolutionary violence or defend the revolution. It is essential to view Turkish films of this period as products of the prevailing cultural values and the socio-political climate shaped by the September 12 coup, even when they aimed to adopt a progressive stance (cited in Yarar Aksoy, 2023, p. 92).

After 1980s the neoliberal process of shaping individuals within diverse cultural frameworks is also evident in the New Turkish Cinema. As it becomes more embedded in global production networks and festival circuits, it increasingly prioritizes micro-political themes and identity-related issues. The new independent cinema even after 1990s focuses on topics that do not challenge political or cultural capital. In this context, many films take place in small towns, often featuring

unknown or nonprofessional actors – primarily children – who narrate stories of ordinary people, portraying their struggles with disillusionment, identity crises, and social isolation. The emphasis on collective action and social awareness gradually gives way to a more ambiguous approach, often described as "life politics." As Rosenau argues, affirmative postmodernists prioritize 'life politics' over emancipation. They dismiss emancipatory politics, arguing that many efforts once considered liberatory – such as the pursuit of justice, freedom from inequality, and resistance to oppression – ultimately became oppressive themselves. Moreover, any form of emancipation presupposes a structured plan or coherent program. Instead, affirmative postmodernists embrace 'life politics', which is loosely defined by themes such as intimacy, globalization, self-actualization, and identity. (cited in Daldal, 2023, p. 8).

The transition to colour television broadcasting in Türkiye in the mid-1980s marked a significant turning point in the country's media and consumer culture. Beginning in the late 1970s, television increasingly appeared in films as a central symbol of the emerging consumer society. Advertising became a key component of this new cultural landscape, reinforcing consumption-oriented values. During the 1980s, television played a continuous role in shaping an instalment-based consumption culture, encouraging audiences to adopt credit-driven purchasing practices. In this sense, television can be seen as contributing to a form of economic dependency by promoting consumption through loans and instalment payments, particularly for commodities such as cars, apartments, and television sets.

In the early period of television in Türkiye, the growing influence of advertising culture was also reflected in cinema. Films such as *The Man Who Turned the Corner* (Köşeyi Dönen Adam, 1978) and *Man Number 100* (Yüz Numaralı Adam, 1978) exemplify this tendency. Television further functioned as a platform for producing new film and advertising stars who were represented as emerging "from the ordinary people," often through strategies of representational promotion. Similarly, images of consumer society and its social consequences can be observed in The Naked Citizen (Çıplak Vatandaş, 1985).

In *Man Number 100*, the protagonist Şaban, who lives with his parents and siblings in a modest household, is portrayed as experiencing both a rise and a fall within the advertising industry. At a time when the advertising sector was losing its effectiveness, advertisements featuring well-known celebrities failed to generate significant public interest. Consequently, an advertising agency developed a new campaign strategy by casting an ordinary person from among the public. Şaban, a low-income individual representing the everyday public, was considered an ideal candidate for this project. (Şen, 2019, p.719). Films such as *The Naked Citizen*, *Lucky Worker*, and *Man Number 100* convey the message that in 1980s Türkiye, where hard work alone was no longer sufficient to secure a livelihood or achieve upward social mobility, economic survival and class advancement increasingly appeared possible through advertising, television exposure, and fame within popular media culture.

The Naked Citizen (Çıplak Vatandaş, 1985), a striking example of Neo-Liberal Realist cinema, depicts a public servant crushed by inflation. Despite taking on multiple side jobs, he cannot survive economically and repeats the line "not enough", reflecting the erosion of wages and dignity. In a moment of breakdown, he strips naked in public—an act of despair that ironically brings him media fame. The film emphasizes how male nudity becomes a commodified spectacle. Once the protagonist's act draws attention, others begin to undress too, hoping for similar visibility and opportunity. Nudity becomes currency in a neoliberal society where visibility replaces value. Even the Prime Minister joins the media frenzy, and the protagonist is re-employed—not for his labor, but for his public image. Eventually, this unsustainable exposure leads to his institutionalization, while the media reaps all the benefits. The film ends ambiguously, underscoring how neoliberalism turns vulnerability into entertainment without addressing systemic injustice.



Figure 1. Scenes from "The Naked Citizen" (1985), Source: Uzman Film

In *The Naked Citizen*, the everyday struggle of a civil servant (played by Şener Şen) becomes a poignant critique of Turkey's neoliberal transformation in the 1980s. The protagonist, whose official salary proves utterly insufficient, is forced to juggle eight different jobs in a desperate effort to survive in an urban economy increasingly dominated by inflation and precarious labor. His side hustles—selling lemons, distributing promotional hats at football matches, working as a dishwasher, and even undressing for detergent commercials—underscore the erosion of job security and the absurd commodification of human labor.

Set against the backdrop of a city where gambling and lottery schemes have become informal livelihoods for the poor, the film depicts a society where hope is privatized, and the working class is pushed into the margins of economic rationality. The protagonist's oft-repeated line, "It wasn't enough. I couldn't make ends meet," serves as a refrain highlighting the shrinking value of wages under runaway inflation.

What begins as a satire of economic survival gradually evolves into a psychological drama. Unable to find stability despite endless work, the protagonist ultimately attempts to navigate the system not through resistance, but by aligning with it—seeking media attention as a means of social mobility. His transition into a "mediatic" figure mirrors the neoliberal valorization of visibility over substance. However, this pursuit of fame leads not to liberation but to psychological collapse. The character suffers a breakdown and is institutionalized in a mental hospital—illustrating how the pressures of commodified identity and performative capitalism culminate in personal disintegration.

This sequence of images reveals the structural contradictions of the 1980s: a laboring subject who is simultaneously invisible to the economy and hyper-visible to the media. His story exemplifies Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence, whereby individuals internalize systemic failure as personal inadequacy. *The Naked Citizen* ultimately offers a tragicomic portrait of a neoliberal order in which survival requires not just work but spectacle, not just endurance but exposure.

Both *Queer World* and *The Naked Citizen* reflect how, in a neoliberal landscape where traditional paths of upward mobility are blocked, the promise of mediatic visibility emerges as an alternative—yet illusory—route to class transcendence, turning personal struggle into public spectacle without addressing structural inequality. In *Queer World* (Düttürü Dünya, 1988), director Zeki Ökten presents a melancholic portrayal of the working poor in a rapidly transforming neoliberal Turkey. At the center is *Dütdüt Mehmet* (protagonist), a clarinetist who supports his family by playing at nightclubs. Despite his honest efforts, he is unable to meet even the most basic needs of shelter and sustenance for his disabled child, his wife, and himself. His home—a squatter's house owned by his opportunistic brother-in-law—is soon to be demolished by urban developers, and Mehmet cannot afford rent elsewhere. He scrambles to survive, yet his income is perennially insufficient.

Mehmet's character embodies the neoliberal subject paralyzed by structural inequality, yet clinging to the seductive promise of personal success. Though he performs as a musician, he idealizes his craft with dreams of becoming the next Orhan Gencebay or İbrahim Tatlıses (Music stars of the period). Their posters and self-composed songs signal not resistance, but resignation to the fantasy of celebrity—a hallmark of neoliberal ideology where media visibility replaces collective political engagement. Rather than organizing or questioning systemic conditions, Mehmet turns inward, believing that success will arrive through talent and fate.

The film *Queer World* explicitly contrasts this Depoliticized Subjectivity with scenes of women protesting inflation by banging pots and pans. Mehmet dismisses their protest, saying, "Will life get cheaper by hitting pots?"—then ironically offers a musical demonstration of how to do it in rhythm. This moment captures his naivety and disconnection from class-based struggle, reinforcing a central critique of neoliberal culture: the internalization of helplessness masked by dreams of fame.

Meanwhile, Osman, the brother-in-law, epitomizes the corrupt petty bureaucrat thriving under 1980s economic liberalization. As a government messenger, he brags about how "a well-placed signature can make millions," championing a system of "my civil servant knows how to get things done." Osman's philosophy reflects the ruthless entrepreneurialism of Turkey's ANAP-era reforms, where public office becomes a gateway to private profit and where ethical considerations are abandoned in the name of survival.

Queer World captures the emotional disintegration of the working class, not through melodrama, but through everyday exhaustion, passivity, and deferred dreams. The neoliberal spirit of the 1980s is not one of organized rebellion but of inward retreat, where music replaces mobilization and fantasy replaces structural critique. Through Mehmet's broken clarinet notes and Osman's bureaucratic schemes, the film offers a quiet but damning diagnosis of a world where the poor are denied both voice and vision.

Although housing and rent problems were being addressed in Turkish cinema as early as the 1960s, they became much more visible and central to social realist narratives after the 1980s due to global factors such as the oil crisis and the international circulation of Arab capital. In early examples like *Bitter Life* (1962), filmed after the coup, issues related to housing and rent already appeared—showing, for instance, how newlyweds had to rent homes without basic utilities like electricity or water. Shared rooms among multiple families, high rents, and unfulfilled promises by politicians and the press were already visible in the 1960s, as seen in *The Epic of Ali of Keshan* and *Bus Passengers*. Although figures like Selahattin Acar even centered their political campaigns around the rent issue in 1979, systemic solutions remained elusive (Akdağ, 2018).

However, these concerns—treated as side themes in the pre-1980 period—assumed a far more prominent role in the aftermath of the 1980 coup. Films such as *The Tenant* reflected how the housing crisis persisted in the neoliberal period, while *The Handsome One*, starring Kemal Sunal, resonated with broad audiences by articulating collective urban anxieties. The narrative continued in *The Laughing Man*, where the character's struggle with recurrent demolitions of his self-built home and his eventual invention of a mobile house struck a chord with viewers. This post-1980 period also coincided with intensified real estate speculation, particularly driven by wealthy Arab investors enriched by the 1970s oil price surge. In fact, the couple who played the leading roles in the movie *The Handsome One* and displayed superhuman

strength to get married complain about the exorbitant rent prices and the Iranian-Arab capital's increasing real estate prices in Türkiye.

In this scene from *The Laughing Man*, the protagonist—still in search of a home—visits a modest neighborhood real estate agency. The setting itself is telling: the office is a makeshift, cramped structure cluttered with signs offering various properties in foreign currencies—$300, 250 Deutsche Marks, or 600 French Francs. These details subtly yet powerfully illustrate the decline of the Turkish lira under inflationary pressure and the increasing role of foreign currencies in the domestic housing market. The commodification of housing is no longer measured in local terms; instead, it reflects Turkey's integration into transnational economic flows.

This moment encapsulates several intersecting crises: the housing shortage, currency devaluation, and the deregulation of local markets. It also highlights how global capital—in this case, the influx of remittances from Turkish workers in Germany—reshapes urban space. These migrant laborers, who had accumulated foreign currency abroad, often returned to Turkey to invest in property. While such investment appeared beneficial at the surface, it frequently bypassed formal financial channels, resulting in unregulated or even illicit cash flows. The outcome was a distortion of the local housing economy: prices were set according to the value of international currencies, alienating citizens whose incomes remained tied to a devalued national currency. Thus, the scene serves as a satirical but sharp critique of the neoliberal housing economy, revealing how capital mobility and informal financial mechanisms exacerbated inequality and urban exclusion. Through the lens of a comic real estate transaction, the film exposes how everyday struggles—like securing a place to live—are enmeshed within larger geopolitical and economic transformations.

In *The Handsome One*, the protagonists—deeply in love—struggle intensely to get married, yet housing emerges as a central and insurmountable obstacle. At the heart of the narrative there lies the issue of shelter, positioned not merely as a logistical challenge but as a structural barrier to personal happiness. The housing crisis is woven into the everyday routines of the characters, highlighting its pervasive nature. The dialogue below exemplifies how global capital disrupts local lives, articulating a localized resistance to neoliberal intrusion. As seen in the images, actions such as setting up a protest tent in Taksim Square, sleeping in a truck bed, or threatening to set fire to an unfinished building serve as expressions of protest by the couple. Kemal Sunal's character voices a critique of neoliberal housing policies with the following monologue:

> "We are not squatters. We are a newlywed couple simply in search of a place to live. If you try to use force, I will burn the building down. We never wanted to reach this point; we did everything we could to avoid it. But for a livable flat, they asked for 1000 Deutsche Marks a month, and our combined salary is only 350,000 lira. How could we afford it? We even agreed to live in a chicken coop. Then came the Arabs offering 700,000 a month, and the Iranians offering 20,000 a day. Suddenly,

> we were competing with foreigners in our own country, with our own money. We became the outsiders. No force will remove us from here—only our corpses will. We will live here until we have a roof over our heads."

This scene encapsulates a resistance against the commodification of urban space and the foreignization of local citizens in their own country. It critiques a system in which shelter becomes a luxury and local populations are displaced by global capital flows, echoing broader concerns central to neoliberal urbanism.

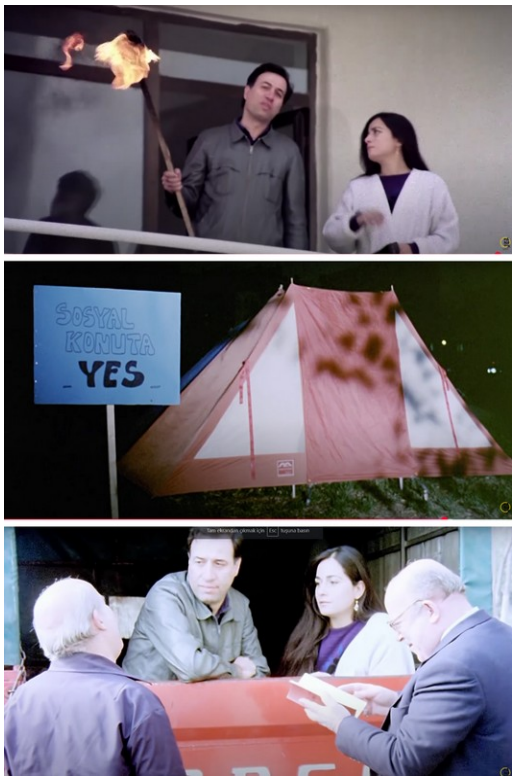

Figure 2. Scenes from *The Handsome One* (1987), Source: Fanatik Film

The housing crisis and the symbolic decline of the middle class are poignantly expressed in *The Tenant* and *The Handsome One*, where inflation, speculative capital, and foreign real estate investments render once-accessible domestic spaces unattainable. These films dramatize how economic capital becomes the sole determinant of social belonging, collapsing the symbolic stability once attached to home ownership, marriage, and professional status.

In *The Tenant*, the dialogue between the landlord and the tenant reveals the impact of transnational socio-economic dynamics on everyday urban life in Turkey. The landlord demands the evacuation of the apartment, claiming that his daughter and son-in-law are returning from Germany and would like to live in their own property. Alternatively, he proposes that the tenant may stay—provided the rent is raised to match the couple's "social status" acquired abroad. The underlying logic is not based on need or fairness, but on aligning the value of domestic

property with the perceived prestige of foreign-earned capital. This negotiation reflects a larger pattern in post-1980s Turkish urban life, where remittances and foreign status began reshaping rental markets. The landlord's statement, "If you raise the rent to match my daughter and son-in-law's social standing, there will be no need to vacate," reveals how international hierarchies and symbolic capital influence local housing practices. The return of Turkish migrants from Europe—especially Germany—often came with higher expectations, and domestic landlords sought to monetize this through disproportionate rent hikes. The scene illustrates how global economic asymmetries penetrate local relationships, turning housing into a battleground of class status and international currency power. Rather than functioning as a basic right or shelter, the home becomes a tradable commodity, subject to social comparison and transnational capital flow. It satirically portrays the moral absurdity of this system—where displacement is justified not by legal necessity, but by social vanity and economic opportunism.

In neo-liberal-realism era rather than fighting against the system in an organized manner, human figures who struggle within themselves and who lose this and lose their mental health because they cannot engage with the system have been created. Inflation and the high cost of living are in a position to crush people. In *The Naked Citizen*, the mental health of a head of a family is deteriorated because he cannot support his family. However, there is no suggestion against this at the end of the film. A similar migration situation is also valid for the film *The teacher*, which was shot in the same years. The film tells the story of a teacher and his family's financial problems after they are forced to migrate to a big city because they are assigned there. Filmic story tells of a successful teacher who has difficulty making ends meet and has to do extra work and who also loses his mental health. The film ends with the teacher being taken to the mental hospital. There is no final frame message in these films that would mobilize the audience against the system. In this context, *The Teacher* criticizes the withdrawal of the state from education and public service, as civil servants are forced into informal labor markets and symbolic professions like teaching are economically devalued. These narratives document the shrinking of public welfare and the collapse of institutional cultural capital.

The Naked Citizen turns the neoliberal obsession with performance into satire. The protagonist, unable to maintain a decent life despite holding eight jobs, is forced to strip in public—a moment that allegorizes the commodification of identity and the new logic of media spectacle as a means of survival. This shift from structural critique to self-exposure reflects the neoliberal valorization of visibility over competence.

One of the films that tells the reflections of the neoliberal economic order in Türkiye is *The Wheel* (Çark, 1987) which was directed by Muzaffer Hiçdurmaz. It is a striking example of Turkish labor cinema from the post-1980 coup period, offering a vivid critique of systemic exploitation and social injustice. Originally

titled *Direniş* (*Resistance*), the film's name was changed to *The Wheel* due to political pressures, illustrating the broader climate of censorship and suppression following the 1980 military coup (Geçer, 2021). The film follows Rauf, a skilled worker played by Tarık Akan, as he navigates a series of harsh industrial environments—from glass factories to shipyards and leather workshops—each marked by degrading labor conditions and economic marginalization. Set against the backdrop of a neoliberal restructuring process, the narrative exposes the deepening precariousness of working life, characterized by low wages, job insecurity, and dangerous physical environments. Notably, *The Wheel* also emphasizes the resistance of the labor movement, portraying the collective efforts of unionized workers to organize, protest, and survive within an increasingly repressive regime. Despite distribution limitations, the film remains a significant cultural artifact that not only documents the economic and psychological toll of labor exploitation but also gives voice to a working class struggling to assert its dignity and rights in the face of growing authoritarianism and economic liberalization.

The film *The Wheel* delivers a raw and visceral depiction of working-class exploitation under precarious and dehumanizing conditions. In one of the opening sequences, neighborhood men labor in a glass factory—barefoot or in worn-out slippers, lacking even the most basic safety gear. Their exposure to extreme heat and danger becomes a visual metaphor for their systemic disposability. The absence of protective equipment not only symbolizes economic desperation but also highlights the negligence of industrial employers in a deregulated labor market.

One worker's father falls gravely ill, but the son struggles to secure treatment due to a privatized and profit-driven healthcare system. Despite a lifetime of uninsured labor, the father is denied care and ultimately dies. As the plastic industry outpaces glass production, the factory closes. The workers, lacking union representation, are dismissed without recourse. Their despair is voiced in the line: "If you were in Germany, you'd be saved from this hell."

Jobless and abandoned, the men roam in search of work, facing an economic climate where unemployment spreads like a plague. Eventually, they find a position at a shipyard—only to be rejected due to their interest in unionizing. They move on to a leather factory, where conditions are appalling: child laborers and disabled workers toil side by side, undocumented migrants are exploited, and breaks for meals are a luxury. The factory operates like a prison of flesh and fire, sustained by capitalist logic that values profit over people.

The Wheel exposes the brutality of a patronage-based labor regime, where individuals are stripped of agency and community is fractured. The film denounces how the unchecked rise of capital transforms labor into disposable bodies and flattens all other values into monetary calculation. Through its vivid

and often disturbing imagery, the film presents a haunting indictment of neoliberal industrial decline and its human cost.

One of the most other important subjects of the 1980s Turkish cinema was about the banker crisis that emerged as a result of bankers defrauding the public. The serious economic problems that emerged after the 1980 coup, the disappearance of state security, public privatizations, and the excessive irregularity of market conditions and the melting salaries due to high inflation caused the society to experience very serious financial difficulties. During this process, bankers, who emerged as a hope to hold on to life, invested the money they collected from the public at high interest rates and began to pay the interest income back to the public in the form of monthly salaries. A very significant segment of the society in Türkiye in the 1980s trusted these bankers and deposited their money. It will be seen that these bankers, who also received licenses from the state, increased in number over time and began to defraud the public. The films *Banker Bilo* (1980) and *Attack on Interest* (1982) stand out as black-humour representations of the neoliberal economic transformations of the 1980s. Unlike the socially idealistic cinema of the 1960s and 1970s, which often proposed clear solutions, these films employ ambiguous endings that foreground observation and critique rather than resolution.

The decade following the 1980 military coup in Turkey marked a fundamental rupture in cinematic representation, as films shifted from collective narratives rooted in class struggle to individualized stories shaped by economic survival and systemic disintegration. This period can be understood through the lens of Neo-Liberal Realism, a cinematic paradigm in which films reflect not political mobilization, but existential anxiety, financial precarity, and moral ambiguity. One of the era's most prominent themes was the precarization of labor. In *A Sip of Love* (1984), for example, female labor is depicted as both emotionally and economically marginalized, revealing how domestic roles collapse under neoliberal economic pressures and rendering women effectively invisible both at home and in the workforce. Similarly, *The Wheel* (1987) and *The Treadmill* (1982) portray repetitive, underpaid labor as absurd and dehumanizing, serving as allegories for the loss of dignity in a deregulated economy.

In *A Sip of Love* (1984), the protagonist Aygül's visibility and agency emerge only when she enters the labor force. Her domestic life is dominated by a husband who is economically inactive, spends his time gambling in coffeehouses, and embodies a crisis of masculinity—unemployed, passive, and both economically and sexually disempowered. Aygül, a mother of four, realizes that emancipation from both this dysfunctional marriage and the stifling pressures of patriarchal neighborhood norms is only possible through wage labor.

The contrast between Aygül and the women in her neighborhood is striking. While others rely on superstition, charms, and folk rituals to alter their fates, Aygül chooses factory work and productive labor. Through employment, she gains not

only financial independence but also gendered autonomy. As Nazlı Bayram (2025) explains, Aygül's economic self-sufficiency becomes the turning point that enables her to leave her husband and pursue a life rooted in personal desire and emotional fulfillment. However, the film's conclusion hints at the cyclical nature of gendered roles—Aygül, now with a new partner, re-enters domesticity and motherhood, suggesting the persistence of structural constraints on female independence.

But on the other hand, in order to exist in a male-dominated world, Aygül is forced to give up her femininity and fight like a man in a man's world. The film offers a powerful critique of traditional gender roles and underscores how women's emancipation is intimately tied to their access to labor and income. Aygül's journey from dependence to independence, and perhaps back again, reflects the complex, often circular path of male-gendered economic liberation in patriarchal societies.

Another dominant theme is systemic corruption and institutional failure, captured in *The Honest One* (Namuslu, 1985), where honesty itself becomes a liability. Here, symbolic capital—such as moral integrity—loses its value in a neoliberal order where visibility and manipulation triumph over substance. In *The Crook* (Zübük, 1980) and *The Plaintiff* (Davacı, 1986), political fraud and the commodification of justice reflect the erosion of public trust in institutions, illustrating Bourdieu's claim that neoliberalism restructures fields of power by replacing civic values with transactional logics.

In *The Crook* based on the satirical novel by Aziz Nesin, the eponymous character İbrahim Zübükzade serves as a sharp and timeless critique of Machiavellian political figures in modern Turkey. Far from being a traditional statesman, Zübükzade operates more like a pragmatic boss, transforming governance into a space for personal economic gain. His actions echo the traits of today's populist opportunists who exploit public office not to serve, but to extract value and consolidate power.

One of the film's greatest achievements lies in its dual critique—not only of cunning politicians, but also of the electorate that continuously allows itself to be deceived. As Öziş (2017) argues, the power of Zübük is rooted in its ability to say plainly to the audience: "Wake up." This critique goes beyond the individual—it targets a structural and cultural dynamic in which citizens, through blind faith or inaction, become complicit in their own manipulation. Zübükzade's political rise is fueled by promises of mosques, roads, and dams—symbolic infrastructures that exploit the emotional and religious expectations of voters. Through these empty gestures, Zübük not only ridicules populist rhetoric but also reveals how democracy can be hollowed out when language becomes a tool of deception. His character, constantly scheming and lying, illustrates the parasitic ascent of those who climb the social ladder by trampling the very communities they claim to represent. Ultimately, Zübük reflects Aziz Nesin's moral vision: an insistence on justice, and a warning against political greed and social complacency. The film's ending, with a newspaper headline proclaiming "The Zübükzade era is over," reaffirms

Yeşilçam's narrative tradition of moral closure—asserting that no evil goes unpunished. This resolution not only satisfies cinematic conventions but also serves as a cathartic reassurance to viewers who yearn for ethical restoration in public life.

In *Plaintiff*, directed by Zeki Ökten and starring Kemal Sunal, the storyline follows a protracted legal dispute between two neighbors in a rural village. Set in Yenişehir, Bursa, the film unfolds over a span of seven years, offering a sharp critique of the inefficiency and moral ambiguity of the Turkish judicial system. What begins as a petty disagreement gradually turns into a bureaucratic purgatory, where justice is both delayed and distorted.



Figure 3. 2 Scenes from "Plaintiff" (1986), Source: Gülşah Film

A particularly poignant layer of the narrative is the presence of street vendors and informal workers who operate outside the courthouse. These characters turn the legal process into an economic opportunity, selling food, beverages, and services to those caught in the long cycle of trials. Their persistent visibility symbolizes how the judiciary, instead of being a space for impartial justice, has become a setting for profit, exploitation, and informal economies. The court becomes not a house of resolution, but a marketplace.

The film exposes how the judicial system, entangled with greedy lawyers and bribes disguised as settlement offers, transforms legal grievances into endless and absurd performances. This commercialization of justice reflects a broader critique

of what could be called "judicial capitalism"—where access to justice is shaped by money, endurance, and negotiation rather than truth or fairness.

Through satire and repetition, *Plaintiff* portrays the judiciary not as an institution of moral clarity, but as an extended economic process, feeding a network of opportunists who survive off the system's inefficiencies. The absurd length of the lawsuit reflects the lived frustrations of citizens who, in seeking justice, find themselves trapped in a game of endurance and expense.

Taken together, these films construct a cinematic cartography of the neoliberal subject—fragmented, precarious, and increasingly depoliticized. Through motifs of housing, labor, ethics, and media, Turkish cinema in the 1980s reveals how neoliberal rationality restructures not only economies but everyday life, identity, and narrative imagination. The figure below effectively visualizes the change after 1980 and produces a density map:

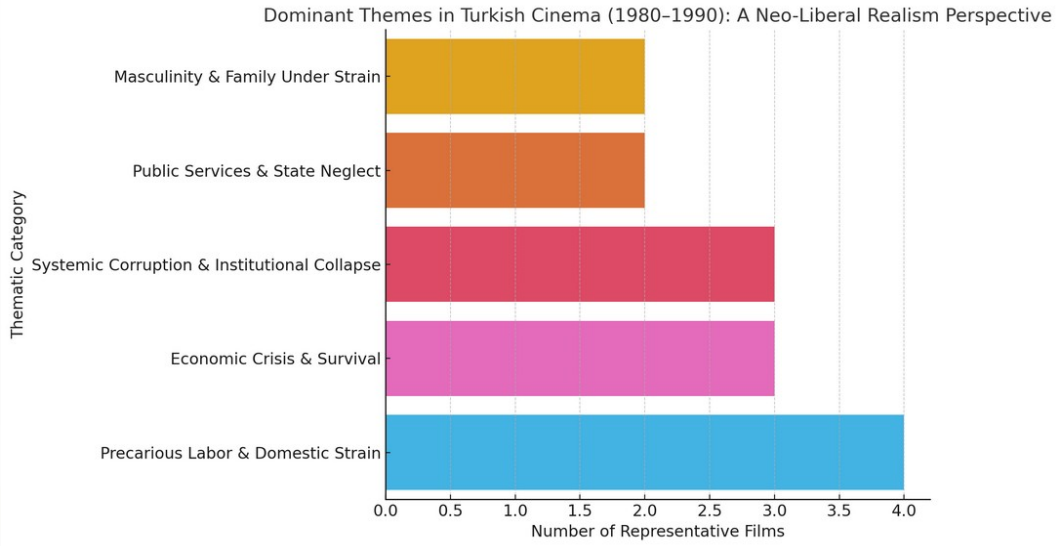

Figure 4. Statistics about dominant themes in Turkish Cinema (1980–1990) in the context of the Neo-Liberal Realism Perspective

Both *The Interest Rush* and *Treadmill* released in the early 1980s, explore the ideological and material consequences of Turkey's transition to a neoliberal economy, particularly following the 1980 military coup. However, the two films adopt different narrative lenses and tonal strategies to depict the rise of finance capitalism and the social disintegration it induces.

In *The Interest Rush*, the story centers around Kamil Bey, a civil servant who represents the cautious, honest middle class clinging to traditional values of hard work and stability. The film traces his slow seduction into the world of speculative banking, catalyzed by government announcements legitimizing banker offices. Through Kamil's eyes, the film documents how legal frameworks are manipulated to manufacture consent among ordinary people—encouraging them to gamble their life savings for promised wealth. This descent is marked by scenes such

as the crowded banker offices, the euphoric gathering at Çiçek Pasajı, and the symbolic ice rink sequence, where skaters slide on slippery surfaces—mirroring the instability of a society built on speculative finance.

Treadmill, in contrast, employs satire and caricature to dissect the opportunists who exploit the same financial system. Banker Yakup is not a victim, but the architect of deception. Through fraudulent schemes and cynical manipulation, he embodies the dark psychology of those who thrive in deregulated markets. His scapegoating of the unsuspecting bookkeeper Ali—who is jailed for Yakup's crimes—reveals how neoliberalism does not merely fail to protect the innocent; it actively punishes them. One of the most memorable scenes, where a religiously posturing character mocks secular values while leering at a woman, showcases the film's sharp critique of moral hypocrisy under the guise of piety—a familiar trait in post-1980 Turkish sociopolitical life.

Whereas *The Interest Rush* mourns the collapse of collective ethics and social trust through the lens of a desperate but principled man, *Treadmill* mocks the performative morality and greed of the new bourgeoisie. The former is a social tragedy; the latter, a satirical farce. Yet both films converge in their conclusion: the neoliberal promise of effortless enrichment leads not to prosperity, but to ruin, betrayal, and loss. Kamil Bey's financial dreams evaporate alongside state accountability, while Yakup's fabricated suicide underscores how illusion and impunity go hand-in-hand in the world of finance. Moreover, both films reveal how the state subtly reinforces this system. In *The Interest Rush*, the Finance Minister's public statement blaming citizens for "gambling" away their money reflects a neoliberal discourse of individual responsibility that absolves the state of its regulatory failures. In *Treadmill*, Yakup's impunity suggests a state indifferent to—or even complicit in—economic predation. While Kamil Bey is a "banker victim," Ali becomes a prisoner of bureaucratic indifference, punished for his trust.

In *The Poor Man* (Yoksul, 1986), Kemal Sunal portrays a naïve and kind-hearted tea server working in a bustling han (urban inn or commercial arcade). His character, aptly named "Yoksul" (literally and ironically "the Poor"), represents the voiceless and unorganized lower class of the neoliberal 1980s in Turkey. Despite his good intentions and hard work, he is repeatedly exploited by everyone around him—his boss, his coworkers, even the woman he loves. Yoksul is employed informally and underpaid by Süleyman Bey, the cynical owner of the tea house who epitomizes the opportunistic spirit of the post-1980 Turkish liberal economy. Süleyman's mantra—"It's the age of the economy, cheat or be cheated"—encapsulates the rise of market-oriented morality. In the han, commerce has replaced community; profit overshadows ethics. Yoksul falls in love with Leyla, a beautiful textile worker who manipulates his affection for material gain—coaxing him into buying gifts like watches and stereo systems. Her betrayal, when she runs off with a building contractor, mirrors the broader theme of moral erosion in neoliberal society, where relationships are transactional and upward mobility often depends on deceit.

Economically and emotionally crushed, Yoksul begins to awaken through the guidance of Kerim Bey, a modern, English-speaking financial advisor who embodies the rational, technocratic spirit of the new capitalist order. With Kerim's help, Yoksul exposes Süleyman Bey's corruption and takes over the tea business himself-rising from exploited laborer to small-time entrepreneur.

From a political economy perspective, the film allegorizes the social dislocations of the Özal era, during which privatization, deregulation, and free-market ideology reshaped Turkey's urban fabric. As wages declined and labor protections vanished, the working poor were left to fend for themselves, often absorbing neoliberal ideals without structural support. The film critiques this system's empty promises, showing that while anyone can become rich, it is often at the cost of solidarity, dignity, and truth. Ultimately, Yoksul is a darkly comic parable about the illusion of social mobility and the internalization of neoliberal values by those it harms most. Through the character of Yoksul, the film reveals how systemic poverty persists not only through exploitation, but through the moral compromises that the poor are forced to make under the weight of structural injustice.

Finally, *The Lucky Worker* (1980) constructs a poignant critique of Turkey's early neoliberal transformation by exposing how mass media, advertising, and speculative capital commodify not only labor, but hope itself. Through the naive yet hardworking character of Mehmet Ali—played brilliantly by İlyas Salman—the film dramatizes how the working class is manipulated and discarded in a society where visibility substitutes for justice and spectacle replaces substance. The film begins with Mehmet Ali leaving his rural village and family behind in pursuit of a better life in Istanbul. As a construction worker, he is emblematic of the migrant labor force-honest, skilled, and determined to build a stable future. His early scenes on the construction site emphasize solidarity, physical labor, and ambition. He dreams not of riches but of becoming a master bricklayer. However, this dream is quickly hijacked by the machinery of capitalist media. A turning point occurs when Mehmet Ali is selected in a promotional lottery organized by Millet Bankası—a fictional stand-in for corporate finance. The bank collaborates with a manipulative advertising firm run by Mösyö Alber, who turns Mehmet Ali into a marketing tool. He is paraded across media platforms as a model "lucky worker" who has supposedly won an apartment. Gifts, attention, and public admiration flood in. Yet all of this is an elaborate façade: the apartment is never legally his, no deed is handed over, and no one—including Mehmet Ali himself—thinks to ask for proof. This orchestrated fraud mirrors the spectacle-driven logic of neoliberal capitalism, where images of upward mobility are deployed to pacify and distract the masses. The film's most critical commentary emerges through the character of the female journalist, who represents public conscience and investigative truth. Her boss's comment—"You know what I like most about you? Your frankness, ambition, your drive to rise… and of course, your famous forgetfulness"—encapsulates how even

public awareness is commodified and co-opted. The media, while seemingly exposing injustice, often functions as a tool of the same system it critiques.

As the truth unravels, Mehmet Ali's mental state deteriorates. The film's climax —his psychological collapse—symbolizes the destruction not only of his dream but of his very sense of self. What begins as a hopeful migration ends in alienation, madness, and the bitter realization that he was never the subject of empowerment, but the object of exploitation. *The Lucky Worker* functions as a devastating allegory of neoliberal spectacle, exposing how public institutions, private capital, and mass media coalesce to construct illusions of mobility while maintaining rigid class hierarchies. Mehmet Ali, the laborer who once believed in the dignity of work, becomes a disposable icon in a system that feeds off manipulated dreams. His tragedy is not that he was poor, but that he was made to believe—however briefly—that he had won.



Figure 5. Scenes from "The Lucky Worker" (1980), Source: Fanatik Film

Conclusions

In conclusion, the article demonstrates that Turkish cinema of the 1980s did not merely adapt to economic change but actively registered and reproduced the symbolic grammar of neoliberalism. Through the framework of Neoliberal Realism, it becomes clear that cinema functioned as a site where older dispositions (habitus) collided with new market-driven fields, producing characters marked by precarity, institutional abandonment, and the commodification of selfhood.

By reading these films not as isolated texts but as socially situated narratives, the study offers a novel theoretical model that connects aesthetics with structural change. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how cinema mediates economic ideology, and how symbolic capital is contested and recalibrated in visual culture under neoliberal conditions.

In the method section, concise answers to the questions that determine the problematic of the article were found as follows. These answers will be answered by further elaboration in the following paragraphs. In response to the first question, the analysis demonstrates that the selected films construct narrative worlds shaped by economic precarity, deregulated labor markets, and moral erosion. Characters are often portrayed as navigating broken institutions (e.g., schools, bureaucracies, the press), and are forced to survive through improvisation, deception, or visibility. These selected films narrativize not merely poverty or unemployment, but the deep cultural and symbolic consequences of neoliberalism: the loss of status, the collapse of collective agency, and the commodification of identity.

With regard to the second question, the concept of Neoliberal Realism emerges as a distinct narrative and aesthetic formation. Unlike the politically charged and ideologically explicit social realism of previous decades, these films favor individualized, depoliticized storylines grounded in domestic, professional, or existential crises. The narrative focus shifts from structural critique to the intimate dilemmas of characters struggling to reconcile outdated moral codes with new material realities. This realism is not defined by fidelity to material detail alone, but by its emphasis on symbolic displacement, social fragmentation, and the performativity of survival under neoliberal logic.

As for the third question, Bourdieu's framework reveals how characters' dispositions (habitus) are misaligned with the evolving socio-economic field, producing both personal crises and social commentary. The erosion of cultural and symbolic capital—evident in the figure of the teacher reduced to precarious work, or the honest man forced into dishonesty—exemplifies the symbolic violence of the period. These films show how neoliberalism reshapes not only external conditions but also internalized norms, as characters attempt to reposition themselves within a field that now values spectacle, adaptability, and entrepreneurial subjectivity over public service or ethical coherence.

However, the 1980 military coup marked a radical rupture in this trajectory. With the institutionalization of censorship, the dissolution of political parties, and the aggressive implementation of neoliberal economic policies, Turkish cinema was forced to abandon its overtly political stance. The post-coup period witnessed not just a shift in narrative content but a deeper epistemological transformation: from the mobilizing potential of cinema to its containment within depoliticized, commodified, and emotionally fragmented representations. What had once been

a cinema of political awakening transformed into a cinema of personal survival and passive spectatorship.

In this new context, films increasingly relied on indirect political registers, favoring ironic distance, satire, and psychological interiority over revolutionary critique. The protagonists of 1980s cinema—disillusioned teachers, debt-ridden public workers, alienated tenants—embodied a new cultural logic where economic survival superseded ideological clarity. Films with neoliberal reality substitute structural critique with black comedy, presenting moral decay and institutional collapse not as political outcomes, but as symptoms of an abstract, depersonalized economic order. These narratives no longer demand collective change; rather, they offer a melancholic reflection on the invisibility and exhaustion of resistance in a society restructured by market logic.

Moreover, the very aesthetic tools of pre-1980 political cinema—once shaped by Brechtian distanciation, documentary realism, and collective subjectivity—began to dissolve under the influence of the neoliberal imaginary. The emerging figure of the neoliberal subject is atomized, emotionally disoriented, and symbolically disarmed. The space once occupied by class solidarity and radical aspiration is now filled with consumer fantasies, status anxiety, and the commodification of identity. Even humour, once used as a strategy of subversion, is co-opted by the dominant ideology, reframed as a coping mechanism rather than a mode of critique.

The decline in politically potent film production in the 1980s is thus not simply quantitative but profoundly symptomatic of a broader cultural transformation: a cinema that once demanded "How do we change the system?" now whispers, "How do we endure it?" This transition, aptly conceptualized as Neo-Liberal Realism, marks the absorption of radical aesthetics into a cinematic habitus aligned with individualism, privatization, and ideological resignation. Turkish cinema, in turn, ceased to function as a battleground for political meaning and became a stage for the dramatization of neoliberal fatigue.

A recurring motif in films - *The Wheel*, *The Tenant*, and *Queer World* etc.- is the fractured male identity in a neoliberal order. Once defined through labor and household authority, the male protagonists find themselves disempowered by unemployment, homelessness, and domestic strain. Their retreat—into silence, madness, or escapism—mirrors a broader class disorientation. These films depict not only economic hardship but the symbolic death of the patriarch as a stable social figure. This corpus of films constructs a cinematic grammar of neoliberal realism where hope is manufactured through spectacle, class struggle is obscured by market language, and characters drift between humiliation and illusion. Far from offering melodramatic resolution, these films reveal the psychological, domestic, and moral erosion that underpins Turkey's neoliberal transformation. What unites these films is not merely their economic critique, but their tragicomic rendering of a society where survival replaces solidarity and image supplants ideology.

When viewed through the Bourdieusian lens of habitus, field, and capital, the narrative landscapes of Turkish cinema between 1980 and 1990 present more than individual tales of misfortune or triumph—they materialize as symbolic representations of displaced class positions under neoliberal restructuring. These films not only document the socio-economic shocks of the post-1980 Turkish economy but also illustrate the recalibration of class habitus under new capitalist configurations. In these narratives, the working-class protagonists—shaped by an ethos of dignity and modest survival—are gradually dislocated from their traditional positions within the social field, thrust into alien realms where symbolic and economic capital are both hyper-inflated and grotesquely uneven.

Bourdieu's concept of *illusio*—the deep belief in the value of participation in a social game—helps elucidate the protagonists' misplaced faith in social mobility. In *The Lucky Worker*, Mehmet Ali is seduced by the illusion of class ascension via media spectacle. Similarly, in *The Naked Citizen*, nudity becomes a mediatic currency for survival in a system where economic capital is unattainable through traditional labor. These acts of desperate self-representation reflect an enforced recalibration of symbolic capital in the absence of economic autonomy. The "game" of neoliberalism demands participation, but offers its own rigged rules.

The recurring motif of media-facilitated social mobility also echoes the transformation of field dynamics in neoliberal contexts. In *Queer World*, the protagonist's naive attempt to navigate the cultural field through music and cassette dreams underscores Bourdieu's point that without the necessary cultural and social capital, attempts to enter higher fields often result in symbolic violence. His failure, like that of others, is not personal but structural—it arises from a mismatch between habitus and field.

In these films, we witness what Bourdieu called the "left hand of the state"—the retreat of protective institutions—replaced by deregulated market mechanisms and coercive survival strategies. Whether it's the illusion of a gifted apartment (*The Lucky Worker*), the sexualized spectacle of naked resistance (*The Naked Citizen*), or the ever-shifting dreams of cassette-born stardom (*Queer World*), these stories stage a tragicomic dance between individual agency and the structuring violence of capital.

The Turkish films produced in the aftermath of the 1980 military coup do not merely reflect a shift in aesthetic preferences or thematic concerns; rather, they constitute a profound transformation in the symbolic and social architecture of cinema itself. In contrast to the collectivist ethos of the 1960–1980 period, when social realism mobilized narratives of class struggle, solidarity, and moral awakening, the films of the following decade enact what may be called a cinematic deconstruction of habitus. Characters once positioned as agents of political change now find themselves dislocated in a field dominated by market rationality, Spectacularization of Precarity, and fragmented labor. The notion of cultural capital—once symbolized by moral integrity, educational credentials, or professional pres-

tige—is revealed as non-convertible under neoliberal conditions. These films thus illustrate the central paradox of neoliberal subjectivity: survival without meaning, visibility without value, and adaptation without agency.

The theme of alienation within the family and home further deepens this diagnosis. In films such as *The Tenant* and *The Handsome One*, the domestic space ceases to function as a refuge or locus of identity. Housing is commodified, priced in foreign currencies, and transformed into an arena of struggle against external economic forces. The protagonists' inability to secure shelter is not merely a material failure but a symbolic disinheritance, reflecting how national citizens are rendered foreign in their own land. The presence of Iranian and Arab investors in these narratives is not coincidental—it marks the globalization of capital and the foreignization of the intimate, where marriage, family, and home are subordinated to speculative logic. This spatial alienation, embedded in the visual grammar of these films, underscores the erosion of the traditional petit-bourgeois dream and the emergence of a new urban precarity.

Equally significant is the way these films portray labor. *The Wheel* and *The Treadmill* present work not as a path to dignity but as a site of repetition, exhaustion, and disposability. In these narratives, labor is not a source of moral or social affirmation but a treadmill of survival, where the body is sacrificed to the indifference of capital. The absence of protective gear, the denial of healthcare, and the rejection of unionization reflect a deliberate dismantling of collective labor structures. These films expose how neoliberalism extracts surplus from vulnerability, valorizes overwork, and isolates workers into fragmented experiences devoid of solidarity. The characters' responses—despair, resignation, or desperate entrepreneurship—mirror the broader depoliticization of the era. Protest is replaced by personal hustle, and collective resistance by resigned adaptation.

This inward turn is especially visible in *The Teacher*, *The Honest One* and *The Naked Citizen* where civil servants—once icons of state authority and social progress—are humiliated by economic degradation. Their descent into mental illness is not anecdotal but structural, a symptom of a society in which the state has abdicated its symbolic and material responsibilities. The recurring trope of institutionalization—whether psychiatric or bureaucratic—emerges as a metaphor for the collapse of the public sphere, where service is no longer a form of nation-building but an act of silent martyrdom. These films articulate, with subtle intensity, the erosion of moral economy, as the characters are stripped not only of income but also of narrative coherence and social purpose.

Crucially, these films also embody the operations of symbolic violence, in which structures of domination are naturalized, internalized, and reproduced without direct coercion. The internalization of failure, the normalization of humiliation, and the moral resignation that permeates these neoliberal films signal how neoliberalism reshapes not only institutions but also desires, hopes, and subjectiv-

ities. Individuals come to accept their dispossession as fate, their invisibility as normal, and their unfreedom as choice.

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The first author (Serhat Yetimova) played a leading and active role in the thematic design of the article, academic writing, methodology development, data collection, literature review, analytical examinations, as well as the preparation of visuals and tables, and the findings and conclusion sections. The second author (Menderes Akdağ) contributed to the thematic structure of the article and made significant contributions to the film analyses and the conclusion section. The third author (Mustafa Aslan) also contributed to the film analyses and the conclusion section.

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Ludosis in Video Game Ontology or How to Live within a Mess

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Abstract

From its very beginning, the field of game studies is haunted by the question of video game ontology: what is a game and what are its fundamental components? Numerous authors, such as Ian Bogost and Alex Gekker, have written on the impossibility of establishing an exhaustive ontology of games. At the same time, game design frameworks, such as MDA or SSM, are being continuously developed, being ontological models themselves, designed for practical application. Striving to compare extant models, many authors in game studies employ the term "ontology" in an uncritical manner, haphazardly inheriting meanings from different disciplines: ranging from philosophy to technical fields. In order to work through the resulting contradictions, the article proposes an overhaul of the video game ontology project, taking into account its roots in computer science, borrowing the concept of conceptualization from the latter—and using this concept to replace the pursuit to pin down the fundamental metaphysics of video games. Drawing from Ian Bogost's "flat video game ontology" and the post-humanities, the article argues for the necessity of "democratizing" video game metaphysics—so that static models and fundamental definitions are surpassed by mutable conceptualizations made by multiple actors involved in the construction of games (or in their "ludosis"). By analogy with "infra-language" of actor-network theory, the article offers a "ludosis-language", which can be employed to juxtapose, modify, and construct different ontological models of video games. A project of an interactive platform called LUDOSIS is also described, in order to outline a possible operationalization of the ludosis-language.

Keywords

Actor-Network Theory; Ludosis; Ontology; Design Framework; Game Design; Game Studies; Metaphysics; Applied Ontology; Post-humanities; Metagaming; Ludohermeneutics; Ontological Delegation; Mess

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Концепция людозиса в онтологии видеоигр, или как жить в бардаке

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Аннотация

Сферу Game Studies (исследований видеоигр) с самого начала пронизывает вопрос об онтологии видеоигр: что такое игра и каковы её фундаментальные компоненты? Ряд авторов, такие как Ян Богост и Алекс Геккер, говорят о невозможности установить окончательную онтологию игр. При этом параллельно развиваются гейм-дизайнерские фреймворки, такие как MDA и SSM, представляющие собой онтологические модели прикладного характера. Стремясь сопоставить существующие теории и модели, многие авторы в Game Studies используют понятие «онтология» нерефлексивно, хаотично наследуя значения из различных дисциплин: как философских, так и технических. Чтобы проработать возникающие в результате противоречия, статья предлагает пересмотреть проект онтологии видеоигр с учётом его корней в компьютерных науках, заимствуя оттуда принцип прикладной концептуализации — и заменяя им стремление зафиксировать фундаментальную метафизику видеоигр. Опираясь на «плоскую онтологию видеоигр» Яна Богоста и авторов постгуманитарного направления, статья обосновывает необходимость «демократизации» метафизики видеоигр — где вместо статичных моделей и фундаментальных определений на передний план выходят изменчивые концептуализации множества акторов, принимающих участие в конструировании игр (в их «людозисе»): игроков, исследователей, дизайнеров, критиков и так далее. По аналогии с «инфраязыком» в акторно-сетевой теории, в статье предлагается «людозис-язык», посредством которого можно сопоставлять друг с другом различные онтологические модели видеоигр, видоизменять их, а также конструировать новые. В качестве операционализации этого языка описывается проект интерактивной платформы LUDOSIS и общие принципы её работы.

Ключевые слова

акторно-сетевая теория; людозис; онтология; рамки проектирования; игровой дизайн; игровые исследования; метафизика; прикладная онтология; постгуманитарные науки; метагейминг; людогерменевтика; онтологическое делегирование; месс

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Введение

Как указывает Маркку Эсклинен (Eskelinen, 2001), история исследований видеоигр (game studies) во многом определяется усилиями по определению их основного объекта, которое представляется необходимым для обоснования game studies как автономного исследовательского направления. Иными словами, «парадоксальная задача создания интердисциплинарной дисциплины» (Stenros & Kultima, 2018, p. 344) подразумевает под собой постоянную выработку ответов на вопрос — «что такое видеоигра».

Сфера game studies (далее GS), занимающаяся этим и смежными вопросами (из чего состоит игра, как устроены отношения между её элементами, где пролегает граница между игровой и внеигровой реальностями) традиционно характеризуется как «онтология видеоигр» (Bogost, 2009; Ветушинский & Галанина, 2016)

Эспен Орсет и Павел Грабарчик в статье “An Ontological Meta-Model for Game Research” (Aarseth & Grabarczyk, 2018) суммируют и обобщают несколько видеоигровых онтологических моделей различных авторов, по-разному определяющих состав и отношения компонентов игры (правил, интерфейса, нарратива, игрока и т.д.). Орсет и Грабарчик рассматривают 4 известных модели (2018, p. 8) и 9 определений понятия «игра» (Aarseth & Grabarczyk, 2018, p. 9), и это уже даёт нам представление о насыщенности предметного поля самыми разными теоретическими проектами, стремящимися дать свой ответ на ключевые вопросы онтологии видеоигр.

Онтологические модели видеоигр могут иметь не только теоретически-междисциплинарный, но и прикладной характер — например, модели MDA (Mechanics, Dynamics, Aesthetics) (Hunicke et al., 2004) и SSM (System, Story, Mental Model) (Grip, 2017) являются прежде всего дизайнерскими фреймворками, призванными декомпозировать игры на ряд базовых структурных элементов и категорий сущностей (в случае MDA эти категории звучат как «механики, динамики и эстетики»), чтобы систематизировать процессы принятия дизайнерских решений.

Однако стоит заметить, что дизайнеры и исследователи подходят к онтологии игр по-разному. Для исследователей видеоигр важна полнота онтологии, максимально точно описывающей объект исследования — видеоигру. Именно стремлением достичь этой полноты обусловлены работы вроде «онтологической мета-модели» Орсета и Грабарчика (Aarseth & Grabarczyk, 2018). Это целеполагание строго академического характера, оно мало связано с задачей проектирования видеоигр. В этой статье мы предпримем попытку показать, чем может быть полезно корректно выстроенное сближение между этими сферами.

В данной статье мы также осуществим сжатый обзор онтологии видеоигр как направления, попытаемся проблематизировать его с опорой на критику

последних лет и предложим свои подходы к пересмотру онтологических исследований в Game Studies с учётом рассмотренной критики.

В последнем разделе статьи мы предлагаем свой подход к онтологии видеоигр, основанный на переосмыслении понятия «людозис», введённого финским исследователем Франсом Мяйря (Mäyrä, 2008). Кроме того, мы предлагаем проект платформы LUDOSIS, которая позволила бы работать с онтологиями видеоигр не как со статичными и взаимоисключающими формальными моделями, а как с изменяемыми, взаимосочетаемыми и ситуативными сборками.

Онтология «онтологии»?

Проблемы с онтологией видеоигр начинаются еще на уровне самого этого понятия. К сожалению, многие авторы Game Studies некритично используют слово «онтология», зачастую не давая описания самого понятия и пояснения, откуда оно заимствуется.

Например, в тексте “The Word Game: The ontology of an indefinable object” Эспена Орсета и Гордона Калеи (Aarseth & Calleja, 2015) слово «онтология» встречается исключительно в названии. Пояснения понятию в статье не даётся. Франс Мяйря в книге “An Introduction to Game Studies” говорит о том, что задача онтологии видеоигр — на фундаментальном уровне определить, что значит «игра» или «играть» (Mäyrä, 2008, pp. 156–157). Это роднит его с метафизическими исследованиями феномена игры, предшествовавшими эре компьютеров и представленными прежде всего Йоханом Хёйзингой (1992). В тексте “Videogames are a Mess” (Bogost, 2009) Ян Богост утверждает, что под онтологией имеет в виду именно метафизику игры. А вот Йозе Загал в “Game Ontology Project” (Zagal & Bruckman, 2008, p. 2) явно указывает на то, что его понятие онтологии относится не к философии и метафизике, а к понятию онтологии из компьютерных наук (“the term ontology is borrowed from computer science, and refers to the identification and (oftentimes formal) description of entities within a domain”) (2008, p. 2).

Далее, Орсет и Грабарчик в работе “An Ontological Meta-Model for Game Research” (Aarseth & Grabarczyk, 2018) ещё больше усложняют ситуацию тем, что в качестве онтологических моделей будут равно рассматривать как онтологию Загала (Zagal & Bruckman, 2008), так и модель Орсета и Калеи (Aarseth & Calleja, 2015) — хотя эти «онтологии» относятся к разным дисциплинам и оттого отличны по своему назначению. Таким образом авторы «онтологической мета-модели» стремятся спасти Game Studies от участи «описательного изоляционизма», при котором «междисциплинарное поле превращается в россыпь обособленных дисциплин, лишь номинально объединенных изучаемым ими феноменом» (2018, p. 5). Однако в стремлении к междисциплинарности они уделяют минимум внимания тому, как могут отличаться целеполагания разных онтологических проектов.

Слово «онтология» сформировано из греческих “ontos” (бытие) и “logos” (слово) (“Ontology,” n.d.). Дадим кратчайший обзор его истории.

Понятие было введено в 1613 году независимо двумя немецкими философами: Рудольфом Гоклениусом в «Философском Словаре» (Goclenius, 1613) и Якобом Лорхаодом в «Философском Театре» (Lorhard, 1613). Задача онтологии в философии близка к метафизике и стремится сформировать такой набор классов сущностей, который описывал бы вселенную, в которой мы находимся, и позволял бы понимать процессы, происходящие в этой вселенной. Таким образом, онтология — это подраздел метафизики о классификации всего, что находится во вселенной, и описании связей между этими явлениями. Результатом онтологического исследования является получение онтологических моделей (которые часто также называются «онтологиями»), содержащих в себе как раз набор классов и их отношений. Однако последующие работы, в частности, «Философские исследования» (Wittgenstein, 1953) Людвига Витгенштейна, ярко демонстрируют невозможность категоризации всех сущностей мира. Эта проблематизация привела к тому, что исследовательский фокус сместился в сторону формирования онтологических моделей в некоторой конкретной области (domain). Такой подход был назван «прикладной онтологией» (applied ontology) и получил большое распространение в компьютерных науках — например, в проекте «семантической паутины» (Breitman et al., 2007, p. 8).

Никола Гуарино (Guarino, 1998, p. 2) говорит о том, что задача философской онтологии — сформировать набор категорий, который был бы независим от языка, на котором этот набор категорий описан; в то же время задача онтологии в компьютерных науках (Computer Science, далее CS) — составить некоторый словарь, который описывал бы конкретные понятия в этой области и их взаимоотношения. Чтобы избежать такого терминологического тупика и нарушения первого правила логики, Гуарино предлагает ввести термин «концептуализация» (1998, pp. 2–3) для CS, который мог бы заменить понятие «онтологии» в этой сфере.

Для онтологий же Гуарино предлагает понятия (1998, pp. 7–8) «верхнеуровневая онтология» (top-level, upper-level ontology), задача которой — описывать некоторые общие для всех областей концепты (например, время или пространство) — и «прикладная онтология» (applied ontology), задачей которой становится описание некоторой области (domain). Грубер в “Toward principles for the design of ontologies used for knowledge sharing” (Gruber, 1995) тоже описывает концептуализацию, но уже как «абстрактный, упрощенный взгляд на мир, который мы пытаемся представить с той или иной целью. Каждая база знаний, система, основанная на знаниях, и агент, оперирующий знанием, имеют свою концептуализацию — явно или неявно». При этом, согласно Груберу, онтология является результатом такой концептуализации. Барри Смит в “Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Computing and Information” (Smith, 2004)

обращает внимание на то, что Грубер таким образом смещает разговор об онтологии от онтологического реализма — то есть представления о том, что онтология точно представляет реальность — в сторону представления о концептуализации, которая может быть верна или не верна для определённой реальности (Smith, 2004, p. 162). Следовательно, прикладная онтология для компьютерных наук — это не точное перечисление всех категорий, а скорее упрощённое и узкоспециальное представление о «рабочих» категориях, которое позволяет получать некоторый продуктивный результат в некоторой области.

Таким образом, со временем увеличивается понятийная дистанция между онтологией в компьютерных науках и классической западной метафизике. В то время как для философии важно понять, что из себя на самом деле представляет объект исследования и на какие категории его можно разбить, для CS важна не точность осмысления объекта, а такая концептуализация, которая позволит формировать для предметной области эвристически эффективные утверждения и даст возможность работать с ней продуктивным образом.

С точки зрения истории понятия, любая онтология видеоигр представляет собой именно «прикладную онтологию», так как описывает отдельную область: собственно видеоигры. При этом гейм-дизайнерские фреймворки по типу MDA (Hunicke et al., 2004), призванные помочь в разработке, ближе к «концептуализации» по Гуарино. Они не стремятся создать метафизику видеоигры, описать её фундаментальную реальность. Их задача — облегчить работу дизайнера.

Поэтому, казалось бы, не стоит рассматривать их в одном ряду с работами по метафизике видеоигр — ведь такие фреймворки просто не ставят перед собой метафизических задач. Однако, как мы попытаемся показать ниже, в контексте метафизики видеоигр, возможно, наиболее эффективной стратегией сегодня будет именно обращение к частичным концептуализациям и временным эвристикам. Не стоит пытаться использовать дизайнерские фреймворки как подспорье для фундаментального определения видеоигры и её компонентов — напротив, полезнее воспринимать любые определения видеоигры инструментально, как временные и ситуативные решения, подобные фреймворкам.

Погружаясь в бардак

На протяжении существования Game Studies ряд авторов — среди которых Алекс Геккер (Gekker, 2021), Ян Богост (Bogost, 2009), Стефани Болук и Патрик Лемьё (Boluk & Lemieux, 2017), Себастьян Детердинг (Deterding, 2015) — проблематизировали необходимость формирования универсальной и определённой метафизики видеоигры.

В общих чертах проблему описывает Богост в своей статье «Бардак в видеоиграх» (“Videogames are a Mess”) (Bogost, 2009), где он на примере своих исследований электронных игровых платформ (platform studies) указывает на невозможность обнаружения какого-либо фундаментального, «по-настоящему реального» слоя существования видеоигры. Подчёркивая роль платформ в онтологической композиции видеоигр, Богост демонстрирует: за, казалось бы, максимально формальным определением игры (например, как системы правил), призванным описать «игру-как-таковую», всегда можно обнаружить как минимум ещё одну реальность, без которой этот предположительно краеугольный слой так же не мог бы существовать.

Для объяснения этой ситуации он заимствует понятие «беспорядка» (“mess”) у акторно-сетевого теоретика Джона Ло. «Бардак» подразумевает отказ от установления всеобъемлющих онтологий и статичных формальных моделей — и, напротив, «позволяет бессвязностям проявиться» (Bogost, 2009; Law, 2006), уступая место ситуативному, конкретному анализу видеоигровых сборок и соединений. Исследователь заявляет:

> «В видеоиграх бардак. Нам не стоило бы и пытаться его устранить — даже если это было бы возможным» (Bogost, 2009).

В статье “Against Game Studies“ (Gekker, 2021), критически оценивающей современное состояние дисциплины, Алекс Геккер указывает на тот факт, что онтологические дебаты об играх продолжаются по сей день — но в то же время задачи чёткой демаркации «игрового» и «не-игрового» становятся всё менее релевантны по мере распространения игровых и геймплейных элементов в не-игровых медиа (Deterding, 2015). Геккер говорит об увеличении «пористости» и размытости объектов исследований видеоигр: он приводит в пример «неиграбельный» контент, такой как стримы и видеоблоги, при этом являющийся расширением видеоигровых миров. С другой стороны, видеоигровые механики все чаще проявляются в других видах медиа, примером чему служит интерактивный фильм «Черное зеркало: Брандашмыг» (“Black Mirror: Bandersnatch”), вышедший в 2018-м году (Gekker, 2021, p. 77). Отсюда возникает метафора «пористости», используемая Геккером: все больше форм начинают свободно циркулировать между игровыми и не-игровыми медиа, и граница между ними становится все более проницаемой. По мнению исследователя, это ставит под угрозу обоснованность существования самих Game Studies как отдельной сферы гуманитарных наук, по крайней мере, в нынешнем виде (Gekker, 2021, p. 77).

Стефани Болук и Патрик Лемьё (Boluk & Lemieux, 2017) описывают феномен, получивший название «метагейминг», который включает в себя всё многообразие практик нарушения онтологической границы «магического круга», призванного отделять игровую реальность от остального мира (Tekinbaş & Zimmerman, 2003). К метагеймингу Болук и Лемьё относят, помимо прочего, моддинг («фанатская» модификация программного обеспечения

игры), стриминг (онлайн-трансляция игрового процесса), контрплэй (намеренное пренебрежение целями или правилами игры) — и в целом использование игровых продуктов помимо задумок их разработчиков или издателей, часто в комбинации с не-игровым ПО или вне-игровыми медиа. Ярким примером метагейминга является «забастовка» фракции логистов в многопользовательском военном симуляторе “Foxhole”, случившаяся в 2022-м году (Granger, 2022). Логисты, класс игроков, отвечающих за поставку на виртуальный фронт припасов и снарядов, сформировали «профсоюз» и выдвинули разработчикам требования по изменению механик игры и более открытой коммуникации с фанатским сообществом. Чтобы добиться своих целей, игроки из профсоюза временно прекратили свою логистическую деятельность во вселенной игры, что частично «парализовало» фронт. Так, границы и нормы игровой реальности неожиданно расширились, став площадкой для локального политического противостояния между игроками и разработчиками “Foxhole”, причем совершенно неожиданно для самих разработчиков.

Современный техно-культурный момент характеризуется стремительным развитием и распространением форм метагейминга, а также таких явлений, как геймификационные системы (Koreć, 2015), видеоигровое современное искусство (Fuchs, 2012), первазивные игры (или «игры в альтернативной реальности») (Duggan, 2017). Всё это говорит о растущем количестве трансмедиальных игро-подобных «гибридов» (Jenkins, 2007), не укладывающихся в чёткие онтологические категории. Как пишет Геккер,

> «по мере ускорения этих процессов, <...> вопрос “что такое игра и где её границы” значит всё меньше по сравнению с вопросом “что игро-подобные объекты значат для индивида и для общества”» (Gekker, 2021, p. 77).

Таким образом, богостовский «бардак» усугубляется по мере неминуемого развития новых игровых форм, тогда как game studies не успевают обновлять свою методологию в соответствии с требованиями времени.

В качестве возможного выхода из этого кризиса Геккер предлагает обратиться к постгуманитарным исследованиям (post-humanities) — современной междисциплинарной области, которой свойственен отказ от предзаданных или дуалистических моделей, претендующих на универсальность, в пользу внимания к конкретным материальным практикам, посредством которых человеческие и не-человеческие агенты совместно производят онтологические реалии, обусловливающие их существование (Pettman, 2019). Среди магистральных авторов и течений этой области можно назвать новый материализм Донны Харауэй (2020), агентивный реализм Карен Барад (Barad, 2007), акторно-сетевые и «плоские» подходы к онтологии общества, представленные Джоном Ло (2015), Бруно Латуром (2020), ассамбляжным подходом Мануэля Деланда (2018), антропологов «онтологического поворота», таких как Эдуарду Вивейруш де Кастру (2022b, 2022a).

Общим местом для пост-гуманитарных авторов является попытка преодоления антропоцентризма и связанных с ним базовых онтологических предпосылок и дуализмов: например, в случае с проектом Филиппа Дескола — разделения на Природу и Культуру, на «естественное» (созданное природой) и «искусственное» (созданное человеком) (Дескола, 2012). Алекс Геккер схожим образом критикует устоявшиеся дуализмы в сфере game studies, такие как «людология/нарратология, игра/игрок, намерение/смысл» (Gekker, 2021, p. 76). Вместо них он призывает перейти к «пост-дуалистской онтологии», которая «менее сконцентрирована на определении границ объектов (в данном случае — игр) и вместо этого представляет их как континуальные явления, «простирающиеся на единой онтологической плоскости и имеющие проницаемые границы» (Gekker, 2021, p. 76).

Схожим образом, адресуя описанную им проблему «бардака», Ян Богост предлагает проект «плоской онтологии видеоигр» (Bogost, 2009), символически закрывающий дебаты об определении того, что такое видеоигра. В его основе — принципиальная открытость и анти-редукционизм: возможность включения любых элементов, которые покажутся нам релевантными для конкретного анализа (будь то физика игровой платформы, телесность игрока или внешность персонажей) и отказ от сведения одних элементов к другим (то есть признания какого-либо аспекта существования видеоигры как «фундаментального»).

Для обоснования плоской онтологии видеоигр Богост также обращается к современной философии — к таким авторам, как Квентин Мейясу, Грэм Харман и Леви Брайант, наряду с уже упомянутыми выше Латуром и Ло. Само понятие «плоской онтологии» исследователь заимствует у Брайанта:

> «Если мы согласимся с призывами Хармана и Брайанта сплющить онтологическое поле так, что все объекты будут иметь равные исходные позиции, результатом этого будет план недискриминирующих различий, в которых все аспекты игры потенциально равнозначны» (Bogost, 2009).

Как плоская онтология видеоигр Богоста, и так пост-дуалистская онтология Геккера описывают аналогичный теоретический жест в исследовании видеоигр. Задачей которого является преобразование онтологии видеоигр из формалистской дисциплины, направленной на выявление «подлинных структур видеоигры», во что-то гораздо более восприимчивое к неоднородности медиума, гибридным объектам, пограничным случаям и всевозможному «бардаку».

Нам хотелось бы подхватить и продолжить этот жест. На наш взгляд, для этого необходимо приступить к разработке такой методологии, которая соответствовала бы описанным амбициям «новой онтологии видеоигр»: то есть позволяла бы работать с растущей неоднородностью игрового медиума, не скатываясь в редукционизм и преждевременное замыкание границ «магического круга».

Возможно, кто-то когда-нибудь обозначит это движение каким-нибудь звучным прилагательным, приставленным к слову «поворот», как это принято в междисциплинарных исследованиях. Но перед этим предстоит выполнить большой объём работы. Как мы уже показали, перечень авторов, составляющих постгуманитарный интеллектуальный ландшафт, крайне обширен, а их подходы чрезвычайно разнородны. И если, как предлагает Геккер, наш путь лежит через этот ландшафт, в рамках данной конкретной статьи нам придётся выбрать определённый маршрут, чтобы не заблудиться. В следующем разделе мы попытаемся нащупать подходящую отправную точку, обращаясь к приведённым авторам, — и отправиться в путь.

От бардака к сетям

Ян Богост описывает ряд возможных методов работы с «плоской онтологией видеоигр». Среди них исследователь упоминает свой авторский метод «единичных операций» или «юнит-операций» (“unit operations”), рассматривающий ряды осмысленных дискретных соединений между отдельными материальными элементами — «юнитами». «Юнит-анализ» (“unit analysis”) предполагает возможность обнаружения и «перечёта» этих операций как в художественных произведениях, так и в технике (Bogost, 2006). Любой из «юнитов» (единиц) может быть рассмотрен как совокупность других «юнитов», также формируемых посредством юнит-операций. Схожей структурой обладают объекты в объектно-ориентированной философии Грэма Хармана, на что указывает сам Богост (2006, p. 5). Таким образом, «юнит-операции» входят в перечень плоских онтологий видеоигр, предлагаемый Богостом.

Какие ещё мы можем обнаружить в этом перечне модели, позволяющие нам работать с «планом недискриминирующих различий, в которых все аспекты игры потенциально равнозначны» (2009)?

Для Богоста оказывается важно подобрать теоретическую оптику, которая бы в достаточной степени утверждала «вещный хаос» (2009) видеоигр, и таковой оптикой для него оказывается именно “mess” Джона Ло, давший название статье (оригинальное название статьи — “Videogames are a Mess” — имеет форму онтологического утверждения: «Видеоигры — это бардак»). До этого он прямо дистанцируется от акторно-сетевой теории Бруно Латура, так как латуровская фигура сети кажется ему «чрезмерно нормализованной». Даже латуровское понятие “imbroglio” («путаницы, при которой “никогда не ясно, кто и что действует”»), по мнению Богоста, слишком формально и организовано (2006).

При этом он не указывает, почему нормализованность актор-сети оказывается для него избыточной, тогда как дискретный формализм юнит-операций — нет. Здесь будто бы можно увидеть пробел в интерпретации Латура Богостом. Говоря о схожем предположительном недопонимании латуровского

теоретического проекта со стороны Грэма Хармана, Нора Хямяляйнен и Туро-Киммо Лехтонен пишут:

> «Он не относится достаточно серьёзно к эмпирической стороне философии Латура и, таким образом, терпит неудачу в том, чтобы в полной мере оценить значение эмпирических акцентов в вопросе о том, чем является латуровская метафизика» (Hämäläinen & Lehtonen, 2016).

Хямяляйнен и Лехтонен указывают, что Харман ошибочно видит цель Латура в создании метафизической системы классического типа, призванной исчерпывающе описать, из чего состоит мир; объяснить, что в нём реально, а что нет; предоставить перечень «фурнитуры вселенной» (“furniture of the universe”) (2016, p. 5). На деле же, как они говорят, Латур стремится создать «кустарную, прагматическую, методологическую онтологию» (“a makeshift, pragmatic, methodological ontology”) (2016).

Важная составляющая этой онтологии — «…лингва франка, который, вместо того, чтобы утверждать наверняка, что существует — позволяет пересматривать (allows a renegotiation) состав существующего, перечень релевантных элементов реальности, каковы их способы существования, и т. д. Этот пересмотр должен достигаться не только через должным образом оснащённые эмпирические исследования (которые предоставляют нам мир заново), но также через приглашение людей (people), с их разнообразными точками зрения, к метафизическому столу переговоров (нечто вроде политической демократии посредством метафизики)» (Hämäläinen & Lehtonen, 2016).

Один из известных афоризмов Латура — призыв «следовать за самими акторами» (“follow the actors themselves”) (2018). В нём выражается неотрывная часть акторно-сетевой теории — методологическое и эмпирическое внимание к тому, как акторы, составляющие актор-сети, сами осуществляют «миростроительную активность», сами производят модели описания устанавливаемых между ними ассоциаций — и к тому, как эти модели позволяют ассоциациям стабилизироваться и расширяться.

Актор-сеть — это не онтологическое утверждение о том, что вещи существуют как акторы и упорядоченно связывающие их сети, как предположил Грэм Харман (и что, возможно, увидел в латуровском проекте Ян Богост). Это инструмент, посредством которого предлагается дать акторам возможность создавать свои собственные онтологические утверждения (свои определения мира), в условиях отсутствия «априорных отношений порядка» (2017, с. 179) — то есть, в условиях того самого онтологического «бардака». Подробно это разъясняется Латуром в его статье «Об акторно-сетевой теории. Некоторые разъяснения, дополненные еще большими усложнениями» (2017):

> «АСТ <акторно-сетевая теория> — не о проложенных сетях, а о деятельности по прочерчиванию сетей. <…> нет сети и актора, учреждающих сеть, все дело в акторе, чье определение мира набрасывает, отслеживает, очерчивает, изображает, описывает, предсказывает, вписывает, архивирует, выписывает, записывает, маркирует или отмечает траекторию, называемую сетью. Никакая сеть

> не существует независимо от самого акта ее прослеживания, а прослеживание сети никогда не осуществляется актором, находящимся вне этой сети. Сеть — это не вещь, а записанное движение вещи» (с. 192).

Здесь становится ясным важное методологическое отличие АСТ от юнит-анализа Яна Богоста. Если юнит-операции отслеживаются с позиции наблюдателя (будь то литературный критик, исследователь платформ или видеоигровой теоретик), то актор-сети всегда эмпирически отслеживаются самими составляющими их акторами. Как только наблюдатель начинает отслеживать актор-сеть — он становится её частью. Это участие, как и его роль в онтологическом росте сети, тоже подлежит регистрации.

Но как эта «метафизическая демократия», где акторы постоянно сами производят собственные миры и их определения, может быть применена к видеоиграм? Как передать онтологию видеоигр «в руки» всему многообразию действующих лиц и сил, формирующих облик медиума?

Возможный прототип этого хода мы тоже можем найти в сфере постгуманитаристики. Важной опорной точкой для многих постгуманитарных авторов является понятие «онтологического поворота». В статье «Кто боится онтологического волка» (Кастру, 2022a) бразильский антрополог Эдуарду Вивейруш де Кастру резюмирует это понятие в контексте современной антропологии. Он говорит об «онтологическом повороте» как о переходе антропологии к новой эпистемологической этике, которая подразумевает обеспечение условий онтологического самоопределения изучаемых народов — «всегда уступай дорогу народу, который ты описываешь» (2022a, с. 183). Иными словами, исследователь должен значительно «ослабить» свои убеждения о том, как устроен мир, чтобы «уступить место» убеждениям своих информантов. Философ и антрополог Гильдас Сэлмон называет эту операцию «онтологической делегацией» (Salmon, 2013).

> «Понятие онтологической делегации означает, что антрополог вынужден достать свои онтологические допущения из сейфа и подвергнуть их устойчивость и переносимость испытанию, позволяя сделать их объектом контранализа в рамках туземных познавательных практик; <...> Таким образом антрополог превращается в онтологического переговорщика или дипломата» (Кастру, 2022a, с. 175–176).

Наше предложение — посредством аналогичного преобразования установить «метафизическую демократию» в онтологии видеоигр. Так же, как приверженный акторно-сетевой теории социолог делегирует построение моделей общества самим исследуемым акторам, мы могли бы делегировать онтологическую концептуализацию видеоигр различным сообществам, формирующим их облик. Как подсказывают нам Хямяляйнен и Лехтонен, для этого необходимо сформировать подходящую среду, «метафизический стол переговоров» (Hämäläinen & Lehtonen, 2016). В его рамках всевозможные акторы, включая исследователей, игроков и разработчиков, могли бы самосто-

ятельно и совместно регистрировать и пересматривать онтологические модели видеоигр.

В основе здесь — эмпирический акцент: модели формируются исходя из опыта взаимодействия с конкретными игровыми артефактами, а не из умозрительных построений об «играх вообще».

Выстраивая здание парламента

На уровне эмпирики мы сталкиваемся с растущей сложностью медиума и его концептуализаций. Благодаря творческим усилиям гейм-дизайнеров, игры постоянно модифицируются и развиваются: жанры переплетаются друг с другом, создавая тем самым новые жанры, которые формируют свои поджанры — и всё это многообразие не поддается чёткому квантованию, а представляет собой набор стремящихся друг к другу континуумов. В то же время, по словам Орсета и Грабарчика, «каждый год всё больше и больше дисциплин пополняют набор» тех, что так или иначе относятся к исследованиям игр (Aarseth & Grabarczyk, 2018, p. 3), и все они привносят свои инструменты, методы и предустановки.

Однако далеко не только разработчики и исследователи игр формируют свои онтологии. Источником явных или неявных концептуализаций также выступают игроки и игровые сообщества.

Один из подходов в исследованиях видеоигр, описывающих взаимодействие игроков и игры, — это людогерменевтика (от лат. ludus — «игра»). В самом общем смысле людогерменевтика изучает интерпретативные процессы в видеоиграх — по аналогии с тем, как герменевтика изучает процессы интерпретации текстов. Эспен Орсет и Себастьян Мёринг, которых причисляют к классикам этого направления, пишут в работе “The game itself? : Towards a Hermeneutics of Computer Games”:

> «Практики людогерменевтики предполагают конкретную онтологическую основу, будь то эксплицитную или имплицитную. Это в равной степени справедливо для игроков, критиков и теоретиков. <...> игровой процесс (playing) приводит к повышению онтологического понимания. Тот или иной процесс интерпретации невозможен без стоящей за ним онтологической модели, какой бы слабой она ни была поначалу» (Aarseth & Möring, 2020).

Согласно людогерменевтическому подходу Орсета и Мёринга, чтобы играть в видеоигру, игроку необходимо конструировать собственную онтологическую модель этой видеоигры, которую он применяет для принятия внутриигровых решений. Осуществляя герменевтический процесс интерпретации, используя метод проб и ошибок, игрок корректирует свою онтологическую модель так, чтобы повышать её применимость. В эту онтологическую модель могут входить утверждения о жанре игры, о составляющих её сущностях, о сюжете, о багах, о культурном значении внутриигровых репрезентаций.

С точки зрения Вели-Матти Кархулахти, герменевтика видеоигр представляет собой «двойную герменевтику»: состоящую, во-первых, из эстетических и нарративных («экстра-людических») интерпретаций; во-вторых, из геймплейных и перформативных («людических») интерпретаций (Karhulahti, 2015, p. 5). Комбинация людических и экстра-людических интерпретаций, подвергаемая обновлению через «петли обратной связи» в процессе геймплея, составляет онтологию игры для игрока. Стоит заметить, что это динамическая онтология, которая постоянно обновляется в результате людогерменевтических процессов. Орсет и Мёринг приводят пример игрока, играющего в “Journey”— сперва считающего, что он играет в однопользовательскую игру, но затем, сталкиваясь с аватарами (внутриигровыми отображениями) других игроков, корректирующего свою онтологию в сторону понимания “Journey” как многопользовательской игры (Aarseth & Möring, 2020).

Кархулахти вводит ещё одну категорию интерпретаций — «мета-людические» — свойственную игровым критикам. Мета-людические интерпретации оценивают видеоигры как эстетические артефакты в контексте культуры в целом. Орсет и Мёринг также пишут о том, что критикам и теоретикам, как и игрокам, необходимо производить относительно рассматриваемых игр онтологическую модель, «будь то эксплицитную или имплицитную». Эти онтологии не производятся игроками, критиками или теоретиками «с нуля», но частично заимствуются из предыдущего игрового опыта, описаний видеоигр в медиа, распространённых представлений об устройстве видеоигр и других источников. Между онтологиями возможно перекрёстное заимствование: игроки реагируют на оценки критиков, теоретики обращаются к опыту игроков, критики заимствуют подходы у теоретиков. Таким образом, множество онтологических моделей формируют онтологию той или иной игры, которая является не статической и единственной, но динамической и множественной. Её можно представить как актор-сеть:

> «Сети становятся более или менее объяснимыми по мере своего развертывания и в зависимости от того, что они делают друг с другом. Акторы приводят в порядок свой собственный беспорядок (“cleaning up their own mess”) (Латур, 2017, с. 187–188).

Акторно-сетевой подход к изучению видеоигр подразумевает как раз регистрацию множества способов, которыми всевозможные акторы «приводят в порядок свой собственный беспорядок» — тот самый постулированный Богостом “mess”. Да, в видеоиграх бардак — но это не значит, что формирующие их акторы не стремятся навести в них разнообразный порядок.

Как пишет Томмазо Вентурини в статье «Погружаясь в магму: как подходить к исследованию разногласий с помощью акторно-сетевой теории»:

> «Впрочем, осторожно. Мы не говорим, что социальная жизнь неумолимо хаотична и не поддается никакой интерпретации. Точно так же мы не говорим, что в сложности невозможна никакая стабильность, порядок или организация. <…> Упрощения возможны. Однако для любого коллективного упрощения

> должна проводиться и поддерживаться работа. <...> если социальная картография требует тяжелого труда, то только потому, что социальная жизнь сама по себе создается тяжелым трудом» (Вентурини, 2018, с. 66).

Значит, нашей задачей как исследователей здесь становится найти способы поспособствовать этой тяжёлой работе, а не добавлять дополнительной нагрузки. Чтобы лучше понять, как этого добиться, мы сперва оценим трудности, с которыми сталкиваются разработчики игр на фоне избыточной сложности медиума.

Разработчики тоже участвуют в деятельности по локальной стабилизации бардака и путаницы. Подобно тому, как онтологическое производство игрока отличается от такового у теоретика — онтологическое производство разработчика будет специфически обусловлено задачами, техникой и практиками, свойственными разработке игр.

Онтология, которой разработчик руководствуется в создании видеоигры, определяет репертуар сущностей и релевантных связей между ними, из которых собирается сама видеоигра. В ней могут быть задействованы более абстрактные видеоигровые сущности, наподобие механик из фреймворка MDA (Hunicke et al., 2004) — но почти неизбежно в ней также будут присутствовать сущности или категории, уникальные для данной конкретной игры (например, таковыми являются порталы в “Portal” от студии “Valve”).

История гейм-дизайна пронизана чередой концептуализаций, претендующих на всеобъемлющее осмысление всех возможных вариаций видеоигрового дизайна. Примерами таких работ являются являются FADT (“Formal Abstract Design Tools”) Доуга Черча (Church, 1999) — или “400 Game Design Rules” Хала Барвуда и Ноа Фалстейн (Barwood & Falstein, n.d.), которые предлагают формировать “инструменты” и “правила” игрового дизайна — дизайнерские утверждения о том, как элементы игры должны быть связаны друг с другом. Впоследствии такие наборы дизайнерских утверждений приобрели формализм паттернов и стали одной из областей теории гейм-дизайна (Kreimer, 2002).

Однако, как мы утверждаем в рамках предлагаемой нами оптики, вторя Богосту и Геккеру — видеоигры не терпят никаких фундаментальных утверждений о самих себе. Поэтому подобные проекты универсальных гейм-дизайнерских фреймворков обречены на быстрое устаревание или неприменимость. Отчасти это связано с тем, что многие дизайнеры стремятся впечатлить игрока уникальной комбинацией механик и компонентов. Но если никто ранее не комбинировал компоненты игры подобным образом, то она и не может существовать в качестве задокументированного паттерна. Таким образом, любой статичный список паттернов либо способствует стагнированию медиума, либо упускает зоны его инновационного развития.

При этом паттерн, эмпирически корректный для одной игры, может оказаться некорректным для другой. Амбассадор паттернов гейм-дизайна

Бернд Креймер пишет об этом так: «<желаемый> паттерн для одного человека вполне может оказаться анти-паттерном для другого» (“one person’s pattern might well be another’s anti-pattern”) (2002).

Ближе к «демократическому» и эмпирически ориентированному подходу оказываются «линзы гейм-дизайна», предложенные Джесси Шеллом (Schell, 2008). Они представляют собой не строгие утверждения, а вопросы о дизайне игры, которые должны помочь дизайнерам самостоятельно сформировать утверждения об их собственных играх. Впрочем, они всё ещё оперируют статичным перечнем сущностей и понятий.

«Классический» подход к онтологии видеоигр будто бы оставляет нам два варианта: либо выбрать предпочитаемую нами онтологическую модель в ущерб другим, либо попытаться консолидировать их всех в единую «мега-модель». Оба подхода неприемлемы в рамках выбранной нами эпистемологической этики, так как они в любом случае не будут достаточно подвижны и адаптивны для видеоигрового «бардака».

Вместо этого «классического» подхода мы предлагаем сформировать инфраязык. Словом «инфраязык» Бруно Латур называет минимальный набор понятий, который позволяет перемещаться между самыми разными онтологиями и концептуализациями, не отдавая исключительное предпочтение ни одной из них:

> «Единственный требующийся метаязык было бы вернее назвать инфраязыком. Он должен быть бедным, ограниченным, кратким и простым <…> Этого инфраязыка достаточно, чтобы двигаться от одной сети к другой, и всякое объяснение всегда будет одноразовым, выкроенным исключительно для текущей проблемы» (Латур, 2017, с. 191).

Инфраязык акторно-сетевой теории включает такие термины, как «группа», «актор», «сила», «перевод» и «поток» (2020, с. 245). Именно инфраязык имели в виду Хямяляйнен и Лехтонен, когда говорили о «лингва франка, который позволяет пересматривать состав существующего» (Hämäläinen & Lehtonen, 2016).

Как мог бы выглядеть инфраязык для исследований видеоигр, соблюдающих принципы «кустарной, прагматической, методологической онтологии» (2016) и стремящейся максимально внимательно отследить то, как разные акторы упорядочивают бардак в видеоиграх?

Ниже мы предложим проект такого инфраязыка для игрового медиума.

Инфраязык людозиса

Франс Мяйря, финский исследователь видеоигр, является автором неологизма «людозис». Он определяет людозис как «создание смысла через игровую деятельность» (“meaning-making through playful action”) (Mäyrä, 2008).

> «...Семиозис, или смысл, связываемый с игрой как с системой знаков — и людозис, или смыслы игры, переживаемые как динамические игровые процессы (experienced as dynamic processes of play)» (Mäyrä, 2009, p. 5).

На первый взгляд, в этом можно увидеть отголоски дуалистического разделения игры, подобного разделениям на «нарратив» и «геймплей», «эстетики» и «механики», или — вспоминая подход Кархулахти — на «людическое» и «экстра-людическое». Однако мы можем пересмотреть понятие людозиса, приняв во внимание то, как Митчелл, Болук и Лемьё описывают природу метагейминга. С их точки зрения, «все игры — уже мета-игры» (Mitchell, 2018, p. 139). Говоря о метагейминге, эти авторы регулярно указывают на его игровой или игривый ("playful") характер. И если людозис — это "meaning-making through playful action", то мы можем, чтобы сделать его первым термином нашего инфраязыка, переопределить его следующим образом.

Людозис — это любой комплекс процессов, создающих игру и создаваемых ею: разработка, моддинг, геймплей, критика, стриминг, фан, контрплэй, работа электроники, процедурная генерация, рендеринг... Этот перечень может продолжаться неопределённо долго, а его состав зависит от того анализа, который мы проводим (от той сети, с которой мы взаимодействуем и которую выстраиваем).

Иными словами, людозис — это онтологический рост игр как разнородных сетей.

Базовое онтологическое допущение, характеризующее термин «людозис» — это сам факт распознания какой-либо вещи как игры (в тот момент, когда мы применяем к ней понятие людозиса). С точки зрения методологии ACT, это не является противоречием, так как в этот момент мы тоже участвуем в акторно-сетевом со-производстве игры как игры — называя её именно игрой, мы совершаем соответствующее онтологическое утверждение. Иными словами, вооружаясь понятием людозиса, мы можем выступать в качестве «людоморфического актора» (актора, наделяющего какую-либо вещь свойствами игры) (Koreć, 2015).

Одновременно центральное понятие «людозис» мы можем вынести в название самого связанного с ним инфраязыка: его можно условно обозначать как «инфраязык людозиса» или «людозис-язык». Чтобы избежать разночтений с понятием «людозис», предлагается записывать название инфраязыка латиницей и большими буквами: LUDOSIS. Значение такой формы записи будет раскрыто чуть позже в тексте.

Следующие два понятия LUDOSIS имеют отношения уже к самому онтологическому конструированию. Они могут рассматриваться как переменные, принимающие самое разное значение в зависимости от задач исследования или разработки.

Онтологическая сущность, или просто *сущность* — это любой элемент игры, находящийся на любом уровне абстрактности и детализации. Например,

фреймворк MDA содержит такие сущности, как «механики», «динамики», «эстетики» (Hunicke et al., 2004). Сущности могут быть как более абстрактными — например, «обратная связь», — так и более конкретными: «вибрация в геймпаде» или «четвёртый уровень».

Логика — это элемент системы, который связан с одной или с несколькими онтологическими сущностями и объясняет связь между этими сущностями. Любая онтология игры предлагает набор сущностей, на которые можно эту игру разбить, а любой узкий принцип работы с несколькими игровыми сущностями предлагает нам логику взаимодействия между конкретно этими сущностями. Логика — это важнейший элемент системы, тогда как онтологические сущности сами по себе предлагают нам лишь названия элементов, из которых состоит игра и окружающие её системы. Важно то, что логика может принадлежать и одной сущности. В таком случае, это будет логика существования или функционирования самой этой сущности. Например, одной из логик, в которую включена сущность, может быть описание и принцип работы этой сущности.

Эти два понятия — базовые типы деталей в конструкторе LUDOSIS. Следующие два термина описывают конструкции, которые формируются из этих деталей.

Карта (или *онтологическая модель*) — с точки зрения нашей системы, это актуальный в данный момент граф онтологических сущностей и логик, который релевантен для конкретной видеоигры или группы видеоигр. Метафора карты не нова для гейм-дизайнеров: в своей книге Джесси Шелл предлагает карту, которая демонстрирует связи между разнородными сущностями, (Рис. 1) влияющими на игру. Подобные карты в формате схем с той или иной детализацией предлагают и другие гейм-дизайнеры, например MDA (Hunicke et al., 2004), DDE (Walk et al., 2017), SSM (Grip, 2017) и т. д. — всё это онтологические модели, которые могут играть роль карт в рамках фреймворка LUDOSIS. При проектировании онтологии для определенной игры гейм-дизайнер или исследователь может описать её настолько конкретно, насколько он считает нужным в случае с этой игрой. Он также может заимствовать и модифицировать готовые карты — такие как карта Шелла или любые прочие гейм-дизайнерские фреймворки. Карта игры может содержать в себе сущности из различных дисциплин — гейм-дизайн, программирование, сценаристика, философия, звуковой дизайн, политология и так далее. Термин «карта» используется для того, чтобы подчеркнуть её невозможность исчерпывающе отобразить онтологический ландшафт анализируемой или проектируемой игры. Карта представляет собой лишь частичный слепок этого ландшафта, но он никогда не будет в полной мере точным, равно как нельзя точно измерить длину береговой линии (Mandelbrot, 1967).

Инвентарь — избыточный набор логик и онтологических сущностей, из которых может состоять любая видеоигра. Своеобразный «онтологический

резерв». Онтологические инвентари не имеют отношения ни к одной конкретной игре, а являются арсеналами или резервуарами, стремящимся «вобрать» в себя наибольшее количество элементов, из которых гипотетически могут состоять игры. При этом элементы инвентаря не структурированы никаким образом и имеют равную первоначальную степень важности, в соответствии с «плоской онтологией видеоигр» Яна Богоста. Инвентари можно обозначить как «мета-онтологии» — но в отличие от мета-онтологии Орсета и Грабарчика (Aarseth & Grabarczyk, 2018) они преследуют цель не классификации существующих онтологий, а создания условий для их конструирования.

Инвентарь — это открытый и изменяемый перечень. За счет свойства открытости он будет всегда способен впитать в себя новую игру, новый игровой жанр или новую онтологию игры, которую невозможно и/или непродуктивно описывать элементами, уже существующими в этом перечне. Его можно реализовать как редактируемую базу данных наподобие “Game Ontology Project” (Zagal & Bruckman, 2008), где каждый пользователь может добавить новые сущности и логики в общий запас.

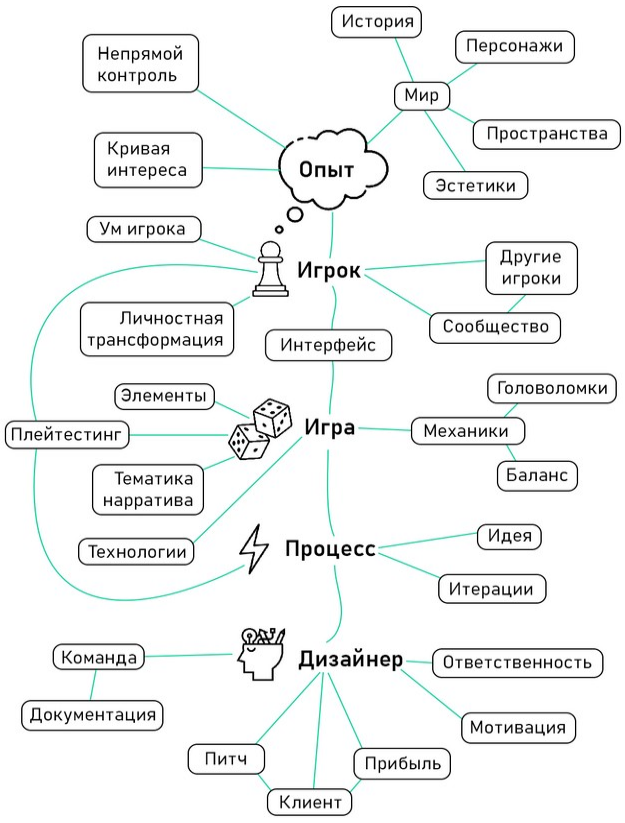

Рисунок 1. Карта Джесси Шелла (Schell, 2008, p. 463)

Платформа LUDOSIS

Чтобы предлагаемый нами инфраязык оказался применим в игровых актор-сетях, его необходимо оснастить платформой, через которую акторы могли бы систематизировать свои онтологические представления. Ниже мы опишем проект такой платформы, а впоследствии и демонстрацию её работы на примере разработки видеоигр.

Допустим, держа в голове концепцию своей игры, гейм-дизайнер начинает создавать карту этой игры в LUDOSIS. Этот процесс выглядит достаточно просто: например, наша игра — это двухмерный паззл-платформер в фэнтези сеттинге. Этих данных уже вполне достаточно, чтобы начать формировать онтологическую модель (составлять карту). Нам нужно найти в мета-онтологии — инвентаре — такие сущности: двухмерное пространство, паззл, платформер, фэнтези. Если каких-то из желаемых сущностей нет в инвентаре, то их можно добавить; или найти вместо них более абстрактные; или собрать набор более конкретных сущностей.

Используя систему LUDOSIS в процессе проектирования конкретной игры, пользователь постепенно формирует её онтологическую модель, выбирая из «пула» инвентаря те или иные сущности и выстраивая связи между ними, описывая те как логики. LUDOSIS может существовать в виде программы или цифрового интерфейса, который бы автоматически «подсказывал» пользователю возможные связи между теми сущностями, которые он добавляет в свою онтологическую модель. Так как LUDOSIS ориентирован на междисциплинарность, это могут быть сущности из совершенно разных сфер. Логики в таком случае могут быть, в частности, готовыми схемами «взаимного перевода» сущностей из разных дисциплин.

Система может иметь вики-подобный формат, где пользователи могут предлагать свои версии онтологических и мета-онтологических моделей, коллаборироваться в их проектировании, устраивать дискуссии. Вокруг отдельных инвентарей и групп карт могут собираться собственные сообщества. Разные инвентари могут быть соединены в более крупный инвентарь по желанию пользователей, но также пользователи могут делать свои версии существующих инвентарей: ответвления или «форки». Это сближает LUDOSIS с тем, как устроена работа с кодом и приложениями на платформе “GitHub”.

Несмотря на своеобразный «революционный дух», который можно увидеть за нашими построениями, мы не хотим порвать с традициями гейм-дизайнерских теорий. Существующие фреймворки и онтологии могут послужить материалом («сырьём») для базы данных LUDOSIS, предоставляя готовые перечни сущностей и отношений между ними — но они так же и могут быть модифицированы пользователями. LUDOSIS — это тигель, в котором сами игровые фреймворки расплавляются и переплавляются: это материя игры в магматическом состоянии. Почти как горные породы в магме, дизайн игры процессе разработки находится одновременно и в жидком, и в твёрдом состо-

яниях. «Но в этой метафоре есть еще кое-что: в магме жидкое и твердое состояния сосуществуют в непрекращающихся взаимных трансформациях; в то время как по краям потока лава остывает и кристаллизуется, некоторые твердые породы под действием тепла плавятся, становясь частью потока». (Вентурини, 2018, с. 67). Те же флуктуации можно наблюдать и во взаимосвязях между разными элементами игры во время разработки. Это сглаживает недостатки закрытости или статичности этих моделей, так как LUDOSIS, по сути, позволяет сделать их открытыми и динамическими — а также комбинируемыми с другими моделями. Мы не предлагаем переписать или «преодолеть» теории гейм-дизайна — а скорее наоборот, предлагаем их развитие на основе методологического равноправия.

Мы последуем традиции обозначать фреймворки гейм-дизайна в виде акронимов — и опишем эту гипотетическую платформу, дав дополнительное значение каждой из букв в слове LUDOSIS: *Ludic User Designed Ontological Syntax Interactive System*.

Ludic — игровая (система). Это слово происходит от латинского “ludus”, игра, и переводится как «игровой», «в игровой манере». Это свойство работает на нескольких уровнях. Во-первых, оно очевидным образом отсылает нас к тому, что наши методы нацелены на проектирование и анализ видеоигр. Но есть и другое, гораздо более важное свойство: мы подходим к видеоиграм играючи. Цель системы — сделать процесс добавления и удаления элементов игры в её карте простым и доступным. Пользователь может создавать модель игры играючи, выстраивая неожиданные предположения о том, какие элементы могут быть в игре — а также, например, о том, где и как эти элементы могут располагаться друг относительно друга и какие связи эти элементы могут выстраивать.

User Designed Ontological — онтологически определяемая пользователем (система). Тут важно подчеркнуть то, что мы даем пользователю, то есть гейм-дизайнеру, определить, какие элементы из общего массива элементов присущи его собственной игре. Именно это дает нам ту гибкость, которую не способны дать гейм-дизайнерам фреймворки, ведь фреймворки нам предлагают действовать уже в рамках некоторого фиксированного набора элементов, а LUDOSIS дает возможность сформировать набор элементов и дизайнерских утверждений под нашу конкретную игру.

Syntax — синтаксическая (система). Слово «синтаксис» происходит от двух греческих слов, означающих «с, вместе, совместно» и «построение, расположение, строить, располагать» (“Syntax,” n.d.). Этим прилагательным нам важно подчеркнуть свойства людозиса как языка, состоящего из некоторого количества слов, которые постоянно появляются и выходят из оборота, но какие бы слова ни использовались в языке — они позволяют формировать бесконечное множество возможных смыслов. Возможность формировать

новые комбинации и связи между элементами мы характеризуем как синтаксичность системы.

Interactive — интерактивная (система). Это прилагательное в большей степени относится к тому, что мы не просто используем LUDOSIS, а мы активно взаимодействуем с ним: причём в самых разных ролях. Мы можем взаимодействовать с ним, проектируя новые игры, дополняя массив элементов новыми сущностями и логиками, а также дополняя, расширяя или изучая уже существующие сущности, логики и онтологии видеоигр.

System — система. LUDOSIS — это система: хоть и с массой вариаций возможностей организации, но всё еще система. LUDOSIS существует как язык: в нём постоянно формируются новые слова или правила, а также выходят из оборота старые — вне зависимости от желания и намерения отдельных авторов. Несмотря на все стремления структурировать язык, он неформален и гибок. Поверх неформального языка мы можем пытаться строить более формальные языки, но так или иначе язык в своей основе будет жить, расширяться и пополняться до тех пор, пока им кто-то пользуется. LUDOSIS гордится тем, что его структура скорее напоминает «бардак», нежели полноценную формальную структуру. Однако это вовсе не отрицает наличие системности — просто эта системность создаётся более ситуативно, “in situ”: в самом процессе работы с LUDOSIS. Для работы с таким множественным и непостоянным объектом, как видеоигры, нам необходима такая же множественная и непостоянная система.

Заключение

Насколько предлагаемые нами теоретические ходы и практические предложения решают проблемы, постулированные в первых трёх разделах статьи? Чтобы ответить на этот вопрос, вернёмся к тезису Яна Богоста о «бардаке», который послужил для нас отправной точкой в пересмотре онтологии видеоигр:

> «Здесь можно поставить вопрос: какие единицы имеют значение для конкретной игры в конкретных обстоятельствах? Подобная стратегия освобождает нас от поиска оснований, на которых неопровержимо покоятся игровые объекты, предостерегает нас от недальновидного эссенциализма в отношении железа или человеческого опыта (или чего бы то ни было между ними), заставляя задавать больше конкретных вопросов об определенных аналитических ситуациях. Уже недостаточно просто искать ответ на один-единственный вопрос “Что такое игра?”» (Bogost, 2009).

Описываемая нами платформа позволит раз за разом отвечать на вопрос, подчёркиваемый здесь Богостом: «Какие единицы имеют значение для конкретной игры в конкретных обстоятельствах?» В случае с LUDOSIS такими ситуативными ответами оказываются модели, которые мы выше

назвали «картами». Предлагаемый формат платформы позволяет придать этому картированию коллективный, коллаборативный и протяжённый во времени характер.

Таким образом, людозис-язык как теория — и LUDOSIS как его техническая реализация — предположительно выполняют программу демократизации метафизики видеоигр. Нам больше не нужно брать на себя работу по составлению фундаментальной метафизики игры — мы можем (и в каком-то смысле должны) делегировать эту работу широкому кругу акторов, имеющим отношение к существованию и развитию игр — то есть, имеющим отношение к людозису. В момент этой делегации видеоигровая метафизика отказывается от претензий на фундаментальность, сближаясь с прикладными концептуализациями — которые могут приниматься или отбрасываться в зависимости от поставленных целей: будь то дизайн, исследование или критика. Происходит полноценный переход от эссенциализма к конструктивизму.

Впоследствии мы планируем более точно описать функционал и сценарии пользовательского опыта платформы, а также приступить к её технической реализации. В последующих публикациях мы уделим внимание описанию методов, упрощающих анализ и проектирование игр на началах «плоской онтологии».

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Examining Women's Representation in Media: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract

The representation of women in the media constitutes one of the important research topics in the field of media. The aim of this study is to reveal the scientific trends, conceptual structure and academic dynamics in the field by systematically examining the studies on the representation of women in the media through bibliometric analysis method. For this purpose, the literature on the representation of women in the media was analyzed through performance and science mapping analyses. The analyses were carried out using the R programming language. Within the scope of the research, 1087 articles published between 1981–2024 and searched in the Web of Science database were analyzed. According to the research findings, it was revealed that there was an increase in the number of publications on women's representation in the media after 2011; the most productive journal was 'Feminist Media Studies' and the most influential journal was 'Sex Roles'. Marika Tiggemann was found to be both the most productive and the most cited author with six articles. When the distribution of publications by country was analyzed, it was found that the USA was the country that produced the most publications. In the analysis of cooperation between countries, it was determined that the USA is at the centre and has multilateral cooperation with many countries. The most frequently repeated keywords in studies on women's representation in the media are 'gender' and 'social media'. In recent years, concepts such as 'family', 'gender-based violence', 'media coverage', 'social media', 'content analysis', and 'race' have come to the fore. The most cited paper was the article titled "Social media effects on young women's body image concerns: Theoretical perspectives and an agenda for research" by R. M. Perloff in 2014.

Keywords

Women's Representation; Media; Bibliometric Analysis; R Programming Language; Women; Media and Women; Representation; Social Media; Gender; Sexuality

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Репрезентация женщин в медиа: библиометрический анализ

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Аннотация

Репрезентация женщин в медиа является одной из значимых тем исследований в области медиа и коммуникаций. Цель данной работы — выявить научные тренды, концептуальную структуру и академическую динамику в этой сфере посредством систематического анализа исследований по теме репрезентации женщин в медиа с использованием библиометрического метода.

Для достижения этой цели были проведены анализы производительности и наукометрического картирования, выполненные с помощью языка программирования R. В рамках исследования проанализировано 1087 статей, опубликованных в период с 1981 по 2024 год и индексированных в базе данных Web of Science.

Результаты показали значительный рост количества публикаций после 2011 года. Наиболее продуктивным журналом оказался Feminist Media Studies, а наиболее влиятельным — Sex Roles. Наиболее продуктивным и цитируемым автором стала Марика Тиггеман, на чьём счету шесть статей. Анализ географического распределения публикаций выявил, что наибольшее количество работ производится в США. Также установлено, что США занимают центральное место в международном сотрудничестве, демонстрируя многосторонние научные связи с другими странами.

Наиболее часто встречающимися ключевыми словами в проанализированных работах стали «гендер» и «социальные медиа». В последние годы особое внимание уделяется таким темам, как «семья», «гендерное насилие», «медийное освещение», «социальные медиа», «контент-анализ» и «раса». Наиболее цитируемой статьёй оказалась работа Р. М. Перлофф 2014 года под названием “Social media effects on young women’s body image concerns: Theoretical perspectives and an agenda for research”.

Ключевые слова

репрезентация женщин; медиа; библиометрический анализ; язык программирования R; женщины; медиа и женщины; репрезентация; социальные медиа; гендер; сексуальность

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Introduction

Throughout history, women have navigated through phases that mirrored numerous transformations across social, cultural, and political landscapes. The waves of equality generated by the Enlightenment and the French Revolution facilitated the emergence of the idea that women could exist as independent individuals within societal life. Consequently, the struggle for women's human rights, which escalated in the late 18th century, persisted throughout the 19th century and evolved into a battle for women's liberation by the 1960s. Within the framework of these struggles, attempts were made to comprehend the relationship between media portrayals of women and their subordinate status in society (Jaddou & Williams, 1981; Rakow 1986; Smith, 1982). The manner in which media positioned women was examined across a broad spectrum, spanning from news reports to television programs, and from advertisements to films and series.

The feminist movements that originated in the United States during the 1960s, and spread to Europe in the late 1960s and 1970s, initiated the discourse on the representation of women in media by focusing on the realms of media and women. Feminist media studies have emphasized the connections between media portrayals of women and the societal practices that oppress and relegate women to a secondary position (Byerly & Ross, 2006; Rhode, 1995; Tuchman, 2000; Van Zoonen, 1994). During this period, under the influence of prevailing cultural approaches in communication studies, it was underscored that media representation is "constructive" and, rather than reflecting social reality, it shapes it. In this context, the view that the secondary status of women in social life is reproduced through the constructive role of media gained prominence. According to this perspective, the inequalities that everyday life presents to women are reconstructed in the media's meaning-making process (Çelenk, 2010, p. 230; Steeves, 2005, pp. 151-154).

Early-stage studies in the field of women and media focused on the representations of women in popular culture products such as soap operas, women's magazines, and romance novels (Ang, 1985; McRobbie, 1991; Radway, 1987). A pioneering study in this area is Lichter et al.'s research on television and women over a 30-year period from 1955 to 1986. The research, which examined the main themes and characters during prime-time television viewing hours, revealed that female characters had less visibility, were portrayed as weaker, less educated, engaged in lower-status jobs, and confined to domestic settings (Lichter et al., 1986, p. 17). Tuchman (2000) explains this situation as television's "symbolic annihilation of women". Although the visibility of women in television programs has increased over time, the portrayal of women as vulnerable victims or passive figures subjected to ridicule has persisted. The media perceives women as simplistic beings. Their agendas are devoid of serious issues, with their problems stemming solely from romantic relationships (Gauntlett, 2008, p. 47). Reception studies focusing on the field of women

and media in the literature detail the experiences of women as consumers of popular culture products. In one of the seminal texts in this area, "The Feminine Mystique", Friedan (2013) conducted interviews with women, exploring the relationship between women's feelings about their lives and popular culture messages. The study revealed that women, as consumers of popular culture products, expressed anger towards the images of women in television programs and advertisements. Reception studies on soap operas have highlighted the differences between female and male viewers, focusing on the connections women make between these dramas and their real lives (Modleski, 1995; Rakow, 1995).

Studies on women in media that focus on body image have also attracted considerable attention. According to these studies, the female body is consistently presented as a sexual object, primarily intended for the male audience, which is often considered the ideal viewer. These representational forms of women serve to reinforce a male-dominated visual narrative. One of the pioneering works in this field, Laura Mulvey's (1975) "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", revealed that cinema is structured upon the male gaze. The female body is idealized through a voyeuristic male perspective. Similarly, John Berger, in his work "Ways of Seeing", through the concept of "the gaze", highlighted that while women are presented as passive objects in advertisements, they are often represented as nude subjects in Western art (Berger, 2016). With the questioning of gender roles, the relationship between the concept of "sexualization" and media has been examined in depth. These studies focus on how gender relations are represented in the media and how audiences interpret them (Mendes & Carter, 2008). The media reproduces discourses that deepen gender-based discrimination and gender inequality through methods such as exposure, sensationalism, and the reinforcement of prejudices (Butler, 1990, 1993; Van Zoonen, 1994, p. 4). The concept of "sexualization", which emphasizes that women's representation in media is confined to body image, has recently focused on the effects of social media on women's body image (Dobson, 2015; Perloff, 2014; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2018; Ward, 2002, 2003, 2016). In recent years, the proliferation of digital media tools has also affected feminist movements. The concept of digital feminism is generally seen as an area where feminists' digital activism and feminist movements intersect (Martin & Valenti, 2013; Mendes, 2015). It is also thought to strengthen the interaction structures of feminists in various areas such as blogs, forums, social media platforms (Chandra, 2020; Martin & Valenti, 2013; Mendes, 2015; Mendes et al., 2019). Although digital media tools are seen as important tools in terms of increasing women's visibility, it has been revealed that women are more exposed to cyber violence (Mendes et al., 2019). In the digital world where women are imprisoned in unrealistic body images, the concept of sexualization and the effects of social media on the female body have been focused on (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008, Holland & Tiggemann, 2016; Perloff, 2014; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2018; Ward, 2016).

In news media, as in all areas of media, women are either marginalized or represented in limited ways (Byerly & Ross, 2006; Rakow & Kranich, 1991). Women who are the subject of news often function more as objects supporting the news rather than as speaking subjects (Rakow & Kranich, 1991, p. 12). News texts are predominantly fabricated narratives produced by men (Global Media Monitoring Project, 2021; Ross & Padovani, 2017; Sui et al., 2024). Consequently, media in general, and news in particular, carries a male-centric perspective (Byerly & Ross, 2006; Ross, 2014; Ross, & Carter, 2011; Tuchman, 2000; Van Zoonen, 1994). In news media, women are typically represented either as vulnerable victims of violence or murder (Comas-d'Argemir, 2015; Ross, & Carter, 2011; Taccini & Mannarini, 2024) or as commodified bodies (Evans, 2017; Guizzo et al., 2017; Ward, 2016). The achievements of women in numerous fields, particularly sports, are often ignored by news media (Cooky et al., 2013; Cooky et al., 2015; Fink, 2015; Fink & Kensicki, 2002). Overall, women constitute a significant research area for media studies. Women frequently appear in media and are represented in various forms. How this situation is reflected in the literature and what topics studies on women in media focus on are crucial considerations.

This study aims to examine scholarly works on women in media to reveal the scientific trends and structure of the field. To this end, scientific studies on women in media were analyzed using the bibliometric analysis method. Bibliometric analysis enables the evaluation of existing literature by systematically examining scientific studies published within a specific period in a scientific discipline or a particular field of study (Van Raan, 2005; Yin et al., 2018). With the bibliometric analysis method, key reference sources, productive and influential authors, and significant journals and countries within a research area can be identified (Zhang et al., 2016). In this research, scientific studies on women in media were addressed with performance analysis and science mapping techniques, and answers to the following research questions were sought:

- Research Question 1: What is the number and publication trend of women in media studies?
- Research Question 2: Which are the most productive and influential journals, authors, and countries in women in media studies?
- Research Question 3: What are the most cited articles and the most influential publications in women in media studies?
- Research Question 4: What are the most frequently repeated keywords in women in media studies? How is the distribution of trend topics studied over the years?
- Research Question 5: What is the intellectual structure of the women in media studies field?

- Research Question 6: What is the conceptual structure of the women in media studies field? How does the thematic development in the field progress?
- Research Question 7: What is the social structure of the women in media studies field?

Although there are bibliometric studies on women's studies in the literature (Hassan et al., 2021; Navarro-Beltrá & Martín-Llaguno, 2013; Tavares et al., 2021; Tsay & Li, 2017), no bibliometric study on the representations of women in media has been found. In addition, a significant part of the bibliometric studies in the field of women and media in the literature consists of works in the field of advertising and mostly addressing gender issues (Adalı et al., 2024; Navarro-Beltrá & Martín-Llaguno, 2013; Tavares et al., 2021). Therefore, there is a lack of studies in the literature that focus on women's representation in the media in a broad framework. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to this gap in the women and media literature. The significance of this research is highlighted by the necessity to analyze the general working trends in the women in media literature, to evaluate the effectiveness of journals, authors, and countries related to the field, and to examine the fundamental dynamics, important studies, collaborations, and developments within the area. Furthermore, it is anticipated that examining women in media studies using the bibliometric analysis method will provide several benefits to both the literature and practitioners.

With the advancement of technology and digitalization, the number of works in a specific research area has increased in recent years, and access to these works has become easier. However, the increase in the number of scientific works in a field makes it difficult for researchers or practitioners to have a structured holistic view of the area. Therefore, by identifying the fundamental dynamics of the women in media study area, which forms the aim of this study, and by evaluating the development of the field with a holistic perspective, the current state of the literature can be defined. Simultaneously, it is expected that this study will provide researchers with significant outputs for their future studies and guide them on which topics they should focus.

Studies in the international literature on women's representation in the media have generally focused on specific types of media such as soap operas, women's magazines, television programmes, news, and films (Ang, 1985; McRobbie, 1991; Radway, 1987). Representations of women in certain time periods have been analyzed in depth through methods such as content analysis, discourse analysis and reception studies (Friedan 1963; Lichter et al., 1986, Modleski, 1995; Rakow, 1995). These studies have focused on more specific issues such as the commodification of the female body in the media, sexualization, and how the media produces gender inequality and how it positions women. This study, on the other hand, instead of addressing the representation of women in the media in a specific media genre or a specific time period, uses bibliometric analysis technique in order to reveal

the general trends, structure, and development of the literature. Thus, it is aimed to reveal the general outlook and dynamics of the literature on women's representation in the media.

The fundamental structure of this study consists of methodology, findings, discussion, and conclusion sections. The methodology section includes detailed information on the bibliometric method, data collection process, data analysis, and data characteristics. The findings section presents performance analyses and science mapping analyses. Finally, the discussion and conclusion section offer general evaluations regarding the study, theoretical contributions, and recommendations for future research.

Methodology

In this study, international scholarly works on women in media were analyzed using the bibliometric analysis method. Bibliometric analysis facilitates the examination of a large volume of literature within a research field from a comprehensive perspective (Zhou et al., 2015). Although bibliometric analysis generally enables the examination of large and objective data (citation count, publication count, keywords, etc.), it relies on subjective evaluations in terms of analysis interpretations. In other words, bibliometric analysis is useful for dissecting and mapping the structure and evolutionary development of scientific knowledge by rigorously making sense of large volumes of unstructured data (Donthu et al., 2021). With bibliometric analysis, influential authors, publications, journals, countries, and institutions publishing in a specific research field can be identified and their performance can be revealed. Furthermore, based on the works in the relevant research field, significant information about intensively studied topics, the diversity of research themes, and the multidisciplinary character of the research area can be provided. Thus, current developments in the relevant research field, the direction in which research is evolving, and leading study topics can be uncovered (Wang et al., 2014; Van Nunen et al., 2018). Two techniques are used for bibliometric analysis: performance analysis and science mapping. While performance analysis evaluates the contributions of research components to the scientific field, science mapping focuses on the relationships between research components and provides visualization of these relationships (Donthu et al., 2021). Additionally, science mapping allows for the unveiling of the conceptual, intellectual, and social structure and dynamics of the scientific field (Cobo et al. 2011a; Zupic & Cater 2015). Offering the ability to visualize and analyze scientific knowledge production processes, science mapping is regarded as a significant tool in understanding the theoretical and practical dimensions of the scientific field.

Performance analysis examines the contributions of research components, such as authors, institutions, countries, and journals, to the scientific field (Cobo et al., 2011a). Within the scope of performance analyses, it is also possible to conduct word analyses like most frequent keywords and keyword trend topics (Aria &

Cuccurullo, 2017). Various metrics are utilized in measuring the performance analyses of research components. Data such as annual publication count, citation count, h-index, g-index, and i-index are crucial metrics for productivity and effectiveness within the scientific field. In science mapping analysis, the most commonly used techniques are co-citation, co-occurrence, and collaboration analyses (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Donthu et al., 2021; Van Eck & Waltman, 2014). These techniques, through network-visualized analyses, enable the acquisition of significant information about the intellectual, conceptual, and social structure of the scientific field. These analysis techniques offer complementary features for understanding and visualizing different aspects of scientific fields.

Data Collection Process and Data Analysis

In the literature, it is emphasized that a flowchart should be established for bibliometric studies (Donthu et al., 2021; Ragazou et al., 2022; Yáñez-Dávila et al., 2023). For this study, a 6-stage bibliometric analysis flowchart is shared in Figure 1. Since the purpose of this study is to examine works on women in media, the research field was selected as studies on "women and media" in the 1st stage.

In the 2nd stage, the database selection was carried out. In bibliometric studies, databases such as summaries of data, keywords, reference information, author, institution, and country information are required for analyses in database selection (Gaviria-Marin et al., 2019; Zengin & Suveren, 2025). Although there is no general consensus in database preference, it generally depends on the researcher's preference (Atabay & Güzeller, 2021). Relevant data can be obtained through various databases such as Web of Science (WoS), Google Scholar, Scopus, and PubMed. Especially WoS and Scopus databases provide the most comprehensive bibliographic data sources (Zhu & Liu, 2020). The WoS database is regarded as a significant database in bibliometric studies and is widely preferred (Yang et al., 2013). Therefore, the data retrieval was conducted through the Web of Science Core Collection database on 10.09.2024.

In the 3rd stage, research concepts were formulated. In the Web of Science Core Collection database, by selecting the "title" header, the search formula (woman OR women OR female OR lady OR ladies OR she OR dame) AND ("media") was entered into the search section to conduct the search. Thus, relevant words appearing in the titles of studies in the database were included in the research. As a result of the screening, a total of 2758 publications were obtained.

In the 4th stage, certain constraints were applied to the data. Initially, Web of Science category constraints were employed. The research included the following areas: (1) communication, (2) women's studies, (3) humanities multidisciplinary, (4) sociology, (5) political science, (6) social science interdisciplinary, (7) cultural studies, (8) history, (9) business, (10) film radio and television, (11) management, (12) religion, (13) social issues, (14) Asian studies, (15) ethnic studies, (16) family studies, and (17) ethics. As a result of the field constraint, 1508 works were obtained. Another constraint was applied to the document type. Only "article" and "review

article" works were selected, and a total of 1087 publications were included in the analysis.

In the 5th stage, the selection of programs for analyses was carried out. The research data were examined using the bibliometric analysis technique, and Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017), the web-based interface application of the Bibliometrix package program used in the R programming language for bibliometric analysis, was employed.

Finally, in the 6th stage, a decision was made regarding data analysis. Bibliometric analyses are categorized into two: performance analysis and science mapping analysis (Noyons et al., 1999). Performance analysis allows for the evaluation of different scientific actors, such as researchers, institutions, and countries, based on publication and citation data. Science mapping analysis, on the other hand, reveals the temporal representation of the conceptual, intellectual, and social structure of a specific research field (Cobo et al., 2011a; Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020). In this study, bibliometric analyses of the research data were analyzed within the scope of performance analyses and science mapping techniques.

In accordance with performance analyses, annual scientific production, most productive journals, most productive authors, most productive countries, most cited documents, most frequent keywords, and keyword trend topics were analyzed. Productivity analyses were evaluated based on the number of articles. Citation counts were considered for citation analyses. Word analyses were examined by considering the frequency of repetition of keywords in the article. These analyses provide scientifically grounded answers to the questions posed within Research Question 1, Research Question 2, Research Question 3, and Research Question 4.

Within the scope of science mapping analyses, co-citation analysis, keyword co-occurrence analysis, thematic map analysis, author collaboration analysis, and country collaboration analysis were included. Through science mapping, the intellectual, conceptual, and social structure of women in media studies is analyzed. Among the most widely used techniques, co-citation analysis reveals the intellectual structure, keyword co-occurrence and thematic map analysis reveal the conceptual structure, and author and country collaboration analysis reveals the social structure (Donthu et al., 2021; Van Eck & Waltman, 2014). Science mapping analyses will provide answers to Research Question 5, Research Question 6, and Research Question 7.

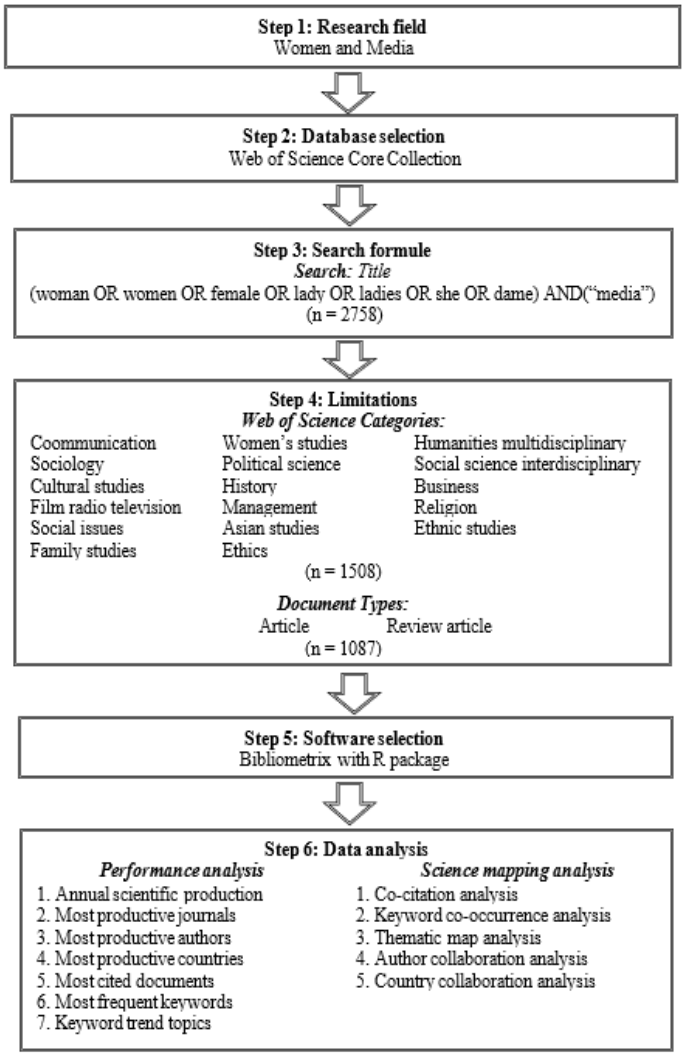

Figure 1. Flowchart of bibliometric analysis

Data Properties

Table 1 provides general information regarding the research data. It is observed that the first work in the women in media database dates back to 1981. In the period from 1981 to 2024, 1087 articles were produced in the field of women in media by 1933 authors, using 43277 references with an average of 39 references per publication. 52.80% of the publications were prepared as multi-authored (n=574), and 47.28% were prepared as single-authored publications (n=513).

Table 1. Main information

Description	Results
Period	1981-2024
Documents	1087
Annual Growth Rate %	10.63
Document Average Age	7.79
Average citations per doc	13.05
References	43277
Authors	1933
Single-authored documents	513
Multi-authored documents	574

Table 2 presents the publication languages of studies produced in the field of women in media. According to this, it is observed that 91.44% of the studies produced in this field are published in English (n=994). English, which ranks first in the list, is followed by Spanish (n=47) with 4.32%, while Russian (n=12) ranks third with a rate of 1.10%. It is noted that works published in French and German, which appear in the top five, remain below 1%. Based on the information in Table 2, it is possible to state that the English language dominates the field.

Table 2. Distribution of documents by languages

Document languages	Number of documents (n)	Document languages	Number of documents (n)
English	994	Catalan	1
Spanish	47	Dutch	1
Russian	12	Hungarian	1
French	10	Indonesian	1
German	6	Italian	1
Turkish	6	Malay	1
Portuguese	5	Polish	1

Findings

Performance Analysis. Annual Scientific Production

Figure 2 examines the distribution of academic publications in the field of women in media studies over the years. When looking at general trends, it is observed that studies in this field were initially quite limited, but have shown a significant increase over time.

From 1981 to 1990, the number of publications on women in media studies remained at a significantly low level. This situation indicates that academic awareness of women's representation in media was limited during this period or that studies in this field had not yet been carried out systematically enough. From the late 1990s onwards, a noticeable increase in publication numbers began, and this increase became more pronounced in the early 2000s. It is understood that research on women's representation in media began to attract more attention in the academic literature during this period. While the total number of publications was 48 by 2000, the total number of publications increased to 184 by the end of 2010.

It is noteworthy that a significant increase in the number of articles published in the field of women in media studies occurred as of 2011. During this period, the intensification of debates on gender equality and the widespread adoption of digital media platforms contributed to the rapid increase in academic interest in this field. It is observed that this rise in publication numbers gained momentum, particularly in 2018 and onwards. This rise can be attributed to the effects of social media on women's body images and digital feminist activism practices. Notably, the peak in publication numbers is seen in 2023, with 119 articles published. decrease in publication numbers is observed in 2024. This decrease is thought to be due to the fact that the data for this study were obtained before the completion of 2024. The number of articles published in 2011 and onwards is 903.

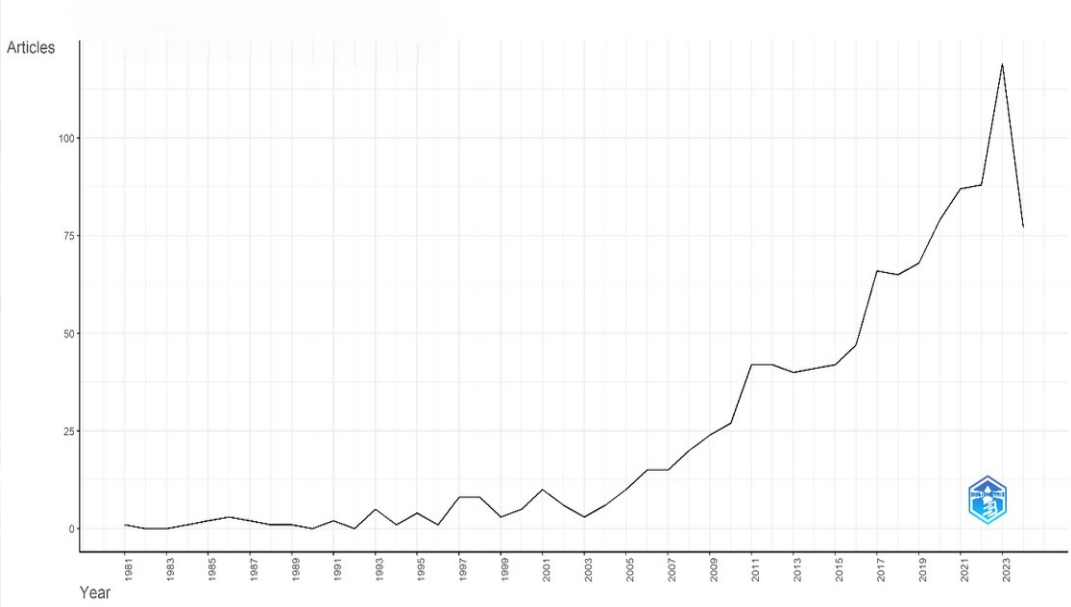

Figure 2. Annual scientific production

Most Productive Journals

Table 3 ranks the top ten most productive academic journals in the field of women in media studies, based on total article count and total citation count.

This table provides crucial data for understanding in which journals academic production and impacts are concentrated in this field.

Table 3. Most productive journals

	Journal name	Article number	Total citations
1	Feminist Media Studies	69	621
2	Sex Roles	28	2185
3	Psychology of Women Quarterly	16	745
4	Sport in Society	16	223
5	Communication & Sport	15	456
6	Media Culture & Society	15	280
7	Journal of Gender Studies	14	110
8	International Journal of Communication	10	49
9	New Media & Society	10	376
10	Social Media + Society	10	206

The most productive journal in the field has been Feminist Media Studies with a total of 69 articles. Simultaneously, it ranks as the third most influential journal in this field with a total citation count of 621. In terms of both productivity and influence, Feminist Media Studies holds a central position in the field of women in media studies. Sex Roles, which ranks second in productivity, although publishing 59.42% fewer articles than Feminist Media Studies, is the most influential journal in the field with 2185 citations. This indicates that the articles published by the journal are heavily referenced by other researchers and hold a significant place in the literature. Psychology of Women Quarterly, ranking third, proves its influence on the field with a total of 745 citations despite publishing 16 articles. When looking at the journals published in the field of women in media in general, it is observed that journals publishing on more specific topics such as women's studies, feminism, and gender produce more works and receive more citations in the field. Journals that offer more general frameworks such as communication, media, social media, and new media have featured fewer works in the field of women and media.

Most Productive Authors

A total of 1933 authors have contributed to studies on women in media. Table 4 ranks the top ten most productive and most cited authors in the field of women in media studies, based on the number of articles they have published and the total number of citations these articles have received. This table provides data to evaluate individual academic contributions and the impact of these contributions within the field.

Among the top four most productive authors are Youno Kim, Silvia Knobloch-Westerwick, Marika Tiggemann, and L. Monique Ward, each having published six articles. Cheryl Cooky also ranks as the fifth most productive author with five articles. However, there are significant differences among these authors in terms of scientific impact. Among the top five most productive authors, the three most influential authors in terms of citation count are Marika Tiggemann with 670 citations, Cheryl Cooky with 308 citations, and L. Monique Ward with 300 citations.

Table 4. Most Productive and most cited authors

	Authors	Documents number	Total citations		Authors	Total citations	Documents number
1	Kim, Y.	6	74	1	Tiggemann, M.	670	6
2	Knobloch-Westerwick, S.	6	108	2	Perloff, R.M.	378	1
3	Tiggemann, M.	6	670	3	Fink, J.S.	340	2
4	Ward, L.M.	6	300	4	Cooky, C.	308	5
5	Cooky, C.	5	308	5	Ward, L.M.	300	6
6	Dobson, A.S.	4	53	6	Kelly, E.	297	1
7	Pope, S.	4	98	7	Perdue, L.	297	1
8	Aubrey, J.S.	3	169	8	Peterson, B.	297	1
9	Chang, J.	3	41	9	Silverstein, B.	297	1
10	Dworkin, S.L.	3	77	10	Cheryan, S.	249	1

Youno Kim, the most productive author, publishes works in areas such as gender, media, globalization, women, and the sociology of media/culture at the American University of Paris. Furthermore, this author has published works in leading journals of the communication field, such as Media Culture & Society, International Journal of Cultural Studies, Communication Theory, and Cultural Studies/Critical Methodologies (Kim, 2006; 2010; 2011a; 2011b).

Silvia Knobloch-Westerwick, the second most productive author, continues her academic studies at Technische Universität Berlin. Research articles have been published in leading peer-reviewed journals of the communication field such as Mass Communication and Society, International Journal of Communication, New Media & Society. The author has contributed to the field especially with her work focusing on science communication and gender (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2013). Additionally, although Kim and Knobloch-Westerwick stand out in terms of productivity, their total citation counts remain at 74 and 108 respectively, indicating a more limited academic impact.

Marika Tiggemann, who ranks third in productivity but is the most influential author, continues her studies at Flinders University and stands out with her work

on body image in social media (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Holland & Tiggemann, 2016; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2018). It is evident that Tiggemann strongly contributes to the literature in the field and that her work serves as an important reference point for theoretical and applied research in the field.

L. Monique Ward, the fourth most prolific author in the field of women in media, continues her career at the University of Michigan and conducts studies in the areas of media, sexuality, sexualization, and gender development (Ward, 2002; 2003; 2016). Cheryl Cooky, the fifth most prolific author, continues her academic work at Purdue University College of Liberal Arts. She stands out particularly with her works focusing on sports communication, gender, and female athletes (Cooky et al., 2010; Cooky et al., 2013; Cooky et al., 2015). Ward and Cooky attract attention with their total citation counts (300 and 308). These authors appear to have made a balanced contribution to the field in terms of both productivity and scientific impact. This situation demonstrates that Ward and Cooky's works add value to the field both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Richard M. Perloff ranks second in effectiveness with 378 citations, and Janet S. Fink ranks third with 340 citations. Richard M. Perloff (2014) contributed to the women and media literature with his theoretically grounded research examining the effects of social media on young women's body image concerns. Janet S. Fink (2015) continues her academic studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The author has contributed to the field with her works on women's sports.

Finally, when looking at Table 4, it is possible to say that, excluding Tiggemann, who has both a high number of publications (6) and citations (670), there is no direct correlation between the number of publications produced by other authors and the number of citations they receive. The total citation count (482 citations) received by Kim, Knobloch-Westerwick, and Ward, who are among the most productive authors with 6 publications, is 28.05% less than Tiggemann's citation count (670 citations). The total citations received by authors with fewer than 4 publications (2442 citations) are 34.84% more than the citations received by authors with more than 4 publications (1591 citations). Authors with fewer publications have received more citations than authors with more publications.

Most Productive Countries

Table 5 details the geographical distribution of academic production in the field of women in media studies, illustrating the contribution levels of different countries to this field. The total number of published documents and the percentage of these documents in the academic literature provide data to analyze the impact of countries on the field. It can be stated that the feminist movements that emerged in the USA in the 1960s contributed to the increase in studies on women and media. It can be thought that the development of mass media in the USA has also led to the concentration of studies on the representation of women in the media in this field.

Table 5. Most productive countries

	Country	Documents number	Documents (%)
1	United States of America	358	0.33
2	United Kingdom	105	0.10
3	Australia	63	0.06
4	Spain	52	0.05
5	Canada	46	0.04
6	China	44	0.04
7	Israel	20	0.02
8	Sweden	20	0.02
9	South Africa	15	0.01
10	Germany	14	0.01

According to Table 5, the United States (USA) stands out as the most productive country in this field, with a total of 358 publications. The USA's contribution of 33% of the total output indicates its leading position in the field of women in media studies. This situation can be associated with the USA's strong academic infrastructure, comprehensive research funding, and research ecosystem involving a high level of international collaboration.

The United Kingdom follows the USA with a total of 105 publications. The United Kingdom, providing 10% of the total contribution, holds an important position in the field. While the USA and the United Kingdom exhibit a clear leadership in the women in media studies literature, it is evident that these two countries provide a distinct advantage compared to other nations. Countries with moderate productivity include Australia (63 publications, 6%), Spain (52 publications, 5%), and Canada (46 publications, 4%). Out of the total 1087 studies on women in media, 624 (approximately 57%) were produced by authors from institutions in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Australia, Spain, and Canada.

Countries exhibiting lower productivity include China, Israel, Sweden, South Africa, and Germany. China, with a total of 44 publications, contributes 4%, placing it in the middle ranks, while countries like Israel and Sweden have contributed only 2% with 20 publications. South Africa and Germany provide less than 1% of the total contribution with 15 and 14 publications, respectively. Despite the low productivity levels of these countries, it is assessed that the socio-cultural perspectives they offer to the literature add a different dimension to the field.

Most Cited Documents

Table 6 lists the top ten most cited academic works in the field of women in media studies and evaluates the impact of these studies in the literature using citation counts from both WoS and Google Scholar. This table provides an impor-

tant framework for understanding the thematic focuses, methodological contributions, and academic impacts of influential research in the literature.

When Table 6 is examined, it is observed that the top four most cited articles are published in the "Sex Roles" journal, which is in the Q1 category and has an impact factor of 3.0 in 2023. In the ranking based on the total citation counts in WoS and Google Scholar, it has been noted that six out of the top ten publications are again published in the "Sex Roles" journal. Since the "Sex Roles" journal is the most influential journal in the field of women in media, it is an expected result that most of the most cited publications are published in this journal (see Table 3).

Within the research data, the work with the highest number of citations is R. M. Perloff's (2014) article titled "Social media effects on young women's body image concerns: Theoretical perspectives and an agenda for research", published in the "Sex Roles" journal. This work presents a theoretical framework suggesting that the interactive nature of social media, the strong presence of peer influence, and the content features such as visual image sharing can significantly affect body image anxieties. This article stands out as the most influential study in the field, with a total of 378 WoS citations and 1362 Google Scholar citations. These high citation numbers indicate that the effects of social media on women's perception of their bodies are a significant topic for both academic and societal discussions.

The second most cited work is the article titled "The role of the mass media in promoting a thin standard of bodily attractiveness for women" by Silverstein, Perdue, Peterson, and Kelly (1986). Published in the "Sex Roles" journal, this study focuses on the role of the media in presenting thinness as a crucial aspect of attractiveness for the female body. To this end, the ways in which the female body is represented in the media are examined. The study, which reveals that thin women are featured more than men in the media, concludes that thinness is becoming an increasingly important criterion of attractiveness for women. With a total of 297 WoS citations and 1180 Google Scholar citations, this work is among the historically and theoretically significant contributions in the literature. The study has guided discussions in the field by addressing the media's role in shaping gender norms and women's perception of their bodies.

The third most cited work is the article titled "The stereotypical computer scientist: Gendered media representations as a barrier to inclusion for women" by Cheryan, Plaut, Handron, and Hudson (2013). Similar to the first two works, this article, published in the "Sex Roles" journal, examines the stereotypes about individuals in the field of computer science and whether changing these stereotypes through media influences women's interest in computer science. This study contributes to discussions on gender representation and equality in media with 249 WoS citations and 637 Google Scholar citations.

Table 6. Most Global Cited Documents

	Documents	WoS citations	Google Scholar citations
1	Perloff, R. M. (2014). Social media effects on young women's body image concerns: Theoretical perspectives and an agenda for research. *Sex roles*, 71, 363-377. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-014-0384-6	378	1362
2	Silverstein, B., Perdue, L., Peterson, B., & Kelly, E. (1986). The role of the mass media in promoting a thin standard of bodily attractiveness for women. *Sex roles*, 14, 519-532. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00287452	297	1180
3	Cheryan, S., Plaut, V. C., Handron, C., & Hudson, L. (2013). The stereotypical computer scientist: Gendered media representations as a barrier to inclusion for women. *Sex roles*, 69, 58-71. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-013-0296-x	249	637
4	Harper, B., & Tiggemann, M. (2008). The effect of thin ideal media images on women's self-objectification, mood, and body image. *Sex roles*, 58, 649-657. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9379-x	241	783
5	Cooky, C., Messner, M. A., & Hextrum, R. H. (2013). Women play sport, but not on TV: A longitudinal study of televised news media. *Communication & Sport*, 1(3), 203-230. https://doi.org/10.1177/2167479513476947	212	563
6	Fink, J. S. (2015). Female athletes, women's sport, and the sport media commercial complex: Have we really "come a long way, baby"?. *Sport management review*, 18(3), 331-342. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2014.05.001	196	601
7	Heldman, C., Carroll, S. J., & Olson, S. (2005). "She brought only a skirt": Print media coverage of Elizabeth Dole's bid for the Republican presidential nomination. *Political communication*, 22(3), 315-335. https://doi.org/10.1080/10584600591006564	181	420
8	Peter, J., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2007). Adolescents' exposure to a sexualized media environment and their notions of women as sex objects. *Sex roles*, 56, 381-395. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-006-9176-y	169	525
9	Posavac, H. D., Posavac, S. S., & Posavac, E. J. (1998). Exposure to media images of female attractiveness and concern with body weight among young women1. *Sex roles*, 38(3), 187-201. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1018729015490	162	538
10	López-Guimerà, G., Levine, M. P., Sánchez-Carracedo, D., & Fauquet, J. (2010). Influence of mass media on body image and eating disordered attitudes and behaviors in females: A review of effects and processes. *Media Psychology*, 13(4), 387-416. https://doi.org/10.1080/15213269.2010.525737	157	451

In other studies included in Table 6, topics such as women's body perception through media, sports, and gender representations are addressed. The study by Harper and Tiggemann (2008) details the effects of thin body images promoted by media on women's self-objectification, mood, and body perception. With a total of 241 WoS citations and 783 Google Scholar citations, this study stands out as a fundamental source on the subject. Similarly, the study by Cooky, Messner, and Hextrum (2013) analyzes the forms in which female athletes are represented in the media and addresses gender inequalities in television news media. This study contributes to the context of the sports-media relationship with a total of 212 WoS citations.

The study by Fink (2015) analyzes how female athletes are represented in media advertisements and the perception of women within the context of sports commerce. With 196 WoS citations, this study contributes to the literature on the representation of female athletes in the media. Additionally, the study by Heldman, Carroll, and Olson (2005) focuses on the mediatic representation of Elizabeth Dole in her political campaign and addresses how women are represented in the media in the political sphere.

Peter & Valkenburg (2007), examining the sexualization of women through media and its social effects, analyzed in one study the impact of adolescents' exposure to sexualized media content on their perception of women and received a total of 169 WoS citations. Similarly, the study by Posavac, Posavac, and Posavac (1998) examined the effects of media on women's body perception and the anxiety caused by these effects in women. This study stands out in this regard with a total of 162 WoS citations. López-Guimerà et al. (2010), on the other hand, addressed the effects of media on eating disorders and women's behavioral tendencies and received 157 WoS citations.

Most Frequent Keywords

The frequency of keywords plays a critical role in understanding which concepts researchers focus on and how these concepts form the basis of the field. This analysis is important in determining which concepts are dominant in the women in media literature and which themes shape the research agenda.

Table 7 presents the most commonly used keywords in studies on women in the media and their occurrence rates. The keywords 'media' and 'women' are not included in the table, as they directly reflect the research topic. According to the table, 'gender' and 'social media' are the most prevalent keywords. This indicates that gender is widely discussed in relation to social media and that these two themes are central to the field. The prominence of 'violence', 'feminism' and 'representation' among the keywords suggests that the representation of women in the media and violence against women have been extensively examined in the literature. It also shows that feminist theories and representations of women provide an important theoretical framework for research in this area. This finding supports the role of feminist media studies in the literature on women in the media.

Table 7. Most frequent keywords

Keyword	Occurrences	Keyword	Occurrences	Keyword	Occurrences
Gender	143	Identity	24	Facebook	13
Social media	140	Objectification	23	Femininity	13
Violence	72	Activism	21	News media	13
Feminism	53	Empowerment	19	Advertising	12
Representation	45	Television	19	Black women	12
Politics	42	Election	17	China	12
Communication	41	Media coverage	16	Intersectionality	12
Framing	38	Post-feminism	16	Marketing	12
Islam/Muslim	33	Gender bias	15	Social comparison	12
Body image	32	Journalists	15	Motherhood	11
Discourse	32	Leadership	15	Print media	11
Mass media	31	Ethnic/ity	14	Sexualization	11
Media representation	30	Fashion	14	Eating disorders	10
Journalism	30	Instagram	14	Religion	9
Gender stereotypes	29	Newspapers	14	YouTube	9
Culture	27	Sports media	14	Beauty	8
Content analysis	25	Twitter	14	Gender roles	8
Discourse analysis	25	COVID-19	13	Indonesia	8
Race	25	Digital media	13	Self-esteem	8

Table 7 shows that the literature on women in media also has an interdisciplinary structure. For example, concepts such as 'intersectionality', 'gender bias', and 'objectification' address the intersection of gender with different social hierarchies and the ways in which women are objectified in the media. The existence of such concepts shows that gender is not treated as a one-dimensional phenomenon in the studies but is evaluated in a broader sociocultural context.

Media types and digital platforms are also among the topics frequently addressed in the studies. Keywords such as 'news media', 'television', 'Instagram' and 'Twitter' reveal that women's representations are analyzed in digital media environ-

ments as well as in traditional media. Especially the increasing role of digital media platforms in social interaction highlights the studies on how gender themes are processed on these platforms.

Keywords such as 'body image', 'empowerment', 'social comparison' and 'sexualization' in the table reflect the growing academic interest in the effects of media on women's bodily perceptions and social empowerment.

Keyword Trend Topics

Keyword trend topics provide the most frequently repeated keywords on a yearly basis and allow us to understand the periodical development processes of a research field. Keyword trend topics make an important contribution to understanding how the prominent concepts in the literature on women in the media have changed over time and the effects of these changes on the thematic structure of the field. In this context, it can be considered as a tool for predicting the current dynamics of the field and future research directions. Figure 3 and Table 8 analyze the trends and frequencies of the keywords of studies on women in the media according to years. In order to better evaluate the trends in the field in Figure 3, Figure 3 has been tabulated (see Table 8).

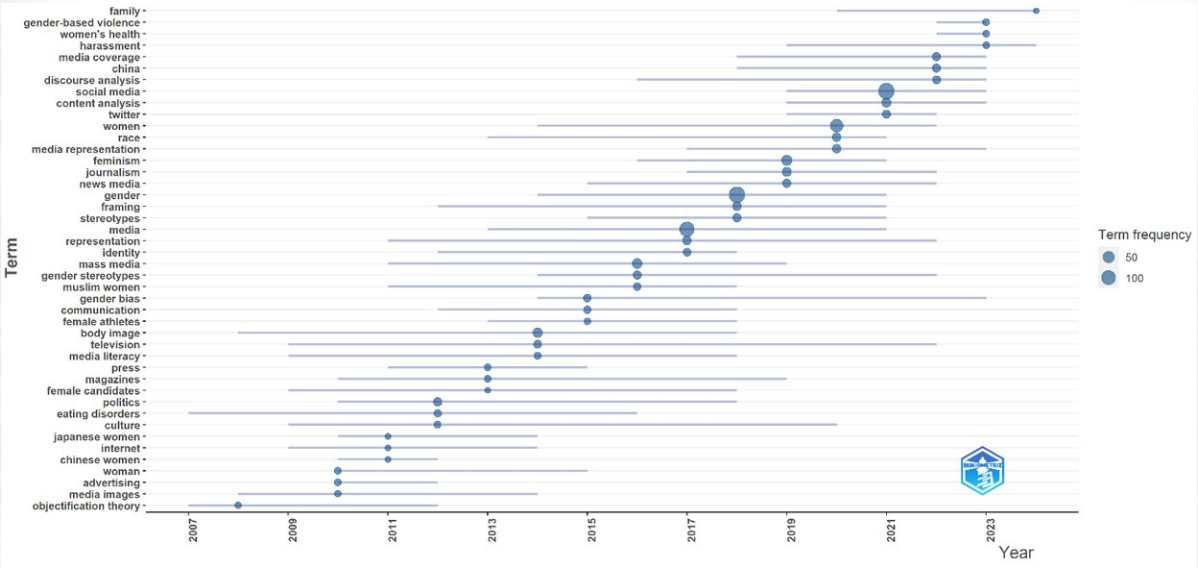

Figure 3. Keyword trend topics by year

According to Figure 3 and Table 8, 'family' in 2024 and gender-based violence and women's health in 2023 are seen to be prominent in the literature. Concepts such as 'gender-based violence', 'women's health' and 'harassment' show that gender inequalities are addressed in the media context and that these issues have become a priority in current academic discussions.

In 2022, the keywords 'media coverage' and 'China' were repeated the most. In this period, it is seen that the studies carried out especially in China come

to the fore. In 2021, it draws attention as a period in which the keywords 'social media', 'content analysis' and 'Twitter' appeared with high frequency in the literature. This trend shows that the importance of digital media platforms in gender studies is increasing. Social media has been intensively addressed as a field that transforms individuals' gender perceptions and representations of women. In addition, the high frequency of the concept of 'content analysis' indicates that digital media contents are evaluated with systematic analysis methods.

Table 8. Keyword trend topics

Keyword	Year	Frequency	Keyword	Year	Frequency
Family	2024	3	Mass media	2016	30
Gender-based violence	2023	6	Gender stereotypes	2016	13
Women's health	2023	5	Muslim women	2016	9
Harassment	2023	5	Gender bias	2015	9
Media coverage	2022	12	Communication	2015	8
China	2022	12	Female athletes	2015	5
Discourse analysis	2022	10	Body image	2014	26
Social media	2021	140	Television	2014	10
Content analysis	2021	23	Media literacy	2014	6
Twitter	2021	13	Press	2013	5
Women	2020	75	Magazines	2013	5
Race	2020	17	Female candidates	2013	3
Media representation	2020	16	Politics	2012	15
Feminism	2019	31	Eating disorders	2012	8
Journalism	2019	19	Culture	2012	6
News media	2019	13	Japanese women	2011	3
Gender	2018	143	Internet	2011	3
Framing	2018	17	Chinese women	2011	3
Stereotypes	2018	12	Woman	2010	6
Media	2017	109	Advertising	2010	6
Representation	2017	18	Media images	2010	4
Identity	2017	11	Objectification theory	2008	4

In 2020, 'race' and 'media representation' and in 2019, 'feminism' and 'journalism' were the most frequently repeated keywords. In 2018, concepts such as 'gender', 'framing' and 'stereotypes' came to the fore. Studies in this period

focused on analyzing how gender roles are constructed by the media and the effects of this construction on social perceptions. The 2017–2008 period shows that the issues of women's representation and objectification in the media have an important place in the literature. In this period, keywords such as 'objectification theory' (2008), 'media images' (2010), 'body image' (2014) and 'representation' (2017) came to the fore. It is understood that feminist media studies critically analyzed the representation of women in the media in this period. In addition, keywords such as 'Chinese women' (2011), 'Muslim women' (2016) and 'Japanese women' (2011) show that representations of women in the media are addressed in different cultural contexts.

Science Mapping Analysis. Co-citation Analysis

Co-citation analysis means that two publications are co-cited if there is a third publication citing any two publications (Small, 1973 cited in Van Eck & Waltman, 2014, p. 3). The more the number of publications in which any two publications are co-cited in other publications, the stronger the co-citation relationship between the two publications, and it is also likely that these two publications that are co-cited are related to each other (Leung et al., 2017). This analysis technique is used to reveal the intellectual accumulation of the scientific field and provides the most effective publication clusters (Donthu et al., 2021). Co-citation analysis is an important technique for understanding the intellectual foundations of a scientific field, the theoretical frameworks and the effects of the main pioneering studies in this field. This analysis enables the identification of the most influential studies in literature, the examination of the relationships between studies, and the understanding of the intellectual development and knowledge production dynamics of the field.

Figure 4 shows the co-citation network based on the reference sources of international studies on women in media. Bibliometrix R Network Layout Kamada & Kawai was used to visualize the co-citation network analysis, Louvain technique was used for the clustering algorithm (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Zupic & Cater 2015) and the number of nodes was set to 100. This choice was made in order to summarize the overall structure of the literature and avoid over-complication by analyzing the 100 most influential studies of the network and the relationships between these studies. Kamada & Kawai organize the connections between nodes to present the network in a visually more understandable way. This algorithm is a frequently preferred method especially in the visualization of citation networks and clearly reveals the relational structure in the literature. The Louvain algorithm divides the nodes into groups based on the principle of modularity optimization and allows the identification of intellectual clusters in the literature. This algorithm contributes to understanding which studies in the literature converge around certain theoretical frameworks or topics (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Bretas & Alon, 2021; Zupic & Cater 2015).

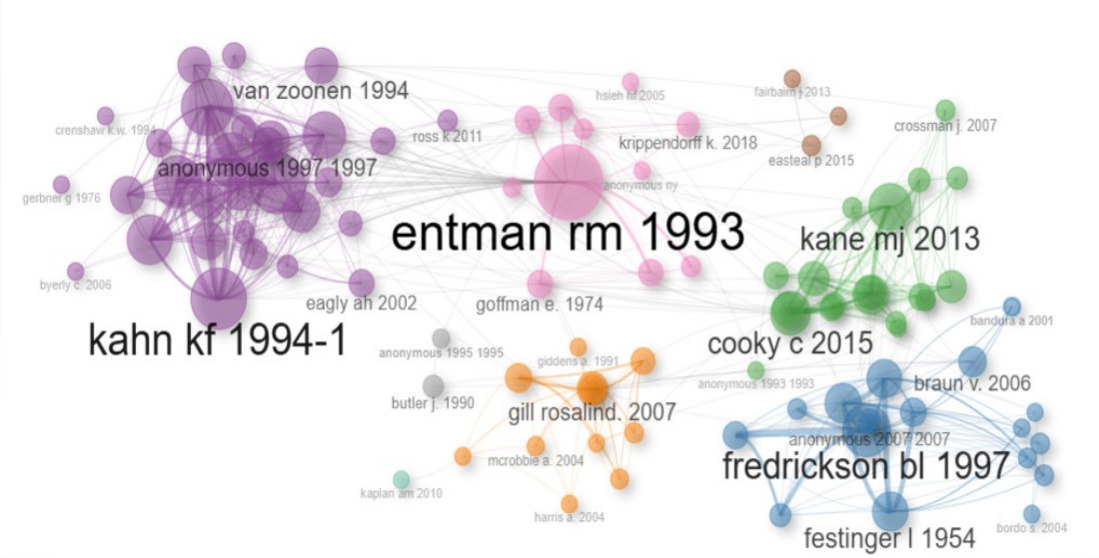

Figure 4. Co-citation network

In Figure 4, each cluster is shown in different colors. The links in the figure represent the frequency of co-citation relationships between two works. Thick and dense links between works or clusters indicate that two works are frequently co-cited in the same studies and that these works form a strong network of relationships in the literature. The size of the rings containing authors and their works is shaped by the number of citations, and the size of the ring increases as the number of citations increases (Aria et al., 2020). The fact that the central works in the clusters are associated with more dense connections emphasizes that these studies have an important position in literature. The transitive links between different clusters reveal the existence of interdisciplinary approaches and how thematic differences are integrated. According to the results of the co-citation network analysis, seven different clusters emerged, and five clusters dominate the field. These clusters are as follows:

Cluster 1: Framing theory

The first cluster is visualized with pink color and the work of Entman (1993) comes to the fore. Entman's framing theory forms the intellectual basis of this cluster. Entman (1993) presents a framework that analyses the impact of media content on social perceptions. Another important work in this cluster belongs to Goffman (1974). Goffman (1974) analyzed framing theory in his study. This cluster is shaped around studies that analyze how gender representations are framed through the media and how these representations shape social dynamics. This cluster is a frequently used theoretical reference point for critical media analyses in the literature.

Cluster 2: Objectification theory and social comparison theory

The second cluster is visualized with the color blue, and the work of Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) leads this cluster. This study provides an important theoretical framework that addresses the objectification of women in media representations and its psychological effects within the scope of objectification theory. Another important work in this cluster is Festinger's (1954) "A theory of social comparison processes". This theory deals with the processes of individuals comparing themselves with others through the media and the effects of these processes on individuals' body perception and psychological well-being. This cluster is closely related to concepts such as 'body image,' 'mental health,' 'self-esteem,' 'representation' and 'stereotypes'. In the literature, this cluster is considered as the centre of critical analyses based on feminist theories.

Cluster 3: Representation of women in the media

Cluster 3, visualized in purple, is centred on Kahn's (1994) study. This study critically analyses the distorted representation of women politicians in the media and shows how gender inequalities are reproduced through the media. This cluster has an important place in the literature in the context of women's political representation. Another important work in the cluster is Van Zoonen's "Feminist media studies" published in 1994. The study analyses the role of the media and its content in reinforcing gender stereotypes and setting the public agenda. This cluster has an important place in the literature in the context of women's representation in the media.

Cluster 4: Representation of women athletes in the media

At the centre of Cluster 4 is the study by Cooky et al. (2015), which is visualized in green. This study addresses the processes of marginalization of female athletes and analyses how gender inequality is perpetuated in the context of sport through the media. The work of Kane et al. (2013) is another influential work in this cluster. This study reveals how elite female athletes react to the way they are represented in the sports media. At this point, Cluster 4 includes studies on how female athletes are represented in media content and their reactions to this representation.

Cluster 5: Postfeminist media culture

Cluster 5 is visualized in orange and the concept of postfeminist media culture developed by Gill (2007) forms the centre of this cluster. The elements of postfeminist media culture analyze how gender is reproduced in the media context and how it affects the social roles of individuals. The cluster is related to concepts such as 'empowerment,' 'sexualization' and 'identity' and covers the literature on feminist media studies from a postfeminist perspective.

Cluster 6 is represented by Butler's (1990) "Feminism and the subversion of identity", while Cluster 7 is represented by Easteal et al.'s (2015) "Enduring themes and silences in media portrayals of violence against women".

Keyword Co-occurence Analysis

Co-occurrence analysis is based on the frequency with which keywords appear together in scientific works. As the number of publications in which any two keywords appear together increases, the co-occurrence relationship also increases. Keywords are terms that represent the essence of a scientific work. Therefore, co-occurrence analysis is very important to discover the concept network and conceptual structure of research topics and trends in a scientific field (Callon et al., 1991; Leung et al., 2017). Keyword co-occurrence analysis aims to visualize how certain keywords are used together in the literature and the relationships between these words. This technique is important in understanding thematic groups in the research field and the links between these groups. Keyword co-occurrence analysis also displays the conceptual structure that reveals the basic concepts of a research field and the relationships between these concepts.

Figure 5 presents a co-occurrence network that visualizes the relationships between keywords used in studies on women in the media and the thematic densities arising from these relationships. The link density of keywords in the network provides a better understanding of the theoretical framework and research trends in the field. Bibliometrix R Network Layout Kamada & Kawai was used to visualize the keyword co-occurrence analysis, and the number of nodes was set as 100.

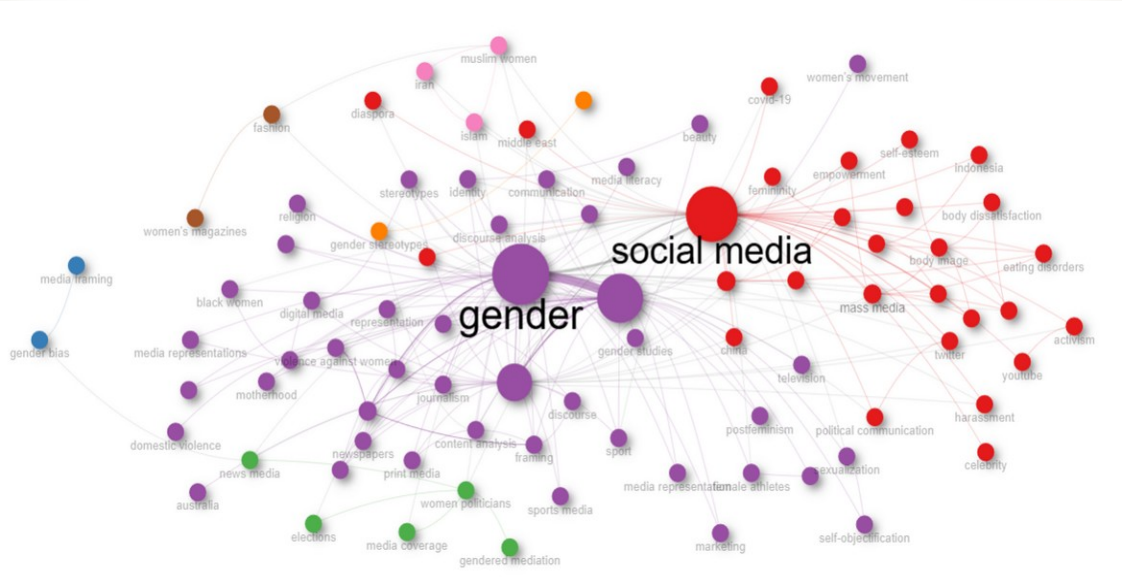

Figure 5. Keyword co-occurrence network

When Figure 5 is analyzed, it is seen that there are seven different clusters in the studies on women in the media, but two clusters in particular dominate the field. These clusters are as follows:

Cluster 1: Social media

In the centre of Cluster 1, which is visualized in red, is the keyword 'social media'. This concept is at the centre of the network and establishes dense connections with other keywords. This situation reveals that the social media cluster is an important research focus in women in media studies. Other important words in this cluster are mass media, feminism, post feminism, body image and social comparison. Again, the prominence of concepts such as eating disorders, empowerment, objectification, body dissatisfaction in this cluster reflects the issues frequently addressed in critical studies on women's representations in the media. This group represents the literature in feminist media studies that focuses on the objectification of women and how their body perceptions are shaped.

The keywords related to social media tools in the cluster were Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. This emphasizes the impact of digitalization on gender studies. The density of the concepts in this group shows that academic interest in the potential of digital media to transform gender perception is increasing.

Cluster 2: Gender

Cluster 2, which is visualized in purple, has the keyword 'gender' at its centre. This shows that gender is another important research focus in women's studies in media. The prominent keywords in this cluster are media, women, violence against women, identity, race, ethnicity, black women, framing, journalism, media representation, content analysis, discourse analysis. Based on the keywords, it is seen that the conceptual issues in this cluster are discussed in the context of gender-based violence, racism, identity formation, women's representation and in the context of content analysis and discourse analysis. Based on the connections between keywords, it shows that the words in Cluster 2 are related to each other both theoretically and methodologically.

Cluster 3 is shown in green, and the word 'news media' is at the centre of the cluster. This is followed by women politicians and elections. Cluster 4 is visualized with pink color and consists of the keywords Islam and Muslim women in the centre. Cluster 5 is visualized with blue color and consists of the keywords 'gender bias' and 'media framing'. Cluster 6 is colored orange and consists of the keywords 'gender stereotypes' and 'advertising', while Cluster 7 is colored brown and consists of the keywords 'fashion' and 'women's magazines'.

Thematic Map Analysis

Thematic map analysis is another technique used in the evaluation of conceptual structure (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Cobo et al., 2011b; Lim et al., 2024). Thematic

map is created based on the keywords of scientific works and provides important information about the future of the field. It provides important output on how the thematic and thematic development in a scientific field progress (Lim et al., 2024). Thematic maps are a strategic diagram used to define the conceptual structure of a scientific field; they determine which themes are formed, and analyze the importance and development of these themes (Cobo et al., 2011a). In the thematic map, themes are evaluated according to centrality and intensity. While centrality expresses the importance of the theme, intensity gives an idea about the development of the theme (Aria et al., 2021; Nasir et al., 2020). In determining the prominent themes related to a field of study and which are extremely important for the field, it is necessary to examine the motor and basic themes in the thematic map (Cobo, 2012).

Figure 6 shows the thematic map based on the keywords of the studies on women in the media. As a result of the thematic map analysis, it is seen that there are seven themes in the women in media literature. Among these seven themes, especially three of them are quite inclusive in the field since they contain a large number of keywords. These themes are gender, social media and mass media.

Thematic maps divide the literature in a scientific field into four quadrants. The themes in the upper right quadrant represent high density and high centrality and are referred to as motor themes. Motor themes show the research areas/topics that are developed and important for a particular research area (Akter et al., 2021). As shown in Figure 6, Social media and Mass media themes are the motor themes of women in media literature. In the social media theme – feminism, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, activism, post-feminism, YouTube, political communication and femininity keywords are included. In the mass media motor theme – body image, China, identity, communication, eating disorders, empowerment, objectification, self-esteem, sexualization keywords are included.

The themes in the lower right quadrant have low density and high centrality and are called basic themes. Basic themes refer to a large number of studies in a particular field and give the main topics studied in the field (Aria et al., 2020). Again, based on Figure 6, Gender theme is the only basic theme of women in media literature. The keywords within the Gender theme are as follows: media, women, content analysis, journalism, representation, framing, race, media representation, violence against women.

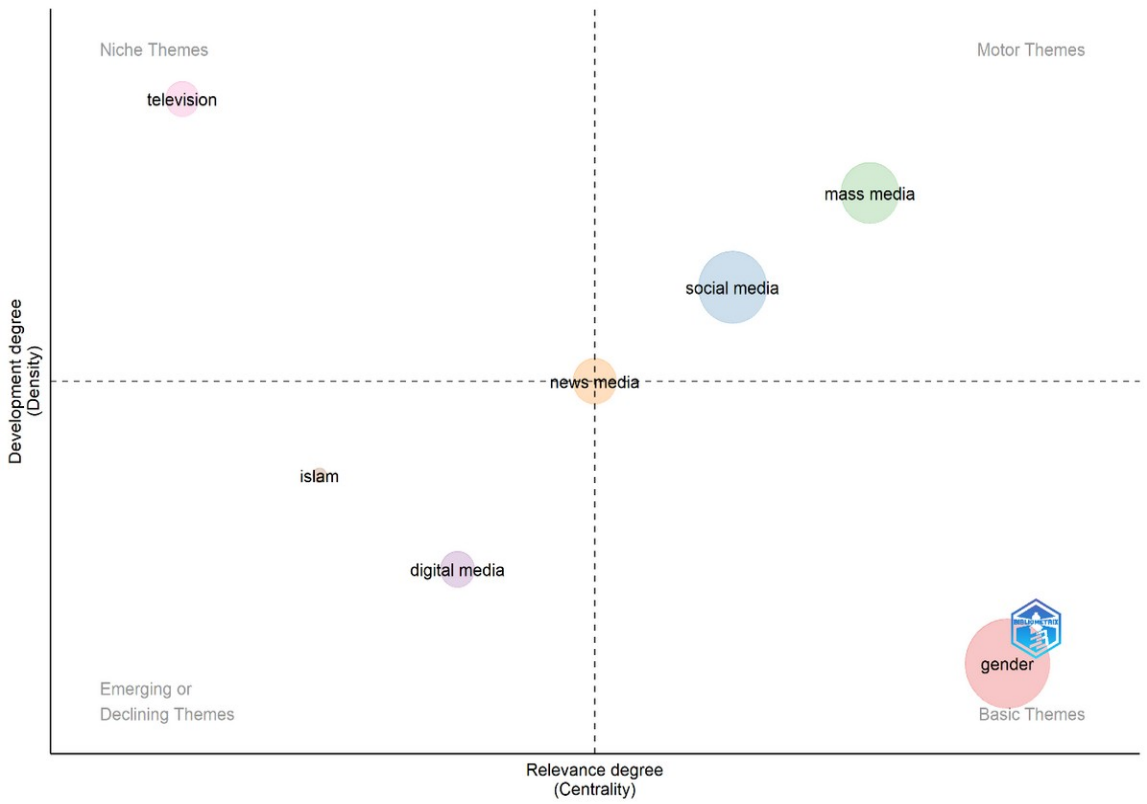

Figure 6. Thematic map

The themes in the upper left quadrant have high density and low centrality and are referred to as niche themes. Niche themes are highly developed but isolated topics in a particular research area (Aria et al., 2020; Cobo et al., 2011b). According to Figure 6, the Television theme is in the niche themes quadrant. The keywords within the Television theme are as follows: advertising, fashion, sexuality, woman, women's magazines, body, magazines, pornography, and press.

The themes in the lower left quadrant represent high intensity and high centrality and are called emerging or declining themes (Aria et al., 2020; Cobo et al., 2011b). Emerging themes are themes that need to be further developed in the research field, while declining themes are themes that are less studied and gradually abandoned in the research field (Cobo et al., 2011a). As can be seen in Figure 6, two themes emerged in the emerging or declining quadrant. The first of these is the relatively more central theme of Digital media. This theme includes the keywords 'intersectionality, black women, motherhood, critical discourse analysis, women's movement, women's rights, media discourse and Turkey'. The relatively more intense theme is Islam. In the Islam theme, the keywords Muslim women, religion and Iran were included.

Finally, the new media theme was located at the very centre of the thematic map and was not included in a quadrant. It is seen that this theme is quite central in the literature on women in the media. The keywords within this theme are:

'media coverage, women politicians, discourse analysis, gender bias, covid-19, media framing, elections, new coverage' and 'comfort women'.

Author Collaboration Analysis

Collaboration analysis is based on the visualization of publications based on co-authorship. Collaborations can be analyzed by researchers, researcher institutions or countries (Van Eck & Waltman, 2014). Collaboration analysis is very important to understand the cooperation and interaction between researchers and to reveal the social structure in the scientific field (Donthu et al., 2021). Author collaboration analysis is a technique for understanding the collaboration dynamics of a scientific field. Author collaboration analysis, which reveals the social structure of the scientific field, allows visualizing the collaborations established between different researchers and evaluating the contributions of authors in the literature.

In this study, network layout Kamada & Kawai, clustering algorithm Louvain technique was used to analyze the collaboration network, and the number of nodes was determined as 100. Figure 7 shows the author collaboration network visualization in the studies on women in the media. The density of author collaborations is indicated by the thickness of the lines between the rings where the author names appear. The thicker the author collaboration, the thicker the lines. Again, the size of the rings is formed according to the number of works produced by the author (Aria et al., 2020).

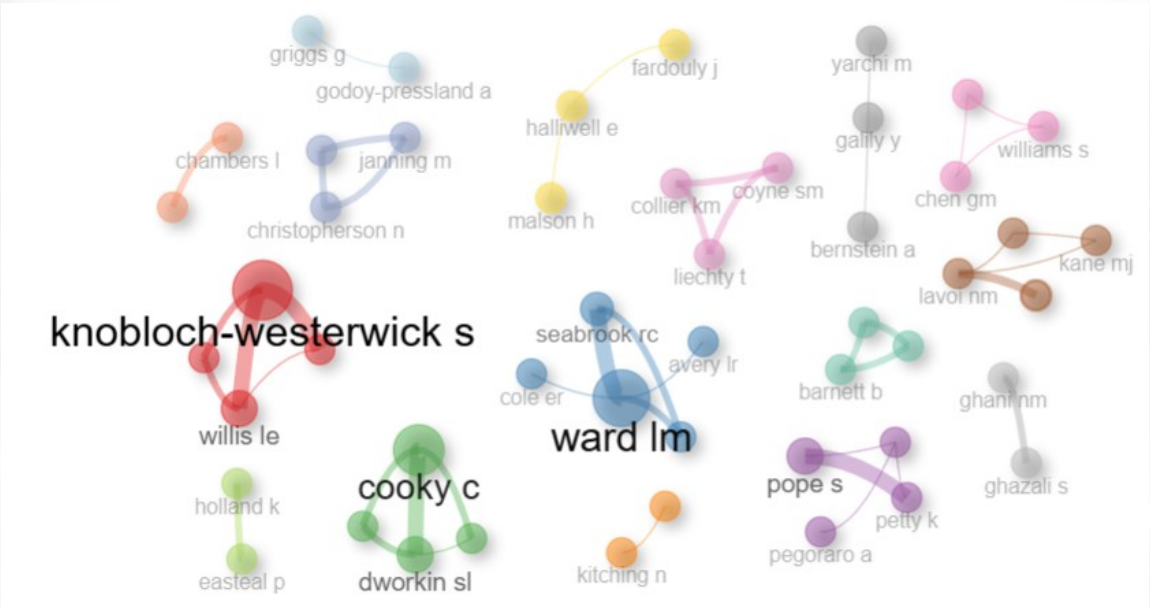

Figure 7. Author collaboration network

There are 16 different clusters in the author collaboration network and each cluster is visualized with a different color. In the red cluster, where S. Knobloch-Westerwick is at the centre, she collaborates intensively with L. E. Willis and also

with K. T. Luong and A. R. Kennard. Another important cluster is the cluster visualized in blue, where L. M. Ward is at the centre in terms of the number of works. The author collaborates intensively with R.C. Seabrook and S. Giaccardi. In the green cluster, which also includes C. Cooky, the author has intensive collaborations with R. Dycus, M. A. Messner and S. L. Dworskin, as well as with each other.

Country Collaboration Analysis

Country collaboration analysis reveals the social structure of a scientific field. Collaborations are formed according to the countries where the institutions of the authors producing works in a field are located and the contributions of the countries to the literature are examined. In the creation of the network for country collaboration, network layout Kamada & Kawai, clustering algorithm Louvain technique was used and the number of nodes was determined as 100.

Figure 8 details the social structure and dynamics of international academic relations by analyzing the network of collaboration between countries in the women in media literature. Seven different clusters were formed within the scope of country collaborations. Among these clusters, the cluster visualized in red with the USA at its centre is very important in terms of women in media literature. USA is positioned as a central node in the inter-country cooperation network, and this position reflects the magnitude of the country's contribution to the international academic literature. The USA has multifaceted and intensive co-operation with different countries. Within this cluster, the USA makes a global contribution to the literature by establishing strong links with countries from different continents such as China, South Korea, Canada, Italy, Turkey and Ukraine. In addition, collaborations with countries such as Malaysia, Pakistan and Nigeria show that the US is not limited to the Western world, but strengthens academic ties in Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

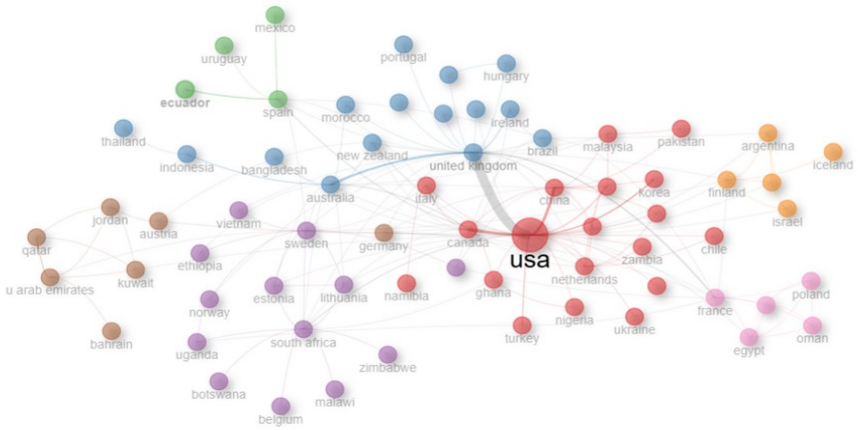

Figure 8. Country collaboration network

The USA also has strong collaborations with countries in different clusters. In particular, the USA's cooperation with the United Kingdom is important in terms of emphasizing the intensity and continuity of academic ties between English-speaking countries. In the blue cluster with the United Kingdom at the center, the UK has strong collaborations with Australia, Ireland and New Zealand.

Another cluster with South Africa at the center is visualized in purple. South Africa is also in cooperation with the USA. Other countries in this cluster are African countries such as Uganda, Malawi, Zimbabwe, European countries such as Sweden, Belgium, Estonia, Norway and Asian countries such as Vietnam.

In the cluster represented in brown, Kuwait is in the center and has collaborations with United Arab Emirates, Austria, Jordan, Qatar, Bahrain and Germany. Spain is in the green cluster, France in the pink cluster and Finland in the orange cluster.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study aims to reveal the main trends, conceptual structure, social relations, and intellectual dynamics in the field by systematically analyzing the academic literature on women in media through bibliometric analysis. Covering the period between 1981 and 2024, this study examines the literature on women in media through performance and science mapping analyses. Trends in the number of publications of studies on women in the media, the most prolific journals, authors and countries, and citation analysis were evaluated. The most studied topics in the field and the change in trend topics over the years are discussed. In addition, co-citation, co-occurrence and collaboration networks were created and thematic mapping was carried out. The findings confirm that women's studies in media is a multidisciplinary and constantly evolving research field, and they provide a basis for future studies.

As a result of the bibliometric analysis, it was determined that a total of 1087 articles meeting the criteria were published in the field of women in the media between 1981 and 2024. The increase in the number of publications, especially in the period after 2011, is striking. This can be attributed to factors such as the rise in academic awareness on gender equality, the impact of feminist movements and the spread of digital media. In this process, which is conceptualized as digital feminism, feminist movements have started to organize on social media (Martin & Valenti, 2013; Mendes, 2015). It can be stated that examples of digital feminist activism such as the Slutwalk Movement (2011), the #NiUnaMenos Movement (2015), and the #MeeToo Movement (2017) have focused academic attention on this field. In addition, it is noteworthy that studies linking the concept of sexualization with how unrealistic body images on social media affect young women in particular (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008, Holland & Tiggemann, 2016; Perloff, 2014; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2018; Ward, 2016).

When the most productive journals are analyzed, the journal "Feminist Media Studies" comes to the fore, while "Sex Roles" draws attention in the ranking of the most influential journal based on the number of citations. Marika Tiggemann was found to be both the most prolific and the most cited and influential author with six articles. In particular, Richard M. Perloff with one article and Janet S. Fink with two articles were the second and third most cited authors and made significant contributions to the field. In the inter-author collaboration analysis, the collaborations within three different clusters centered on S. Knobloch-Westerwick, L. M. Ward and C. Cooky are quite striking. This situation reveals that research in the field is carried out in international cooperation. When the distribution of publications by country is analyzed, the USA is the country that produces the most publications in the field of women in media. This shows the academic leadership and research capacity of the USA in the field. Feminist movements that emerged in the USA in the 1960s focused on the media and women and concentrated on the representation of women in the media (Jaddou & Williams, 1981; Rakow 1986; Smith, 1982). It is possible to say that political and social debates based on gender equality and women's rights have increased interest in the academic field. It can be stated that the structure of the USA, which dominates the global media industry, has also influenced studies on women and media. It can be said that the development of mass media such as cinema, radio and television in the USA has led academic studies to focus on the representation of women in these media. Studies on women's representations on television (Ang, 1985; Friedan, 1965; Lichter, 1986; Radway, 1987), women's representations in cinema (Mulvey, 1975), women's representations in advertisements (Berger, 2016; Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971; Goffman, 1979; Sexton & Haberman, 1974) are important works that have shaped the field. It can be stated that this historical background forms the basis of the US interest in the field and the academic production in this field.

The United Kingdom and Australia are other countries that have made significant contributions to the field. In the analysis of cooperation between countries, it was determined that the USA is at the center and has multilateral cooperation with many countries.

According to the findings of the citation analysis, Perloff's (2014) work has the highest number of citations in studies on women in the media. The work examines the effects of social media on young women's body perception with a theoretical framework. The other most cited work is Silverstein et al.'s (1986) study on how mass media promotes women's standards of physical attractiveness. Both of the most cited works deal with the impact of the media on the female body. The findings of the co-citation analysis are based on the references of the studies on women in the media and give the main works cited together in the field. Accordingly, although there are seven clusters in total, four clusters are particularly important for the field. The cluster we call "framing theory" is represented by Entman (1993), with the works in this cluster corresponding with the topic. The studies

in the second important cluster mainly examine "objectification theory and social comparison theory" and the cluster takes its name from here. The important representative of this cluster is Fredrickson and Roberts (1997). Another cluster is named "representation of women in the media", and the prominent study belongs to Kahn (1994). Again, the cluster we call "representation of women athletes in the media" is also very important, and the work of Cooky et al. (2015) stands out in this cluster. These clusters represent the main theoretical approaches, research topics and intellectual debates in the field.

The most frequently repeated keywords in women's studies in media are "gender" and "social media", except for the words "media" and "women". This shows that women's studies in media are frequently discussed on the basis of gender and predominantly in the context of social media. Within the scope of the research data, the works of Marika Tiggeman (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008, Holland & Tiggemann, 2016; Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2018) and the prominent work of R. M. Perloff (2014) emphasize that social media negatively affects women's body images and reinforces gender roles. The results of international studies on social media and gender are similar to those in the literature. UNESCO's "Gender Report: Technology on Her Terms" revealed that social media reinforces gender stereotypes. According to the report, unrealistic body images on social media cause girls to experience self-confidence problems (*Gender report...*, 2024). The report presented by the European Parliament in 2023 also stated that social media presents different content to male and female users through algorithms and thus reinforces gender stereotypes (Park et al., 2023).

The keywords "violence", "feminism" and "representation" are also among the top five most frequently repeated words. The issues of violence against women, feminism and the representation of women in the media have been extensively studied in the literature. When the keyword "violence" is analyzed specifically, the fact that the issue of violence is studied very frequently can be attributed to gender-based violence against women continuing to be experienced intensely. The World Health Organization (WHO) considers violence against women as a major public health problem and a violation of women's human rights. According to WHO estimates, approximately 1 in 3 women worldwide are subjected to violence, and most of this violence is intimate partner violence (*Violence against Women...*, 2024). According to data from the European Union (EU) survey on societal violence in 2021, 50 million women aged 18–74 in the EU, or 31% of women, have experienced physical (including threats) and sexual violence in their adult lives. The data also revealed that 32% of women have had a violent partner in their lifetime (*Every third woman...*, 2024). The European Union Gender Based Violence Survey 2024 report reached similar findings as the 2021 report and concluded that the number of women victims of violence has continued to increase over the past 3 years. According to the report, women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence than men (*Every third woman...*, 2024). In addition, women are intensely exposed to cyber

violence (*Cyberviolence against women...*, 2024). The term cyber violence against women and girls is used to describe new acts of violence mediated by online technology (Combating Cyber Violence..., 2022). Cyber violence includes acts of violence committed using the internet and/or mobile technology, such as online harassment, cyber dating abuse, revenge porn and cyber stalking (EIGG, 2022; *Cyberviolence against women...*, 2024). A 2014 survey of 42,000 women across the EU by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights found that 1 in 10 women had received inappropriate proposals or obscene emails on social media. Looking at gender-based differences in experiences of online harassment, it was found that girls were more likely than boys to experience hurtful or abusive behavior (Newman et al., 2022).

Feminism is also one of the most repeated keywords. According to the IPSOS International Women's Day 2024 survey, while 33% of women identified themselves as feminists in 2019, this rate increased to 39% in 2024. This data shows that approximately two out of every five people (39%) in 31 countries identify themselves as feminists (*International Women's Day 2024...*, 2024). The 2017 "MeeToo Movement" and the "Women's March" protests in the same year, which targeted Trump for his anti-women rhetoric, led to feminism becoming a popular concept among young women (Will, 2019). The constitutional guarantee of abortion as a constitutional right in France has also been recognized as a promising development for many feminist movements around the world (*Overview of gender...*, 2024). However, these positive developments do not mean that gender equality has been fully achieved. Data indicate that at the current rate of progress, it will take another 134 years to achieve gender equality worldwide (*Global Gender Gap Report...*, 2024; *Overview of gender...*, 2024). Therefore, the fact that feminism-related studies are intensively included in the literature can be attributed to both the increased interest in the feminist movement and the failure to achieve gender equality.

The fifth most repeated keyword in the study was "representation". According to the results of the co-citation network analysis, Kahn's (1994) study stands out in the first cluster, the representation of women in the media. In the cluster of representation of women athletes in the media, which emerged in the co-citation network analysis, the studies of Cooky et al. (2015) and Kane et al. (2013) came to the fore. Among the studies focusing on the representation of female athletes in the media, Cooky et al. (2013) and Fink, (2015) are also among the most cited works. Cooky, one of the most productive writers, has also looked at the field of representation from the perspective of female athletes with her studies in 2010 and 2015. At the 2024 Paris Olympics, the number of female and male athletes participating was equal for the first time. With this feature, the 2024 Paris Olympics stood out as the most gender-equal Olympic Games in history. However, despite the equality in participation, studies on the unequal representation of female athletes in the media will remain important today and in the future.

When the trending topics studied are analyzed, it is seen that concepts such as "family", "gender-based violence", "media coverage", "social media", "content analysis" and "race" have come to the fore in recent years. This finding shows that research topics in the field have changed over time and the focus has shifted to current issues. Issues such as the changing roles of women in work and family life, and the effects of different forms of work such as working from home on women's family life are more emphasized. The results of the keyword co-occurrence analysis supported the findings of the word analysis. Although a total of seven clusters were formed as a result of the analysis, the two main clusters centered on the keywords "social media" and "gender" are very important. The most frequently repeated words with the keyword "social media" are 'mass media, feminism, post feminism, body image' and 'social comparison'. The most frequently repeated words with "gender" were 'media, women, violence against women, identity, race, ethnicity, black women' and 'framing'. This finding shows that identity-based research areas such as race, ethnicity and black women have taken their place in the literature.

As a result of thematic map analysis, the motor themes of the field of women in media, that is, the important research areas of the field, are "social media" and "mass media". The social media theme includes the concepts of feminism, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, activism; the mass media theme includes the concepts of body image, identity, eating disorders, empowerment, objectification. The main theme of the field, that is, the most studied areas in the field, is the theme of "gender". Within the gender theme, the words 'media, women, content analysis, journalism, representation, framing' and 'race' are included. The niche theme studied in the field of women in the media was the theme of "television". Within this theme, the words 'advertising, fashion, sexuality, woman, women's magazine' and 'body' were included and studies on these topics were more limited. This finding shows that television is still important in the field of women and media, albeit in a limited way. The emerging or declining themes of the field are "digital media" and "Islam". In the literature, topics such as the positioning of women in Muslim societies, women's movements and modernization are of interest. These themes are areas that need further study in the field. In the theme of digital media, the concepts of intersectionality, black women, motherhood, and in the theme of Islam, the concepts of Muslim women, religion and Iran come to the fore. Women's rights in Iran, women's protests and feminism are noteworthy research topics. Researchers who want to work or are working in this field can focus on these topics.

Theoretical and Practical Implications and Recommendations for Future Studies

The findings of this study may have some theoretical and practical implications for the field of women's representations in the media. The literature on the topic falls within the field of study of many different disciplines such as media studies, gender, psychology, sociology, communication, and cultural studies. Based

on the findings, it is very important to address literature from a multidisciplinary perspective in future studies. Again, within the scope of this study, Framing Theory, Objectification Theory, Social Comparison Theory indicate the basic theories in the field and researchers who will work in this field in future studies can shape their studies on the basis of these theories. Again, as a result of the thematic analysis, important gaps in the literature are related to concepts such as 'Islam', 'Muslim women', 'digital violence', 'race and ethnicity'. Studies on women in the media based on these concepts can be focused on those.

Some implications can also be drawn for practitioners, educators, and policy makers in the field of women's representations in the media. Research findings reveal the need for digital media literacy. The negative effects of social media on body perception have serious consequences especially for young women. The dissemination of media literacy training will enable young people in particular to recognize and distinguish sexist representations by questioning media content. Creating policies that encourage the media to represent women in a more balanced and realistic manner will increase the role of the media in combating gender inequality. Current data from media organizations on women's representation in the media will be useful in terms of providing in-depth information. In addition, establishing legal frameworks to combat cyber violence and effectively punishing these offences will strengthen women's presence in the social sphere.

It is thought that this study will determine the current state of the literature on women's representation in the media and provide ideas for future research. Increasing the number of studies in the field, analyzing them in more depth and examining them in different contexts is important for a more positive and empowering representation of women in the media. This kind of research allows for understanding the complex dynamics between media and gender, developing a critical perspective and creating a more equitable media environment. In particular, raising awareness among media professionals about women and the media can make women's representation in the media more fair and inclusive. Media professionals who are aware of gender equality can go beyond presenting women only within the framework of stereotypical roles and emphasize more realistic forms of representation. They can produce content that will not trigger women's body image concerns and reinforce sexist perceptions. Instead of a publishing approach that commodifies the female body, it can develop a language that focuses on women's mental and intellectual achievements. It can play an active role in producing policies that aim to raise social awareness about violence and discrimination against women. Bibliometric analyses allow for the identification of general trends in the field and a more comprehensive interpretation of these trends, thus enabling future studies to be directed in a more informed and effective manner. Accordingly, future research can contribute to more inclusive and transformative changes in the representation of women in the media by taking into account current trends.

This study aims to contribute to the literature on women in media, to provide a perspective on the field and to guide researchers. In this direction, a number of issues can be focused on for future studies. First of all, the concept of digitalization, which is also prominent in the conceptual structure of women in media literature, is very important for the field. Within the scope of digitalization, new media platforms or artificial intelligence applications can contribute to women's studies. The development and application of new research methods, for example, big data analysis, social network analysis, artificial intelligence-based content analysis and mixed methods research can be used to conduct more in-depth and comprehensive analyses. The role of AI and algorithms in gender construction can be emphasized. Comprehensive studies can be conducted on the differences between the ways in which AI positions women and men. Studies on sexist disinformation spread through social media can lead to socially beneficial conclusions in terms of ensuring gender equality and preventing gender-based violence.

These recommendations overlap with the main goals of digital feminism. Inclusive studies in the field of digital feminism can support the production of conscious policies regarding women's representation in the digital world. Studies on the concept of digital feminist activism can reveal the reflections of women's roles in social events in the digital world. Media representations in different cultural contexts can be analyzed. In particular, it may be important to analyze how media representations of women are shaped in cultural, political and economic contexts and to evaluate the interactions between different cultural norms and values. Women and representation studies can be analyzed from a broader perspective within the framework of artificial intelligence and algorithms and more comprehensive findings can be obtained.

Adopting interdisciplinary approaches in women's studies, especially by integrating different disciplines such as psychology, sociology, communication and media studies, cultural studies, political science and gender studies, a more comprehensive and multidimensional analysis framework can be created. Finally, current and emerging social issues can be emphasized. By focusing on issues such as gender inequality, discrimination, violence, hate speech, cyberbullying, gender-based discrimination, racism and media representation of LGBTI+ individuals, the impact of the media on these issues can be analyzed in detail. Analyses to be conducted especially on social media can serve as a reference for other studies in the field of women and media by keeping the pulse of public opinion. Such studies focusing on social media can provide important data for many civil society organizations and international organizations aiming to ensure gender equality. Studies to be conducted within this framework will strengthen academic knowledge on women's representation in the media and contribute to the development of more informed policies to ensure gender equality.

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The Peripeteias of Cultural Politics in “The Craft” (1996)

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Abstract

The paper is a detailed analysis of Miranda Corcoran's monograph on the 1996 horror film “The Craft”, published in the “Devil's Advocates” series. Corcoran specializes in the representation of young witches in popular culture. The author of the paper presents the book's contents, accompanied by critical remarks. For example, Miranda Corcoran writes in detail about the contexts of the 1980s and 1990s—the “Satanic Panic,” the “Riot Grrrl” movement, the policies of Reagan and Clinton, and so on. It is noted that while these contexts are interesting in themselves and help understand the film's significance in a broader cultural context, these descriptions are often verbose and sometimes not entirely helpful. Corcoran writes at length about the film's social politics (race, class, feminism), presenting it not so much as a horror film as a film about teenage girl problems. In this, she follows many other authors, but this does not help understand “The Craft” as a work of horror. Ultimately, the film's social analysis is thorough and comprehensive, while its analysis of “The Craft” as a horror film raises questions. Not only does Corcoran write little about this, but she also calls “The Craft” a slasher film, which the film is not. The author of paper concludes that, despite this significant flaw, the book deserves attention.

Keywords

Horror; Cultural Politics; 1990s; The Craft; Criticism of Postfeminism; Representation; Witches

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Перипетии культурной политики в «Колдовстве» (1996)

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Аннотация

Статья посвящена подробному разбору монографии Миранды Коркоран про хоррор-фильм 1996 года «Колдовство», вышедшей в серии «Адвокаты дьявола». Коркоран специализируется на репрезентации молодых колдуний в популярной культуре. Автор статьи излагает содержание книги, сопровождая это критическими замечаниями. Так, Миранда Коркоран подробно пишет про контексты 1980-х и 1990-х – про «сатанинскую панику», движение “Riot Grrrl”, про политику Рейгана и Клинтону и т.д. Отмечается, что хотя эти контексты сами по себе интересны и помогают понять значение фильма в более широкой культурной ситуации, часто эти описания многословны, а иногда и не совсем полезны. Коркоран подробно пишет про социальную политику фильма (расу, класс, феминизм), представляя его не столько хоррором, сколько кино про проблемы подростков. В этом она следует многим другим авторам, но это не помогает понять «Колдовство» как произведение в жанре хоррор. В итоге оказывается, что социальный анализ фильма качественный и всеобъемлющий, в то время анализ «Колдовства» как хоррора вызывает вопросы. Коркоран не только пишет про это мало, но также и называет «Колдовство» слэшером, которым фильм не является. Автор статьи приходит к заключению, что даже несмотря на этот существенный недостаток, книга заслуживает внимания.

Ключевые слова

хоррор; культурная политика; 1990-е годы; Колдовство; критика постфеминизма; репрезентация; Ведьмы

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В 2026 году исполняется – подумать только – тридцать лет фильму, который на долгие годы стал и все еще является культовым среди девочек-подростков и который нынешние молодые женщины и те, кто смотрел это кино в юном возрасте, любят и пересматривают до сих пор. Речь идет о картине Эндрю Флеминга «Колдовство» (The Craft), вышедшего на большие экраны поздней весной 1996 года. (Я не указываю точную дату потому, что сведения о выходе кино в прокат разнятся). И хотя «Колдовство» показало умеренные кассовые и также считается «гнилым фильмом, который мы любим» (White, 2019) (рейтинг фильма на сайте «Rotten Tomatoes» далек от совершенства), его влияние огромно, а культурный статус – крайне высок. Про него регулярно пишут в медиа, как правило, отмечая юбилеи, а также – хотя и реже – научные исследования (Chandler, 2016). И раз уж у такого важного кино такой большой юбилей, я решил, что напишу рецензию на книгу Миранды Коркоран «Колдовство», вышедшую в серии монографий «Адвокаты дьявола» (Corcoran, 2023), посвященных фильмам ужасов. До «Колдовства» у Коркоран выходила фундаментальная работа «Колдовство и подростки в американской популярной культуре: маленькие колдуньи» (Corcoran, 2022), а после – нон-фикшен «Призрачные штаты: путеводитель по американской готике» (Corcoran, 2024) и совсем недавно сборник эссе под ее редакцией «Сатанизм**[1] и феминизм в популярной культуре» (Corcoran, 2025) (к слову, на обложке последней книги – кадр из фильма «Ведьма» Роберта Эггерса (2015), так что все творчество автора так или иначе кружится вокруг ведьм и феминизма).

Должен сказать, что хотя лично я нахожу книгу интересной, текст придерживается методологии, наименее продуктивной – на мой взгляд – для исследований хоррора. Аннотации книги дает именно то, что обещает: «Миранда Коркоран анализирует фильм в контексте популярной и политической культуры 1990-х, а также обсуждает его подход к таким вопросам, как раса, гендер, сексуальность и классовая принадлежность». Сказать честно, монография оказалась лучше, чем я ожидал, но подчеркну, что те книги из серии «Адвокаты дьявола», про которые я уже писал рецензии в *Galactica Media* – либо не злоупотребляют этой оптикой (монография про два тома «Оно» (2017, 2019)), либо используют совсем иные подходы (монографии про «Хижину в лесу» (2012), «Заклятие» (2013) и «Кладбище домашних животных» (1989)). Следование выбранной «методологии политкорректности» становится главным недостатком книги, которая вроде как выходит в серии «Адвокаты дьявола», но вместо того, чтобы описать «Колдовство» как хоррор, автор пишет о феминистском содержании кино. Однако во введении она справедливо заявляет, что ее

> «анализ остается скорее тематическим, чем эстетическим. … Подобные фильмы редко стремятся к новаторству в плане монтажа или мизансцены. Однако они часто являются новаторскими в том, каким образом они затрагивают соци-

1 Движение, признанное в России экстремистским. Здесь и далее будет обозначаться значком **

> альные и культурные проблемы, актуальные для подростковой аудитории» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 15).

Автор, конечно, в своем праве, но это не сильно помогает понимать хоррор-составляющую картину. Но обо всем по порядку.

Книга содержит большое введение, три главы, заключение и библиографию. Представим их по порядку. Во вступительной части Миранда Коркоран 1) рассказывает о личном отношении к фильму; 2) пересказывает сюжет; 3) дает фактическую информацию о картине – о задумке «Колдовства», кто в нем играл, как оно снималось и как было принято. С точки зрения Коркоран, секрет долголетия картины в том, что в ней тема оккультизма переплетается с тонким, сочувственным изображением женского подросткового возраста (правда, в заключении автор предлагает еще один вариант ответа на данный вопрос). Фильм ныне привлекает зрительниц потому, что получил статус хоррора, который серьезно относится к проблемам молодых женщин. Картина не столько про девушек-подростков, сколько для девушек-подростков. Главные героини «Колдовства» представляют разные социальные классы и расы; каждая воплощает какие-то аспекты подросткового опыта. Он одновременно про женскую дружбу и женское предательство: хотя четыре маленькие колдуньи поддерживают друг друга и создают настоящее сестринство, в итоге они проявляют жестокость по отношению друг к другу и, в конце концов, подрывают доверие. Последнее нужно пояснить, раскрыв сюжет.

Главная героиня Сара (Робин Танни), всю жизнь мучаясь чувством вины из-за того, что ее мать умерла при родах, пыталась совершить самоубийство. Фильм начинается с того, что ее отец и мачеха после инцидента переезжают в собственный дом в Лос-Анджелесе. Сару определяют в католическую школы, где она встречается с тремя подругами, у которых в школьной иерархии статус «чудачек» (weirdos). Это Рошель (Рэйчел Тру), Нэнси (Файруза Балк) и Бонни (Нив Кэмпбелл). Все три девочки – изгои. У каждой, как и у Сары, свои проблемы: темнокожая Рэйчел терпит расистские издевательства, Нэнси комплексует из-за обезображенного с детства тела, а Нэнси, живущая в трейлере, вынуждена терпеть лишения и родителей-алкоголиков. Девочкам, представляющим три стихии, нужна четвертая для ковена, и они принимают в компанию Сару – единственную, кому колдовство даровано от природы. Они начинают практиковать магию: сперва все идет хорошо и весело (они делают шалости), а затем они используют колдовство во вред, и заклятья оборачиваются против них. Сара отстраняется от девочек, и Нэнси с подругами отправляется к ней в дом, чтобы отомстить за предательство. Все заканчивается тем, что Сара счастлива, Рошель и Бонни теряют силы, а Нэнси отправляется в дом для умалишенных.

История создания картины обычная. Из любопытного стоит упомянуть разве тот факт, что съемочная группа наняла Пэт Девин, практикующую ведьму

и верховную жрицу Завета Богини (Covenant of the Goddess) в качестве консультанта. В «Колдовстве» переосмысляются силы природы и говорится, что магия окружает нас повсюду. При этом данная тема по иронии реализовывалась с помощью практических и цифровых спецэффектов. Так, в некоторых сценах использовалась тогда зарождающаяся технология компьютерной графики (CGI). Это прежде всего сцена, в которой девушек окружает облако бабочек после первого ритуала колдовства. В сцене использованы сотни цифровых копий, созданных путем сканирования данаид монарха и построения соответствующей 3D-модели. Но куда интереснее фактической и технической информации то, как фильм был принят.

Отзывы были неоднозначными. Например, Роджер Эберт был недоволен «Колдовством», правда, он похвалил главных героинь. Рита Кемпли в “Washington Post” пожаловалась на сумбурную структуру фильма, банальный сюжет и назвала кино «смесью Готорна, “Смертельного влечения” и голливудской магии». Другие авторы (например, из “San Francisco Chronicle”) были более благосклонными. Негативные рецензии и скромные сборы Коркоран объясняет внешним фактором: создатели изначально намеревались получить рейтинг PG13, а получили R (лица младше 17 лет не могли смотреть фильм без сопровождения родителей). Такой рейтинг заставил критиков и зрителей рассматривать фильм как произведение, созданное для взрослых, а не для подростков. Кроме того, многие критики и зрители не знали, как воспринимать «Колдовство», потому что бум подростковой литературы – в которую картина вписывается – случился позже. Как бы то ни было, «хотя общие кассовые сборы «Колдовства» составили всего около 55,6 миллионов долларов, фильм имел большой успех на VHS, став популярным для домашнего проката и неотъемлемой частью вечеринок с ночевкой в конце 1990-х и начале 2000-х годов» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 14). Это, пожалуй, все, что мне показалось важным во введении. Можно идти дальше.

Первая глава монографии называется «От рейганизма до беспорядков: определяя место “Колдовства” в 1990-х». Коркоран слишком подробно рассказывает о контексте 1990-х – ровно то, что обещается. Опуская детали, обратимся к ее главному выводу. Девяностые в США отражали две противоречивых установки: с одной стороны, цинизм, кристаллизовавшийся в начале десятилетия, с другой – растущая самоуспокоенность, возникшая из-за экономического роста во второй половине декады. Кроме прочего Коркоран цитирует политика и публициста Патрика Бьюкенена, охарактеризовавшего идеологический раскол американской жизни 1990-х как «культурную войну» (концепт был изобретен раньше и не им). В общем: «Америка в 1990-е была разделенной страной, и фильм “Колдовство” (1996) содержит и отражает этот культурный раскол» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 19). Честно говоря, кажется, что Коркоран заходит далеко, заявляя, что в «Колдовстве» присутствует конфликт, который не только усиливает напряжение в центре сюжета, но и обнажает противоречия,

присущие американскому обществу 1990-х. Если так, то почти все американские фильмы 1990-х обнажают противоречия, присущие американскому обществу 1990-х годов, а российские фильмы 1990-х обнажают противоречия, присущие российскому обществу 1990-х. Кино не снимается в вакууме, и в том числе жанровые картины отражают свое время. В «Колдовстве» есть социальный контекст и политический подтекст, но это не делает картину уникальной в том смысле, что здесь контекст с подтекстом не лучше, чем во многих других картинах.

Миранда Коркоран подробно пишет о том, как социальное неравенство отражается в контрастах Лос-Анджелеса. Много места она уделяет протестам в городе, разгоревшимся в 1992 году после избиения темнокожего Родни Кинга и последовавшим оправданием виновных полицейских. Вот как пафосно Коркоран описывает участников протеста: «ярость, подпитывавшая их насилие, проистекала из десятилетий нарастающей расовой напряженности и осознания репрессивных систем, которые продолжали лишать цветного населения прав» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 22). Зачем Коркоран это делает? Чтобы позже рассказать о теме расизма в кино. Правда, здесь она не останавливается, а продолжает размышлять о том, как маргинализация цветных (на заднем плане в школе мы можем увидеть студентов латиноамериканского и азиатского происхождения, но у них нет голоса) в «Колдовстве» отражает кинематографические и телевизионные нормы того времени, когда небелые люди появлялись лишь в качестве второстепенных персонажей, символических фигур или в специальных эпизодах, которые эксплицитно затрагивали проблемы расизма. Такие громкие заявления – немного перебор. Тенденция, о которой пишет Коркоран, была, но в этом контексте тем более эффектным и востребованным было, например, творчество Спайка Ли.

Много и с большим удовольствием Миранда Коркоран пишет про безопасность и особенно про сексуальное насилие. Это было отражено в том, что ужасы происходили изнутри и попадали в дома американского среднего класса. Суть этого рассказа изложена в следующей цитате:

> «Девяностые годы стали десятилетием, когда насилие и смерть проникли в ранее безопасные места. Одновременно с этим изображение девочек-подростков в фильме как монстров, или, точнее, ведьм, также перекликается с культурным дискурсом эпохи, определяемой насилием в школах. … преступниками были не посторонние, неизвестные и зловещие незнакомцы, а подростки, которые сами являлись частью школьного сообщества» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 25).

Далее Миранда Коркоран сообщает о том, что в 1990-х и начале 2000-х годов девочки становились важной демографической группой. С необходимостью произошел и тематический сдвиг в кинематографе того периода: популярные фильмы стали дрейфовать в сторону интересов девочек. Здесь Коркоран переходит к изложению научно-популярной книги «Воскрешение Офелии. Секреты девочек-подростков» Мэри Пифер (Pipher, 1994)

(более позднее издание на русском появилось в 2020 году). Пифер, обратила внимание на то, что несмотря на весомые достижения женского движения, почему-то девичья культура в 1990-е определялась страданиями и угнетением. В эскалации депрессии, расстройств пищевого поведения и селфхарма Пифер обвинила медиакультуру. «Колдовство» опиралось на эти представления о девочках-подростках как об проблемных, потерянных и своенравных. Многие тезисы Пифер находят отражение в фильме.

К этой теме Миранда Коркоран неоднократно вернется. А вот то, к чему она не вернется, так это кинематографическому контексту фильма. Здесь автор пересказывает книгу Джона Кеннета Мьюира о фильмах ужасов 1990-х (Muir, 2011). Коркоран считает, что хотя «Колдовство» находится под влиянием более ранних хорроров, тем не менее, является продуктом 1990-х, сформированным не столько строгим консерватизмом эпохи Рейгана, сколько конфликтами культурных войн 1990-х годов (Corcoran, 2023, p. 30). Это, конечно, потрясающее заявление. Во-первых, классические слэшеры к середине 1990-х исчезли. Во-вторых, только самый глубокий аналитик культуры смог бы заметить, что фильм 1996 года – это продукт 1990-х, а не 1980-х. Спасибо, Миранда Коркоран. Тонко, глубоко, оригинально. Будем пользоваться этой важной идеей. В этой главе Коркоран опирается на книгу Александры Уэст про цикл подростковых хорроров 1990-х (West, 2019), начавшийся с «Баффи — истребительницы вампиров» (1992) и завершившийся «Черри Фоллс» (2000). Перечисляя вслед за Уэст фильмы, Коркоран приходит к выводу, что хорроры 1990-х годов уникальны тем, что с одинаковым энтузиазмом черпают вдохновение из работ Джона Карпентера и Джона Хьюза. И здесь автор делает кульбит, чтобы заявить: «Колдовство», как и многие его современники из 1990-х, — фильм не только о насилии, оккультизме и хорроре, но и о подростках и старшей школе (Corcoran, 2023, p. 31). Это делается для того, чтобы больше не писать про хоррор. Теперь она пускается во все тяжкие рассказа про подростковое кино, и, конечно: «“Колдовство” изображает среднюю школу как микрокосм более широкого общества, со всеми его социальными предрассудками и иерархиями, воспроизведенными в миниатюре» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 33).

И раз так, то Миранде Коркоран ничего не остается, кроме как заявить, что, как и во многих фильмах о средней школе, «Колдовство» представляет саму школу сценой, на которой молодые люди могут разыгрывать собственные драмы социального и личностного развития. Что делает Коркоран далее? Ссылаясь на эссе критика Робина Вуда о подростковом кино 1990-х, она заключает, что «Колдовство» воспроизводит видение школы как социального, а не образовательного пространства. Вновь ссылаясь на Мюьира, она пишет, что девочки используют колдовство, чтобы соблазнять мальчиков, а не летать на метлах. Ссылаясь на критика Тимоти Шари, она пишет, что это фильм не столько об оккультизме, сколько про вероломство школьных группировок.

Для Шари, как и для многих поклонников фильма, «Колдовство» уникально тем, что берет обычные переживания подросткового возраста и объясняет их с помощью языка сверхъестественного. Так что «Колдовство» построено вокруг тех же проблем, которые определяют стандартные фильмы о старшей школе 1990-х. В общем, никакого вам хоррора, читатели. Дальше терпите про социальный контекст и политический подтекст.

Миранду Коркоран оправдывает то, что по-другому про «Колдовство» никто не пишет. Вот, например, мнение Кэтрин Спунер о фильме:

> «“Колдовство” берёт за основу знакомые приёмы подростковых фильмов о старшей школе и переосмысливает откровенно готическим образом. Привычные пространства дома, школы и торгового центра превращаются в готические места, населённые змеями, насекомыми и паразитами, в них появляются монахини и католицизм, а также продаются свечи, магические принадлежности и книги по оккультизму. В этой обстановке четыре главные героини открывают для себя колдовство и сперва используют его, чтобы противостоять обыденной жестокости школьной жизни (изоляция, сплетни, сексуальное лицемерие, злобные насмешки и расизм). Однако их сила показана всё более развращающей и разлагающей, причём три из четырёх девушек становятся хуже своих обидчиц, и Саре приходится возвращать их силы добру, а не злу. Таким образом, любой ужас, порождаемый фильмом, обусловлен не сверхъестественными силами, а тем, как эти силы раскрывают скрытую жестокость, уже присутствующую в персонажах» (Spooner, 2004, p. 183).

В следующей подглавке первой главы Миранда Коркоран показывает свою некомпетентность в качестве исследователя хоррора. Она заявляет, что «Колдовство» в значительной степени заимствует элементы из другого подросткового жанра — слэшера. Коркоран повторяет, что 1990-е были периодом, когда национальные тревоги Америки начали обращаться внутрь себя; что «Колдовство», вышедшее в том же году, что и «Крик» (1996), воспроизводит модель внутрипоколенческого насилия; что в фильмы, когда женщины подвергаются насилию со стороны других женщин – еще хуже, чем даже слэшеры. Также Коркоран пишет вот такое:

> «Хотя “Колдовство” довольно явно затрагивает сферу сверхъестественного, финальная схватка между Сарой и Нэнси явно (и, по сути, довольно осознанно) опирается на визуальный лексикон жанра слэшера. Возможно, наиболее явным приемом, заимствованным “Колдовством” из слэшеров является образ “последней девушки”» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 38).

Зачем помещать «Колдовство» в контекст слэшеров, не ясно, потому что это не слэшер. Девушка последняя, потому что она остается одна из компании и, хотя ранее не могла, дает отпор монстру. В следующих двух главах про хоррор нам не расскажут. Хотя, имея в виду то, что нам уже рассказали про хоррор, все-таки скорее к счастью, чем к сожалению. В общем исследование можно похвалить за социальный анализ и упрекнуть за анализ хоррора. В других местах книги Миранда Коркоран чувствует себя более уверенным автором.

Во второй главе «“Сатанинская** паника”: Новая ведьма для девяностых» излагается краткая история колдовства, описывается репрезентация ведьм в популярной культуре и возрождение образа ведьмы в конце XX века как реальной проблемы после создания викканства и сатанинской паники 1980-х и начала 1990-х годов. Итак, кто такие ведьмы? Ссылаясь на определение историка Питера Хаттона, Коркоран пишет, что ведьмы используют сверхъестественные силы, чтобы причинить вред, страдания или несчастья другим людям. Классическая ведьма отравляет пищу, оставляет фетиши у порогов и приносит зло в счастливый дом. Обычно считается, что ведьмы поклоняются дьяволу. Героини в фильме поклоняются совсем не ему, но богине Манон, которая гораздо более всемогуща, чем Б-г и дьявол: если бы они играли в футбол, то Манон была бы стадионом, на котором они играют. В фильме изображены шабаш и левитация – гораздо более приземленное видение ночных полетов. Колдуньи не летают на метлах, а просто поднимаются в воздух посредством заклинания, прочитанного другими девочками. Я бы даже подчеркнул, что фильм даже на уровне названия отстраняется от ведьм, так речь в нем идет не о “Witchcraft”, а просто о “The Craft”.

В 1584 году член парламента, врач и инженер из Кента Реджинальд Скот опубликовал первый сохранившийся трактат о колдовстве, написанный английским автором. Скот утверждал, что вера в колдовство подпитывается невежеством. Коркоран пишет, что рассуждения Скота о колдовстве как о воображаемой угрозе, а не о реальном преступлении, помогли превратить ведьму из источника политической и культурной тревоги в литературный образ. Уже позже писатели XIX века помогли утвердить ведьму как феминистскую икону, а также способствовали популяризации концепции «добрых ведьм», представляя тех, кто становился жертвами охоты на ведьм, как угнетенных предшественниц современных активистов.

Миранда Коркоран сообщает, что в американском воображении образ ведьмы закрепился только с выходом экранизации «Волшебника страны Оз» (1939). Злая Ведьма из «Волшебника страны Оз», которая, между прочим, имеет мало общего с предыдущими воплощениями персонажа, оказала влияние на формирование популярного образа. Кроме того, «Волшебник страны Оз» способствовал созданию бинарной оппозиции, разделяющей колдовство на полярные позиции добра и зла. Однако, во-первых, сам образ Злой ведьмы в итоге был переосмыслен, например, в популярной мюзикл-дуалогии «Злая: Сказка о ведьме Запада» (2024) и «Злая. Часть 2» (2025), а во-вторых, это тем самым разрушает устоявшуюся бинарную оппозицию. Оппозиция добрых и плохих ведьм представлена, как мы видели, в «Колдовстве». Сара противопоставляется эгоистичным соратницам. Она окажется единственной, кто выразит обеспокоенность по поводу практик ковена. Магия Сары представлена как естественная и чистая, а маргинальное социальное положение, занимаемое

Нэнси из рабочего класса, афроамериканкой Рошель и изуродованной Бонни, выделяет их как (уродливых) «злых ведьм».

Глава о «Сатанинской** панике» в книге опять же кажется скорее неуместной. Или во всяком случае слишком подробной. Коркоран считает, что «Колдовство» – продукт «сатанинской паники», которая возникла в 1980-х годах и влияла на представления о культах ведьм вплоть до начала 1990-х годов. Не ясно, почему фильм пронизан последствиями этой паники, если магия в нем не про дьявольщину, а про обычное неоязычество? Коркоран сама же пишет: «Сатанинская паника утихла примерно к 1992 году, а после середины 1990-х вера в ритуальные злоупотребления настолько резко упала, что в основном ограничивалась определенными группами консервативных христиан» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 58). Единственная причина упоминать феномен в том, чтобы сказать, что создатели кино пытались отстраниться от сатанизма**, но тогда не ясно, зачем так подробно писать о «сатанинской панике»? В эпоху, омраченную затянувшейся паранойей сатанинской паники, «Колдовство» переосмыслило магию для широкой аудитории, представив ее как нечто потенциально дающее силу (Corcoran, 2023, p. 60). Упоминаемая Пэт Девин, консультант по викканству, старалась, чтобы заклинания и обряды в фильме структурно, эстетически и духовно соответствовали тем, что использовали настоящие ведьмы. Довольно иронично замечание Коркоран: «Чтобы не оскорбить реальных ведьм, бог и богиня не появляются в “Колдовстве”, как и любые другие языческие божества». (Corcoran, 2023, p. 66). А тем, что девочки учатся в католической школе, задеть никого не боялись. Чувства ведьм для американского общества важнее чувств людей, придерживающихся более традиционных верований.

Как и во второй главе, в третьей мы узнаем про много чего, но, конечно, не про хоррор. Последняя глава исследования называется «“Мы — чудачки, мистер”: Колдовство и политика идентичности». «Мы — чудачки, мистер» (We are the weirdos, mister) — фраза, которую Нэнси бросает добродушному водителю автобуса. По мнению Миранды Коркоран, своим «чудачеством» Нэнси, Бонни, Рошель и Сара воплощают альтернативные возможности женственности. Здесь фильм рассматривается как продукт постфеминистской идеологии и феминизма третьей волны. Коркоран часто цитирует Анжелу МакРобби, которая считает, что в политику и популярную культуру 1990-х были включены феминистские идеалы и риторики, однако это не всегда помогало феминизму (McRobbie, 2009). Политика и культура 1990-х апеллировали к «свободе» как к идеалу, к которому женщины могли стремиться, но одновременно представляли феминизм как «устаревший». Для МакРобби постфеминистский дискурс формировал образ идеальной современной женщины как наделенной правами, но при этом не слишком-то наделенной. Иными словами, можно было быть самостоятельной женщиной, но в определенных рамках.

По мнению Миранды Коркоран, «Колдовство», являясь продуктом того периода, ретроспективно было осуждено за предполагаемую тенденцию наказывать чрезмерно амбициозных героинь. В этом контексте Коркоран предлагает свою апологию Нэнси, которая, в отличие от подруг, не ищет ни любви, ни мести, но скорее силы Манон. Ее заботы не личные, а универсальные и духовные. Ее заклинания более неистовые, а магия – более интенсивная. Но она также изображена как более неуравновешенная. Правда, последнее можно оправдать: у Сары хороший дом в хорошем районе города, отец любит и уважает её, а Нэнси страдает от насилия и бедности, поэтому её стремление к власти проистекает из потребности вырваться из сложной ситуации. «Сара прославляется за тщательно выверенное использование власти. Сара умна, сильна и независима, но, в отличие от Нэнси, она никогда не бросает вызов социальным структурам и не нарушает доминирующие представления о надлежащей женственности (Corcoran, 2023, p. 75). В общем, «Колдовство» льет воду на мельницу постфеминизма.

Однако не все так просто. Несмотря на то, что фильм постфеминистский, он также и феминистский. Отмечая, что «Колдовство» часто ругают, Коркоран также замечает, что это кино

> «гораздо более тонко подходит к вопросам гендера, власти и женской сексуальности, чем считают многие критики. Фильм часто сдерживается постфеминистским “двойным переплетением” (double entanglement), которое превозносит независимость и отправляет женское движение в прошлое. Тем не менее, фильм затрагивает некоторые новые формы феминистского активизма, которые возникли в 1990-х годах» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 75).

Краткий рассказ про «Riot Grrrl», конечно, интересный, но он опять же не особо нужен, чтобы заявить

> «Рошель, Бонни, Нэнси и Сара — изгои в своём маленьком, удушающем школьном обществе. Их маргинализация во многом обусловлена экономическими и культурными факторами: расой, классом, внешностью, сексуальной ориентацией. Подобно движению Riot Grrrl начала 1990-х, четыре потенциальные ведьмы объединены общим гневом по поводу несправедливости, присущей их маргинальному положению» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 78).

Уберите фразу «Подобно движению Riot Grrrl начала 1990-х», и не изменится ничего. Зато останется мантра про социальную справедливость. Но интенция ясна. Коркоран любит фильм и всеми силами старается показать, что он куда более прогрессивен, чем есть на самом деле – или, по крайней мере, как принято считать.

Далее Миранда Коркоран посвящает несколько подглавок каждой из героинь и их проблемам. Так, одна девочка Лора Лиззи травит Рошель за ее цвет кожи. Хотя Рошель цветная, она опровергает кинематографические стереотипы о том, какой должна быть темнокожая женщина, и рассказывает другую историю о жизни чернокожих. Она живет не в гетто, как подавляющее большинство черных персонажей в американском кино 1990-х, а в пригороде.

При этом Рошель – единственная из четырех девочек, чьих родителей и дом нам не показывают. Гнев Рошель и ее увлечения злой магией обусловлены буллингом со стороны Лоры, которая травит одноклассницу за волосы, а они, как пишет Коркоран, были политизированы исторически: «тот факт, что Лора дразнит Рошель за ее “кудрявые” волосы, не случаен; скорее всего, это отражение долгой и болезненной истории, в которой волосы, наряду с другими признаками расовых различий, использовались как средство для выделения, угнетения и дискриминации людей с темным цветом кожи» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 86). Помимо прочего, есть ирония в том, что Рэйчел Тру, игравшая Рошель, сперва исключили из рекламной кампании фильма, а позже — из числа участников конвентов.

Если Рошель символизирует расовую проблему, то Нэнси Даунс – классовую. Она является лидером ковена и пытается утвердить свое господство в группе, а когда получает власть, то не может с ней справиться. Здесь Коркоран снова прибегает к апологии Нэнси. Она пишет, что популярная культура и политическая риторика 1990-х изображали бедных как «Других». То есть они не оказались в ловушке, а сами выбрали ценности и модели поведения. Иными словами, бедные были бедными из-за личных недостатков. Мать Нэнси и ее отчим пьют, постоянно ссорятся и изображены неопрятными, кажется, по причине собственной лени. В итоге может возникнуть впечатление, что без магии Нэнси никогда не выберется из нищеты. Так что как персонаж Нэнси сформирована своим социальным происхождением.

Проблема Бонни иного рода. Она, получившая сильные ожоги тела в детстве, становится объектом многочисленных сплетен. Бонни сталкивается с дискриминацией, жестокостью и маргинализацией и борется с психологическими последствиями физической травмы. После того, как вследствие магии ее шрамы исчезают, Бонни начинает носить откровенные свитера и короткие юбки, демонстрируя тело, которое она когда-то так тщательно скрывала. В итоге она становится заносчивой и нарциссичной.

Заканчивает последнюю главу Коркоран тезисом, который стал мантрой книги. «Жажда власти у Нэнси непреодолима, месть Рошель своей обидчице становится слишком жестокой, а уверенность Бонни перерастает в высокомерие. Таким образом, в “Колдовстве” Сара, единственная ведьма в группе по природе, представлена также и как единственная, кто способен сдерживать свои желания и ответственно использовать свои силы» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 95). Оказывается, что Сара – самая проблемная «ведьма». Коркоран упоминает, что критики ретроспективно посчитали несправедливым то, что Сара – белая, из среднего класса, физически здоровая и при том та, кто сохранила силы и была настолько мудрой, чтобы использовать их с умом. Автор вынуждена признать, что хотя Сара тоже сформирована своими травмами, все же «фильм, похоже, отдает предпочтение белизне, ценностям среднего класса и телесной неприкосновенности» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 96), раз уж Сара превосходит всех

своих подруг. Но все-таки «намерения “Колдовства” были инклюзивными, прогрессивными и искренне направленными на противодействие упрощенным, одномерным образам молодых женщин, которые были распространены в популярной культуре той эпохи» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 97).

Заключение книги не повторяет сказанное (это к счастью, так как все мысли были озвучены не раз), но посвящено наследию фильма. Здесь нам говорят, что именно «Колдовство» оказало наиболее сильное влияние на последующие образы маленьких колдуний. Так, прямым и явным переосмыслением картины в поп-культуре стал сериал Аарона Спеллинга «Зачарованные», который транслировался на канале WB с 1998 по 2006 год. Также «Колдовство» переосмысливается в сериалах «Баффи — истребительнице вампиров»», в третьем сезоне (2013-2014) сериала-антологии «Американская история ужасов» и сериале «Леденящие душу приключения Сабрины» (2018–2020). В качестве примеров влияния называются GIF-ки знаковых сцен, татуировки, фан-арты, фотосессии в стиле фильма и проч. Популярный американский бренд одежды “Urban Outfitters” продавал футболку оверсайз с изображениями четырех героинь. В 2019 году бренд “Hot Topic” представил линию одежды, основанную на «Колдовстве». Неизменная популярность фильма подтверждается фан-конвентами и встречами актеров с поклонниками.

Рассказав все это, Миранда Коркоран доходит до неприятного – ребута. Фильм «Колдовство: новый ритуал» (The Craft: Legacy, режиссер Зои Листер-Джонс), задуманный как (лега)сиквел оригинала и спродюсированный Blumhouse, вышел на стриминговых платформах в октябре 2020 года и, со слов Коркоран, «получил мало внимания как от поклонников оригинала, так и от критиков в целом». Как и в первой части, колдовство здесь использовано в качестве метафоры подросткового опыта.

> «Но сиквелу в конечном счете не хватает напряжения оригинала, поскольку ни одна из маленьких колдуний нового поколения не тянется к тёмной стороне. Действительно, картина Листер-Джонс прямо реагирует на некоторые критические замечания в адрес оригинала, в частности, на жалобы по поводу того, что женская дружба в ней изображалась как нестабильная и склонная к конфликтам. В “Новом ритуале” юные ведьмы не нападают друг на друга, а противостоят злодею-мужчине в лице злого колдуна (Дэвид Духовны). Безусловно, попытка избежать регрессивных изображений женской злобы заслуживает похвалы, но и антигерой, и мифология фильма кажутся недоработанными. В итоге “Новый ритуал” воспринимается как краткое введение в мир колдовства и чаще больше похоже на пилотный эпизод сериала, чем на полноценный фильм» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 103).

По моему мнению (возможно, так считают все, так как Коркоран это подтвердила) проблема фильма в том, что авторы «Колдовство: новый ритуал» попытались исправить все «недостатки» оригинала – так что теперь никаких конфликтов среди девочек не было, а главной угрозой для них стал – взрослый белый мужчина. Консенсус критиков на сайте «Rotten Tomatoes» гласит: «Хотя режиссёр Зои Листер-Джонс проложила новый путь для совре-

менных чудачек, “Колдовство: Новый ритуал” может очаровать только поклонников оригинала». Проблема в том, что нельзя быть уверенными даже насчет фанатов первой части. На IMDB оценка фильма – 4,6. Как видим, автор очень осторожно пишет про картину, которая не понравилась ни ей, ни большинству зрительниц.

В конце монографии Миранда Коркоран выходит на более общие и интересные темы. Она кратко замечает (чего не было во введении), что колдовство часто становится единственной дорогой к власти и самоопределению для молодых женщин, которых регулярно отвергают и унижают. Возможно, это обещание власти позволило «Колдовству» сохраниться в массовом сознании. Коркоран пишет, что: «Ведьма, в конце концов, является символом сопротивления. Это женщина, которая, не имея собственного значимого политического, социального или экономического влияния, обращается к единственным силам, которые приветствуют и защищают ее» (Corcoran, 2023, p. 102). Об общем социально-политическом и экономическом значении ведьм в свое время написала Сильвия Федиричи (Federici, 2018). В главе про ведьм в своей книге 2025 года «Политика монструозных фигур в современном кинематографе: ведьмы, зомби и киборги вновь очаровывают конец света» Франческо Стиччи упоминает много про что, но не про фильм «Колдовство» (Sticchi, 2025). Так что, несмотря на все недостатки (ненужные контексты, практически полное отсутствие прочтения фильма как хоррора и навязчивое стремление превозносить социальный подтекст фильма) книга Миранды Коркоран существует не зря. И есть некоторая ирония, что в книге «Колдовство и подростки в американской популярной культуре: маленькие колдуньи» Коркоран, хотя и с другим уклоном, но все еще пишет про расу, класс и феминизм «Колдовства» (Corcoran, 2022, p. 141-150).

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