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My war, your war: understanding conflict in Africa and the Middle East through fiction film: Hotel Rwanda and The Kingdom

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2010-03-17T12:17:35Z
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/7727

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INTRODUCTION

The first casualty when war comes, is truth[1].
Senator Hiram Johnson (1917)

This thesis shall focus on two mainstream fiction films that present different conflicts and analyse how the narrative constructs rhetoric around global issues (which pertain to film as a commodity and draw on multiple levels of analysis such as economics, politics, culture and ideology). The chosen films are *Hotel Rwanda,* (Terry George, 2004) and *The Kingdom,* (Peter Berg, 2007).

Questions arise as to the representation of events that have occurred historically, because these narratives are based on other pre-existing narratives that have been eclectically constructed by the media and popular culture. In 2009, one remembers the Vietnam War years via an accumulation of the historical facts, the memory and testimony of the veterans as well as the cultural artefacts, (such as Hollywood films, The Vietnam War Memorial, Art Exhibitions, Mainstream and Alternative film). The conglomeration of these ideas starts to raise questions around the representation of the original event and the implied interpretation of it. Debates therefore concerning:

- What perspective is one looking from?
- What type of representation is one looking at?
- Whose ideology is being served through the characters in terms of:
    - Gender

[1] Knightly, P. 2002. *The First Casualty: the War Correspondent as Hero and Myth-maker from Crimea to Kosovo*. London: Prion, pg vii.

- Ethnicity
- Intertextuality?

The broadness of the title of this thesis "My War, Your War ..." is specifically chosen because it reflects the lack of distinct boundaries surrounding conflict, the representation of conflict, given the nature and advances in media technology. When one examines any conflict[2], there are so many different perceptions from which one can view a crisis. This starts from the aggressors, to the victims, followed by the members of the society who do not want to get directly involved. Thereafter, one has what is often referred to as the 'international community', which often involves the super-powers, the media as well as the peacekeepers, namely, the United Nations. Each of the above sectors of society become involved in some major or minor way depending on their interest. Arguably, once the media starts to discuss the conflict so too does the audience (international media readers). Therefore, the terminology used "My War, Your War..." illustrates that conflict is a matter of perception.

The films that I shall analyse are not factual but draw on events that have actually occurred, specifically with reference to the 1994 Rwandan Genocide and the terrorist attacks on American civilian's post 9-11. This research has specifically chosen the two films *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* because they both draw from 'real' events and

[2] The use of the term 'conflict' throughout this thesis refers to all clashes that have been conducted with reference to the events portrayed within each film. This research uses the broad term 'conflict' as opposed to the term 'war' because Rwanda was very specifically a genocide and the events that occurred on 9-11 centred on acts of terrorism. It is for this reason that this research opts for the term 'conflict' or 'crisis'as opposed to 'war' or any other term.

attempt to explain and provide an ideological argument of each conflict through their narrative.

The fiction film medium represents, refers to and comments on the situation in both Rwanda and the Middle East in an attempt to create an awareness and comprehension. There is thus a constant blurring of the boundaries between fact and fiction within each narrative. When trying to understand or describe what has happened, one has to use discourse. This is restrictive as one is confined to the principles and characteristics that govern it and yet one cannot move away from discourse because it is the only tool available to explain events. For example, genocide occurred in Rwanda, but when one talks of mass genocide of civilians as a result of ethnicity, one is using discourse to create a greater understanding. It is when one resorts to this descriptive form of narrative that one transpires positions towards different groups and people. People will tend most often to understand conflict through representation via discourse. However, once the fiction film medium represents these events, they start to engage in a more complex discussion regarding representation within narrative; ideology and discourse (see White[3]). Consequently, the very act of representation becomes a violation because each aspect or event is taken out of its initial (discursive) context and placed into a (discursive) narrative, whether it is news, documentary or fiction. This thesis will focus on the fictional element, and analyse how fiction film is used as part of history, memory and culture.

[3] White, H. 1987. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. USA: JHU Press.

The discussion will analyse the two films with reference to the following research questions:

- To what extent do the two films translate historical truths/realities in fiction film?
- How do the case studies attempt to explain each conflict despite the confinements that frame the fiction narrative?
- To what extent are the representations of different warring groups in the two films ideologically constructed?

This research will discuss these objectives and research questions with reference to how the Hollywood system fits within the global environment and distributes very specific messages that shape global cultural perceptions. The discussion will then develop around the characteristics that define the framework of the Classical Hollywood Narrative[4] and the Restorative Three-Act Structure. Ideological implications of *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* will be examined with reference to how each film becomes an artefact, which merges the memory of the victims with the historical to form a cultural representation of each conflict. Through the theoretical framework that dictates the Classical Hollywood formula and the act of representing, each case study is bound to create narrative tensions and by so doing, both films fall victim to creating the 'other' with reference to the films representation of each villain. The discussion will therefore discuss how the 'real' events are immersed within the framework of the fiction film and how this immersion influences how we understand the events.

[4] David Bordwell initially identified the formula which emerged from Hollywood as the Classical Hollywood formula. Since then the narrative is also referred to as the Classic Hollywood cinema, The Classic Narrative text. This research will refer to the narrative as according to Bordwell's initial term the Classical Hollywood formula.

Process of Recording Events

News stories may exist within the media for any length of time, for example: the war in Iraq: a number of years; the disappearance of Madeline McCann and the subsequent social outcry: a number of months; natural disasters: a few weeks or for as long as immediate aid is required. News broadcasters will generally follow the principle of a 24-hour lifespan for incidences and events that occur within each news story. If someone suspects for example, that they have spotted Madeleine in Belgium, a broadcaster will mention this incident for approximately 24 hours. If there are no further developments, or if there have been too many fruitless developments before, the broadcaster will no longer mention the story until such time that there is another incident or finding. This may change, however, according to the constructed manipulation of ideological interests. In other words, if the story promotes an ideological interest, a network will provide updates on the story for longer than the standard 24-hour lifespan. The fiction film, however, is a little different to news stories, as it exists as a single narrative rather than a compilation of disjointed pieces. The fiction film is tangible and far more easily obtainable years after its release. It is easier to get a copy of film than it is to obtain a copy of a news story broadcast on television. One can view an entire film from beginning to end, whereas the news story is more fragmented - it relies more on the memory of the event and the compilation of the multiple narratives that exist to serve consciousness and conscience. Each war film, in contrast, has a particular message with reference to the conflict it presents. Through this research, I aim to present how these messages are created with reference to discourse and how they contribute to memory and culture.

Elements such as history, collective memory and culture are also relevant to the interpretation of images. Cultural artefacts are embedded within a historical context, for example, Popular Culture films from the following conflicts such as:

1. Vietnam War: *Platoon,* (Oliver Stone, 1986) *Born on the Fourth of July,* (Oliver Stone 1989)
2. The Gulf War: *Three Kings,* (David O. Russell, 1999) *Jar Head,* (Sam Mendes, 2005)
3. Breakup of the Former Yugoslavia: *No Man's Land,* (Danis Tanovic, 2001) *Welcome to Sarajevo,* (Michael Winterbottom, 1997)
4. Middle East crisis and the War on Terror: *The Kingdom,* (Peter Berg, 2007), *Lions for Lambs,* (Robert Redford, 2007)
5. Conflict in Africa: *Hotel Rwanda,* (Terry George, 2004), *The Constant Gardener*, (Fernando Meirelles, 2005)

These 'artefacts' become integral to how the masses understand the specific referents. The boundaries between history and collective memory propagated through mass culture, mediated through cultural media and how the audience ultimately accepts them as 'truthful' is central to the inquiry of this research. This reading also investigates the politics of the film medium of 'manufacturing consent' around the legitimacy of conflict and trauma during times of war and provokes questions regarding the validity of images based on real events especially with reference to how their representation creates popular memories.

Although the conflicts represented within the films do not directly relate to South Africa, it is important to understand how the audience (through analysing the two case studies) participates in the politics of trauma, the construction of memories and the representation of conflicts particularly with reference to the global representation of conflicts abroad. Due to global news and economic strength regarding distribution, marketing and international star appeal, it is of interest to note that the average South African can probably tell you much more about the Middle East crisis and the war in Iraq as opposed to the genocide in Rwanda or Darfur, to name a more recent example. However, the purpose of this study is not to focus on an audience interpretation, but rather to analyse the films from a South African perspective with reference to the way in which Africans and Arabs are represented within the two case studies.

Drawing on Jean Baudrillard's work, it becomes evident that the mass information overload of images in the digital era has changed the nature and type of reporting of conflict[5]. Today's audience witnesses conflict through a virtual medium according to the principles of reality television with the images almost bordering pornography[6] where the sign has become a simulacrum that signifies nothing[7]. Baudrillard argues that there is no longer a need for 'embedded' journalists because the soldiers themselves are emersed in the image[8]. This was evident via the cell phone footage and images which were released from the Abu Graib prison during the War in Iraq. Baudrillard continues that in order for images to become a true source of information, they would have to be distinct from the

[5] Baudrillard, J. 2005. "War Porn" in *Journal of Visual Culture* 5 (1): 86-88.
[6] Ibid
[7] Macey, D. 2001. *Dictionary of Critical Theory*. London: Penguin, pg 33.
[8] Baudrillard, J. 2005. "War Porn" in *Journal of Visual Culture* 5 (1): 87.

war they represent. This has not been possible in the modern era because now the images are as virtual as the war itself[9]. Through an analysis of the case studies, this research shall question how the images of the two film narratives actually function in creating signified messages around events that have occurred in the historical world.

The outcome of this research will focus on how the representation of the conflicts in the films relate to the global discursive order and the critical discourse analysis approach[10] with special reference to how the narratives promote a specific interpretation and memory of global wars. The interrogation of this position becomes relevant to the media's portrayal of conflicts within Africa, because it opens a debate about the changing nature, causes and consequences of conflict in the modern era (as well as the memory thereof) and how it is kept alive through culture.

This research will begin with the Hollywood system, specifically with reference to how its economic strength gives it distributive power and influence within the cultural environment. This position will develop into the next section, which will focus on the structure of each script of the two case studies. The discussion will then focus more specifically on how the films function as cultural artefacts which contribute to cultural memory. Finally, the research will look more closely at the characterisation within the films and how the messages that emerge contribute to creating 'others' by alienating certain groups from predominantly Western perceptions.

[9] Ibid
[10] Macey, D. 2001. *Dictionary of Critical Theory*. London: Penguin, pg 33.

Chapterisation

Chapter 1 examines the strength of the Hollywood system within the global environment. Hollywood forms part of Popular Culture and has the influence to communicate very influential messages. The chapter explores how the films draw on pre-constructed stereotypes created within the media to comment on events that have occurred in the 'real' world. Therefore, there is a merging or intersection of the 'real', historical world with fiction. Film is also a commodity; its producers create film to bring in profit. The chapter then considers the economic and distributive authority of the Hollywood machine within the global world. The chapter argues that Hollywood's economic and distributive strength provide it with the means to influence perceptions of the Developing states.

Chapter 2 deals with how fictional narratives address or comment on Global issues. The historical progression of narrative theory binds this chapter together. In order to understand the theoretical framework of the script of each film, the chapter embarks on the simplest narrative formula, namely, The Classical Hollywood formula. After explaining the characteristics of the formula with examples from the case studies, the chapter moves onto Genre theory and its function and relevance to understanding narrative.

The discussion then progresses towards a detailed chronological analysis of each film with reference to the Restorative Three-Act structure as described by Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush[11]. The Three-Act structure has existed since Aristotle. Although there are

[11] Dancyger, K & Rush, J. 2002. *Alternative Scriptwriting: Successfully Breaking the Rules*. Boston, Oxford, Johannesburg, Melbourne, New Delhi: Focal Press.

numerous writers who have re-written Aristotle's original concept (see Tierno[12], Vogler[13] and Field[14]), in order to maintain an uncomplicated and thorough understanding of the Three-Act structure in film, I have to chosen to focus more specifically on the work of Dancyger and Rush.

The chapter then examines the development of the history of narrative theory, starting with Structuralism and its development into Post-Structuralism. The key focus of the first part of this chapter merely attempts to explain the theoretical progression of narrative theory by drawing on events within both films merely to highlight the theoretical ideas.

Chapter 3 takes a close look at Marita Sturken's[15] proposal that one remembers conflict through the convergence of history, memory and culture. The chapter argues that memory and culture are an integral part of the historical and that all three elements combined contribute to identity. The discussion will also present the notion that fiction narrative is mediated because it draws on ideologies originally created within news narrative and both fiction and news become part of cultural memory.

[12] Tierno, M. 2002. *Aristotles Poetics for Screenwriters: Storytelling Secrets from the Greatest Mind in Western Civilisation*. USA: Hyperion.
[13] Vogler, C. 1998. *The Writers Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*. USA: Prima Publishing.
[14] Field, S. 1982. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. New York: Dell.
[15] Sturken, M. 1997. *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

Chapter 4 develops directly from Chapter 3. The discussion on how one remembers generates notions of 'othering', particularly with reference to Emerging and Periphery[16] groups. This chapter examines the key features of notions of the 'other' and New Barbarism as initiated by Robert Kaplan[17] who proposes that violence is because of traits embedded in local cultures and not economic interests. This chapter will also draw on examples from both case studies to highlight the theoretical perspectives of 'othering' with reference to Edward Saïd[18], Renata Salecl[19] and Slavoj Žižek[20]. This chapter challenges that Multiculturalism is deeply engrained within Cultural Imperialism[21], which promotes the message that the Western ideal is correct.

Chapter 5 functions as a reflection of how we understand conflict through fiction. The chapter will draw conclusions based on how fiction intersects with the 'real' world and promotes 'preferred' readings. Through a reflection of the economic strength of the Hollywood system and an analysis of the two case studies, it will become evident that Popular Culture films are very specific in their representation of Emerging and Periphery groups.

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[16] Although the terms 'periphery' and 'developed' are couched in the modernisation paradigm, and some may argue that they are no longer appropriate to describe the current geo-political and economic realities, they are used in this thesis with reference to their initial connotations, discussions and relevance.
[17] Kaplan, R. 2000. *The Coming of Anarchy*. New York: Random House.
[18] Saïd, E, W. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.
[19] Salecl, R. 1994. "The Crisis of Identity and the Struggle for New Hegemony in the Former Yugoslavia" in Laclau, E (ed.) *The Making of Political Identities*. London and New York: Verso.
[20] Žižek, S. 1997. "Multiculturalism, Or, the Cultural Logic of Multinational Capitalism" in *New Left Review, Vol* 225 (September/October): 28-51. London: New Left Review Limited.
[21] Debates regarding the term 'cultural imperialism' began in the 1970s, since then there have been numerous literatures (see Rogers, R, A. 2009. "From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: A Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation" in *Communication Theory*, Vol 16 (4): 474-503 and Crowther, P. 2004. "Defining Art, Defending the Canon, Contesting Culture" in *The British Journal of Aesthetics,* Vol 44 (4): 361-377) contesting the validity of this concept, especially in the current complex postmodern and interdependent global world, this research utilizes the most widely understood use of the term and will therefore not engage in any critical discussion of the term.

In view of the fact that the theoretical framework of the first chapter dictates that the full analysis of the films only happens in Chapter 2, it is thus necessary to provide a synopsis of *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* in order to generate a platform for Chapter 1.

Hotel Rwanda

Hotel Rwanda, directed by Terry George (2004) is a story about the events that occurred during the 1994 Rwandan Genocide told from the point of view of Paul Rusesabagina, a Hutu man working as the manager at the Sabena hotel chain – *The Milles Collines* Hotel (Hotel of a Thousand Hills) in Kigali.

The film starts with a voice-over from the Hutu radio station propagating hate messages against the Tutsi minority. This is immediately followed by visuals of a political Hutu rally, implying the under growing tension within the country. Paul Rusesabagina, the central protagonist, who is depicted as a character with impeccable, style, courage and an ability with people that allows him to protect 1268 Tutsi refugees staying at the Hotel. Throughout the film, Paul resorts to bribery and blackmail and makes use of the contacts he has made in diplomatic circles as well as the Rwandan elite in order to save and protect his family and the people staying at the hotel.

The film presents key historic events of the Rwandan Genocide through Paul's experiences. This includes the assassination of President Juvenal Habyarimana on 6

April 1994, the systematic slaughter of Tutsi civilians, the underground black market and the lack of intervention from the West to stop the genocide.

After numerous failed attempts to leave the hotel and find safe passage to neighbouring Tanzania, the film ends on a positive note, with Paul successfully helping the refugees and uniting his family with the orphaned cousins who were lost during the entire time of the genocide. The story, although slightly cynical towards the West, is emotional and captivating in trying to draw awareness to the horror of the victims and the resilience and honour of those who survived.

HOTEL RWANDA – MAIN CHARACTERS

Paul Rusesabagina – Hotel Manager
Dube - Porter
George Rutaganda – *Interahamwe* militia
Gregoire – Hutu rebel
General Bizimungu – Army General
Tatiana Rusesabagina – Paul's wife
Thomas – Paul's brother-in-law
Fedens – Paul's sister-in-in-law
The Twins – Anais and Carine
Colonel Oliver – UN Peacekeeper
Madame Archer – ICRC Volunteer
Mr Godefroid – Sabena President
Benedict – Local Journalist

The Kingdom

The Kingdom directed by Peter Berg (2007) attempts to depict the Middle East crisis and its relationship with the Western world. Although the events are fictional, the film draws on global terrorist attacks that have happened in the 'real' world to advocate that the film

has a resemblance to recent terrorist attacks that have occurred involving suicide bombers.

The film begins with a factual, historical background of Saudi Arabia, the events of 9-11 and the War on Terror. Once this is achieved the fiction narrative takes over, implying that the events within the narrative have a direct relationship to the actual events, initially portrayed.

After a terrorist cell attacks an American housing compound in Saudi Arabia, Special Agent Ronald Fleury, the central protagonist cunningly negotiates a five-day trip with three other agents into Saudi Arabia to try and find the killers and avenge the death of his colleague and friend Agent Francis Manner.

Once the Americans enter Saudi Arabia, Colonel Faris Al-Ghazi informs them that the Saudi authorities have not allowed them permission to involve themselves actively in the investigation. The Americans are frustrated, but desperate to solve the heinous crime at all costs. As the narrative progresses, the Arabs start to respect the American's knowledge, which results in the Saudi Prince designating them full permission to investigate the crime sight.

At this point, the Americans work with the Saudi police and General Al-Ghazi as they track down Abu Hamza, the Mastermind behind the attacks. *The Kingdom* is very different to *Hotel Rwanda* in its representation of violence. *The Kingdom* seems to

indulge in the massacre of citizens in the initial attack, as well as the shoot out which brings the film to its resolution. The film ends on a cynical note, having restored equilibrium, the group returns home, heroes but with the knowledge that although this terrorist cell has been destroyed, there are still others and the War on Terror is far from over.

THE KINGDOM – MAIN CHARACTERS

Agent Ronald Fleury – FBI Agent
Agent Grant Sykes – FBI Agent
Agent Janet Mayes – FBI Agent
Agent Adam Leavitt – FBI Agent
Colonel Faris Al-Ghazi – Saudi Police
Sergeant Haytham – Saudi Police
Robert Grace – FBI Director
Francis Manner – FBI Agent
Gideon Young – Attorney General
Ellis Leach – Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
Prince Ahmed Bin Khaled – Saudi Prince
Prince Thamer – Saudi Prince in the USA
General Al Abdul Malik – Army General, initially in charge of investigation
Abu Hamza – Mastermind of terrorist cell
Kevin Fleury – Agent Fleury's son
Abu Hamza's grandchild
Talal – Bomb-maker

1

GLOBALISATION, POPULAR CULTURE AND FILM AS A COMMODITY

> A scholar of media technology, Frederick Williams, compared the Gulf War to the first moon landing in 1969: It was one feat to put two astronauts on the surface of the moon, but another, perhaps just as amazing, to broadcast live that first human step on the moon's surface. Technology-based immediacy, Williams concluded, was a preview of the shape of things to come[22]
>
> George Gerbner

There is no doubt that since the first moon landing, the impact and influence of the media has been immense. Since the Gulf War in particular, the world has been in the position to witness conflicts almost instantaneously in the comfort of one's own home. Alongside this, 'globalisation' a loose but popular concept has become an integral term in defining and understanding 'the world'.

Within this concept, the Hollywood system has prevailed and remained an economic stronghold. When analysing films that emerge from this system, it is necessary to examine the Hollywood message machine and its place within the global setting.

POPULAR CULTURE

In order to understand the economics of the Hollywood system, it is necessary to investigate how Hollywood fits within the global market. Popular Culture or popular entertainment has become more acceptable as a topic of study within the academic

[22] Gerbner, G, Mowlana, H et al (eds.) 1992. *Triumph of the Image: The Media's War in the Persian Gulf – A global Perspective*. Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, pg 243.

environment and more studies on the relevance and influence of popular culture are emerging[23]. Studies have ranged from enquiries into the production of individual texts, genres, the industry, occupational groups right through to the media owners and the range of the different types of formats (film, music video, posters, magazines *inter alia*) within the entertainment industry[24]. The term is contentious because it is viewed in so many different ways with reference to what is considered 'popular'. Postmodernism, for example, allows for the expression of marginalised groups which itself has become part of the 'popular'. This research will make use of the term with reference to how the mainstream point of view becomes part of the 'popular' by focusing on how the two case studies communicate a 'preferred' reading of the events portrayed through the Hollywood system.

Within Popular Culture, casting and the Hollywood star system influences the audience because it is common knowledge that audiences flock in greater numbers to see more popular actors. When Hollywood represents Africa, well-known American actors play the lead. *Blood Diamond* (Edward Zwick, 2006) was lead by Leonardo Di Caprio and *Hotel Rwanda* (Terry George, 2004) saw Don Cheadle cast as the lead. This could be to draw more audience attention to a subject that Hollywood does not consider a huge profit generator. The question remains, however, can a professional American actor really capture the heart of the African spirit because he/she has the professional ability and training to capture the emotions evoked in a film? Perhaps one requires a larger in depth understanding of Africanism in order to justify its portrayal on screen. This will be

[23] Hesmondhalgh, D. 2005. "The Production of Media Entertainment" in Curran, J & Gurevitch, M. *Mass Media and Society: 4th Edition.* New York and London: Hodder Arnold, pg 153.
[24] Ibid, pg 154

questioned with reference to the Hollywood system and character development within narrative in Chapter 2.

Different Approaches

Since the 1970's, there have been two main groups of theoretical debate: the first, mainstream organisational sociology of culture (who adopt more of a descriptive, neutral tone, whatever their political position and focus on micro-empirical studies of organisations): and the second, political economy approaches to the media (strictly Marxian, make use of theory and secondary data on industry trends)[25]. Although these two positions have converged in some circles, they have remained quite distinct within studies of media entertainment[26]. More recently, however, Hesmondhalgh[27] argues that a new approach has developed, including organisation (Hirsch[28]and Born[29]), ownership (Lash and Urry[30], Phillips[31] and McChesney[32]) and the nature of the specific work available (McRobbie[33], Ursell[34] and Ryan[35]). As will be discussed, more entertainment conglomerates are buying into news organisations and *vice versa*. It is also evident that ownership has had an effect on organisation and the nature of news stories. Although

[25] Ibid, pg 154-155
[26] Ibid, pg 155
[27] Ibid
[28] Hirsch, P, M. 1972. "Processing Fads and Fashions: An Organisation-set Analysis of cultural Industry Systems" in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol 77: 639-659.
[29] Born, G. 1993. "Against Negation, for a Politics of Cultural Production: Adorno, Aesthetics, the Social" in *Screen,* Vol 34 (3): 223-242.
[30] Lash, S & Urry, J. 1994. *Economies of Signs and Spaces*. London: Sage.
[31] Phillips, R. 2004. "The Global Export of Risk: Finance and the Film Business" in *Competition and Change*, Vol 8 (2).
[32] McChesney, R, W. 2004. *The Problem of the Media*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
[33] McRobbie, A. 2002. "Clubs to Companies: Notes on the Decline of Political Culture in Speeded up Creative Worlds" in *Cultural Studies,* Vol 16, 516-531.
[34] Ursell, G. 2000. "Television Production: Issues of Exploitation, Commodification and Subjectivity in UK Television Labour Markets" in *Media, Culture and Society,* Vol 22: 805-825.
[35] Ryan, B. 1992. *Making Capital from Culture*. Berlin and New York: New York University Press.

these positions (ownership, organisation and availability) do not contribute to how the case studies promote certain 'truths' about the 'real' events, they become relevant with reference to the Hollywood system and how it fits within the global environment.

Whether globalisation creates a homogenous or heterogenous, modernist or postmodernist view on society, one element remains constant and that is the promotion of commodity culture with the intention to generate profit. According to Janet Wasko,[36]

> The profit motive and the commodity nature of film have implications for the kind of films that are produced (and not produced), who makes them, how they are distributed and where/when they are viewed.

Wasko's comment merely highlights to what extent economic factors have infiltrated the cultural sector because no producer will invest in a project unless there is a very strong likelihood that it will bring in a substantial profit. In addition, this position reveals how economics influences the production as well as the reception process of a film. Wasko's position on **when** producers create a film, tie in with Gramsci's[37] concept of hegemony. For example, a film like Oliver Stone's *JFK*, (Oliver Stone, 1991) which validated the conspiracy theory, was made in the 1990s, nearly 30 years after the assassination of John F Kennedy because the 1990s audience could deal better with the political implications of the film. Both Gramsci's dominant hegemonic position and Wasko's attitude towards film as a commodity propose that ideological positions and economic factors ultimately influence cultural production.

[36] Wasko, J. 2007. *How Hollywood Works*. Los Angeles, London: Sage Publications, pg 4.
[37] See King, A, D (ed.) 1991. *Culture Globalisation and The-World-System*. London: Macmillan.

REPRESENTATION

As early as 1914, 85% of the world's film audiences were watching films that were produced in the United States of America[38]. With the outbreak of The Great War 1914-1918, the effects of the war did not damage America in the same way as it did Europe. This was largely due to America's geographical position. It thus became quite logical that America was in a position to produce films whilst Europe initially engaged in the conflict and then after the war, had to re-build its cities. It was during this time that the war film emerged. Although film critics have always regarded these types of films as a minority genre, the war film created a platform with reference to the representation of what was true as opposed to what was fiction. The war films that resulted initially served on numerous levels such as patriotic films to encourage enlistment *England Expects*, (George Loane Tucker, 1914), propaganda, *Triumph of the Will*, (Leni Riefenstahl, 1934), critiques of the futility of war *All Quiet on the Western Front*, (Lewis Milestone, 1930) and films which served political ideologies, *The Sinking of the Lusitania*, (Winsor McCay, 1918)[39]. Some were purely fiction with a strong message, others were based on fact and then there were the documentary films, as from 1915 technological advances meant that camera operators were permitted to go to the 'front' and record battles[40]. Although the reconstruction of Europe did give rise to the neo-realist era with films such as *Rome, Open City,* (Rossellini, 1945), *Germany Year Zero,* (Rossellini, 1947), *Bicycle Thieves,* (Vittorio De Sica, 1948), for economic reasons the European film industry did not infiltrate the global market as successfully as the Hollywood film industry. As a

[38] Herman, E. S & McChesney, R, W. 1997. *The Global Media. The New Missionaries of Global Capitalism*. London: Cassell, pg 13-14.
[39] Hayward, S. 1996. *Key Concepts in Cinema Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 396.
[40] Ibid, pg 400

result, Hollywood films continued to gain access to the market pre and post World War I and II, and Hollywood's position gradually grew in the global market.

During the Cold War years, the distribution as well as the types of messages that emerged from cinema were specific to the type of target audience, namely Western or Soviet blocks. With the collapse of Communism and the fall of the 'Iron Curtain', the ideology of global markets encouraged free trade and freedom of information, but within this new system a new ideology has emerged, one based on free trade and industry but still promoting a very powerful message, which still serves the dominant Super-power. Some call it the New World Order, others see it as an extension of capitalism, but despite its name, one element prevails – Hollywood, an icon and personification of capitalism, has been a platform and supporter of its ideals. As the heroes and villains of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s became redundant, a new set of primary characters and narratives emerged:- the War against Terror being one of the major theses. Thus, the cinematic landscape has largely become the mythical orient. According to Carl Boggs and Tom Pollard[41]:

> Terrorism has become a vital source of narratives, fantasies, and myths that contribute so much to highly entertaining cinema, with its international intrigue, exotic settings, graphic violence and the putative conflict between good and evil.

In addition, the Al Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon fuelled further fear and paranoia, inspiring a new cycle of films in which powerful images of on-screen terrorism dramatise elements of real-life terrorism[42]. With this new cycle of films, the

[41] Boggs, C & Pollard, T. 2006. "Hollywood and the Spectacle of Terrorism" in *New Political Science*, Vol 28 (3) Sept: 335.
[42] Ibid

'real' world is not merely a referent or point of reference for stories, the 'real' world has become part of the narrative with fictional characters referring to actual events as if they actually witnessed them. The audience, who are the actual witnesses of the events in some way or the other, merely accept this façade and re-live the events from the point of view of the fictional characters. Because of the current political climate, the Middle East has been a flourishing backdrop for potential Hollywood blockbusters. With the ongoing War on Terror, the representation of Arab fundamentalism has prevailed with reference to the Middle East. This is evident in *Syriana* (Stephen Gaghan, 2005), *Babel* (Alejandro González Inárritu, 2006), *A Mighty Heart* (Michael Winterbottom, 2007), *Lions for Lambs* (Robert Redford, 2007), *Grace is Gone* (James Strouse, 2007), *Charlie Wilson's War* (Mike Nichols, 2007), *World Trade Centre* (Oliver Stone, 2006), *United 93* (Paul Greengrass, 2006), *Rendition* (Gavin Hood, 2007) and *Home of the Brave* (Irwin Winkler, 2007).

Another area of curiosity, and a theme that has emerged with increasing frequency since the 1990s, has been Africa. During this time, the continent was characterised by enormous ferment, expectation and even optimism[43] but some of that positivism was over-shadowed by the greed for power, with Africa experiencing sixteen wars during the period 1990-1997[44]. The continent oozed with the ingredients for potential film narrative and thus became a point of interest for Hollywood producers.

[43] Newbury, C. 2002. "States at War: Confronting Conflict in Africa" in *African Studies Review*, Vol 45 (1) Apr: 3.
[44] Dziedzic, M, J. 1998. "Policing the New World Disorder: Addressing Gaps in Public Security during Peace Operations" in Manwaring, M & Fishel, J, T (eds.) *Toward Responsibility in the New World Disorder*. London: Frank Cass.

Hollywood has *attempted* to present conflict in Africa on film without prejudice, such as *Blood Diamond* (Edward Zwick, 2006), *Black Hawk Down* (Ridley Scott, 2001) and the more successful *The Last King of Scotland* (Kevin Macdonald 2006). Despite their good intentions, each of these films, at some point support the notion that states in Africa are weak and some African wars should "take their course – regardless of the consequences in loss of life and destruction of societies"[45]. The latest film trends also indulge in the notion that all wars in Africa involve the recruitment of child soldiers and thrive on the proposition that intervention from the outside is the only acceptable solution because the warring parties have little interest in stopping the violence[46] (see also Richards[47], Peters & Richard[48] and Skinner[49]). Furthermore, the bi-polar political system that these films portray still fits within the American ideological system regarding the stereotypical and often racist representation of Africa.

Over the last decade, Hollywood has increased its representation of Africa: *The Constant Gardener* (Fernando Meirelles, 2005), *I dreamed of Africa* (Hugh Hudson, 2007), and *Hunting my Husband's Killers* (Jay Knox, 2006). The representation of the Middle East has also increased with films such as *The War Within* (Joseph Castelo, 2005), *Rules of Engagement* (William Friedkin, 2000) and *The Road to Guantanamo* (Michael Winterbottom, 2006). Although the subject matter has diversified, the films, however,

[45] Newbury, C. 2002. "States at War: Confronting Conflict in Africa" in *African Studies Review*, Vol 45 (1) Apr: 6.
[46] Ibid, pg 8-10
[47] Richards, P. 1996. *Fighting for the Rain Forest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*. Oxford: James Currey.
[48] Peters, K & Richards, P. 1998. "Why We Fight: Voices of Youth Combatants in Sierra Leone" in *Africa,* Vol 68 (2): 183-210.
[49] Skinner, E. 1999. "Child Soldiers in Africa: A Disaster for Future Families" in *International Journal on World Peace,* Vol 16 (2): 7-22.

rely on superficial typecasting which reintegrates Africa as the 'dark continent' and Islam as a multinational representation of fundamentalist groups. The films are still based on heroes and villains but the classifications of the victims, heroes and villains have changed because the social and political environment is different to what it was 20 years ago. The discursive representations of war have remained universal, but with The Cold War ending, the geographic locations of the villains have changed according to social and political environment. Because of the Gulf War, for example, viewers start to understand terminology such as collateral damage, genocide, ethnic cleansing and suicide bombers. These representations originated in the mass media and are then easily understood by audiences when the same terminology weaves its way into fiction film. The mass media thus assists in creating associations, which mainstream film continues. Simon Cottle[50], (see also Tolson[51], Shoemaker and Reese[52]) writes about the general media, but his argument is also relevant to film. He argues that the media does not have a reflective or representational role in conflict; in contrast, he claims that the media serves a more active performative and constitutive role[53]. This position implies that the media does not merely report events; it also plays a complex and active role in disseminating ideas and images and positioning the audience quite specifically, which is then continued and reinstated via the film medium. In addition, Kim Deep[54] writes that

> Films, being a powerful and popular form of mass communication, invariably transmit social and political messages … Films have a large, substantial impact on viewers whose frame of reference does not expose them to other cultures, as

[50] Cottle, S. 2006. *Mediatized Conflict*. UK: Open University Press, pg 9.
[51] Tolson, A. 1996. *Mediations: Text and Discourse in Media Studies*. London, New York and Sydney: Arnold Press.
[52] Shoemaker, P, J & Reese, S, D. 1996. *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass media Content 2nd Ed.* USA: Longman Publishers.
[53] Cottle, S. 2006. *Mediatized Conflict*. UK: Open University Press, pg 9.
[54] Deep, K. 2002. "Deconstructing Hollywood: Negative Stereotyping in Film" http://www.peak.sfu.ca/the-peak/2002-1/issue6/fe-mots.html, accessed 2008-02-07.

> well as people who depend on the media for information about the larger world in which they live in.

It is therefore evident that Hollywood films have an impact on their audiences concerning who they represent and how they implement that representation.

Cottle and Deep's position continues with Dyer[55], who states,

> The dogmatism of the dominant ideology … imposes its stereotypes on those it identifies as subordinate or deviant. Stereotypes might then be defined as a narrow and restrictive (but also resilient) set of meanings or concepts produced within an ideology – as racism, for example has produced stereotypes of blacks.

In view of these positions, it becomes evident that the relationship the media has with ideology, its subject and its audiences create rigid representations but it may also offer some opportunities for debate and dialogue when the film challenges the dominant ideology. What will become evident, through this research is that at times, the films attempt to challenge dominant perceptions, but the narrative structure of each of the case studies merely absorbs any contradictions to the mainstream, into dominant beliefs through hegemony.

Another aim of this research is to show that there is a constant blurring of the boundaries of fact and fiction. As an increasing amount of films, represent the 'real' historical world, they exude the reading that they are factual because the events portrayed are based on events that have actually happened in the historical world. By referring to the historical world, the films imply that the semiotic representation within the fiction

[55] Tolson, A. 1996. *Mediations: Text and Discourse in Media Studies*. London, New York and Sydney: Arnold Press, pg 186.

narrative is factual. This entanglement is not only happening within narrative structures but also within the corporate entertainment system.

It is important to examine ownership within the media because so many entertainment companies have merged with news organisations over the last 30 years. In addition, one has to acknowledge the conglomerisation of the media world because the very nature of the global environment is shrinking ownership and control at a rapid rate. If one compares the diversity of ownership of media corporations in the 1980s to the 1990s, one can see a rapid consolidation of ownership. According to Bagdikian:[56]

> In 1983, fifty corporations dominated most of every mass medium and the biggest media merger in history was a $340 million deal. … [I]n 1987, the fifty companies had shrunk to twenty-nine. … [I]n 1990, the twenty-nine had shrunk to twenty three. … [I]n 1997, the biggest firms numbered ten and involved the $19 billion Disney-ABC deal, at the time the biggest media merger ever. … [In 2000] AOL Time Warner's $350 billion merged corporation [was] more than 1,000 times larger [than the biggest deal of 1983].

What has resulted in the new millennium is a media world that is controlled by nine[57] (mainly US) corporations[58]. This is relevant because when one examines ownership more closely, one obtains an indication of the extent to which the global environment is integrated.

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[56] Bagdikian, B, H. 2000. *The Media Monopoly*, *Sixth Ed.* USA: Beacon Press, pg xx-xxi.
[57] At the end of the 1990s, the nine media corporations were: AOL Time-Warner, Disney, Bertelsmann, Viacom, News Corporation, TCI, General Electric (owner of NBC), Sony (owner of Columbia, Tri-Star Pictures and major recording interest), Seagram (owner of Universal Film and music interests).
[58] Shah, A. 2009. "Media conglomerates, Mergers, Concentration of Ownership" http://www.globalissues.org/article/159/media-conlgomerates-mergers-concentration-of-ownership.html, accessed 2009-03-22.

CONGLOMERATE CORPORATIONS

The more recent merging of the entertainment and film industries has become more prominent as was evident when Time Warner bought CNN and Disney bought ABC[59]. Consequently, major conglomerates are still buying key news networks whose primary interest is the entertainment industry. If one observes any 24-hour format on a news channel, it becomes evident that unless a major historical event is taking place such as the War on Terror or the War in Iraq, news reporting is losing ground to entertainment. What results is the 'dilution' of the news because the 24/7 news channels have slots which are dedicated to film reviews, cooking and travel. It is thus evident that merely through watching, the news channels are exposing viewers more and more to the mainstream entertainment and film industry. What results in terms of content, is an audience who is accustomed to viewing factual material alongside fiction, thereby, uniting and associating fact with fiction on a larger level. In addition, the same union is happening in terms of ownership because the shareholders have invested interests in a number of organisations.

According to Janet Wasko[60],

> from the 1950's onward, the majors became part of diversified conglomerates, no longer depending on movies as their only source of income, but involved in a wide range of cultural production, from audio-visual products to theme park operations.

The 1980s saw an activity of deregulation, privatisation and technological developments, topped with the opening of new international markets, thus, allowing

[59] Nohrstedt, S, A & Ottosen, R (eds.) 2005. *Global War – Local Views: Media Images of the Iraq War*. Sweden: Nordicum, pg 15.
[60] Wasko, J. 2007. *How Hollywood Works*. Los Angeles, London: Sage Publications, pg 59.

new commercial channels to emerge all over the globe[61]. This concept of the transnational flow of cultural products is not new to Hollywood because as has already been mentioned, Hollywood has dominated the cinema screens since the First World War due to its historical, economic, political and cultural factors[62]. In addition, because of its distributive dominance, the Hollywood film industry has infiltrated markets across the globe. On the one hand, this allows all cultures access to American mainstream culture but on the other hand, Wasko critiques transnational corporations because by penetrating the globe and promoting typically Western values, this type of dominance endorses the "loss of cultural diversity and the growth of 'sameness' attaching a negative evaluation to the process"[63]. What this implies is that this sort of market domination can lead to cultural autonomy and Cultural Imperialism, a position that will be examined in more detail in Chapter 4. In addition, with reference to Kim Dyer, Hollywood's economic and distributive strength has also allowed it to promote very specific representations and political opinions on a global level.

GLOBALISATION[64]

Mainstream film is distributed globally, thus the necessity of viewing the term 'globalisation' as well as the nature of the film medium as a commodity and how it influences general perceptions. 'Globalisation' is a very complex term, with many

[61] Ibid, pg 174
[62] Ibid
[63] Barker, C. 1999. *Television, Globalization and Cultural Identities*. London and New York: Open University Press, pg 37.
[64] Some of the ideas in this section were initially explored in a paper presented at the Counter Narratives Conference: Challenging/Conflicting/Confusing Voices held at The University of Winchester on 3rd-6th April 2006. Paper entitled "Heart of Darkness: The Representation of Conflict in Africa on Global Television", by Tanja Sakota-Kokot.

different definitions, after providing a brief background; this study shall focus primarily on the cultural aspect of the term. John Ralston Saul defines globalisation as a combination of 19th Century Free Trade Theory combined with 19th Century Small Buccaneer Capitalism, which takes the element of the nation state to the international level[65]. This research will opt for a cultural interpretation as offered by John Thompson:[66]

> Globalisation … refers to the growing interconnectedness of different parts of the world, a process which gives rise to complex forms of interaction and interdependency.

Thompson advocates the consequences of globalisation as complex forms of interaction and dependency and does not differentiate or specify between homogenisation and heterogenisation[67]. His definition does not relate as much to social relations as for example Waters[68], who defines globalisation as:

> A social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding.

Both points of view regard globalisation as a process, which is complex and draws awareness to other cultures and societies. Some theorists such as Albrow[69] argue that globalisation advocates homogeneity because it "refers to all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society".

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[65] Ralston Saul, J. 2005. *The Collapse of Globalism and the Reinvention of the World*. London: Atlantic Books.
[66] Thompson, J, B. 1995. *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pg 149.
[67] Rantanen, T. 2005. *The Media and Globalisation*. London: Sage Publications, pg 6.
[68] Hartely, D & Whitehead, M. 2006. *Teacher Education: Major Themes in Education*. USA & UK: Taylor and Francis, pg 40.
[69] Croucher, S, L. 2003. *Globalisation and Belonging: The Politics of Identity in a Changing World*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield, pg 10.

Globalisation promotes homogenisation, with regard to the spread of Western capitalism and culture so that:

> For all that it has projected itself as transhistorical and transnational, as the transcendent and universalising force of modernisation and modernity, global capitalism has in reality been about westernisation – the export of western commodities, values, priorities, ways of life[70]

Here Barker[71] advocates that as much as globalisation crosses the historical and national, it merely universalises and dictates a primarily Western or Anglo-American perspective across the globe, generating income for the economically strong and submersing the Emerging and Periphery[72] states to fit within a specific mould, by sponsoring the export of Western commodities and cultural perspectives. Other theorists such as Sinclair et al[73] (see also Ang[74], Butcher[75] and Graddol[76]) argue that globalisation leads to heterogenisation rather than homogenisation because a number of huge global corporations have created localised production centres, such as MTV and CNN. These companies have diversified their programming by having production centres across the globe which creates:

> A world characterised by regional realignments and fracturings, national and ethnic separatisms, and in parallel a proliferation of overlapping and criss-crossing media vectors which undermine a unified singular notion of the global[77].

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[70] Barker, C. 1999. *Television, Globalization and Cultural Identities*. London and New York: Open University Press, pg 38.
[71] Ibid
[72] See footnote 16, pg 10.
[73] Sinclair, J, Jacka, E, & Cunningham, S. 1996. *New Patterns in Global Television: Peripheral Vision.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[74] Ang, I. 1994. "Globalisation and Culture" in *Continuum*, Vol 8 (2): 323-325.
[75] Butcher, M. 2003. *Transnational Television, Cultural Identity and Change*. London: Patterson Sage.
[76] Graddol, D. 1998. *The Future of English*? London: British Council.
[77] Machin, D & van Leeuwen, T. 2007. *Global Media Discourse: A Critical Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 12.

Although more recent theorists have argued for heterogeneity, the fact remains that globalisation is a complex process, which unites yet separates groups of people because the economically strong continue to dominate the market and thrive on a cultural and economic level - as is evident with the Hollywood system.

History of globalisation

The term 'globalisation' is relatively new but the concept of what 'globalisation' entails has actually existed for quite some time. As already mentioned Ralston-Saul[78] sees the term come into effect during the 19th Century. Roland Robertson[79] describes globalisation as a long-term process that started in the 15th Century and went through a number of phases. He refers to the first stage as the "germinal stage", when nation states in Europe began to establish themselves whilst at the same time the world began to unveil itself through trade and exploration expeditions[80]. This era was characterised by identity and knowledge of the world as explorers ventured to unknown continents. The second stage of globalisation, according to Robertson is the "incipient stage" (approximately the mid 18th Century to the 1870s). Here saw the consolidation of homogenous, unitary nation states, yet also the beginnings of international agreements and international legislation[81]. During this phase, the 'national' and 'international' developed side by side by stressing the importance of individual nations and yet maintaining unitary agreements with other nation states. The 1870s to the 1920s witnessed the third, "take-off" stage,

[78] Ralston Saul, J. 2005. *The Collapse of Globalism and the Reinvention of the World*. London: Atlantic Books.
[79] Robertson, R. 1990. "Mapping the Global Condition: Globalisation as the Central Concept" in *Theory: Culture and Society,* Vol 7 (2-3): 15-30.
[80] Ibid
[81] Machin, D & van Leeuwen, T. 2007. *Global Media Discourse: A Critical Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 29.

where national states began to suppress minority languages and culture and regulated single national languages, traditions and histories[82]. The concept of marginalisation and superiority of dominant groups became more prominent. Due to the development of technology, this phase is also characterised by increased global communication and interaction[83]. The fourth stage is the "struggle for new hegemony" (mid-1920s to the late 1960s). During this phase, independence was still a key concept and decolonised nations began to develop their own national identity[84]. At this point, one witnesses how Colonialism influenced former nation states and how it affected their cultural identity. The fifth and final phase, Robertson classifies as the "uncertain phase" because on the one hand, there is an intensity of global trade and communication but on the other hand, the oldest and richest nations dominate financially. However, the Developed state have become preoccupied with maintaining their national homogeneity as immigration increases and alternative approaches such as the concept of radical Islam emerges[85]. This phase seems to classify the current political period. A combination of natural disasters, political upheaval and corruption has plagued Africa whereas the War on Terror continues to occupy America and its coalition countries.

For other theorists, 'globalisation' is a more recent term. Giddens[86] classifies the term as one of the outcomes of modernity and dates the process back to the 1800s. Tomlinson[87]

[82] Robertson, R. 1990. "Mapping the Global Condition: Globalisation as the Central Concept" in *Theory: Culture and Society,* Vol 7 (2-3): 15-30.
[83] Machin, D & van Leeuwen, T. 2007. *Global Media Discourse: A Critical Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 29.
[84] Robertson, R. 1990. "Mapping the Global Condition: Globalisation as the Central Concept" in *Theory: Culture and Society,* Vol 7 (2-3): 15-30.
[85] Ibid
[86] Giddens, A. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge Polity.
[87] Tomlinson, J. 1991. *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction*. London: Pinter Publisher.

situates the term at the beginning of the 1960s and describes it as the socio-political process that emerges after Imperialism. Jameson[88] links the concept to late capitalism and Harvey[89] associates the notion of time-space compression with the postmodern condition.

Although all these theorists classify the term as a relatively modern concept, none of them consider the very early political attempts to unify different societies such as the Roman Empire (see also Machin & Leeuwen[90], Gents & Kramer[91] and Leaves[92]). Is it possible that the general concept of globalisation actually dates back to Ancient times with the Roman and Egyptian Empires? If one were to agree or disagree with this approach, one element remains constant: the term has evolved according to the social and political conditions of the time. It is therefore from this perception that this research shall focus on the more recent definition as highlighted by Robertson.

The term 'globalisation' as we know it today has its roots in economic theory. 'Globalisation' draws on multiple levels of analysis: economics, politics, culture and ideology[93]. The cultural and ideological aspects, which are most probably the more successful results of the term, are the primary focus of this discussion, *viz a viz*, the ways in which film functions as a global medium, encouraging viewers to understand distant

[88] Jameson, F & Hardt, M et al. 2000. "Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" in *The Jameson Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pg 187-232.
[89] Harvey, D. 1989. *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Oxford: Oxford Blackwell.
[90] Machin, D & van Leeuwen, T. 2007. *Global Media Discourse: A Critical Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge.
[91] Gentz, N & Kramer, S (eds.) 2006. *Globalization, Cultural Identities and Media Representations*. New York: State of University of New York Press.
[92] Leaves, F, R. 1930. *Mass Civilization and Minority Culture*. Cambridge: Minority Press.
[93] Mittelman, J, H. 1996. "The Dynamics of Globalization" in Mittelman, J. H (ed.) *Globalization: Critical Reflections*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, pg 2.

wars through the stories portrayed. The notion of globalisation demands an environment where one has access to information of events, situations and free enterprise. With satellite technology, videophones and the constant improvement in technology, one questions the number and type of news reports focusing on Africa within the mainstream media and how this is continued within film because, mainstream fiction (namely Hollywood) is not adequately representing Developing and Emerging states. As a result, questions arise around the nature and type of representation concerning Africa and the Middle East both within the mainstream news media and by the fictional mainstream, namely Hollywood.

As terrorist and conflicting wars have increased across the globe since the 1960s, "the topic has become an enduring source of narratives, fantasies and myths that have contributed to Hollywood filmmaking with its familiar emphasis on international intrigue, exotic settings, graphic violence and the demonisation of foreign threats"[94]. These films have prevailed within Hollywood from the Cold War right through to the present War on Terror. Although the villains may have changed, the general principle remains the same; good eventually overcomes evil and the Western hero always restores equilibrium and order on a global level.

With reference to this research, the concept of globalisation functions on two levels; the first, relates to content of the narrative, the second, is more concerned with how the Hollywood mainstream film has influence in promoting 'the truth' as a result of its wide

[94] Boggs,C & Pollard, T. 2006. "Hollywood and the Spectacle of Terrorism" in *New Political Science*, Vol 28 (3): 337.

economic authority and distribution abilities. Drawing on Phillipa Atkinson[95], it becomes evident that the media has immense power and authority in shaping cultural interpretations of distant wars as well as having an impact on broader policy agendas. Through globalisation, the world actually becomes a smaller place where interaction and telecommunication link and bind events instantaneously and the interaction that globalisation offers, opens a debate about the power of distributing information through the film medium.

Atkinson uses the Ethiopian famine of the mid-1980s as an example of the power and influence of the Western media. Mohammed Mo Amen was the journalist who recorded the emotive images of starving children that lead to the massive humanitarian response and the setting up of Band Aid and Comic Relief. Although the response was positive, Atkinson[96] argues that

> The lack of localised knowledge to inform media coverage of distant events and the tendency towards sensational short-term reporting serve to bias reporting, or at least to reinforce existing biases.

This position has prevailed as far as Africa and the Middle East is concerned. At times, journalists resort to story-telling techniques utilising familiar language, to make far away conflicts more accessible to their viewers. In order to achieve this, journalists utilise the term 'ethnic' conflict, which "becomes the easiest explanation for both the producers of the media and the consumers, and can be applied to other

[95] Atkinson, P. 2002. "Representations of Conflict in the Western Media: The Manufacture of a Barbaric Periphery" in Allen, T & Skelton, T (eds.) *Culture and Global Change*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 102.
[96] Ibid

situations, becoming a convenient point of reference"[97]. By creating universal scenarios, the producers as well as the consumers have a familiar point of reference in order to understand situations in places, which, geographically, are very far removed from the audience. A pattern starts to emerge, the ownership and distribution of information comes from a few media conglomerates, who, simplify complex issues, in order to promote a general understanding across the globe. It is thus necessary to examine news as a commodity and the concept of global reporting because media organisations initially establish these explanations within the news media and then merely allow them to filter through into film.

News as a Commodity

Jean Baudrillard[98] is very critical of the nature of news in the modern world. He does not see the media creating any form of consciousness but rather sees global reporting as a means to stupefy the audience[99]. He writes,

> With everyone glued at home, Television plays out fully its role of social control by collective stupefication … it affixes populations all the better for deceiving them, as with a bad detective novel which we cannot believe could be so pointless[100].

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[97] Ibid, pg 104

[98] Poster, M (ed.) 2001. *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings: Second Edition, Revised and Expanded.* Uk: Stanford University Press.

[99] Jean Baudrillard, a French Cultural theorist is renowned for his more provocative work written on the Gulf War. He was accused of instant revisionism and Berkelian idealism by his critics after initially publishing his article and then book entitled "The Gulf War Did Not Take Place" (Baudrillard, J. 1991. *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place. Translated by Paul Patton* USA: Indiana University Press). Here, Baudrillard argues that "the virtual has overtaken the actual, it functions to deter the real event and leaves only the simulacrum of war which will never advance to the use of force, 'we are no longer in a logic passage from virtual to actual but in a hyperrealist logic of the deterrence of the real by the virtual" (ibid, pg 8). Although he also argued that the Gulf War did not occur because the enemy was undefeated and the victors were not victorious, this discussion shall make use of Baudrillard's writings with reference to the notion that for an audience that watches virtual images, violence becomes sanitised, allowing them to displace themselves further from the actual conflict.

[100] Ibid, pg 249

He argues that audiences want to watch clean war, white war programmed war, more lethal than the war which sacrifices human lives[101]. What this implies is that the viewer wants to watch a 'sanitised' version of conflict. One that is void of bloodshed and violence. It is far more palatable to watch a laser image of an explosion than to actually witness the casualties that result from an explosion. The footage that emerged during the Gulf War is more conducive to this type of objective. These images have emerged with the War on Terror but they do not illustrate the type of warfare happening in Africa. Perhaps this is why the news agencies do not allocate Africa adequate representation. Technologically, Africa has not reached this level firstly, in terms of its reporting and secondly, in terms of the ways people engage in conflict in Africa.

In contrast, conflicts synonymous with the Middle East such as the Gulf War, War in Iraq (particularly the Shock and Awe onslaught) and the War on Terror have gravitated towards the type of news reporting with which Baudrillard identifies. These conflicts have ensured that journalists are on site, standing by to communicate information, as it emerges with the verification process happening in real time. The audience watches history materialize in bits and pieces, live, as the broadcaster receives it. Both *Hotel Rwanda* and *The Kingdom* exude the same type of reporting that the mainstream media initially exercised concerning each conflict.

Hotel Rwanda is emotive with most of the physical action happening off screen. The narrative provides the information only once it has happened. The film imitates the type of reporting that broadcasters used during the Rwandan genocide. One received

[101] Ibid, pg 251

information only after the events happened. In contrast, *The Kingdom* mimics the same fast-paced instant action that one has witnessed with all conflicts relating to the Middle East, setting a tone and expectation in terms of what viewers are accustomed to watching. This instant type of reporting gets the prime spots in news bulletins, thereby, targeting larger audience numbers and maintaining a greater interest.

There is also the possibility that video and computer games such as Playstation[102] have affected audience demands. Thus, the simulation and reporting of 'instant history' is more compatible with the daily events and images of the modern viewer than the heart-rending massacres conducted with machetes, machine guns and clubs.

Baudrillard[103] also argues that the mass "knows that it knows nothing and does not want to know. The mass knows that it can do nothing, and it does not want to achieve anything". He does not see the mass media as a form of communication because it does not allow for feedback, the information is fed through but it is not necessarily brought back into the system. The television screen therefore, does not act as mirror onto the world but rather a screen that bombards us with superficial information filled with vox

[102] Another area that has developed out of the Hollywood system is computer games. Playstation, a game console, released by Sony amplified the 3-D gaming experience. Some of the games are based on popular film narratives and consist of animated versions of the original story, offering further difficulties and adventures from the original blockbuster. The viewer now plays an active role in the storyline, deciding on and influencing the outcome because the player (who was initially the viewer) is now the hero/heroine. This is clear with reference to computer games, which also appeared as films, *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* remains at the top position with *Pokemon: The First Movie* at second place and *Mortal Kombat* at third (Wasko, J. 2007. *How Hollywood Works*. Los Angeles, London: Sage Publications, pg 168). According to David Machin and Theo van Leeuwen the American computer game industry is now bigger than the Hollywood film industry (Machin, D & van Leeuwen, T. 2007. *Global Media Discourse: A Critical Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 39). Each of these commodities feed into the Hollywood system with the specific aim at producing more income.

[103] Poster, M (ed.) 2001. *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings: Second Edition, Revised and Expanded*. Uk: Stanford University Press, pg 219.

pops, universal commentary and mocked up scenarios, where both questions and answers are 'fixed'[104]. The Hollywood film industry further implements this agenda with the box office blockbusters merely slipping into the message initially advocated by the mass media (see Chapter 3 and 4). According to Baudrillard[105], mediators such as politicians, the media, and intellectuals function to "manage by delegation, by procuration, this tedious matter of power and of will, to unburden the masses of this transcendence for their greater pleasure and to turn it into a show for their benefit". Here, Baudrillard is implying that the 'intellectuals' merely function as a medium of power who entertain the mass without really going into the depths of the 'reality' portrayed. He acknowledges this in his article "The Gulf War did not take place"[106]. One cannot compare the sophistication of the images released during the Gulf War in 1991 with those that come out of Africa. The Gulf War was the first war reported in real time as the events happened. The laser type images, smart bombs, dumb bombs, F16's were all there. Clinical, 'clean', precise warfare was the name of the day. Africa cannot produce these kinds of images, perhaps this is why it is classified as 'other' (see Chapter 4) and it is not represented adequately because it does not fit the supply-demand formula.

Baudrillard[107] writes,

> No one wants to hear of the other. Ultimately, … the war is grounded in the disappearance of alterity, of primitive hostility, and of the enemy. War has become a celibate machine.

[104] Baudrillard, J. 2002. *Screened Out. Translated by Chris Turner.* London and New York: Verso, pg 189.
[105] Poster, M (ed.) 2001. *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings: Second Edition, Revised and Expanded.* Uk: Stanford University Press, pg 249.
[106] Ibid, pg 231-253
[107] Ibid, pg 239

This attitude towards watching war could be due to popular computer games such as Playstation and the way it encourages the viewer/player to encounter different conflicts (see earlier discussion, or footnote 97). Whatever the reason, the fact remains that the same clinical type of warfare used in the gaming industry is perforating into the way the mass media reports on major events across the globe.

Global Reporting

By creating the global environment, news agencies have to have reporters situated all around the globe, on standby ready to report on events as they happen. This presents half the problem with representing Africa and the Middle East. According to Jaap van Ginneken:[108]

> As a rule of thumb, somewhat less than a third of agency correspondents are stationed in North America, somewhat more than a third in Western Europe and roughly a third cover the entire rest of the world: Eastern Europe, Africa, the Arab world, Asia, Oceania and Latin America.

Sky News, for example, has its Africa correspondents based in South Africa. When there is a news-worthy event happening on the African continent, these correspondents are called upon to travel, investigate and report – a phenomenon often referred to as 'parachute journalism'. The time factor becomes an essential element because the event has already taken place by the time the reporters arrive. The question to ask is why there are so few journalists situated or posted in the Periphery countries. Is it because the Western powers own the news agencies or is it more about what the Western audience

[108] Van Ginneken, J. 1998. *Understanding Global News.* London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pg 131.

wants to watch? The irony of this is that these news agencies broadcast on a global level and reach audiences from Developed countries as well as those from the Periphery. In addition, according to Van Ginneken Eurocentric jargon fills the reports, clearly portraying what he calls a Eurocentric grid, namely, from a Christian or Judaeo-Christian point of view, from a white point of view, from an Anglo-American point of view. Van Ginneken[109] also comments that "the Iraq/Iran war, or the Angolan and Mozambican civil wars took hundreds of thousands or even millions of lives, without people in New York, London or Paris getting terribly excited about it"[110]. In a post 9-11 era, the media has shifted its representation of the Arab world since the Bosnian War, from victim to extreme fundamentalists whether it is with reference to their religion, attitude towards women or the way Arab civilians are treated in the United States.

This subject matter has emerged in numerous forms of the mass media from popular television dramas such as *Boston Legal.* In the episode titled "Guantanamo by the Bay"[111] a client approaches the firm because the government detained him on suspicions that he was involved in a terrorist plot. The episode draws awareness to the way 'Arab-looking' individuals are now perceived as being dangerous as a result of 9-11. Similar terrorist plots continue with popular films such as *The Road to Guantanamo* (Mat Whitecross and Michael Winterbottom, 2006), a drama (part documentary) based on four Pakistani Britons who travel to Pakistan for a wedding[112]. The four visit war torn Afghanistan, which is in the process of being bombed by the Americans and are caught

[109] Ibid
[110] Ibid, pg 115
[111] *Boston Legal*, Season 3, Episode 22, original Air Date 1 May 2007.
[112] See "The Road to Guantanamo". 2006 http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0468094/plotsummary, accessed 2009-06-03.

by the Northern Alliance on suspicions of terrorism. After one of the four is killed, the remaining three are transported to Guantanamo Bay base in Cuba where they are wrongfully imprisoned for three years. The mass media has reported on these types of incidents and any event relating to terrorism. These stories eventually emerge within popular films and television programmes. A pattern seems to emerge; the mass media initially reports events that relate to the Developed states. These stories/events then filter through and emerge within popular culture in the form of film and television products. The same global interest does not seem to be happening with events focusing on the Emerging or Periphery states. The question remains: why does the news not adequately cover events in remote and distant places within this technologically advanced and globally united world? According to the above pattern, if the mass media does not initially focus on events, they cannot filter through to the cultural sector.

The concept of 'distance' is important to address because it is not merely a geographical phenomenon. Conflict that occurs on a different continent or in some remote inaccessible place creates differences on three levels: the first (the simplest), geographically: the second, on emotional level because it creates an 'other' (someone different from Western society, a concept which will be discussed in Chapter 4). Thirdly, on a social level, there is a link, particularly with reference to Africa and the Middle East, as there are already established relationships with these areas due to Colonialism, race conflict, as well as cultural integration[113].

[113] By 'cultural integration', I refer specifically to the cultural communication and overlap that has occurred as a result of migration, 19th Century free trade and globalisation. One can also see this influence in art, for example the influence of African sculpture on Picasso's cubism, whether analytical cubism or synthetic cubism.

According to Martin Shaw[114], the global environment represents remote wars ideologically and with that distance, conflicts and responsibility revolve around the question of representation. He adds that people involved in conflict rarely represent themselves; a third party usually transmits the information[115]. Thus, the representation of people involved in distant conflict relies on the global media, which (as has already been established) Western society dominates. As a result there is what Shaw defines as an "intersection of their [the people in conflict's] needs and demands with the interests, beliefs and agendas of groups in Western society"[116].

Both films examine the conflicts they portray from a predominantly Western perspective. A central question that emerges with reference to the media and ultimately, the fictional representation of the events, is: can Western based institutions represent zones in crisis without prejudice or discrimination?

Framing

According to Pippa Norris et al[117] terrorist events "are commonly understood through news 'frames' that simplify, prioritise and structure the narrative flow of events" (see also Goffman[118], Entman[119] and Gamson[120]). This research presents the opinion that this

[114] Shaw, M. 1996. *Civil Society and Media in Global Crisis: Representing Distant Violence*. London and New York: Pinter, pg 11.
[115] Ibid, pg 12
[116] Ibid
[117] Norris, P, Montague, K & Just, M. 2003. *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government and the Public*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 10.
[118] Goffman, E. 1974. *Frame Analysis*. Boston: New England University Press.
[119] Entman, E. 1991. "Framing US Coverage of International News" in *Journal of Communication,* Vol 41 (4): 6-28.

position relates not only to news narrative but to film as well. In addition, framing is relevant to the depiction of all conflict, including terrorist activities, as will become evident through *The Kingdom* (terrorism) and *Hotel Rwanda* (conflict). The concept of framing suggests that news frames:

> bundle concepts, stock phrases, and iconic images to reinforce certain common ways of interpreting developments … Without knowing much, if anything, about the particular people, groups, issues, or even places involved, the terrorist and anti-terrorist frame allows us to quickly sort out, interpret, categorise and evaluate these conflicts[121].

This form of interpretation suggests that one can quickly identify with events that occur in remote or developing countries as a result of this type of reporting. This framework, however, influences events to fit the mould of the framework. The result is a simplified narrative of sometimes-complex events because the narrative relies on a polarised version of who is the perpetrator and who is the victim. The framework also attributes blame and re-shapes perceptions according to who is a friend or enemy[122]. President Bush[123] reiterated this position when he addressed Congress after 9-11 with the following comment: "Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists". This statement sets the tone on a political level as well as cultural because it polarises the Americans in relation to Al Qaeda and invites individuals to follow the *us-them* principle (see Chapter 4).

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[120] Gamson, W. 1991. *Talking Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
[121] Norris, P, Montague, K & Just, M. 2003. *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government and the Public*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 11.
[122] Ibid, pg 15
[123] Bush, G. 20 September 2001. "We are a Country Awakened to Danger and Called to Defend Freedom" http://www.september11news.com/PresidentBushSpeech.htm, accessed 2009-11-03.

One can argue that framing functions on numerous levels: cultural, ideological, political and social. The analysis of both case studies will show to what extent framing functions with reference firstly, to content and secondly, to the concept of globalisation and with specific regards to *Hotel Rwanda*, the accessibility of journalists to enter conflict regions. The concept of journalism is important to discuss because *Hotel Rwanda* presents this issue in relation to how the West failed to assist the victims of the genocide (see Chapter 2). There is also a link to the type of representation the media uses when the news first reports a conflict and when that same conflict is then presented as part of a film (see Chapter 3).

With reference to the reporting of conflict, one cannot deny that the media does address and broadcast conflict from Periphery states. If one looks at Van Ginneken's[124] comment that apart from the USA and Europe, only a third of the world's journalists is dispersed across the globe, the question remains: why there are not enough journalists covering the rest of the globe? Carroll Bogert[125] also questions this position in her article "Another Africa Calamity – Will Media Slumber On?". With reference to the ten-year anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, she writes, "the international media don't send reporters to cover genocides, it seems. They cover genocide anniversaries"[126]. In her article, Bogert[127] writes about how she randomly asked foreign editors at the Overseas Press Club, if they had any journalists in Darfur. (This was at the time when militias were

[124] Van Ginneken, J. 1998. *Understanding Global News.* London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pg 131.
[125] Bogert, C. 28 April 2004. "Another Africa Calamity – Will Media Slumber On?" *Human Rights Watch* http://hrw.org/English/docs/2004/04/28/sudan8540_txt.htm, pg 1-2, accessed 2006-02-28.
[126] Ibid, pg 1
[127] Ibid

ransacking and torching homes - killing, raping and displacing nearly a million people into neighbouring Chad in April 1994). One editor replied, "We did have someone there! … But she's been covering all of Africa"[128]. This comment implies that the answer relates to economics, that there are not enough journalists to cover the whole continent.

Some critics may argue that Rwanda was a global phenomenon and that it was highly publicised. One cannot denounce this, but this only happened once the genocide was over. Broadcasters publicised the event as a call for intervention and Humanitarian Aid. In this regard, the global media was very effective and functioned as an essential channel for creating awareness and addressing the crisis on hand. This reinstates Atkinson's[129] position that one of the positive effects of the global media is obtaining humanitarian aid, but this does not explain why there were so few foreign correspondents when the genocide occurred in Rwanda and, why those who were there, were not able to gain access to crisis areas. I am not denouncing that there were a few journalists such as Tom Giles and Fergal Keane[130], but they themselves say that their reports were censored and manipulated to focus on bringing in Humanitarian aid as opposed to the genocide story. Perhaps the ingredient that is missing is the local journalist. In order to receive adequate representation, has the time come for people or societies in conflict situations to represent themselves? Shaw[131] writes "Western-dominated global media rarely take seriously the self-representation of individuals, communities and organisations in zones of conflict".

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[128] Ibid

[129] Atkinson, P. 2002. "Representations of Conflict in the Western Media: The Manufacture of a Barbaric Periphery" in Allen, T & Skelton, T (eds.) *Culture and Global Change*. London and New York: Routledge, pg 102.

[130] See Giles, T. 7 April 2004. "Media Failure over Rwanda's Genocide" http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/panorama/3599423.stm, pgs 1-5, accessed 2006-02-28.

[131] Shaw, M. 1996. *Civil Society and Media in Global Crisis: Representing Distant Violence*. London and New York: Pinter, pg 182.

Logistic elements such as access to remote places of conflict, censorship issues, and the effects of the local media as well as the general perception of communities on a global level will generally affect their representation, there is always the possibility of bias and propaganda but is this not already happening within the global environment regarding Western thought and ideals. The Al Jazeera news network has attempted to present a local position on a global level with reference to the Arab world. This news network has created a more heterogeneous account of events; particularly regarding the Middle East. This local flavour echoes Shaw[132] who argues that civil society has to start nurturing new ideas: developing global society as a community as well as a market; overcoming the distancing which affects our responses to people in other situations; actively asserting responsibility". Perhaps we should be aspiring towards this end. In the mean time, the representation of communities in conflict from the Emerging and Periphery states remains a blanket term with political, cultural and economic assumptions.

Victims

Although Chapter 3 will examine victims with reference to history, memory and culture and Chapter 4 will discuss the representation of victims in relation to the 'other', at this point it is necessary to touch on the notion of victims in relation to the global media. This is necessary to establish because the way in which the global media represents the Emerging and Periphery states has a direct impact on how the cultural sector (in this instance popular film) reiterates the initial representation.

[132] Shah, A. 8 June 2003. "Media, Propaganda and Rwanda – Global Issues" http://www.globalissues.org/HumanRights/Media?Propaganda?Rwanda.asp, pg 2, accessed 2009-03-22.

Without going into the politics of the Rwandan genocide, there are a number of influential factors, which have instigated the conflict and exacerbated the bloodshed. Shah[133] states that

> The genocide was a result of Rwanda's political and economic position in the capitalist world system. It involved such monetary factors as its colonial history, the price of coffee [which dropped drastically in the early 1990's], World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies, the global interests of Western nations … and Western attitudes towards Africa.

Shah's comment emphasizes the complex issues surrounding the war, but he also hints at the West's attitude towards Africa. This comment points directly towards the Western perception that it is superior to its counterparts.

Thus far, two trails of thought are emerging. On the one hand, there is the global crisis of how responsible states are to intervene and solve conflicting wars. On the other hand, there is the notion of how the media represents a crisis in the global environment. Although both articulate a different perspective, they both imply that because of globalisation, it becomes very difficult to ignore events that occur in remote areas, especially within the Emerging and Periphery states. Globalisation links the world (see Bauman[134], Patterson[135], Wykes[136]), it creates awareness of what is happening, in theory, previously inaccessible disasters should now be accessible via the television medium. Through prime time slots, global news reports are also able to influence Western countries by encouraging or discouraging the extent to which the International

[133] Ibid
[134] Bauman, Z. 1998. *Globalisation: The Human Consequences*. Cambridge: Polity.
[135] Patterson, C. 1998. "Global Battlefields" in Boyd-Barrett, O & Rantanen, T (eds.) *The Globalisation of News*. London: Sage, pg 79-103.
[136] Wykes, A. 2001. *News, Crime and Culture*. London: Pluto Press.

community should get involved. The Rwandan genocide acts as an example of how the media focused on the situation only after the genocide occurred. The news reports functioned merely to bring in Humanitarian aid. Relating back to Baudrillard, was this because the type of warfare in Rwanda was not palatable for the viewer to watch.

One cannot deny that Rwanda's genocide was very primitive and the methods of the killings were senseless and barbaric, the militia did beat people to death with primitive weapons, but it is the assumptions and attitude by the media towards Africa that needs to be addressed. The same applies to any terrorist activity, killing innocent civilians on a large scale seems pointless but in order to understand how the media functions, it is necessary to analyse how it represents different groups and cultures.

According to Noam Chomsky[137] "some victims are worthy, some are unworthy, depending on one's point of view". Van Ginneken's[138] position is that at any given point in time, there are more than a dozen conflicts in areas within states from the Periphery. Atrocities and killings accompany each conflict but if there are no immediate central interests at stake, the news may hardly mention them[139]. This position ties in directly with Baudrillard's opinion of the mass audience.

The concept of 'framing', as mentioned earlier, augments the way a news narrative represents victims. The jargon remains constant whilst only the geographical location

[137] Chomsky, N. 2004. *Ideas and Ideals*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, pg 202.
[138] Van Ginneken, J. 1998. *Understanding Global News*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pg 115.
[139] Ibid

changes. One is almost ready to hear the same kind of narratives such as 'a thousand casualties after a ferry has sunk off the coast of China, Nearly a million people die as a result of famine in one of the African countries, Hundreds dead as quake hits India'. These typical headlines confront us on a daily basis. It seems as though victims of the Emerging and Periphery states are unworthy. The global world continuously represents them as a mass as opposed to individuals with families and individual problems[140]. Does this have something to do with the kind of footage available?

According to Chomsky[141] election coverage from Periphery states "will depend crucially on whether the countries involved are our clients or our enemies". Take this a step further: on the 27 April 1994, South Africa held its first democratic elections, an important event, as South Africa is often referred to as the economic stronghold and gateway to the African continent. This event happened at the same time as the Rwandan genocide. It seems as though most of the world's journalists were covering the election in South Africa. Is this why there was no one to report the carnage that was happening in the North East of the continent? Why would the media focus on one important and noteworthy event but ignore another event equally important, if not more, for almost one hundred days? Perhaps for the Western viewer the election coverage was more appetising.

[140] This was particularly evident during NATO's bombing campaign of Kosovo. A CNN report stated that refugees in Tanzania were watching the global network news channels which were freely available in the refugee camps. The news networks reported that Kosovo refugees were supplied staple diets of adequate vegetables, bread, chicken and fish. The refugees in Tanzania complained because the ICRC were supplying them mainly with vegetables and rice without the chicken and fish. What made the Kosovo refugees more 'important' to get better food? Were they more 'worthy' refugees?

[141] Chomsky, N. 2004. *Ideas and Ideals*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, pg 203.

Some journalists did try to get their stories out into the global environment. Tom Giles and Fergal Keane[142] have since been recognised for their contributions. According to Giles,[143]

> London wanted human stories from the camps, of getting aid to the refugees, of babies born in misery. It was clear even then that this was not a story of refugees or of some distant civil war but of a systematic genocide still being carried out. But it was hard to get this message across – this was a complicated story in a country few people had heard of. Refugees were, at least a simpler issue.

From Giles' comment, it is evident that producers tried to broadcast the events in Rwanda according to what the audience could digest. Giles[144] continues: "pieces were often re-edited in London – shots of bodies removed". In addition Fergal Keane's "Panorama – Journey into Darkness" which depicted the killings at Nyarubuye was only broadcast on the 27 June 1994, after the massacres had already taken place.

Thus far, this research has examined how the global media has represented conflicts relating to the Arab world and the Periphery. This has been necessary because Hollywood and mainstream film merely reinstates the initial stereotypes and dominant positions that the global media established.

CONCLUSION

Since the early 1950s[145], larger corporations have bought initially smaller and then larger companies to eliminate the 'middle-man' in order to initiate greater profit. This has

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[142] Giles, T. 7 April 2004. "Media Failure over Rwanda's Genocide" http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/panorama/3599423.stm, pg 4, accessed 2006-02-28.
[143] Ibid
[144] Ibid
[145] Wasko, J. 2007. *How Hollywood Works*. Los Angeles, London: Sage Publications, pg 59.

resulted in a huge global industry controlled by a handful of very large conglomerate corporations[146]. The result has been a global industry that has infiltrated on an economic, cultural and political level.

Although this research has mentioned some of the economic factors relevant to the Hollywood system, the prime focus has been on the cultural and ideological aspects, which is one of the more successful results of the terms, with growth in the trade markets being the first most successful results of globalisation.

Both case studies assume the position that their audience understands the global environment and read each film accordingly. This type of perception is originally initiated through the news media and continues through the cultural media, in this case, it communicates through the two films.

News culture, which forms part of the mass media is necessary to understand, as there are a number of factors which emerge with reference to representation. Firstly, news organisations form part of conglomerate corporations whose primary purpose is to generate profit. News thus becomes a commodity which news organisations target to specific audiences. Commodity culture brings in a number of factors which influence the way an audience will interpret a story. These include global reporting (what stories are broadcast), framing (how different groups are portrayed) and how victims are created so as to motivate humanitarian aid in times of crisis. The media represents the African and

[146] Sassen, S. 1991. *The Global City: Place, Production and The New Centrality*. New York: Association of College and Research Libraries, pg 3.

Arab people quite specifically in the news according to the principles of commodity culture and global reporting, framing and victimisation. This continues in the cultural sector as will become evident through the analysis of both case studies.

Hollywood is a huge global industry, through its economic strength and distributive power; its films are not only commodities themselves but also platforms to which the popular culture sometimes aspires. It is no wonder that other companies, such as product placement agencies and the computer game industry emerge through the filmmaking process. All of these remain influential in spawning more income and keeping the 'preferred' readings alive.

Through this Chapter, it becomes evident that the Hollywood System is a prime example of what is happening within the world today. It personifies the concept of how the term 'globalisation' moves towards the conglomeration of various companies and industries, thereby, influencing audience perceptions through representation. With reference to war films, Hollywood-type films affirm authority because they constantly refer to 'real' events. In addition, the industry further encourages elitism through product placement and popular games, which form part of commodity culture. The next Chapter will examine the Hollywood system through the representations in each case study and will provide a detailed analysis of each film with reference to the Classical Hollywood narrative and the Three-Act structure. This will be followed by a discussion on the history of narrative structure. This Chapter has functioned as an introduction to the

Hollywood system and the position of this research that "we are all part of a global society in the sense that no one can escape its consequences"[147].

[147] Giddens, A. 1994. "Living in a post-traditional society" in Beck, U, Giddens, A & Lash, C. *Reflexive Modernisation*. Cambridge: Polity Press.