EDITED BY
LAURA CROSSLEY
CLARA SITBON

DECEPTION

SPIES, LIES AND FORGERIES

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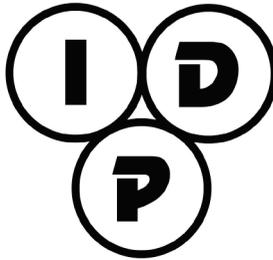
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The *Inter-Disciplinary Press* is part of *Inter-Disciplinary.Net* – a global network for research and publishing. The *Inter-Disciplinary Press* aims to promote and encourage the kind of work which is collaborative, innovative, imaginative, and which provides an exemplar for inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary publishing.

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Introduction: Everybody Lies

Laura Crossley

'Everybody lies' is a statement that will be familiar to anyone who ever watched an episode of *House, M.D.*[1] The notoriously acerbic doctor based his approach to medical cases on the premise that every person, no matter how well intentioned or morally upright, would lie. Sometimes their deceptions were so small that the person telling the falsehood did not quite register their own deception.

It could almost be the basis for a joke. Everybody lies. And if you are sitting there thinking 'Well, I don't,' then you are a liar.

As human beings, in every language, we have myriad words for lying and we also have a sliding scale for the severity of the deception: 'little white lies', that by their very description hint at purity and innocence, harmless untruths told for good reasons; and at the other end full scale betrayal, words or acts that are a complete violation of another person or sometimes of an entire community.

And yet, deception is more than just lying and the ways in which deception plays an active part in our day-to-day lives is far more complex than telling a few untruths to ease our way through awkward work or social situations. In his essay in this volume, Barış Mete examines the role of the unreliable narrator in literary fiction, and the act of collusion between author, narrator, and reader that enables this particular form of literary deceit to function. Yet, each time we open a novel, are we not complicit in a deception? The worlds that authors create for us frequently speak to and uncover deeper truths but works of fiction are just that: constructs, that we willingly engage with.

Both the historian Daniel J. Boorstin[2] and cultural theorist Ralph Keyes[3] have explored how contemporary society has become increasingly tolerant of dishonesty and deception: we live now in an era in which misrepresentation and believability can flourish at the expense of the truth.

> High-profile dissemblers vie for headlines: fabulist college professors, fabricating journalists, stonewalling bishops, book-cooking executives and their friends the creative accountants. They are the most visible face of a far broader phenomenon: the routinization of dishonesty […] The gap between truth and lies has shrunk to a sliver. Choosing which lie to tell is largely a matter of convenience. We lie for all the usual reasons, or for no apparent reason at all. It's no longer assumed that truth telling is even our default setting.[4]

It is something that many of us are guilty of – that joke again: if you are thinking that you are not, you are probably deceiving yourself. Each time that we add a

filter before uploading to Instagram, quietly delete the less flattering shots from Facebook, take numerous selfies in order to get that perfect, 'spontaneous' image, we are engaging in a deception. And yet, the way in which we misrepresent ourselves, even to ourselves, is not something that is hidden, but is an acknowledged, even encouraged, facet of daily life.

The late, great semiotician Umberto Eco examined how a cultural obsession with the real grew alongside an increasing replacement of the real with falsity – that faith in fakes that he discussed in his celebrated series of essays.

> To speak of things that one wants to connote as real, these things must seem real. The 'completely real' becomes identified with the 'completely fake'. Absolute unreality is offered as real presence […] This is the reason for this journey into hyperreality, in search of the instances where the American imagination demands the real thing and, to attain it, must fabricate the absolute fake; where the boundaries between game and illusion are blurred, the art museum is contaminated by the freak show, and falsehood is enjoyed in a situation of 'fullness', of *horror vacui*.[5]

The fake stands in place of the real, but a fake that is so perfect that it is often chosen in preferment over the real. The popularity of blogs and vlogs devoted to beauty tips and tricks is extended in TV series such as *The Swan*[6] and *Extreme Makeover*,[7] where extensive plastic surgery and body modification is seen as liberating the 'real' you: an exercise in falsity designed to reveal a truth. Despite its ubiquity, however, plastic surgery is one of those things that people rarely own up to, which brings us to a widely circulated story from 2012: the (not so) strange case of Jian Feng. Jian Feng considered himself a handsome man and was married to a beautiful woman; imagine his horror when the daughter they produced was far less than the sum of her beautiful parents. Charged with accusations of adultery, his wife confessed that her good looks were the result of the surgeon's scalpel. Not so strange as, with the aforementioned pervasiveness of plastic surgery, we can assume that many children will inherit the faces that their parents used to have. Jian Feng sued his wife for deception and won. The twist in the tale is that the entire story itself was debunked as a hoax, a 'meta-deception'.[8] True or not, the tale of Jian Feng is revelatory: that we are not surprised when the implications of body modification arrive at their (apparent) inevitable conclusion; that hoax stories are so easily disseminated through global media; and that this fake story does indeed reveal truths about our attitudes towards extreme body modification. And yet while we criticise celebrities who are overly-enhanced, the demand for plastic surgery grows year on year.

A darker, and arguably more cynical, view of the logical conclusion of our faith in fakes comes from Jean Baudrillard, who famously argued that the manipulations on both sides during the First Gulf War, and the western media's misrepresentation of the actuality of the conflict, meant that for spectators the war that we were seeing was not the war that was actually happening.[9] At any period of conflict or war, misinformation has become standard procedural practice. Yet, we have a moral hierarchy in terms of how we define these deceptions: the omissions and dissimulations practiced by 'our' side are purely for morale-boosting purposes; when practiced by the enemy, they are propaganda. We could give this hierarchy another name: hypocrisy.

But what is also evident when looking at questions of deception, is that it is a complex and frequently contradictory issue. Deception as a facet of daily life has been studied over decades. A diary study in 1996[10] called for 77 college students and 70 community members to record the number of lies that they told over a seven day period. The results confirmed the researchers' expectations – that people lie on a daily basis.

> Participants in the community study, on the average, told a lie every day; participants in the college student study told two. One out of every five times that the community members interacted with someone, they told a lie; for the college students, it was one out of every three times. Of all of the people the community members interacted with one on one over the course of a week, they lied to 30% of them; the college students lied to 38% of the people in their lives.[11]

Ralph Keyes picks up on DePaulo's research, situating it within general understandings and expectations of deception in day-to-day social interactions:

> How often do we lie and get lied to? All sorts of figures get bandied about. I've seen estimates that range from two hundred times a day to once. One study concluded that we tell thirteen lies a week on the average. Another found that some form of deception occurs in nearly two-thirds of all conversations. If this sounds far-fetched, bear in mind that the most frequent lie of all is "Fine" (in response to the question "How are You?"). This fib is so ubiquitous that deception researcher Bella DePaulo excused subjects from recording it in the records they kept of every lie they told in a week's time.[12]

For most of us that 'Fine' is so ingrained as part of the ritualised formula that it does not even register as a lie. Given the extent of our own deception, it is strange

that truthfulness is such a highly prized quality, especially in public life. A politician caught out in a lie is immediately disgraced; sportsmen such as Lance Armstrong, who are exposed as drugs cheats, find their reputations in tatters and are rarely forgiven by the public. Herein lies the complexity and the hypocrisy: we can excuse our own deceptions but are enraged when anyone is shown to have lied to us.

A lack of deception in public life is a fundamental component in contemporary leadership, with continual demands for transparency. This has been felt in international politics in the past weeks in the wake of the Panama Papers, the leaking of 11.5 million files from the database of the Panama-based off-shore law firm Mossack Fonseca; or, as British newspaper *The Guardian* calls it: 'history's biggest data leak'.[13] With global media outlets focussing on the secretive nature of off-shore trusts and the involvement of numerous high-profile figures, the issue of transparency has remained at the forefront of political commentary. The British Prime Minister David Cameron released copies of his tax return in an effort to show no wrong-doing on his part after he was found to have benefitted from the sale of shares inherited from his father. This display was followed by that of the Chancellor, George Osborne and the Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn. The show of transparency can be read as an effort to prove truthfulness and honesty, especially at a time when the ruling Conservative Party is viewed with some suspicion by the British electorate, due to what is perceived as being its elitist proclivities and a tendency towards secrecy that benefits behind-the-scenes cronies. More than simply working to establish trustworthiness, transparency functions in direct correlation to notions of democracy.

> [T]ransparency in governing processes and outcomes is viewed as a tenet of democratic accountability (Hood and Heald, 2006). Transparency not only reveals pertinent information to guide choices (Fung et al., 2007), but opens the frameworks that govern to the voice of common citizens (Roberts, 2006: 194). Thus, transparency links to more general claims of democracy. [14]

Democracy then fosters the ideal that deception plays no part in the politics and general governance of democratic powers. And yet part of the responsibilities of any government is national security, of which intelligence and counter-espionage services form an integral part. Earlier this year Jeremy Corbyn stated that, in event of his becoming British Prime Minister, he would not implement the Trident nuclear deterrent should occasion demand.[15] The statement drew the ire of military chiefs and members of his own shadow cabinet, including shadow foreign secretary Hilary Benn, who made the point that 'the whole purpose of the deterrent of course is it is trying to deter a potential enemy because they're not sure what you're going to do and that puts them off'.[16] Transparency here is seen as not so

much part of the desired democratic apparatus, but rather as something that is, at best, politically naïve and, at worst, dangerous. Transparency as a threat also became part of the WikiLeaks story, as the organisation in general and founder Julian Assange in particular faced a backlash after the release of non-redacted documents gave the names of NATO soldiers and, crucially, the names of Afghan fixers and translators working for NATO, who were now the targets of Taliban reprisals.[17] National security, then, demands a certain amount of deception, be it simply a matter of omission (in the case of redaction) or elaborate operations that frequently include the passing on of disinformation and the insertion of undercover field operatives into hostile groups.

What all of this tells us is that our relationship with deception (or, rather, deceptions) is complex and fluid. We might view with suspicion the secrecy surrounding the intelligence services, yet fictional representations are not only perennially popular, but have given rise to one of the most lucrative franchises in cinema history; I speak, of course, of Bond. These glamorous depictions are a world away from the day-to-day mundanity of most counter-espionage work; much of the work at Britain's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) is focused on sifting through Internet chatter, rather than drinking martinis in Monte Carlo. So, we derive enormous pleasure from the deceptive construction of a world that is steeped in deception. Similarly, a deception that is designed to be revealed – a hoax – also gives us pleasure, especially if it is done well. We say that we value truthfulness in our personal relationships, yet one look at any given Facebook page reveals an online version of a life that is, at best, half-true: virtual worlds are carefully curated to present the image of ourselves and our lives that we prefer, not the one that is necessarily the most accurate. Ralph Keyes notes that the digital technologies that make deception easier in contemporary society are also at the forefront of unmasking deception.

> The epidemic of résumé fabricators, phony veterans, and sundry imposeurs is actually an epidemic of investigation by those who mine the Internet for evidence with which to expose lies put in play long ago. Google could be the best friend truth discovery has ever had.[18]

Yet, despite the ease with which deceptions, even old ones, can be exposed, we still engage in deceptive behaviour as part of our being. Even when we are forced to face truths about ourselves, we frequently equivocate and justify, deceiving ourselves if no-one else. The study of deception extends in many directions and is truly multi-disciplinary in its scope, methodologies and applications and yet for all of the sophistication of analysis and investigation, we are still brought back to one rather uncomfortable fact: everybody lies.

Notes

[1] David Shore, *House M.D.,* (Los Angeles, CA: Heel and Toe Films, 2004-2012).

[2] Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America,* first Vintage Books edition (New York: Vintage, 1992).

[3] Ralph Keyes, *The Post-Truth Era: Dishonesty and Deception in Contemporary Life* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2004).

[4] Ibid., 5

[5] Umberto Eco, 'Travels in Hyperreality', *Faith in Fakes: Travels in Hyperreality* (London: Vintage, 1998), 7-8.

[6] Arthur Smith and Nely Galán, *The Swan*, (Los Angeles, CA: A. Smith & Co. Productions, 2004).

[7] Gorfain, Louis, H., *Extreme Makeover*, (Los Angeles, CA: Lighthearted Entertainment, 2002-2007).

[8] Justin Thomas, 'The Truth is We are All Becoming Pathological Liars', *The National*, 7 February 2015, viewed 5 April 2016,
http://www.thenational.ae/opinion/comment/the-truth-is-that-were-all-becoming-pathological-liars

[9] Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

[10] Bella DePaulo et al, 'Lying in Everyday Life'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 70.5: 979-995.

[11] Ibid., 991.

[12] Keyes, 7.

[13] Luke Harding, 'What are the Panama Papers? A guide to history's biggest data leak', *The Guardian*, 5 April 2016, viewed 11 April 2016,
http://www.theguardian.com/news/2016/apr/03/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-panama-papers

[14] Luke J Heemsbergen, 'Designing hues of transparency and democracy after WikiLeaks: Vigilance to vigilantes and back again'. *New Media and Society* 17.8 (2014): 1341.

[15] Patrick Wintour, 'Jeremy Corbyn: I would never use nuclear weapons if I were PM', *The Guardian*, 30 September 2015, viewed 11 April 2016,
http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/sep/30/corbyn-i-would-never-use-nuclear-weapons-if-i-was-pm

[16] 'Jeremy Corbyn row after "I'd not fire nuclear weapons" comment', *BBC News*, 30 September 2015, viewed 11 April 2016, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-34399565

[17] Eben Harrell, 'WikiLeaks Comes Under Fire from Rights Groups', *Time*, 12 August 2010, viewed 11 April 2016,
http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2010309,00.html

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[18] Keyes, 254.

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Clothes as Pseudo-Events: Ballyhoo, Rapture Bombs and Reginald Perrin

Barbara Brownie

Abstract

Empty bundles of clothes have the power to signify a variety of events, including voluntary undressing and forcible denuding. In empty clothes, the human body is notable in its absence, and the use of discarded shoes and garments in Holocaust memorials attests to their capacity to represent individual victims of large-scale tragedy. By representing absence through presence, clothes index the absent wearer, and invite speculation about the event that has separated body from garment. In a number of noteworthy events, ranging from Labour minister John Stonehouse's faked suicide (pseudocide) in 1974 to the 'rapture bombs' which littered the internet in the wake of predictions of the Rapture in 2011, abandoned clothes have been used to falsely signify tragedy. For the fictional anti-hero of David Nobbs' *The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin* (1975)*,* undressing, and the planting of his empty clothes as false evidence, becomes the defining act of a complex act of deception, in which he fakes suicide and begins a new life under an assumed identity. This scene of 'pseudocide' has been recreated so many times that it is referred to colloquially as 'doing a Reggie Perrin'. This chapter will explore the role of abandoned clothes in what Daniel J. Boorstin describes as 'pseudo-events' – 'synthetic happenings' that are 'fabricated to make up for the world's deficiency'.[1] It will examine how empty clothing is planted with the intention of fueling media speculation and to provoke the generation of false narratives, drawing on examples of promotional stunts in the 1920s, pseudocides in the 1970s, and rapture pranks in the 2010s.

Key Words: Pseudo-events, Daniel J. Boorstin, clothes, *The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin*, rapture bomb, hoax, fake.

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1. Clothes and Pseudocide

   This chapter explores how clothes are used in deception, specifically, how an abandoned pile of clothes can play a pivotal role in large elaborate deceptions, such as pseudocide. Examples from fact and fiction illustrate how clothes can be used in the manufacturing of a pseudo-event, as in David Nobb's *The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin* (1975), and in the real life pseudocide of Labour MP John Stonehouse. Less elaborate hoaxes come in the form of so-called rapture-bombs, which, like pseudocides, use abandon clothes to signify the death or disappearance of the former wearer.

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David Nobb's tragi-comic novel *The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin* and the later BBC television adaptation of the same name (1976-1979) tell the tale of a frustrated salesman who fakes suicide by leaving his clothes and personal effects on Brighton beach. Perrin abandons his garments with the knowledge that those who find them are likely to assume that he has swum out to sea, never to return to shore. This scene of 'pseudocide' has been recreated in the real world so many times that it is referred to colloquially as 'doing a Reggie Perrin'.[2]

For those following in the footsteps of Stonehouse and Perrin, undressing can be a single gesture in a string of related actions that artificially construct a false event. Along with the formation of a false identity, undressing can be a vital step in the substitution of one identity for another: a means of killing off one's former self so that one may become someone else. This is, writes Michael Jay Lewis, 'a kind of non-corporeal suicide' which destroys 'that which has come to represent one's identity'.[3]

The everyday action of undressing and leaving clothes on the ground, in this case, is the abandonment of an identity, and so acknowledges the inextricable connection between clothes and the identity of the wearer. There is always 'personal or cultural meaning' in a garment left behind, and so matching a pile of clothing to its owner is not a difficult task, particularly when the owner has calculatedly selected clothing that is distinct.[4]

Perrin's plan, as described in Nobbs' novel, originally titled *The Death of Reginald Perrin,* is to 'go down to the south coast somewhere, leave his clothes in a neat pile on the beach' and start a new life under an assumed identity.[5] As in many fictional 'disappearances into the sea', Perrin's actions do not represent death, rather, 'the sign that [he] will afterward be treated as dead by a given society'.[6]

Reginald Perrin's pseudocide reflects 'the rise of the representation of pseudocide… in modern literature' as catalogued by Michael Jay Lewis.[7] Lewis identifies examples including Hal Ashby's *Harold and Maude* (1971), in which Harold Chasen 'repeatedly stages his own death… in order to persist under another identity'. Lewis describes Chasen's pseudocides as acts of 'social recovery' and 'social evasion', motives which are also present in real-life instances of pseudocide.[8]

2. 'Doing a Reggie Perrin'

The opening credits of the BBC television adaptation depict the moment when Perrin removes his clothes. Perrin approaches from the distance, running parallel to the shoreline, clothed in a sombre suit. As he runs, he strips one garment at a time, tossing each in the direction of the sea, leaving a trail of clothing behind him. When he removes his final two garments – his shirt and underpants – he flings them aggressively, resolutely, determined to separate himself from these garments once and for all, and never to look back. Once naked, Perrin strides into the sea.

Perrin does not enact his pseudocide until episode five of the first season. Nonetheless, this credit sequence appears from the very first episode, thereby presenting Perrin's undressing and his subsequent march towards the sea as the defining acts of the series. When the pseudocide is presented in the main narrative, it plays out differently. Perrin arrives at the beach in the dead of night, in a commandeered delivery truck. His walk along the pebble beach is languid and thoughtful. He carries a suitcase containing his disguise, on which he perches for a moment. As he stares out to sea, Perrin experiences a moment of doubt. He ponders a genuine suicide attempt. His internal monologue considers his shame at being labelled a fraud, and how much more effective a statement his suicide would make if it were genuine. He raises his arms in the air, and takes a few steps into the ocean, fully clothed. He stops suddenly when he feels the cold water lap at his ankles, and his doubts are suddenly erased. He dashes back onto the beach and all suggestions of genuine suicide are quickly forgotten.

This episode does not show Perrin undressing. The scene cuts to a shot of him donning the disguise that has been unpacked from his suitcase, including a false beard and overcoat. He bids goodbye to the pile of clothes that are now revealed to be resting at his feet, addressing them directly, and referring to his former identity in the third person, 'goodbye Reggie's clothes, goodbye Reggie'. His words reveal that the act of undressing has had personal significance for Perrin. As he sheds his clothes, he frees himself piece-by-piece from the tedium and frustrations of his former life. The suit has been a symbol of oppression throughout the series so far, and his former life is distinguished from the numerous identities that he adopts later through the means of a variety of alternative costumes. Shedding his suit, Perrin liberates himself from the restraints imposed by a single, fixed identity.

Perrin's enthusiasm is, however, far more subdued in this retelling of his pseudocide than it is in the opening credit sequence. The gusto with which he tosses his clothes on the beach in the credit sequence, which is by now familiar to viewers of the series, is absent from the acts as portrayed in episode five. The credit sequence depicts a daylight scene of gleeful undressing, in which Perrin's act is a celebration of his new freedom. This scene closely resembles Perrin's pseudocide as it is described in Nobbs' novel. In contrast, episode five depicts Perrin's pseudocide as a clandestine affair, carried out in the darkness, in which his feelings of doubt take precedence over his act of undressing. This version of events reveals the credit sequence is not, as viewers had no doubt assumed, a preview of Perrin's pseudocide. Instead, the sequence is revealed as symbolic of his bid for freedom. The daylight sequence is perhaps reflective of how Perrin imagines his pseudocide before reality intervenes.

*Reginald Perrin'*s title sequence mythologises his pseudocide. His undressing on Brighton beach is constructed as the defining event of the series, despite its absence in the show's narrative. Thus, the myth of Perrin's actions is doubly false,

being both fabricated (within the diegesis of Nobb's narrative) and misrepresented (to real-life viewers of the television show).

3. Clothes as Decoys

The writing of Nobbs' novel coincided with the real-life disappearance of British Labour politician John Stonehouse, who faked his own death in 1974, leaving a pile of clothes on Miami Beach. Stonehouse fled to Australia, where he was later tracked down. In the year of the premier episode of *The Rise and Fall of Reginald Perrin*, Stonehouse was jailed for seven years for fraud.[9] Investigations revealed that pseudocide was just one of the many acts of deception that Stonehouse had carried out in order to transition from his former life to his new one. Stonehouse had adopted the alternative identity of Joseph Markham 'as a psychological safety valve' months before his supposed suicide.[10] Like fictional equivalents, Stonehouse's actions allowed his 'ostensible demise while facilitating his ideological liberty'[11]: he stripped himself of the wardrobe of a failure in order that he might 'enjoy the feeling of being an honest man'.[12]

For Perrin and Stonehouse, abandoned clothes are decoys. Abandoning their clothes was the final public act in their genuine identities, and the visibility of this act is contrasted to the invisibility of the lives that they continued to lead after their pseudocide was complete. Thus, the novelty and apparent significance of their piles of clothes serves as a useful distraction, attracting attention to the clothes themselves, and away from the living bodies that once wore them.

Thanks to the prominence of these examples of clothing employed in pseudocide, audiences have not only became familiar with the notion that a pile of clothing signifies drowning, but also equipped with the knowledge that such a scene is easily faked. Armed with knowledge of these previous pseudocides, police have become alert to the suggestion that a pile of clothing may just as likely be evidence of a hoax than of a genuine death. North Carolina resident Robert Lee Battle failed in his attempt to convince the authorities of his suicide because his abandoned clothes revealed more than he had anticipated. Police became suspicious as a result of the objects missing from the pile of clothes that Battle left beside his abandoned truck on a bridge.[13] The pile did not contain the most valuable parts of Battle's wardrobe, including those items which friends and family said were most precious to him – a voodoo charm and expensive wristwatch. Battle's decision to keep these items prompted a police investigation that later revealed the absence of a suit which Battle had reportedly stored in his tool shed.[14]

4. Rapture Bombs

Similarly misleading piles of clothes are arranged in order to index other events that have been widely mythologised but have never transpired. One such event is the Rapture. Depictions ranging from HBO's television series *The Leftovers* (2014) to Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkin's *Left Behind* novels (1995-2007) stress the

significance of empty bundles of clothes as reminders of absent wearers. These piles of clothes provide survivors with tangible evidence that the Rapture has occurred, and a 'rebuke' to those who have been left behind.

Prompted by calculations made by Christian radio broadcaster Harold Camping, real-life believers in the Rapture anticipated a date of 21 May 2011 for the ascent of all deserving believers to heaven. When the Rapture failed to transpire on that date, pranksters were prompted to stage mock evidence in the form of piles of clothes evidently left behind as bodies ascended towards heaven.

These so-called 'Rapture bombs' – piles of clothes laid as false evidence of the sudden disappearance of the wearer – reflect both a desire to ridicule belief in the Rapture, and a need to compensate for the lack of occurrence of such a widely mythologised event. Historian Daniel J. Boorstin's exploration of America's insatiable desire for news observes a need to 'provide synthetic happenings to make up for the lack of spontaneous events'. We demand, he writes, 'more than the world can give us, we require that something be fabricated to make up for the world's deficiency'.[15]

Such is the excitement of anticipation for some predicted events that if they fail to transpire, suggests Boortsin, there is a need to compensate with illusion.[16] On the day of 21 May 2011, as it became apparent that Camping's predictions were incorrect, photographs of 'rapture bombs' began to litter the web. These photographs inspired more elaborate fakery, including Capitol Improv's rapture prank video, staged at the Washington monument in 2011.

5. Pseudo-Events

Rapture bombs may be considered as a 'kind of synthetic novelty' that Daniel J. Boorstin describes as 'pseudo-events'.[17] Pseudo-events, as defined by Boorstin, can be characterised by being planned, not spontaneous, 'planted… for the… purpose of being reported or reproduced', and having an ambiguous relationship to real events so as to invite speculation.[18] The instigator's aim is to create a 'newsworthy' story, likely to provoke curiosity which will in turn generate speculation and prompt further reproduction.

One such pseudo-event is a ballyhoo – one of many 'loud, exaggerated, spectacular advertising stunts' that characterised 1920s media. Before the release of the silent horror film, *A Blind Bargain* (Wallace Worsley, 1922), New Jersey workmen discovered a mysteriously abandoned bundle of clothes lying on the bank of a canal in Newark.[19] Police were called to investigate, and on inspection, officers discovered that the pocket of the abandoned jacket contained a cryptic note describing a 'blind bargain' evidently entered into by the previous wearer of the clothes. The note was signed 'Robert Sandell'. The discovery of the pile of clothes prompted a police investigation, and the mystery of Sandell's 'blind bargain' received front-page coverage in local press. Only when the film was released at local cinemas was Sandell revealed as the film's fictional protagonist. The bundle

of clothes was revealed to have been laid as part of a promotional stunt intended to attract press attention in the run up to the cinematic release. Lyczba lists this as just one of numerous paratextual stunts that bridge the divide between fact and fiction, making use of concrete objects to 'play on the public's sense of what is real, or what is not'.[20]

These pseudo-events rarely exist in isolation. The abundance and variety of rapture bombs online evidences Boorstin's suggestion that 'pseudo-events spawn other pseudo-events'.[21] They can be 'repeated at will, and thus their impression can be reinforced.[22] A style of hoax becomes 'ritualized, with a protocol and a rigidity all its own'.[23] A language emerges, laying out rules for the staging of a particular form of pseudo-event: for rapture bombs, the rules dictate an arrangement of clothing that imitates the form of the absent body in an everyday location such as a home or park; for pseudocide, the ritual of undressing must ensure that clothes are discovered close to a body of water (since death by drowning would provide justifiable reason for the lack of a body). As these rituals become familiar they are more frequently duplicated. In the decades that have followed Perrin and Stonehouse's deceptions, they have inspired numerous imitators, including Lincolnshire dockmaster Graham Cardwell, who began a new life under an assumed name after leaving his lifejacket and helmet on mud flats in 1998.[24]

As each type of pseudo-event acquires this rigidity, pressures arise to produce other, derivative, forms of pseudo-event which are more fluid, more tantalizing and more interestingly ambiguous'.[25] Rapture bombs have evolved from simple piles of clothing to dynamic arrangements of garments and props which appear to suggest that the raptured soul has unexpectedly vanished while in the middle of some kind of activity. Capitol Improv's staged Rapture video demonstrates how rapidly rapture bombs developed into sophisticated 'rapture skits'. Pseudocides have evolved too, with more recent examples featuring additional fabricated evidence such as bloodstains on the clothes, as was the case with the presumed pseudocide of salesman Andrew Hoy, whose blood-stained clothes were found inside his abandoned BMW in Essex in 1999.[26]

With each new example, audiences become more familiar with the intended meaning of the staged scene, and this familiarity allows pranksters or fraudsters to make their scenes more elaborate and ambiguous. Thus, the audience's role in interpreting the scene becomes essential. Whenever clothes are falsely presented as evidence, they are arranged with the awareness that they will be read by whoever finds them. 'Isolated clothes create for us a mystery we must solve'.[27] Like most pseudo-events, they prompt a blurring of the roles of actor and audience, in which those who witness false evidence become unwittingly complicit in 'generating an event'.[28] Rapture bombs are arranged so as to invite the viewer to imagine in great detail the moment of Rapture, and are reliant on peer-to-peer distribution of the image to expand the audience. Reginald Perrin, John Stonehouse, and other perpetrators of pseudocide undress with the sole aim of creating false evidence,

that is, they are 'planned for dissemination'.[29] Those who found Stonehouse's pile of clothing became unknowingly complicit in his deception, by offering a particular interpretation of the clothes as evidence.

Notes

[1] Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America,* First Vintage Books Edition (New York: Vintage, 1992), 9.

[2] 'Pseudocide: Doing a Reggie Perrin', *BBC News*, 14 February 2000, viewed 15 October 2014, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/639098.stm.

[3] Michael Jay Lewis, '"Am I Not Really Dead?" Pseudocide, Individuation, and the Fictional Awakening', *Literary Imagination* 16.3 (2014): 346.

[4] Jeff Smith, 'The Sound of Intensified Meaning', *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics,* eds. John Richardson, Claudia Gorbman and Carol Vernallis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 331-356.

[5] David Nobbs, *The Death of Reginald Perrin: A Novel* [later reissued as *The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin*] (London: Gollanz, 1975), 113.

[6] Lewis, '"Am I Not Really Dead?"', 350.

[7] Ibid., 346-348.

[8] Ibid., 348.

[9] 'MP Planned Death for Months', *BBC News*, 29 December 2005, viewed 29 January 2015, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4564226.stm.

[10] 'John Stonehouse, 'Shed His Guilt by Adopting New Identity', *The Telegraph*, 29 December 2005, viewed 29 January 2015,
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1506526/John-Stonehouse-shed-his-guilt-by-adopting-new-identity.html.

[11] Lewis, '"Am I Not Really Dead?"' 350.

[12] John Stonehouse, 'Shed His Guilt by Adopting New Identity', *The Telegraph*, 29 December 2005, viewed 29 January 2015,
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1506526/John-Stonehouse-shed-his-guilt-by-adopting-new-identity.html.

[13] 'Elaborate Suicide Hoax Foiled by Bondsman', *Times-News,* Hendersonville, N.C., 29 June 1982, 10, viewed 20 December 2014,
http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1665&dat=19820629&id=O2AaAAAAIBAJ&sjid=zSQEAAAAIBAJ&pg=6455,8097717.

[14] 'Suicide Hoax Didn't Work', *The Dispatch,* Lexington, N.C., 30 June 1982. 22, viewed 20 December 2014,
http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1734&dat=19820630&id=wuYbAAAAIBAJ&sjid=llIEAAAAIBAJ&pg=4610,9453646.

[15] Boorstin, *The Image,* 9.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

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[18] Ibid., 11.

[19] 'Blind Bargain Victim Brings Space in Newspapers', *Motion Picture News,* 23 December 1922.

[20] Fabrice Lyczba, '"The Living Realities of Romance": Playing with the Illusion of Reality in 1920s Film Reception Paratexts' (Paper presented at *Media Mutations 5,* 21-22 May 2013, Universita di Bologna).

[21] Boorstin, *The Image,* 33.

[22] Ibid., 39.

[23] Ibid., 33.

[24] '"Reggie Perrin" Father Escapes Punishment', *BBC News*, 8 June 1999, viewed 26 December 2014, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/364379.stm.

[25] Boorstin, *The Image,* 33.

[26] Leonard Rossiter, 'Real Reginald Perrin Incidents', *Reggie Online: The Official Reginald Perrin Website,* 2004, viewed 29 December 2014, http://www.leonardrossiter.com/reginaldperrin/Real.html.

[27] Jude Tallichet, 'Six Features', *Jude Tallichet Studio*, 2014, viewed 17 April 2015, http://judetallichetstudio.com/index.php?/press-release/six-features/.

[28] Boorstin, *The Image,* 29-30.

[29] Ibid., 39.

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Seeing Isn't Believing: The Fallacy of Vision in *The Ipcress File* and *Skyfall*

Laura Crossley

Abstract

Built into the very word 'spy' is the notion of viewing – albeit covertly. This reinforces the idea that the secret agent's primary method of information gathering is surveillance; and being able to control methods of surveillance gives the most power to the person with the most control. Throughout spy texts, the theme of surveillance runs parallel to themes of manipulation and, ultimately, betrayal. The systems of power are used against the very people who have built them as a means of defending the nation state against attack. These systems of power are also largely invisible: the ubiquity of CCTV cameras across Britain renders them virtually unnoticed. In his work on the Panopticon, Michel Foucault addresses the idea of the invisibility of disciplinary power. Discipline, power and control are maintained through the ability to see – and to see more than anyone else. The premium placed on sight is emphasized in *The Ipcress File* (1965) through its stylized aesthetics that frequently present the viewer with impeded views of the unfolding action. Impeded vision is made even more apparent through the myopia of protagonist Harry Palmer. *Skyfall* (2012) engages with surveillance in the digital world and the ability to have access to, and therefore control, visual networks of power is central to the operations of the villain Da Silva and the heroes' efforts to reassert their power. In both films the narratives deal with the inherent deceptiveness of sight in the world of espionage: disguises, false information, manipulated images are all used to create layers of uncertainty. Both films also address the greatest of betrayals in the espionage world: that the ultimate deception comes from within and not from an external enemy. This chapter examines how spying – in all senses – and deception are articulated in these two film texts.

Key Words: Spy fiction, spy film, James Bond, Britishness, Michel Foucault, *The Ipcress File, Skyfall*.

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1. Power and the Panopticon

> The Panopticon is a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad: in the periphery ring, one is totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower, one sees everything without ever being seen.[1]

In his work on the Panopticon, as the above quote highlights, Michel Foucault

puts emphasis on the role that vision plays in the dissemination of power. The ability to see all places the viewer in a position of power over those who cannot see or whose sight is impaired. Vision gives knowledge and knowledge endows power. In the world of espionage, this becomes not just a key point but a true matter of life-and-death - the survival or fall of a nation state can depend upon who controls the information. That is a point made by Raoul Silva, the implacable antagonist of *Skyfall*,[2] as he shows off his cyber-HQ. From here he can control missile strikes and financial markets, seeing everything while remaining unseen. *The Ipcress File*[3] and *Skyfall* are two films separated by nearly fifty years and radically different socio-political backdrops, yet in each ideas of seeing and concealment are central to how power and control operate through their narratives. In both films, despite their wholly dissimilar aesthetics and visual motifs, ways of seeing are made visible throughout.

The visual style of *The Ipcress File* is, possibly, one of its most notable characteristics. Director Sidney J. Furie's finished film does not have much in common with the more glamorous cycle of British spy films that also emerged in the 1960s - much to the horror of the film's producer, Harry Saltzman. Despite sharing the backing of Saltzman with the James Bond franchise, and even sharing composer John Barry, each element of *The Ipcress File* stands as a counterpoint to the Bond canon: casting, performance, location, music, cinematography and visual design all underscore the differences between working class, downbeat Harry Palmer and Son of Empire, Bond. But it is the look of the film that demands the most attention. In his 2012 articles on the film, Gary McMahon pays close attention to the film's aesthetics, reminding us that 'film schools now screen *The Ipcress File* as a paragon of what can be achieved with widescreen composition'.[4] Shots are mainly constructed as 'planes of view' rather than 'points of view'.[5] Foucault identifies the Panopticon as an 'analytical arrangement of space'[6] and in the film the way in which space is framed and presented works to include the audience in the ambiguity and uncertainty of the film's narrative, while simultaneously distancing us from it, due to that very uncertainty. Furie's use of Techniscope is central to the visual style but it is the way in which shots are composed within this widescreen spread that dictates the reading of the film.

> Impossible subjective perspectives, like looking through dead men's specs, foregrounding the background, deflect the view. Even a bird's-eye view is skewed, but obstruction is part of the design: if you look past it, you've missed it. With no preceding action, turning on a light reveals a shock in the radius of a circumference.[7]

As McMahon identifies, the way in which sight is obstructed is as important as what we are able to see; and that dichotomy of what is being seen (or not) and how

it is being seen is emphasised from the beginning.

2. Vision Obscura

When we meet *The Ipcress File*'s protagonist, the cynical, working-class spy Harry Palmer (Michael Caine), it is at the moment of his awakening and the very first that we see of him is a tightly-framed close-up of his eye. Two tracking shots follow as Palmer surveys his flat, searching for his companion from the night before. And in both cases we see the world from his perspective: first without his glasses and the interior is a jumble of hazy colours and half-formed shapes. Then the glasses go on and everything comes into focus. A hero with myopia is vulnerable, certainly more human than the invincible Bond; but this facet also sets up wider ideas about the world that Palmer inhabits. There is, we eventually learn, a traitor in the intelligence service; but even when something is so close to you, it can still be hard to see clearly and to make the correct interpretation about what you are seeing. Palmer's days are made up of surveillance and where *The Ipcress File* differs from many espionage texts is in the mundanity of what is being watched: deliveries of extra milk make it into the surveillance log. Later, it is a series of parking tickets that lead Palmer to the film's slippery villain, Grantby, and another round of tedious waiting and watching ensues for our hero.

However, Palmer himself is subject to the surveilling gaze: from the audience (obviously) and from his superiors, particularly Colonel Ross who keeps tabs on Palmer in a variety of ways both explicit (he orchestrates an encounter during Palmer's supermarket run) and implicit (fellow agent Jean Courtney, who may or not be working for and reporting to Ross). In the game of inter-departmental one-upmanship, each group attempts to gain dominance by knowing what the other is up to. Loyalty is determined by who you are spying on and for whom, and rewards can be given accordingly. It is made clear that all of Palmer's actions are being watched and it is through this watching that control is wielded. Or, at least, the attempt to control him is made. As the audience, we watch Palmer watching others but where the film becomes more unsettling is in the idea that we are also watching Palmer being watched, often when he has no idea that he is under surveillance; and we have no idea who the watcher is and what side they represent, until it is too late.

The film's aesthetics, which frequently create further frames within the frame, heighten a sense of performativity and remind us of the stylisation of the world we are being shown. But they also link back to the inherent theatricality that Foucault identifies in the windows of the Panopticon: 'They are like so many cages, so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible'.[8] This sense of isolation permeates *The Ipcress File* - the main theme on the soundtrack, after all, is entitled 'A Man Alone' - and even while Palmer is an agent of surveillance he is also its object. This is evident during his confrontation with Grantby and the ensuing fight with Grantby's henchman, codenamed 'Housemartin', on the steps of the Royal Albert Hall. Palmer spots his

quarry from the inside of a red phone-box, exits and crosses the space to the retreating figures. The camera does not go with him. The film breaks with the conventions of the action thriller and denies the audience the immediacy of conflict that we are accustomed to in other British spy films of the era. Instead of experiencing the fight at close quarters as we do in the brutal encounter between James Bond and Red Grant in the railway sleeper carriage in *From Russia with Love*,[9] we are given a frustratingly obscured view of the unfolding scene with the criss-crossing red bars of the phone-box maintaining a distance between us and the combatants. It is only eventually that this is revealed as a point-of-view shot: another man observes the fight while remaining unseen by Palmer. Like Palmer he is bespectacled; and his glasses bound by tape hint again at a flaw in vision, an imperfect view of unfolding events that lead to wrong, and even fatal, conclusions. The man, we discover later, is an American agent and the discovery comes only after Palmer has shot him, reacting to a movement in the darkness at a particularly fraught moment. The identity of the dead man is revealed to the audience through an extraordinary shot framed through the now discarded, still taped, pair of glasses.

The obscuring of the action is a repeating motif throughout the film: conversations where one of the speakers is either partially or wholly blocked by another object is common, scenes are filmed as though the audience - or some other, still unidentified personage - is spying on events. It is, as McMahon says 'as if the agenda is highly classified and the cameraman doesn't have clearance'.[10] The paranoia of the Cold War, the knowledge that you cannot trust your closest colleagues and that there is always someone watching means that our only constant point of reference is Palmer himself - and from the outset he is established as someone groping blindly through events as much as we are.

3. Remote Surveillance

This sense of the power created through surveillance is similarly traced in *Skyfall* and forms not just part of the texture of the spies' world, but becomes a dominant force in the narrative itself. Surveillance here is even more distanced than in *The Ipcress File*, facilitated by CCTV and the advancements of the cyberspace era. The ability to see all still gives power, and ultimately control, to whomever can see the most. Foucault differentiates between traditional and disciplinary power, identifying the former as 'what was seen, what was shown and what was manifested'[11] and that those subjugated by that power only become visible when power was bestowed on them; the latter, however, is strongest when it is invisible and it retains its dominance by making others visible.

> 'Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection.[12]

Throughout *Skyfall*, the traces of invisible power are evident. The ease of Bond's movements around the globe can only be facilitated by networks of agents on the ground, all communicating along the lines that radiate out from the London headquarters. London, then, is the centre of power, symbolically constructing the former heart of the former British Empire as being still the heart of current global geo-politics. From London, everything can be mapped and traced and there are recurring shots of maps and trackers being consulted and manipulated from the safety of Q's laptop. And the headquarters themselves are unseen: no longer resident in the landmark building in Vauxhall, the agents have retreated to a set of underground bunkers that even Bond had not known existed.

This idea of a central space that is the control point of a global network is mirrored in Silva's island. The abandoned ruin that serves as his headquarters conceals his servers and computer terminals and from here he can both create and destroy.

> RAOUL SILVA: If you wanted, you could pick your own secret missions. As I do. Name it, name it. Destabilize a multinational by manipulating stocks. Bip. Easy. Interrupt transmissions from a spy satellite over Kabul... done. Hmm. Rig an election in Uganda. All to the highest bidder.
>
> JAMES BOND: Or a gas explosion in London.
>
> RAOUL SILVA: Mm-hm. Just point and click. [13]

The vulnerabilities of MI6's computer-based security are exposed early on in the film when an explosion from inside the building itself destroys M's office. There are blindspots in that all-seeing digital gaze: a cybernetic Panopticon is, potentially, even more susceptible to attack than one made of bricks. Once Silva is introduced, the struggle over information intensifies and is largely centred on who can see the most. Silva is imprisoned in a transparent cage that allows him to be viewed from all 360 degrees - but also allows him to see out. Once he escapes, networks of surveillance are used and manipulated on both sides. As a city with one of the most extensive CCTV systems in the world, London is under almost perpetual surveillance from unseen watchers. Admittedly, we can only assume that the visible cameras are, in fact, working: Bentham's Panopticon raises the notion that under the illusion of surveillance, we modify our public behaviour. In the world of *Skyfall*, however, these cameras are all in operation and are tools of state surveillance and control. But they are not infallible. We watch as Q tracks Silva through the London underground, a task made simultaneously easier and more difficult as Silva opts to hide in plain sight by donning the uniform of a police officer. Once out of the view of the cameras, it is down to the human eye -

specifically, Bond's - to track Silva. However, just as Palmer loses Grantby and Housemartin, Bond loses Silva (understandable given that a tube train comes crashing through the ceiling).

In terms of who can master the digital centre of controlling surveillance, Silva appears most adept. The final act of the film, then, sees the way in which technology is manipulated and finally abandoned by our heroes. As Q and M's Chief of Staff, Bill Tanner, create a false trail of digital breadcrumbs for Silva to follow, M and Bond flee the city and the concentration of networks of surveillance. As Bond says, they go back in time, not just to his ancestral home, but also to a time before cyber-warfare, GPS and CCTV. The country house that is the Skyfall of the title would itself seem to be a vulnerable, exposed place to choose as the site of a final showdown. But for Bond it is familiar ground. It is also outside of the digital network of surveillance that Silva has relied upon and the house itself allows (again) for an unimpeded 360 degree view of the surrounding countryside, while keeping its watching inhabitants hidden. For Bond, Skyfall becomes a Panopticon from where, finally, power can be regained.

One of the final images of *Skyfall* is of Bond standing on the rooftop of the MI6 building, looking out over the vista of London; and if we continue the reading of London as the heart of the current global network of power, by extension Bond is gazing out over the world. It is a protective gaze: controlling and powerful, we are shown surveillance being used as a force for good but one that still renders the watchers unseen by those they are watching. Bond is above the world and the networks of observation and communication that extend from the building beneath his feet give him mastery over the world. It is a view of Britain that is pure wish-fulfilment fantasy. It is far removed from Harry Palmer who, bruised and bloodied at the climax of *The Ipcress File*, knows little more than he did at the start except that he has been used, abused and duped almost to the very end. Being given Ross' handkerchief to staunch the blood from his wounded hand is something for which he is pathetically grateful. No master of the universe here, Palmer by the end is still mired in a world of half-truths and imperfect realisations.

The function of a spy is built into the name: they watch. However, as we witness in *The Ipcress File* and *Skyfall*, observing something at first hand does not always guarantee that what you are seeing is the truth; and gaining knowledge and power through surveillance is not infallible, especially when what you have been shown is a construct purely for your benefit. The employment and manipulations of networks of surveillance remain at the heart of most espionage texts and they continually play with the 'see/being seen dyad' that Foucault identifies as part of the Panopticon. For the spy, what you conceal is as important as what you can see. Yet one of the greatest tricks that any intelligence service can pull off is to convince the other side that they have something of great importance to hide, masking the fact that, possibly, they have nothing of any value to conceal. Dissimulation and misinformation are used by intelligence services in order to

obtain and maintain positions of dominance. If you show someone what they want to see you can make them think what you want them to think; making someone believe in a hidden power can be sufficient to make them cede power to you and in the world of espionage, and the Panopticon, that is the greatest triumph of all.

Notes

[1] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, USA: Vintage Books, 1991[1977]), 202.
[2] *Skyfall*, dir. Sam Mendes. London: Eon Productions, 2012, DVD.
[3] *The Ipcress File*, dir. Sidney J. Furie. London: Lowndes Productions, 1965, DVD.
[4] Gary McMahon, 'Harry Palmer, Michael Caine and *The Ipcress File*: Part One', *Film International* 10.2 (2012a): 31.
[5] Ibid., 30.
[6] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 203.
[7] Gary McMahon, '*The Ipcress File:* Part Two', *Film International* 10.4-5 (2012b): 19.
[8] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 200.
[9] *From Russia with Love*, dir. Terence Young. London: Eon Productions, 1963, DVD.
[10] McMahon, 'Part Two', 24.
[11] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 187.
[12] Ibid.
[13] *Skyfall.*

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The Unreliable Narrator and the Problem of Deceptive Narration

Barış Mete

Abstract

In narrative fiction, an unreliable narrator is identified as one whose account of the story the reader has reasons to suspect. The narrator's limited knowledge of the characters and events, his personal involvement and value scheme are cited as the main sources of unreliability.[1] Although there are different degrees of and debates about narrator unreliability, a narrator is considered to be unreliable if he is a person who is potentially deceptive.[2] Following these two approaches, but the latter in particular, a recent Turkish novel, Ö. Z. Livaneli's *My Brother's Story*,[3] can be read as a literary work depicting an unreliable and therefore a deceptive narrator. The first-person narrator, Mehmet, a retired engineer who lives in a coastal village near Istanbul, pretends to be his twin brother, Ahmet, who has never been present in the novel, thus unknown to the reader and to other characters. The narrator tells the reader his own story pretending that it is his brother's story, the ironic title of the novel. When a first-person narrator is hiding his real identity not only from the reader but also from the other characters, and when he poses as somebody else, this should be an example of narrator unreliability. This example can be evaluated as a type of deception related to having a false identity. This study aims to highlight the presence of an uncommon type of an unreliable narrator in fiction. The study specially focuses on the narrator's motives and reasons for keeping his real identity as secret.

Key Words: Fiction, narrator, unreliability, deception, disguise, false identity.

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1. Introduction

The concept of the unreliable narrator was seminally introduced by the American literary critic Wayne C. Booth in his 1961 book *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Booth in this book says, 'For lack of better terms, I have called a narrator reliable when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work'.[4] This claim means that if the narrator speaks or acts in accordance with the norms of the author of the text, he is regarded as a reliable narrator. If the narrator does not speak or act in accordance with the author, then he is called unreliable. What is specially underlined here in terms of narrator unreliability is the specific textual relationship between the narrator and the author of the text.

Later critics have reconceptualised and reformulated the term unreliable narrator. One of the most influential of those critics is Ansgar Nünning who has not only challenged Booth's emphasis on the relationship between the narrator and

the author but also underlined the indispensable role of the reader in terms of narrator unreliability. According to Nünning, the relationship between the narrator and the reader in a text is as meaningful as the relationship between the narrator and the author. Moreover, it is the reader who decides whether the narrator's account is reliable or not. Nünning claims that 'Unreliability is an effect that most readers intuitively recognize'.[5] He further states that

> most theorists and critics who have written on the unreliable narrator take the implied author both for granted and for the only standard according to which unreliability can be determined … Critics who argue that a narrator's unreliability is to be gauged in comparison to the norms of the implied author just shift the burden of determination onto a critical passepartout that is itself notoriously ill-defined.[6]

As the focus of this study is more on the relationship between the narrator and the reader than any other narrator-related relationships, it should now be argued that the concept of the unreliable narrator needs to be more characteristically formulated within the notions of the reader's identification and involvement with the textual model provided by the first person narrator. Moreover, it is already clear that no form of identification with the narrator can become truly possible if the reader is suspicious of an unreliable narration. Following from this argument, what becomes obvious is the fact that any inexistence of identification between the narrator and the reader in a literary text creates not a close relation but a kind of distance between these two figures.

The distance between narrators and readers is not an uncommon phenomenon in literary arts. Booth, for example, concentrates on the distance that separates the narrator not only from the reader but also from the author and the other characters of a story, and claims that the textual nature of a narrator depends on the degree and kind of distance that the narrator establishes.[7] This is because of the fact that any reading experience provides the reader with different kinds of dialogue among the author, the narrator, and the other characters, of course not excluding the reader. He says, 'Each of the four can range, in relation to each of the others, from identification to complete opposition, on any axis of value, moral, intellectual, aesthetic, and even physical'.[8] The distance between the narrator and the author may be moral, intellectual, physical or temporal. These qualities are also valid for the distance between the narrator and the other characters. When the narrator is separated from the reader's norms, according to Booth, this should specially be observed as the most significant type of distance in terms of narrator unreliability.

2. The Narrator and the Deception

Apart from the inevitable distance between the narrator and the reader as a result of unreliable narration, it should be remembered that any narrator in fiction is a potentially deceptive narrator. In other words, there is no narrator who is not deceiving the reader; or there is no narrator who is not telling the reader the untruth. This fact is mainly because of the special nature of representative arts. As literature itself is a form of representation, the events reported or the accounts given by the narrator to the reader can only be the represented reality, not the reality itself. As it is already well known, fiction means absolute artificiality; but this artificiality still includes references to life which are relevant to our everyday experiences. In other words, although any fictional work is artificial, what is meant here by artificiality does not have to necessarily mean the lack of actual experience. On the contrary, it is enough for a mimetic fictional work to be plausible enough or believable enough to refer to factuality. It can now be asserted that '[fiction] rests on conventions, of which the first and perhaps only one is that fiction specifically, but not always explicitly, excludes the intention to deceive'.[9]

Works of literature, not excluding the realistic examples, usually help the reader understand the true nature of their fictional character. However realistic the work might be, it can be made clear that what the reader sees in front of him is a fictional story. Contrary to this, some narrators, especially unreliable narrators, try to blur the reality and deceive the reader into believing that what they are telling is true for their own advantages. While a novel may display specific signs whose function is to remind the reader of the fictional nature of all the elements of the tale that it tells,[10] an unreliable narrator may have the intention to deceive the reader by manipulating, changing or simply hiding the truth from the reader. Because of this, there might possibly be the signs of a clash between the unreliable narrator and the fictional work where this narrator functions. In other words, in the case of *My Brother's Story* in particular, throughout the story it tells, the novel systematically and consistently pictures Mehmet as its first-person narrator who is very likely to deceive his listener. Contrary to this feature, Mehmet, as the unreliable narrator, tries desperately to maintain his role as long and influentially as possible. Although it is practically impossible to maintain the unreliability throughout the story as the narrator's deceptive nature occasionally becomes obvious, this type of narrator still attempts to keep his unique role as long as possible. And here appears the irony in the story as the unreliable narrator obviously tries the impossible. Being well aware of this fact, the protagonist-narrator of *My Brother's Story* commits an ironic suicide by letting himself be too powerfully embraced by his own invention, a mechanical sweetheart, at the end of the novel. The narrator has told the listener all of the stories he knows, and now he has no more stories to tell. The end of the stories means end of his deception.

3. The Narrator and the Novel

My Brother's Story opens with a quotation from the Pakistani writer Intizar Husain's short story, *The Death of Shahrazad*:

> "O my Emperor and my dear husband." Shahrazad said in a tearful voice, "You granted me life but you snatched my stories from me. I lived only in my stories. When my stories ended, my own story ended with them."[11]

These are the last words of Shahrazad. She is crying as the king has stolen all of her stories, the only source of life for her. The significance of these words is the meaning hidden in these lines. Shahrazad is an explicit reference to the deceptive nature of the narrator of *My Brother's Story*, Mehmet, who has pretended to be his twin brother Ahmet. But Ahmet died years ago when he was ten. And Mehmet adopted a new personality, that of his dead brother, before he played a game of deceptions to a young journalist. He has told his listeners[12] his own life story as if it were his brother's story, hence the double meaning in the title of the novel; and he committed suicide at the end of the novel as he has finished telling all of his stories.

One of the most important features of the novel is the fact that while the narrator tries to maintain his game of deceptions as long as possible, the novel does not fail to make this game visible to the reader. Mehmet tries his best to make his story interesting enough for his listener; *My Brother's Story*, however, insistently presents him as a modern Shahrazad whose life depends on the stories that he tells. This feature is displayed in the novel in a number of examples where such a rivalry can be detected. These examples are analysed in the following section in two different categories: the first is the instances where the narrator aims to conceal his role and the second is the one where the novel highlights this fact.

4. The Narrator and the Play

Even in the opening sentence of the novel, Mehmet employs the same technique used by Shahrazad in her telling of the stories. In order to manipulate the reader, Mehmet creates a tone of suspense saying that when he awoke early in that morning, he felt that he would hear something strange. His days had all been the same, but that particular day he was sure would be different. To keep up with his promise, Mehmet had a call that informed him of the murder of one of his friends, Arzu. While the reader is wondering who Arzu was, why and by whom she was murdered, Mehmet diverts the focus, and thinks of his twin brother Mehmet,[13] which puts the reader in a world of questions. Later in the novel, Mehmet mentions this name again without telling more about it. As the reader is being given these two unidentified names, he finds himself in the middle of a puzzle of identities. But

Mehmet, as the narrator, is well aware of the reader's curiosity. Therefore, the more mysterious his stories are, the more readable they become.

What is more obvious is that the reader is already wondering about the two names he has just heard; and now it is the narrator that the reader wants to learn about. When Mehmet begins to think about Arzu, he plays with the reader's curiosity. For example, he remembers the night when he had seen Arzu for the last time. He remembers her in a night party in a red dress that left her beautiful suntanned legs and shoulders bare. This scene is specially created to make Arzu more attractive and hence more mysterious for the reader. This is the same narrative strategy: the more attractive Mehmet presents her, the more the reader wonders about her. Mehmet copied the method that Shahrazad employed to guarantee the existence of the king's curiosity. The reader is still waiting for an explanation in terms of the names that he has been given when the novel opens. However, his curiosity is strengthened as the novel develops since every story leads to another story which leaves the reader in front of an infinite collection of stories.

Besides his reader, Mehmet plays with his listener's[14] curiosity in terms of two identities: his identity and the identity of Arzu's murderer. Like his role model Shahrazad, Mehmet keeps his listener's curiosity awake by postponing narrating the whole story at once. This quality of his narrative is most obvious in the mysterious identity of his brother. Whenever Mehmet remembers his brother, he refrains from giving any information about him. The only thing his listener knows about this name is that he was the narrator's brother. Mehmet reminds his listener that he will talk about his brother later. As his brother's story is delayed, he develops into a mysterious character; and Mehmet guarantees the presence of his listener during the following stages of his story.

Playing Shahrazad, Mehmet needs a listener, who will symbolically be another king of the collection. And this role is played by a young journalist Pelin. The novel clearly reveals that Mehmet plays the exact role to the young journalist that Shahrazad plays to the king. For example, he says,

> First she asked who I was, why I had been living in Podima, what I did, how I maintained my life, how I knew Arzu and her husband. And I explained everything honestly.[15]

After these lines, Mehmet begins narrating a story in which he keeps the young journalist as his prisoner. She herself acknowledged this role as well: 'If you could, you would keep me a prisoner'.[16] Mehmet manipulated his listener's curiosity so carefully and successfully that Pelin listened to him until the end of the novel, his life. Mehmet comments about his listener saying, 'She was an inborn listener, she was very strong, but she could never resist her curiosity'.[17] In one of the chapters, Mehmet and the journalist-listener talked about fate. The subject matter of their

talk was the question of what would have happened if one had known his fate. This question is a reference to the relationship between the roles of Mehmet and Shahrazad as narrators. When she stops telling stories, her life that is bound to story-telling comes to an end. Mehmet is loyal to this role as well. When the novel comes to an end, the narrator's role has ended. The end of narration becomes his end as the narrator. Although he says 'what can be more frightening than one's knowing his fate'[18] referring to the role of Shahrazad, he knows his fate as the narrator of the novel.

It is also obvious that the intentional postponement of the stories by the narrator is a source of wonder and anguish for the listener. Conventional fiction requires that once the narrator begins a story, he is supposed to tell the listener the whole story without any serious delay. As the young journalist grew suspicious of the reliability of Mehmet's accounts, she wanted to stop listening to him and leave his house. However, to kill one's curiosity is not easy, especially for a young journalist. Mehmet abused her instinct to know and continued his play. He says,

> She had just taken three steps when I called her: "There is another one living in that house." She stopped without turning her face to me. She waited a while and asked without turning to me: "Which house?" … "Try to learn." I said. "If you cannot succeed, come to me again this afternoon. I will tell you very strange things. You will be surprised."[19]

The narrator had to keep the young journalist's curiosity alive; this is the nature of his deceptive game. Like the case of Shahrazad, as long as there is a listener the narrator can live.

Mehmet called Pelin as his listener. In many other ways, the novel exposes that Mehmet has been playing Shahrazad to the young journalist. Instead of the most common verb *to say*, Mehmet uses the verb *to narrate* to refer to his role. He says he narrated or he did not narrate. His narration was effective on his listener, and it was interesting as well. However, the real question is the relationship between fact and fiction. The young journalist had been listening to a narrator in order to catch a clue to solve a murder. She had understood this, and asked him how he knew all of that like hiding somewhere and watching all of those things: '"You are speaking as if you had been there."'[20] What is interesting is that the speaker had formed everything upon his own observations. Mehmet had formulated a story. Pelin paradoxically thought that she had been listening to real stories. The narrator assured her, '"Real, absolutely real! Do you not know fiction is more real than life, the only way to tell reality?"'[21] Because of this, Pelin described Mehmet as a strange man who had mixed fact and fiction in his life. She did not understand where fiction ended and where fact began.[22] However, the fact and the fiction were inseparable. Nobody could be sure of the reality or fictionality of a story.[23]

This becomes most obvious when the narrator tells a story within another story. Although Mehmet is the main narrator of the novel, he uses the stories of other narrators. Therefore, the narrator functions in a net of narrators. In other words,

> In the frame-story, contrary to the Nights themselves, the voice of the narrator is not Shahrazad's voice; instead, Shahrazad is the heroine of the text, or of parts of it. At the same time the frame-story is what Eva Sallis has called the "signature story" for all the stories of the *Nights*.[24]

Anybody Mehmet knows or remembers was another narrator as he presented them to Pelin through the stories narrated either by himself or by one of them. Mehmet's characters from the cleaning lady to a taxi driver in Russia are themselves narrators who once narrated their stories to him. For example, he says talking about the taxi driver,

> He was talking constantly, informing me about his life … He said that he had to narrate something to me … he had to narrate a story to somebody before he went home.[25]

After narrating Mihail's story, it is surprising what Mehmet said to his listener:

> But there are two alternatives … Perhaps … Mihail [the taxi driver] has invented the story. It has never happened … Or I have been inventing that story now; there is no Mihail … As you see everything is a story … and it is impossible for us to know how much is real.[26]

Like Shahrazad who narrates other narrators such as her father, Mehmet makes use of other narrators. Ironically, Mehmet manipulated the young journalist, the real target of all of his stories, so easily that after listening to a story, she could not stop herself saying 'just like in fairytales'.[27] This was the aim of the narrator to enchant her by the stories he narrated. But Mehmet's urge to narrate was so powerful that he never stopped. Once he told a story, it had to develop into another story:

> I can give you a ride to Istanbul … but … if … you stay with me tonight, I will tell you the greatest love story you could ever hear in this world'. 'Whose story is it?' She asked. I said my brother's story.[28]

As outlined elsewhere,

Shahrazad tells the king a series of fantastic stories during the night, always breaking off in the middle of a story as morning approaches, or promising him an even more wondrous tale if he allows her to live until the following night.[29]

5. Conclusion

The unreliable narrator Mehmet follows the exact narrative technique employed by Shahrazad in her own stories. This was, as Pelin formulated, a kind of blackmail that he had been practicing throughout his stories. Every individual story in the novel, from that of Arzu to Svetlana, from that of the young couple to the taxi driver in Russia, had been organized to guarantee the young journalist's presence as the listener in the course of narration. However, Mehmet keeps the greatest one, his brother's story, for the end of the novel and end of his life as the narrator. The narrator plays the role of Shahrazad first to his fictional listener, then to the actual reader. When necessary, he does not hesitate to trigger her curiosity. Any news related to Arzu's murder is enough: "'Another news for you … Svetlana has not been cleared yet, the investigation is going on" … I was about to laugh at her surprise, but I stopped myself'.[30] He says

We drove for a period of time, she suddenly put her hand on the dashboard, cried … I asked her what had happened but I could guess the answer … I could see that she had changed her decision to go … I had been trying for this.[31]

After listening to all those stories narrated to her, Pelin finally understood that she had been playing the role of Shahriyar, and the narrator had been playing Shahrazad to her. She herself confessed that she had never thought of meeting with a male Shahrazad.

Notes

[1] Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London: Routledge, 2005).

[2] Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983).

[3] *Kardeşimin Hikayesi* in the original.

[4] Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 158.

[5] Ansgar F. Nünning, 'Reconceptualizing Unreliable Narration', *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, ed. James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 91.

[6] Ibid., 91.

[7] Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 155.

[8] Ibid., 155.

[9] Michael Riffaterre, *Fictional Truth* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 1.

[10] Ibid., 1.

[11] Ö. Z. Livaneli, *Kardeşimin* Hikayesi (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2013), 4.

[12] Mehmet has two listeners: the actual reader and the fictional journalist.

[13] He has already concealed his true identity and introduced himself as Ahmet, the starting point of his deception.

[14] Apart from the actual reader who reads the novel, Mehmet tells his tales in the novel to a fictional listener, a young journalist.

[15] Ö. Z. Livaneli, *Kardeşimin Hikayesi*, 29.

[16] Ibid., 138.

[17] Ibid., 152.

[18] Ibid., 30.

[19] Ibid., 36-37.

[20] Ibid., 58.

[21] Ibid., 58.

[22] Ibid., 82.

[23] Ibid., 83.

[24] Susanne Enderwitz, 'Shahrazad Is One of Us: Practical Narrative, Theoretical Discussion, and Feminist Discourse', *Marvels & Tales* 18.2 (2004): 189.

[25] Livaneli, *Kardeşimin Hikayesi*, 89.

[26] Ibid., 92.

[27] Ibid., 91.

[28] Ibid., 110.

[29] Melinda M. Rosenthal, 'Burton's Literary Uroburos: *The Arabian Nights* as Self-Reflexive Narrative', *Pacific Coast Philology* 25 (1990): 116.

[30] Livaneli, *Kardeşimin Hikayesi*, 112.

[31] Ibid., 112.

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Culture Matters: Strategic Deception in the Arab-Israeli Conflict

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Abstract
In an authoritative culture, where the strong dominate the weak in political and domestic spheres, the weak incline to use deception to manoeuvre their survival. This is the dynamic that developed centuries ago in the Arab culture and has taken deep roots therein. While Western armies need encouragement to conduct deception operations, Arab armies and political movements don't – because deception is part and parcel of political and military culture. The Western way to deal with what it perceives as a moral issue, namely, the use of persuasion rather than physical damage, is to use the mechanistic approach of technology. The overarching principle is a vaguely defined concept of 'information war'. In the information age, information is conscripted to war itself, including cyber warfare, psychological warfare (formerly 'propaganda'), deception, electronic warfare and finally an undefined connection between the interfaces of the military to those of the media. Within the context of the Arab-Israeli Conflict deception has been used on a large scale: The Egyptian deception campaign preceding the 1973 war is a prime example. Furthermore, in the mid-1990s, while purportedly promoting peace through the Oslo Accords, Yasser Arafat actively encouraged suicide bomb attacks against Israel and compensation funding for attackers' families. To avoid recognition, Palestinians concealed their faces while attacking Israeli forces or civilians, as well as their own people. By contrast, Israeli culture stresses openness to the point of rudeness. Openness is valued throughout the West: Catholic tradition encourages truth telling at all costs, albeit in the cloistered environs of confession. These contrasted attitudes put Israel and the greater West in an inferior position. In light of near future challenges with radical Islam, the West must develop a working understanding of the concept and centrality of deception in Arab cultures.

Key Words: Radical Islam, Arab-Israeli conflict, cultural intelligence.

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1. Introduction

The Arab world has been fascinating to westerners for centuries. The gradual weakening of the Ottoman empire which ruled the area from the sixteenth century, and later on as the poisonous 'black waters' so dangerous for the traditional shepherds became a source for wealth, the Arab world has attracted an increasing amount of attention. Yet, as Field mentions, the generalizations made by those who know the area will be disliked by the western liberal intelligentsia.[1] However,

attempting to inspect the Arab world from a western perspective will be greatly misleading.

2. Truth as a Cultural Construct

As those in the West say, honesty is the best policy. In Judeo-Christian tradition, truth is an objective positive value. The Old Testament commands, 'Thou shalt not bear false witness';[2] 'Ye shall not steal; neither shall ye deal falsely, nor lie one to another'.[3] Catholic tradition encourages truth telling as a means of repentance, albeit in the cloistered environs of confession. Those who admit the truth are applauded: 'I cannot tell a lie; I did it with my little hatchet', a young George Washington is fabled to have exclaimed over the butchered remains of his father's cherry tree. By contrast, one who is caught in a lie is disgraced. Like truth, transparent behaviour and clear, direct communication are highly esteemed qualities in the West.

On the other hand, it is obvious that misdirection can open up tactical advantages. Western individuals and, on a larger scale, nations do take opportunities for deception as they arise, though often they require rationalization or another form of self-justification. For example, the United States army field manual for deception operations (camouflage, misinformation, feigned retreats and the like)[4] grapples with justifications for deceptive tactics and explores their benefits – although these should be obvious to the tactical mind.

The West's attitude puts their militaries in an inferior position when confronting their greatest contemporary threat – radical Islamism, a movement whose roots and contemporary locus is in Arab culture. Arab culture approaches war and conflict differently than the West, not least of which is in their approach to deception.

While Arab armies throughout the centuries have tended not to use deceptive stratagems within battle (generally relying instead on the brute strength of masses frenzied by religious fervour[5]), they famously excel in such related fields as politics and diplomacy where cunning and guile can be put to use.[6] The hadith (sacred Islamic tradition) in which Mohammad teaches that 'war is deceit [*khad'ah*]'[7] can relate to the politics and stratagems surrounding the battlefield.

While the value placed on truth telling in the West is informed by its guilt culture, in Eastern honour-shame cultures[8] it is acceptable and often necessary to lie in order to save face before one's family or community. The Medieval Islamic theologian al-Ghazzālī pragmatically weighed the cost of openness: 'We must lie when truth leads to unpleasant results, but tell the truth when it leads to good results'.[9] The open acceptance of the place of lying may well have informed Arab principles of war. Additionally, in the authoritative Arab culture wherein the strong dominate in political and domestic spheres, the weak incline to use deception as a necessary tool of survival.[10]

Furthermore, limited natural resources made living conditions much harsher in the Arab world, so the struggle for survival required harsher manoeuvres. For all these reasons, deception takes place at all levels of Arab societal life. One Arab philosopher of the fourteenth century attributes guile to all city-dwelling Arabs, maintaining that it was a skill necessary to maintain the luxuries to which they had become accustomed.[11] Hamady explains that Arabs admire the trait of cunning and despise meekness and consider lying a tool to attain a goal.[12]

Reflecting on family relations, Halim Barakat mentions that the structure of the Arab family is hierarchical. The old communicate with young through orders, instructions, warnings and apprehensions, while the upward communication is through pleas, crying, covering up, and deception.[13] Traditional Arab head and face coverings, worn by both men and women for religious and cultural reasons, help to conceal their wearers' intentions from the public eye. Persecutions led Shia Muslims to permit *taqiyah*, the dissimulation of their religious beliefs at the threat of great harm to themselves, their families or their wealth.

Without undertaking a serious study of Arab culture, the West is unable to anticipate their opponents' reactions and is therefore incapable of devising effective strategy. In order to effectively combat groups such as ISIS, the West must develop a working understanding of the concept and centrality of deception in Arab culture.

3. The Arab-Israeli Conflict

The Arab-Israeli conflict can be a laboratory for critical examination of these cultural differences. For the last seventy years, Israel, a Western outpost in the Middle East, has been engaged in constant and often violent strife with neighbouring Arabs. The conflict offers a unique case study of a global problem.

The people of Israel historically do not employ deception as part of their overall strategies. There are isolated examples of small-scale, tactical deceptions as early as the bible in the Jewish tradition. Joshua's conquest of the land of Israel sometimes used deception, for example his covert scouting mission to Jericho and the strategic envelopment in the battle of Ai.[14] Gideon the judge used the cover of darkness and the ancient equivalent of a sound-and-light show to trick the Midianite army into believing that his small band of troops was much larger than it actually was.[15]

The modern Israeli army does not use deception except in rare cases. In wartime, in desperate moments, it uses tactical deceptions such as decoys. In the War of Independence, the newly founded Israeli army attacked Gaza while suffering heavy losses in order to deceive the Egyptian army into believing that Gaza was the main Israeli target. The operation succeeded and the Egyptian army was encircled and forced to negotiate surrender.[16] During the month preceding the Six-Day War, Israel deceived the Egyptian army (through the work of a double agent) into believing that its airpower was inferior to Egypt's. Then, at the

outbreak of that war, the Israeli air force made a large detour towards the Mediterranean before attacking Egypt in the Sinai.[17]

Israel used decoys more frequently during its protracted wars, as in Lebanon, since Israel's typical wars were often too short to develop extensive deceptive strategies.

The organizational explanation is simple: after Israel's declaration of independence in 1948, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) were hastily developed from the decentralized paramilitary force (the Palmach) that operated among the Jewish communities during the British mandate. The Palmach was founded to guard local settlements and was not considered or organized as a large 'national' army that functioned as a single unit. It was greatly influenced by a single British officer, Orde Wingate, who was sent to aid the Jewish forces during the Arab Revolt against Britain in 1936-1939. Wingate maintained that night activities, deception and surprise were key factors in overcoming the paucity of Jewish forces in manpower and materiel.[18] A decade later the strike forces were disbanded by Ben-Gurion and incorporated in the newly founded army, and Wingate's Night Squads tradition was forgotten, only to be relegated in the mid-1950s to small Special Forces unit.[19]

However, the deeper explanation to the lack of deception usage is cultural. Israel belongs to the Judeo-Christian tradition and to the Western world, and as such favours truth and transparency. Israel's military manual provides tiresome justifications for the use of deceptive manoeuvres, just like the United States manual. Linguistically, Israeli speech is direct and explicit, not relying on excessive nuance or context. In fact, sociologist Oz Almog has pointed out that Israelis in particular, out of the citizens of all the Western countries, favour openness to the point of rudeness.[20]

Israel's counterparts in the conflict have used large-scale strategic deception. A prime example is the deception campaign carried out by Egypt preceding the Yom Kippur War in 1973. Egypt concealed the fact that it was moving towards war in order to catch Israel off guard and secure the element of surprise. After its disappointing defeat in the Six-Day War in 1967, Egypt had instituted an annual military exercise that simulated crossing the Suez and taking out enemy troops on the Israeli-controlled bank. Under cover of this annual exercise, in October 1973 Egypt moved all its troops and equipment into position. To lull Israel into complacency, it carried on civilian and political life as normal until the outbreak of fighting, and fed misinformation to Israel in public announcements and radio broadcasts. Even the soldiers stationed at the Suez Canal, who could be clearly seen from the Israeli side, added to the deception: lounging at the Canal, fishing and creating the impression that the Egyptian troops were at ease. Israel was completely convinced, even on the morning of the initial attack, that there would be no war.[21]

The Palestinian Arabs, who were inferior to Israel in all conventional military respects – in population, in economy and in military strength and organization – resorted to a gradual, careful process of eroding Israel's sovereignty in the territories. At first, they used terror and guerrilla war strategies. After the First Lebanon War in 1982 they realized the power of psychological warfare as an enhancement tool for the violent operations they were carrying out. Having limited resources, they began to rely on deception to achieve their goals.

Deception can be found at the basic political level. For example, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) promoted itself in its 1968 national charter as the only legal representative of the Palestinian people. In reality, it was not a legal representation because the committee was never elected in free elections but rather was nominated by Yasser Arafat. It is also not the sole representative, as it claims. Groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad also represent the interests of a portion of the Palestinian people. Other Palestinians feel that none of these groups represent their interests. Yet the PLO promoted itself as the sole representative of the entire Palestinian people, occasionally quite violently. Jibril Rajoub, who took the nomination for head of the Palestinian Football Association, and who has again in 2015 called for Israel to be disbarred from FIFA for human rights violations, was in the 1990s the head of Fatah's counterintelligence department and has violently interrogated and executed hundreds of Palestinians.

For its part, Hamas promotes a false claim to a democratic heritage. It has maintained that Islam is a good match for a democratic political system because of the *majlis-ash-shura*, a governing parliament that was a traditional institution in Islamic empires. The Hamas executive government, like many others throughout the Middle East, is even called *majlis al shura*. In reality, this historical body was a limited advisory council within the caliphate and the rulers were never obligated to accept the council's advice.[22]

Upon these false foundations, individual campaigns of political and psychological warfare were waged by the PLO and Hamas. From the start, Arafat promoted the idea that Israel would be overcome through 'the Palestinian womb'.[23] The idea was to persuade Israelis that they would become outnumbered by the Palestinians in no more than a generation or two. This message was further intensified in 1993 when the Palestinian Authority was founded. One of its first actions was to open a Palestinian bureau of demography. As the accumulated psychological pressure increased by means of the suicide bombing campaign in 1994-1996 and in 2002 (which Arafat supported while simultaneously promoting peace in Oslo[24]), the Israeli government adopted a separation policy and in 2002 embarked on the multi-billion shekel project of the separation wall, scarring the landscape for hundreds of kilometres. The Palestinians hurried to extract a political gain, dubbing it the Apartheid Wall.

The Oslo accords of 1993-1994 were the acme of PLO deception, a political deception with military implications. The PLO used doublespeak in those years,

delivering messages of peace in English to the West while assuring the Arab world, in Arabic, that the fight would continue. In one embarrassing incident, Arafat referenced the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah, the truce struck between Muhammad and the Quraysh rulers of Mecca, in a speech given in English in a Johannesburg mosque in 1994; Arafat implied that the Oslo accords were only a *hudna*, a ceasefire, a temporary break in order to regroup and improve the Palestinian position. The speech was leaked, and the results were widely publicized.[25] Numerous other examples of doublespeak are compiled in *Deception: Betraying the Peace Process* by Itamar Marcus and Nan Jacques Zilberdik (Palestinian Media Watch: Jerusalem, 2011). For years Israel's foreign ministry had tried to expose Arafat's speeches to different audiences, without success. Some believe that the foreign ministry did so half-heartedly, with a very small budget and with the political intention of keeping the PLO in power in the hope that the Palestinian moderates would overcome the extremists.

There are also numerous examples of Palestinian deception in the media presentation of the conflict, such as the classic case in 2000 of the video depicting the alleged violent shooting and death of a young boy, Mohammed al-Dura, in his father's arms. The video was later proven to have been staged, and the boy unharmed, but the desired damage to Israel's public image was achieved. Many more examples have been documented in several excellent works, such as *David and Goliath: The Explosive Inside Story of Media Bias in the Mideast Conflict* by Shraga Simmons and *Double Vision: How the Press Distorts America's View of the Middle East* by Ze'ev Chafets.

Hamas has also used media to present Israel as withholding basic amenities from the Palestinians in Gaza. Famously, in 2008 the parliament in Gaza held a session by candlelight, to which they invited journalists in order to publicize Israel's purported power cuts. Embarrassingly, at the edge of the photographs are curtains that were not tightly drawn, showing the bright midday sun.

The Mavi Marmara incident of 2010 was another planned deception. The voyage was presented as a humanitarian assistance trip, but its main purpose was to elicit a violent confrontation with the IDF to exploit for international media. An analysis of the 561 passengers aboard the flotilla reveals that 'many Mavi Marmara passengers belonged to extremist Islamist organizations, especially the Turkish IHH and other Islamist organizations operating in Turkey'.[26] Contrary to public claims of non-violent intentions, the organisers planned to respond actively to IDF deterrence.[27]

Hamas to this day smuggles weapons (in various forms, including engines and electronics for their tunnel operation) into Gaza, disguised as humanitarian assistance.[28]

4. Culture Matters

Israel's foreign ministry has not effectively anticipated these deceptions. Its government and military overlook the persistent deceptive techniques when responding to terror incidents, military campaigns and threats. Israel also fails in not attempting a sophisticated psychological warfare that takes the Palestinian Arabs' culture into consideration.

The rest of the West should not make the same mistakes. Only through a thorough understanding of an adversary culture can effective strategies be planned or a psychological campaign operated.

Western nations are aware of the need for cultural intelligence, but the majority of attempts towards its promotion are lacking in basic aspects. The United States' Human Terrain System, which was instituted in 2005 in response to U.S. involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq, was criticized for its anthropological approach and its impact was restricted.[29] The U.S. special cultural training program for soldiers slated for deployment to Iraq did not display an understanding of the nuances between subcultures, for example, hiring an Arabic speaking Moroccan lecturer instead of an Iraqi. Programs often progress too rapidly through the material, generalise and simplify, or are not provided to the right soldiers. Furthermore, these programs are the first likely to undergo budget cuts.[30]

This is not an area in which Western governments and military can tread water. With near future challenges with radical Islam at hand, the West must develop a working understanding of Arab culture, including its concepts of deception, and employ this knowledge to its advantage.

Notes

[1] Michael Field, *Inside the Arab World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 10.
[2] Exod. 20:16.
[3] Lev. 19:11.
[4] Department of the Army, 'Battlefield Deception' (U.S. Army Field Manual 90-2, Washington, DC, 1988).
[5] Tribes of converts to Islam – such as the Seljuks and Turks – accomplished the military's greatest successes. This fact explains the great expansion of the Arab empire in the seventh and eighth centuries, and their defeats ever since.
[6] Barton Whaley, 'The Prevalence of Guile: Deception through Time and Across Cultures and Disciplines' (National Intelligence Council, Washington, DC, 2007), 38-44.
[7] Reuven Berko, 'The Concept of Deterrence in Arab and Muslim Thought: The Various Approaches of the Muslim Brotherhood' (Paper presented at the thirteenth annual Herzliya Conference, Herzliya, Israel, March 11–14, 2013).

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[8] Halvor Moxnes, 'Honor and Shame', *Biblical Theology Bulletin: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 23.4 (1993): 167-176.

[9] Quoted in Whaley, 'Prevalence of Guile', 43.

[10] Richard Landes, 'Edward Said and the Culture of Honour and Shame: Orientalism and Our Misperceptions of the Arab-Israeli Conflict', *Postcolonial Theory and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Special Issue, eds. Philip Carl Salzman and Donna Robinson Divine, *Israel Affairs* 13.4 (2007): 844-858.

[11] Whaley, 'Prevalence of Guile', 43.

[12] Sania Hamady, *Temperament and Character of the Arabs* (New York: Twayne, 1960), quoted in Whaley, 'Prevalence of Guile', 43.

[13] Halim Barakat, 'The Arab Family and the Challenge of Social Transformation', *Women and Islam: Critical Concepts in Sociology,* ed. Haideh Moghissi, 145-165 (New York: Routledge, 2005).

[14] Josh. 2; 8:9-28.

[15] Judg. 7.

[16] Yigael Yadin, 'For by Wise Counsel Thou Shalt Make Thy War: A Strategical Analysis of Last Year's Battles', appendix 2 to B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (New York: Praeger, 1954), 386-404.

[17] Ephraim Lapid, 'Hayated hakaful (The Double Wedge)', *Israel Defense*, 21 April 2014, viewed 6 September 2015, http://tinyurl.com/qa7lldf.

[18] Simon Anglim, 'Orde Wingate and the Special Night Squads: A Feasible Policy for Counter-Terrorism?' in *Confronting Insurgencies: Historical Experience and Policy Responses*, Special Issue, eds. Tim Benbow and Rod Thornton, *Contemporary Security Policy* 28.1 (2007): 28-41.

[19] Stuart A. Cohen and Efraim Inbar, 'Varieties of Counter-Insurgency Activities: Israel's Military Operations against the Palestinians, 1948–90', *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 2.1 (1991): 41-60.

[20] Oz Almog, *The Sabra: The Creation of the New Jew*, trans. Haim Watzman (London: University of California Press, 2000).

[21] Dani Asher, *The Egyptian Strategy for the Yom Kippur War: An Analysis*, trans. Moshe Tlamim (London: McFarland & Company, 2009), 93-94.

[22] See for example the Saudi Arabian council. The country's Majlis Al-Shura is in fact called a 'consultative council' and in contemporary times has been granted the ability to 'propose' new legislature, but otherwise has little independent authority. 'Shura in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: A Historical Background', *The Shura Council*, viewed 3 April 2016, https://www.shura.gov.sa/wps/wcm/connect/ShuraEn/internet/Historical%20BG/.

[23] Janet Afary, 'Feminism and the Challenge of Muslim Fundamentalism', *Spoils of War: Women of Color, Cultures, and Revolutions*, ed. T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting and Renée T. White, 83-100 (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: Oxford, 1997), 87. See also Rosemary Sayigh, 'Palestinian Women: Triple Burden, Single

Struggle', *Palestine: Profile of an Occupation*, 153-177 (Zed Books: London, 1989).

[24] Ephraim Karsh, *Arafat's War* (New York: Grove Press, 2003), 121.

[25] Shlomo Ben Ami, *Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy*, (London: Oxford University Press, 2006), 214.

[26] 'Conspicuous among the Passengers and Organizations Aboard the Mavi Marmara Were Turkish and Arab Islamic Extremists Led by IHH.…' *Terrorism Info*. 9 September 2010, viewed September 2015, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/article/18020.

[27] 'Western Pro-Palestinian Activist Who Participated in the Fighting Aboard the Mavi Marmara Claimed…that It Was Clear that the Resistance Aboard the Ship Would Not Be Passive.…' *Terrorism Info*. 28 September 2010, viewed 6 September 2015, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/article/18018.

[28] Avi Issacharoff, 'How's Hamas Getting Supplies for Rockets and Tunnels? Through Israel', *The Times of Israel*, 20 July 2015, viewed 6 September 2015, http://www.timesofisrael.com/hows-hamas-getting-supplies-for-rockets-and-tunnels-through-israel/.

[29] Jim Hodges, 'U.S. Army's Human Terrain Experts May Help Defuse Future Conflicts', *Defense News*, 22 March 2012, viewed 7 December 2014, http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120322/C4ISR02/303220015/Cover-Story-U-S-Army-8217-s-Human-Terrain-Experts-May-Help-Defuse-Future-Conflicts

[30] Montgomery McFate, 'The Military Utility of Understanding Adversary Culture', *Cultural Intelligence for Winning the Peace*, ed. Juliana Geron Pilon, 107-118 (The Institute of World Politics Press: Washington, 2009), 114.

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Lying as Second Person Engagement

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Abstract

In this chapter I explore an apparent consequence of regarding lying as complex deception. If lying is regarded as an act of intended deception that relies on the simultaneous invocation and betrayal of trust, we may appear to be committed to an intellectualist and theory of mind account of interpersonal understanding and interaction. That is, it may seem that a liar, on the basis of supposed knowledge of the perspective of his or her target, sets out to manipulate the beliefs of the target by adopting a third person perspective on the target. I aim to show that this assumption is false. Lying is complex, and it does offer a window to interpersonal interaction and understanding, but it is not an instance of 'theory of mind in action'. Theory of mind accounts treat interpersonal understanding and interaction as solutions to the gap between the first and third person perspective, but when lying is understood in this way, its particular moral and affective dimensions become mysterious, as highlighted in the work of Frankfurt and others. Lying, I argue, is best explained as a (Davidsonian) second-person phenomenon, and the social cognition it involves is best understood in terms of primary interaction, as found in phenomenological and Wittgensteinian approaches.

Key Words: Lying, trust, second person, social cognition, intellectualism, theory of mind.

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1. Introduction

Among the many things that make lying fascinating is the way it can work as a frame for thinking about social interaction and interpersonal understanding. Just because it has, so it seems, a particular moral standing and a particular affective phenomenology, it seems to offer powerful insights to our engagement with each other. This is not a chapter about the morality of lying. I will, for example, set aside questions about when, if ever, lying is nugatory, permissible, or obligatory. I will, however, assume that we do all lie, and that we know what it is to lie, and to discover that we are being, and have been, lied to.

My use of lying as a device for thinking about social cognition and interaction is not unusual. For example, lying and deception have been used in developmental psychology and cognitive ethology since at least the 1980's as measures of cognition and social cognition.[1] For the most part in this work researchers take lying as an indicator and outcome of growing cognitive sophistication. Furthermore, growing cognitive sophistication is taken to be a capacity for 'mindreading'. There is debate as to exactly what sort of development is going on

– whether, for example, it's the development of executive control of ToM (Theory of Mind)[2] modules, or the development of mind-reading capacities themselves – but in any case, lying is taken to be an excellent marker of this mind-reading development. For example, Lee has written recently:

> Lying in essence is ToM in action, because to lie and to lie successfully, individuals must understand their mental state and their listener's mental state.[3]

That is to say, there is in at least most of this literature, an assumption that social cognition and interactive sophistication depend on ToM and mind reading capacities. The question asked is when and how ToM develops, and lying and deception are taken to be useful measures of the supposed development.

I think that the assumptions behind these approaches are wrong. I hope to show that lying, along with the social cognition and skill it involves, is an instance of second person, primary interaction. I hope to show also that when we see lying in this light its moral standing and its affective aspects become clear.

My account of the practice of lying amounts to what is called 'complex deceptionism'.[4] *Deceptionism*, because I think that when we lie we aim to deceive the target audience regarding some matter. *Complex*, because I think that, in a lie, the project of deception involves an interpersonal process in which the liar, in making an assertion to the target audience, invokes the audience's trust and simultaneously betrays it. My general understanding of lying is not radical. I have the company of, for example, Frankfurt, Chisholm and Feehan, Williams,[5] and Faulkner.[6] My main difference from them (with the exception of Paul Faulkner) is that I insist on more 'complexity' than they do.

However, one consequence of the complexity I insist on is that lying looks like what Ryle would call an intellectualist enterprise.[7] That is, it seems that a liar necessarily engages in an inner cognitive process of belief-desire attribution and calculation. This complexity therefore also suggests that lying epitomises mind reading in action, and that a liar necessarily strategizes regarding a judgement of what is going on in the mind of her target. I insist, nevertheless, that lying is non-intellectualist second person, primary interaction.

2. Deception and Betrayal

Some philosophers think that an intention to deceive is not necessary to a lie. For example, Carson claims that someone tells a lie to another person if and only if they make a false statement to the other person, believing that the statement is false or probably false, state it in a context in which they warrant the truth of the statement.[8] Sorensen claims that when someone utters a falsehood believing that the audience will not believe the falsehood, they are lying, but without the intent to

deceive. According to Sorensen, 'lying is just asserting what one does not believe'.[9]

The type of case that is cited in support of such claims is a scenario in which a witness to a crime has identified the culprit to the police, but in open court, fearful of the accused, denies that he saw who committed the crime. Everyone present knows that what the witness says is what he believes false, and the witness knows that they know. The witness could not form or have an intention to deceive but, so it is claimed, the witness is lying.

I will not be able to engage with this approach in the present chapter. To a large extent our assessment depends on whether we think the examples used are of true lies, and that would require more extensive discussion than is germane to my task here. Hence, I will assume, for the purposes of the chapter, that lying *does* involve a deceptive intention.[10]

A deceptionist thinks that a true liar necessarily intends to deceive someone regarding some matter of fact (as the liar sees the facts); either the proposition expressed, or the liar's belief in the relevant proposition.[11] Crucially, deceptionists regard a lie as a tool for bringing about deception, and thus have to investigate the nature of the tool – try to grasp what it is about lying that makes it different from other means of deception. The *complex* dimension of the account comes from the way one sees the tool working, and we can get at that by considering what it is about this tool that leads to its moral standing and its phenomenological character.

Chisholm and Feehan say that a lie is an assertion that the speaker believes false, and that is intended to deceive. According to them, I assert when I state something under what I take to be conditions that give my hearer reason to believe that I accept what I state and wish them to come to accept it. If a person asserts a proposition to another person, then that other person has the *right* to expect that the utterer believes it. A lie, therefore, is distinguished from other deception by being essentially 'a breach of faith'.[12]

I think that Chisholm and Feehan are right that something like faith is breached in a lie. However, the mechanism they identify (falsely asserting to someone) is not sufficient to establish faith. If a speaker takes herself to be in a position of asserting without the hearer recognising their serious intent (for example, as case of miss-assigned irony), then she has asserted in Chisholm and Feehan's sense, but has not established faith. So in the case of an intended lie, that the speaker falsely asserts does not of itself bring it about that there is faith to be breached. Such faith seems to require a certain mutual understanding of acknowledge and expected commitments. The underlying point is that speech *acts* do not have defeasible markers, since whatever marker an utterance *object* carries, that object can be used in any of a wide range of acts.[13]

Frankfurt asks how lies injure us in spite of any consequential benefits they may bestow. He replies that there are two dimensions. First, 'the most irreducibly

bad thing about lies is that they contrive to interfere with, and to impair, our natural effort to apprehend the real state of affairs'.[14]

Second, the discovery that one has been lied to shows that our trusting has been unreliable.

> The discovery exposes to us something about ourselves – something far more disturbing than merely that we have miscalculated, or that we have made an error of judgment. It reveals that our own nature (i.e., our second nature) is unreliable, having led us to count on someone we should not have trusted.[15]

Both observations are important. They help show how it is that, for the victim of a lie, lies have an affective edge quite different from other means of deception. This becomes especially salient with benevolent and trivial lies: they do no harm, may even do good, and yet there is a sliver of disrespect and betrayal.

However, as important as they are, these observations don't explain why there is this trust in the first place, rather than a mere reliance that would be found in successful deception in general. I think the problem is that Frankfurt's necessary conditions for lying (that the target comes to believe true what the liar believes false, and that the target comes to believe that the liar believes it true) don't distinguish lying from acting as though one has a certain belief. For example, I might act as though something has been thrown at me. I thereby get my audience to believe what I take to be false, and I get my audience to believe that I believe it to be true, and thus satisfy Frankfurt's conditions, but I don't lie.

Both these deceptionist accounts (Chisholm and Feehan's, and Frankfurt's), although they recognize the difference between lies and deception in general, including the moral and affective difference, lack a feature that clearly distinguishes lies within deception.

The first step towards this feature is to note that if a liar breaches faith (Chisholm and Feehan) or trust (Frankfurt), then he or she must breach something that is established between speaker and audience – something mutually recognised, understood, and accepted. This, I think, is what Kant was getting at when he said that in order to have lied one must have declared that one is *opening one's mind* to the person to whom one lies.[16] Kant was emphasising the distinction between lying and going through a performance (packing one's bags as if going on a trip) intended to deceive. His expression is obscure, and requires a discussion I'm not able to provide here, but his point seems clear. Although the deceptive performance may cause harm, as a deceptive tool it is different than performance.

I suggest that Kant's 'opening one's mind' should be understood as an *interactive performance*. In my analysis, a liar asserts,[17] and in doing so invokes the trust of the intended audience by way of an interactive performance that establishes mutual recognition of the speaker's intention to be seen as sincere. The

liar simultaneously betrays that trust. Thus the liar is doubly insincere: insincere in falsely asserting, and insincere in the performance of sincerity.

3. Lying as Performance

Note that there can be no conventional sign of sincerity that will achieve this end. Any assertion of sincerity ('I'm being sincere!') is itself either sincere or not, and demands a judgment about *that* act of assertion. As Davidson said in this context, 'the plight of the actor [in a burning theatre] is always with us'.[18]

Davidson is especially relevant here because I think that in the series of papers which might be seen as defending Wittgenstein from the 'Kripkenstein' interpretation he helped undermine a pervasive temptation in our thinking about thought, reason, and language.[19] The temptation is to think that we are able to interact and understand each other because and only because we share a code (a language). The first important problem with this assumption, which places an evidential step between myself and the other, is that it naturally generates other minds scepticism. How do I know this isn't a zombie, or a mutant, because the other's mind is essentially unavailable to me, and can only be grasped indirectly via the code?

Wittgenstein knew that the thought was confused, but his response was interpretable as an expression of scepticism. Davidson's somewhat different approach was to argue, among other things, that a shared code is not sufficient for understanding, is not necessary for understanding, and anyway does not exist.

> [S]peaking a language … does not depend on two or more speakers speaking in the same way; it merely requires that the speaker intentionally make himself interpretable to a hearer (the speaker must 'go on' more or less as the interpreter expects, or at least is equipped to interpret).[20]

This dimension of Davidson's work is important, because the assumption that a shared code is the basis for understanding is tied to the core of an (in my view debilitating) intellectualist and cognitivist mind-set that remains prominent in philosophy and psychology. Davidson, and before him Ryle, Wittgenstein, and Merleau Ponty, have shown that the idea that our cognition and intentional action is grounded in reflective calculation is trapped in a regress, and that, as Wittgenstein famously quoted Goethe, 'in the beginning was the deed'.[21]

I suggest, therefore, that the understanding that arises in a lie follows from a performance of sincerity that establishes a recognition and acceptance of sincerity. The understanding must be able to be achieved independently of the particular features of the speech or utterance object because, as I argued above, it is an understanding about how the object is being used. This performance isn't peculiar to lying – it is a part of assertion itself.

When seen in this light, the particular moral and affective dimensions of lying begin to make sense. The liar engages interactively with the target and invokes trust. This is the tool by which the deception is to be achieved, and the betrayal at the heart of lying explains its character. The power of the realisation that one's second nature is unreliable, which Frankfurt identifies in the victim of a discovered lie, can be seen as resulting from a breakdown at the core of our interactive (therefore human) experience.

4. Lying and the Second Person

I hope to have demonstrated two things. I've claimed that lying is an insincere assertion, in which there is mutual recognition of a multi-layered intention of sincerity that invokes a trust that is then betrayed. On the other hand, I've claimed that this process is brought about in primary interaction, through a performance of sincerity, and not through a grasp and manipulation of other minds.

These two claims can seem contradictory only because in psychology and philosophy there is a strong temptation to regard human interaction as a third person phenomenon. Human interaction is seen as requiring a solution to the problem of how to bridge the gap from the first person perspective to the third person perspective, or the gap from solipsism to objectivity. The assumption that has been made is that human interaction at base involves what Strawson called an objective, rather than reactive, stance.[22] When we *do* mind-read we do adopt a third person, objective stance towards that person. But we do it when the normal flow of interaction has broken down, or when the other's behaviour has become un-interpretable, when we have ceased to see the other as an agent in, Strawson's sense.

However, this is the anomalous situation. Human interaction is by default a second person phenomenon, and it is necessarily so at risk of regress and solipsism. We don't apply a theory of mind, or run a simulation of what things might look like in another's shoes, or run an argument by analogy, or wonder whether we are dealing with a zombie. Those who don't recognise this distinction are sociopaths, just because they aren't able to partake of the second person relation to others.

We know, for example from Davidson in the series of papers I mentioned earlier, that objectivity in fact arises in and because of our second person relations, in triangulation, when we simultaneously recognize our self, the other, and our world. It is not something that has to be uncovered as a solution, but in fact is a condition of our sapience.

5. Conclusion: Holding a Warm Iron

I anticipate a concern, in spite of these claims, that the liar I've described, in my account of complex deception, just *is* treating the victim as an object to be manipulated – invoking trust and then betraying it. I accept that this is a natural

thought.[23] We might think that in lying we treat the other as a thing, an in-itself, and that this is the source of its moral wrongness.

Again, however, we lose the distinction between deception in general and lying in particular. Intentional deceivers are manipulators, but liars are a special case.

That is, lying has the character it does, and leads to the particular resentment it does, because it is a second-person phenomenon, arising in primary interaction. Fundamentally our lies do not involve an objectifying calculation. Most of our lies are just part of our going up to people and moving around in our (social, emotional) world. For the most part, they are not done blindly, or unconsciously, but for the most part they are done indifferently, as a part of managing our world.

I've spoken about a lie as a tool put to the service of an intended deception, and given what I've said here it is thus tempting and plausible to think of a lie as a tool-in-use that, as ready-to-hand, is phenomenologically transparent; like Heidegger's hammer, an innocent extension of the arm.[24] However, this can't be quite right, and lying can't be that far from deception in general. For a lie doesn't just sting the target when she discovers it. It also resonates with the (non-pathological) liar, so it can't be quite correct to say that a lie is transparent. It is more like, say, a branding iron; it is a tool, but one we feel as we use it, and if not in the moment, in reprise. Thus lies, as we know, come naturally, but they don't come easily.

Notes

[1] For some representative material, see essays in Carolyn A. Ristau ed., *Cognitive Ethology* (Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1991). Also, K. Lee, 'Little Liars: Development of Verbal Deception in Children', *Child Development Perspectives* 7.2 (2013): 91-96; A. Polak and P. L. Harris, 'Deception by Young Children Following Noncompliance', *Developmental Psychology* 35.2 (1999): 561-568; B. Sodian, 'The Development of Deception in Young Children', *British Journal of Developmental Psychology* 9.1 (2011): 173-188.
[2] According to a 'theory of mind' approach to social knowledge, we attribute mental states (beliefs and desires) to others, in spite of other minds not being directly observable, on the basis of an innate (belief-desire) model/theory of the mind. The model enables us to attribute mental states as the causal basis of observed behaviour. The idea that there are theory of mind 'modules' derives from Jerry Fodor, *The Modularity of Mind* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1983).
[3] Lee, 'Little Liars', 91.
[4] James Mahon, 'The Definition of Lying and Deception', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta, ed., Viewed on 11 July 2016, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/lying-definition/; also James Mahon, 'Two Definitions of Lying,' *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 22.2 (2008): 211-30.
[5] Bernard Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness: An Essay in Genealogy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 96.

[6] Paul Faulkner, 'What Is Wrong with Lying?' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 75.3 (2007): 535–57.

[7] Gilbert Ryle, 'Knowing How and Knowing That', in *Collected Papers Volume 2*. 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2009).

[8] Thomas L Carson, 'The Definition of Lying,' *Nous* 40.2 (2006): 284–306.

[9] Roy A Sorensen, 'Bald-Faced Lies! Lying Without the Intent to Deceive,' *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 88.2 (2007): 256.

[10] For discussion, see Mahon, 'Two Definitions of Lying'; See Carson, 'The Definition of Lying' 285, for response to Mahon.

[11] Mahon, 'Two Definitions of Lying', 220.

[12] R. M. Chisholm, and T. D. Feehan, 'The Intent to Deceive,' *The Journal of Philosophy* 74.3 (1977): 152. As should be clear, this is not a paper on assertion as such, and I am bypassing an extensive literature, and many important debates.

[13] See David Simpson, 'Communicative Skills in the Constitution of Illocutionary Acts,' *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 70.1 (1992): 82-92.

[14] Harry Frankfurt, 'The Faintest Passion,' *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 66.3 (1992): 6.

[15] Frankfurt, 'The Faintest Passion': 7.

[16] Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 202.

[17] There are lots of ways of asserting, directly and indirectly, in word and gesture. I won't discuss those ways here.

[18] Donald Davidson, 'Communication and Convention,' *Synthese* 59.1 (1984): 7.

[19] Donald Davidson, 'Rational Animals,' *Dialectica* 36.4 (1982): 317-27; Donald Davidson, 'Communication and Convention,' *Synthese* 59.1 (1984): 3-17; Donald Davidson, 'The Second Person,' *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 17.1 (1992): 255-67; Donald Davidson, 'A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs,' in *Truth and Interpretation,* ed. E. LePore (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986): 433-446. I am aware that there is anachronism in this list.

[20] Davidson, 'The Second Person,' 260.

[21] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), §402.

[22] Peter Strawson, 'Freedom and Resentment', in *Freedom and Resentment and Other Essays* (Oxford: Routledge, 2008), 1-28.

[23] See David Simpson, 'Lying, Liars and Language,' *Philosophical and Phenomenological Research* 52.3 (1992): 623-39.

[24] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 15: 98.

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Fake Testimonies: How the Literary Hoax becomes a Tool for Social and Humanitarian Awareness

Clara Sitbon

Abstract

For over twenty years, Somaly Mam, with her foundation, has fought sex trafficking in South East Asia. She was considered a modern heroine idolised by everybody, including Ban Ki Moon, the Pope, Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton. Her autobiography, *The Road to Innocence,* published in 2005, received the Prize of Truth from the Mayor of Cannes, a small French town. Her story is that of a ten year old girl sold by her grandfather to a rich merchant, then forced to marry a violent soldier at the age of fourteen, before being sold to a brothel where she would be beaten, raped, and tortured. A symbol of several generations of abused women, Somaly Mam confirmed her status as martyr with this piece of literary work that would end up being translated into over twelve languages by 2008. In 2014, a *Newsweek* Investigation let by Simon Marks revealed that Somaly Mam's story was completely invented, that she did not grow up in the remote mountains of North Cambodia as she had pretended, and more importantly, it revealed that she went to school until she graduated with a teaching degree. My paper intends to prove how this investigation changed the status of the fake testimony to a pure literary hoax. It also discusses then how this fake testimony brings the literary hoax to the social sphere by focusing on the humanitarian issue of sex trafficking.

Key Words: Fake testimony, faction, literary hoax, Somaly Mam, sex trafficking.

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1. 'Every Woman's Story'

'My name is Somaly. I mean, it is the name I currently bear. Like everybody in Cambodia, I have many. A name is the result of a temporary choice'.[1] For the past twenty years, Somaly Mam has fought against sex trafficking and child slavery in Cambodia. Her action started in the early 1990s and was crowned by her autobiography, *The Road to Innocence*, first published in French by Anne Carrière Editions in 2005. The book received the Price of Truth in 2005. This story changed her into a martyr, and subsequently gave her a sought-after legitimacy that allowed her to be the sole crusader against what lots of people deemed a lost cause. In 2011, she participated in the Most Powerful Women Summit organized by *Fortune* magazine. She told Sheryl Sandberg in very approximate English:

> I have been sold in the brothel by the man who come and tell me
> that he is my grandfather. I stayed in the brothel nearly ten years.

> The brothel owner bring us all together, we all sit on the ground,
> and he tell us we have to do what he ask us to do. But one girl…
> she refused to do what he asked to do so he take a gun and kill
> her, so that is the day I have been escaped from the brothel.[2]

This anecdote is one of many that she recounts in her autobiography. It starts in a context of extreme poverty in the mountains of the Mondol Kiri in the north Cambodian forest. The childhood she recounts is defined by violence, abuse, rape and horror, starting with the man she calls her 'Grandfather' treating her as his slave, and selling her at age 10 to a sadistic Chinese merchant, who will subsequently force her to marry an equally violent Chinese soldier at age 14. At 15 she is sold to a brothel, where the real inferno starts.

Her account, as an autobiography, bears the stamp of authentic testimony, and the reader can't help but sympathise with, if not weep at, the horror of her situation. The particularity of this autobiography lies in the fact that she explains clearly that she believes that her fate is pure normalcy: 'I thought I wasn't the only one living this nightmare, that it was every woman's fate'.[3]

After years of servitude, she gains the trust of the brothel owner, and with it comes more freedom. She still works in the brothel, but she is able to help foreigners working for humanitarian organizations who are helping to recover from the Khmer Rouge. This is when she meets French biologist Pierre Legros, who enables her to leave the world of brothels and prostitution for good. They get married, move to France and Mam proves to be adapting very well to her new life, finding a job as a maid in prestigious hotels of the French Riviera, earning even more money than her husband.[4]

In 1994, they move back to Cambodia, where Legros starts a contract with Doctors Without Borders. The country, at this time, was facing an epidemic of HIV. It had in fact the highest rate of HIV in the Asia-Pacific region. Mam began to volunteer at a clinic that helped women with HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. What she saw convinced her that her fate was not that of a prostitute. She would do everything she possibly could to help women who knew the horrors that she faced, and give them their freedom back.

In 1996, with her husband and a Dutch doctor working with him, Eric Merman, she created the AFESIP.[5] Mam went around brothels in Cambodia and used her knowledge of the Cambodian underworld of sex trafficking to give prostitutes their freedom back. At this point in her autobiography, she tells the story of Thomdi, a seventeen year-old former prostitute originally from Vietnam. Mam explains that,

> [S]he was very skinny, covered with abscesses. […] She had
> AIDS. Orphan, she was sold at age nine. Her parents died in a
> shipwreck and she was living with her sister, who, having no
> money, sold her. At the brothel, she was horribly beaten, and she

was still bearing the marks of her beatings. She would see fifteen to twenty customers a day and caught everything, tuberculosis, AIDS and numerous STDs. In the end, the brothel owners kicked her out and threw stones at her so she wouldn't come back.[6]

With their action growing, Somaly Mam and her husband soon began to attract the international media's attention. In 1998, French documentary *Envoyé Special* gave their action international exposure. Mam was subsequently chosen by the Prince of Asturias to receive the Award for International Cooperation, along with, *inter alia*, Emma Bonino and Rigoberta Menchu.[7] This is when Mam's husband started to express the desire to extend their action beyond the borders of Cambodia. AFESIP offices opened in Laos, Vietnam, France and Switzerland.[8] This is when he also said to Mam that the real thing to do after television was to write a book.[9]

All through her book, she tells how she is and always will be part of this world. She is all of these women at once. In a poignant statement towards the end of her book, she tells the reader: 'everything they lived, I lived as well, it is as if it were me, I am carrying these stigma in my heart and my soul. We share all of this and we don't need to talk to understand'.[10]

In early 2000, Mam opened the Somaly Mam Foundation, and subsequently acquired international recognition. The Foundation brought more and more money as years went by, and she became this martyr idolised by many, from Michelle Obama, Ban-Ki Moon and Angelina Jolie to the Pope. She became a superstar, as Marks explains 'in the most gritty world of nonprofits, and a jet-setting global icon, but she insists that her real life is with her 'girls' back in Phnom Penh'.[11]

2. The Real Story of Somaly Mam

In 2009, journalist Nicholas Kristof, who was also an admirer of Mam's efforts, decided to tell the story of one of the girls in the *New York Times*.

He found a girl named Long Pross, who was kidnapped and sold to a brothel, where she was beaten, tortured with electric wires and had an eye removed by an angry brothel owner with a piece of rusty metal. She was then rescued by Mam and became part of her troops of reformed prostitutes and former trafficking victims. Marks adds that she told her story to Oprah Winfrey and also appeared in a documentary for PBS called *Half the Sky*.[12]

A cult of personality started to grow around Somaly Mam. However, she was contradicting herself more and more often, and inconsistencies started to appear in her story. In 2009, Simon Marks of *Newsweek* started to investigate what was burgeoning into the Somaly Mam Affair. He met Mam's childhood acquaintances, teachers and even local officials in the village where she grew up.

Villagers, Marks reports, say they never met or even saw Mam's cruel 'grandfather', the Chinese man who raped her or the soldier she was forced to marry.[13] More importantly, Marks managed to find old childhood friends of Mam's

who says Mam attended school until 1987, when she got her high school diploma, and she even went to sit the teachers exam in Cambodia.

The most striking aspect of Marks' investigation has to do with Somaly Mam's girls. Do you remember the story of Long Pross, recounted by Kristof? Simon Marks interviewed the physician who took care of her, and reveals that,

> Dr. Pok Thorn says he performed surgery on Pross when she was 13, after her parents brought her to a hospital with a non-malignant tumor covering her right eye. Photographs in her medical records clearly show the young girl's eye before and after the surgery.[14]

Meas Ratha, another former prostitute saved by Mam, also gave a chilling interview in the French documentary *Envoyé Spécial* in 1998. In late 2013, she confessed that her story was fabricated and rehearsed under Somaly Mam's orders, after having passed an interview. Marks reveals that, like Pross, she was never a victim of sex trafficking.[15] She and her sister were sent to AFESIP because their parents were unable to care for them.

Marks's interview debunked the Mam myth. But she had become such a figure that many people refused to believe that she was anything other than what she claimed to be. There was, however, a difference between the persona she was showing in the media and the one she was back in Cambodia. What this story reveals is what some people call the 'market of compassion'. This seems to suggest that NGOs are more and more interested about story telling: moving stories would, it seems, encourage patrons to give funds. In an interview for French magazine *Marianne,* Christopher Minko, who manages a sports centre for disabled people, indicates his anger towards NGOs, which he judges corrupt. He uses Somaly Mam as an example to illustrate his point of view. According to him,

> [S]he is the perfect example, with her lifestyle paid for by her Foundation who gives her an annual income of close to a hundred thousand dollars. All of them do the same thing. Somaly Mam shows a loss of control. She is intelligent, opportunistic, and determined. Intoxicated by her success, she lost all control with shameful lies.[16]

After Marks's investigation, Somaly Mam declared that she never lied and fought to keep her reputation intact. But in the end, she quit her job and closed her foundation. The deception is protean. There are the so-called lies to attract donors, there are stories that might have been embellished or worsened. But beneath this ostentatiously deceptive affair lies a more complex conundrum.

3. Faction and Biographical Imposture: The Social Side of the Literary Hoax

The cornerstone of the Somaly Mam Affair is in the autobiography, which, as previously mentioned, founded her status of martyr. This autobiography is the perfect illustration of the most complex type of literary hoax: biographical imposture.

Biographical impostures present books signed by authors who pretend to be someone they are not. The text is presented as authentic, in the format of a literary documentary. However, when it is debunked, it proves to be based on false experiences, on a false background, and a false identity. In the case of Somaly Mam, the experiences that she pretends to have lived are entirely fabricated. Therefore, biographical imposture hinges upon faction, in other words, the hidden combination of facts and fiction. This process appears to be an author writing about a life he or she fabricated for him or herself. However, the authorial situation is more complex inasmuch as the voice speaking in the autobiography is not that of the author. It is that of a person who allegedly lived the experiences described. In this case, the authorial voice is that of an autoheteronym. Literary hoaxes present different types of authorial relationships: the pseudonym, the simplest one, is a name and is used in place of the author's real name. The heteronym is a supposed author for which a life was invented. Usually, the heteronym and the hoaxer bear different names. In biographical impostures, the author and the hoaxer are one person.

Biographical impostures have to be differentiated from autofiction, which is a genre gaining exponential popularity in twenty-first century literature. The crux of faction is deception and dissimulation. In an autofiction, on the other hand, the author plays on the blurred lines of reality and fiction, making the game obvious to the reader, which excludes deception from its mains characteristics.

Furthermore, biographical impostures usually serve to defend a cause. It is the case of Somaly Mam. But it is also the case of Australia's Norma Khouri, which brought to the spotlight honor killings in the Middle-East. In 2003, similarly to Somaly Mam, Norma Khouri wrote *Forbidden Love,* an autobiography in which she denounces the honour killing of her best friend in Jordan. Because it was presented to be read as a documentary, if not a testimonial, the book became an instantaneous best-seller. Australian journalist Malcolm Knox proved a year after the book was released that the story was entirely fabricated. The book was taken off the shelves almost immediately and the author repudiated. This imposture, however, brings forward social and humanitarian issues, as Gillian Whitlok points out:

> The *hoax* either misrepresents or concocts trauma so that attention is drawn to the social, political and affective work of testimony – to its function as rhetorical effect, and a strategic response to an historical and social situation.[17]

In this type of hoax, repercussions are important as they raise human rights issues. As previously explored, Somaly Mam put herself in the position of a victim, and identified herself with all the victims of sex slavery and violent crimes against women, not only in South-East Asia, but she also extended it to womanhood in peril around the world. Additionally, the support and prizes she received from numerous governments, NGOs and political figures gives the biographical imposture a political and social resonance never seen before in literary hoaxes. But more importantly, she was somewhat victimised. And once the hoax was revealed, this victimisation might have the effect of overshadowing if not devaluating the importance of similar stories that are, this time, authentic.

4. The Ethical Dilemma

This research project was triggered by the common misconception that humanitarian issues cannot be associated with literary hoaxes. Putting forward the idea of the Somaly Mam Affair being a literary hoax has already triggered negative reactions. Indeed, how can such a crucial issue be tainted by a literary hoax? By deeming this affair to be a hoax, are we necessarily implying that the issue it is treating is not serious? It is a legitimate and highly relevant question that does not only apply to the hoax, but to deception in general. And this question is crucial. Because Somaly Mam, even though she wrote a book that was not true, managed to raise the issue of sex trafficking beyond the borders of the work of NGOs. Even more crucial is the link that truly exists between literary hoaxes and humanitarian issues, a link that will always be exploited when greed comes into play. Biographical impostures not only question the legitimacy of testimonials, but they also emphasize a function never seen before in literary hoaxes that is as simple but yet as powerful as that of a chemical catalyst.

Notes

[1] Somaly Mam. *Le Silence de l'Innocence*, Collection Document (Paris: Anne Carrière Éditions, 2005), 9.
[2] Simon Marks, 'Somaly Mam: The Holy Saint (and Sinner) of Sex Trafficking'. *Newsweek,* 21 May 2014. Viewed on 12 December 2014.
http://www.newsweek.com/2014/05/30/somaly-mam-holy-saint-and-sinner-sex-trafficking-251642.html
[3] Mam, *Le Silence de l'Innocence,* 39.
[4] Mam, *Le Silence de l'Innocence,* 80.
[5] Agir pour les FEmmes en SItuation Précaire (Action for Women in Precarious Situations).
[6] Mam, *Le Silence de l'Innocence,* 97.
[7] Emma Bonino was in charge of humanitarian actions at the European Commission in Brussels. Rigoberta Menchu presents an interesting case as she

became famous with her autobiography (*I, Rigoberta Menchu,* 1983) which detailed her fight to preserve the rights of her indigenous community, the Quiches, in South America. She even won the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize after the publication of her book. It was eventually proven that her autobiography was entirely fabricated.

[8] Mam, *Le Silence de l'Innocence,* 150.

[9] Marks, 'Somaly Mam', 4.

[10] Mam, *Le Silence de l'Innocence,* 123.

[11] Marks, 'Somaly Mam', 4.

[12] Marks, 'Somaly Mam', 5.

[13] Marks, 'Somaly Mam', 7.

[14] Marks, 'Somaly Mam', 8.

[15] Marks, 'Somaly Mam', 6.

[16] Christopher Minko, in Marie Huret and Christophe Gargiulo, 'Somaly Mam: La chute d'une icône de l'humanitaire', *Marianne*, 903, (8-14 August 2014): 53.

[17] Gillian Whitlock, 'Tainted Testimony: The Khouri Affair', in Maggie Nolan and Carrie Dawson, *Who's Who? Hoaxes, Imposture and Identity Crises in Australian Literature*, (Brisbane:University of Queensland Press, 2004), 165-177 (173).

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Clara Sitbon is a scholarly teaching fellow at the University of Sydney where she lectures in French Studies. Her PhD focused on Vernon Sullivan and the literary hoax. She is currently working on two monographs, one on Vernon Sullivan, the other on the Série Noire, and is leading a number of edited collections, including on Boris Vian and hoax theory. She is a member of the University of Newcastle's Detective Fiction on the Move strategic research network.

We have entered a 'post-truth era', in which Daniel J. Boorstin notes, 'believability' has become an acceptable substitute for 'truth', and 'manifold deceptions of our culture' are difficult to separate from 'its few enduring truths'. In this era, communities and individuals may feel routinely duped, cheated or betrayed. Though truth may be considered intrinsically valuable, deception may sometimes be useful or necessary. Sometimes there is pleasure in the spectacle of deception. This volume addresses a variety of areas, coming from different disciplines and methodological approaches: what unites them is the notion of deception. Deception is not just one thing: it can be used for personal liberation and expression; it can be used as a tool of state oppression and sometimes it is purely entertainment. We encounter deception every day of our lives.

Laura Crossley is a lecturer in Media and Film Studies, with a PhD from the University of Manchester; the PhD investigated notions of nation and identity in Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings trilogy. Areas of interest focus on representations of British national identity in film and television, British stars and stardom and the function of nostalgia in film. She has published on the spy film and is currently working on a monograph on British espionage cinema. Her most recent talks have focused on the fictional female agent, Modesty Blaise.

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