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## Notes on Contributors

**Alberta Natasia Adji** is currently studying creative writing at the PhD level at Edith Cowan University, Australia. Her novel and exegesis are concerned with complex ethnic relations in Indonesia and feminist intercultural life writing. She has published two novels, *Youth Adagio* (2013) and *Dante: The Faery and the Wizard* (2014), some short stories in *Jawa Pos*, an Indonesian national daily newspaper based in Surabaya, and refereed articles in several journals including *Makara Hubs Asia*, *Life Writing*, *IAFOR Journal of Media, Communication and Film*, *Paradigma*, *Journal of ASEAN Studies (JAS)* and others. Her research focuses on creative writing studies. She holds a bachelor's degree in English literature and a master's degree in cultural studies from Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia. She briefly taught at Universitas Ciputra Surabaya before undertaking her PhD. Her interests are English literature, cultural studies, film studies, Chinese Indonesian studies, and creative writing studies.

**Konstantina Agrafioti** was awarded her Master's Degree with Distinction, in "History, Philosophy and Sociology of Law" from the Law School of Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece in 2019. Her Master's Thesis was in "Philosophy of Law". She is currently working towards a second Bachelor's Degree in the Law School of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She earned her first Bachelor's Degree in "International and European Studies" from the University of Piraeus in 2016. In 2019 she attended Refugee Law seminars of the UNHCR in collaboration with Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She also attended the Charles University (Prague) summer school "Music and Youth Cultures: Theory and Ethnography of Music "Community" in June 2018. Furthermore, she has participated in the sociological research "Frame Analysis and the Rock Scenes", published in the *American International Journal of Contemporary Research* in September 2017. She did her internship as an undergraduate in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, The D1 Directorate, United Nations and International Organisations and Conferences in 2016. She has a Diploma in piano (2010) and in Harmony (2009) issued by the Ministry of Culture of Greece. In the piano contest by UNESCO "Chorus and Orchestra of the Young", she was awarded a second prize in 2006 and a first in 2003.

**Kenneth N. Hansen**, PhD, holds the rank of Full Professor of Political Science and American Indian Studies at California State University, Fresno. He served as co-coordinator of the then-Africana and American Indian Studies Program from 2007-2010. He has published two books, and eighteen peer reviewed articles or book chapters over the past 25 years, which include *The Greening of Pentagon Brownfields* (2004, Lexington Books), and *The New Politics of Indian Gaming* (2011, University of Nevada Press, co-edited with Tracy A. Skopek). Professor Hansen teaches courses and researches on the topics of; public administration theory, American government, American Indian law, tribal administration, and environmental policy. He was among the first founders of the Fresno State American Indian Faculty and Staff Association, which hosts an annual American Indian graduation ceremony. Professor Hansen also serves as a tribal administrator for the Chalon Indian Nation of California, with whom he regularly participates in traditional ceremony.

**Holly O'Farrell** is a fourth year PhD candidate in the History Department at the University of Limerick. Her research focuses on the representation of Middle Eastern art in nineteenth century exhibition spaces and museums. The project is interdisciplinary in its methodology and focuses on gender, museum studies and post-colonialism. Her research analyses representations of Middle Eastern cultures in Western exhibition spaces during the nineteenth

and early twentieth centuries and queries how exchanges between East and West occurred and influenced all parties involved. It aims to demonstrate how cultural events and spaces can influence opinions, encourage prejudices and be a tool through which imperialism can be disseminated to the public.

**Jamie N. Sanchez**, PhD is an Associate Professor and Program Director of the PhD in Intercultural Studies at Biola University, where she has been a faculty member since 2016. Dr Sanchez's research interests include China area studies and refugee studies. Additionally, she specializes in qualitative research methods. Most recently, she was awarded a collaborative research grant for her ongoing refugee studies research. Being a first-generation college student herself, Dr Sanchez enjoys mentoring first-generation college students in addition to other university service roles in the areas of faculty development and educational effectiveness. Dr Sanchez holds a BBA from New Mexico State University, an MA from Union University, an MDiv from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, and a PhD from Virginia Tech.

**Michael Tsangaris** is a member of the Laboratory and Teaching Staff at the Department of International and European Studies of the University of Piraeus. He received his PhD from the Department of Communication and Media Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens; his MA degree in Mass Media and Communications from the University of Leeds; and his Ptychion from the Department of Business Administration of the Economic University of Athens. His most recent publications are: *The Evolution of Rock Festivals in Greece*, ESJ, 2019; *Social networks, festivals and the sense of belonging: Framing Rebellion festivals in Blackpool, Punk & Post Punk 2019*, Ingenta Connect; *Radical Communication and Social Media—political slogans and street art in the time of the crisis*, IJSSER 2018; *Frame Analysis and the Rock Scenes*, AIJCR 2017; *Occupational Segregation and Gender Representation in Films*, LAP LAMBERT, Saarbrücken, 2016, and *Sociology of Art: Howard Becker's Approach' in Katsikidis & Pazarzi 'From social thought to sociological theory'*, Nomiki Vivliothiki Publishing, Athens, 2016. His research interests are focused on subjects concerning Mass Media, Gender, Culture and Society.

## Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the latest *IAFOR Journal of Cultural Studies*, whose publication coincides with the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus.

At first, during late January and early February 2020, the world breathlessly stared at China, fascinated by the ill fate that had befallen its populace, deemed to be far removed from the West and containable on living room flat screens and mobile phones. At times, the virus outbreak was even used as an excuse for localised racism, as when a bus of Chinese was stoned in the Ukraine.

But by late February 2020, however, panic had set in in many parts of the world, as it became clear that, thanks to globalisation, China was everywhere and that dreams of racial and cultural differences, as fake news would have us believe, did protect neither Africans nor Europeans from the disease. Already within a single culture, individuals change the side of the street when another approaches; outbreaks are denied or designated as “negligible” or a return to normalcy by “this coming Saturday” (Iran’s president Hassan Rohani) is promised; whistleblowers are taken into police custody or the outbreak is used to showcase a government’s ability to build a new hospital within a week, relegating the outbreak to an economic problem that can be solved by real estate means; hoarding taking place in supermarkets, with prices of food rising by up to 20% month-on-month (China) or masks and disinfectant sold at exorbitant prices; and news outlets decrying the negative effect the virus has on the stock market or the output of companies rather than looking at the plight of the infected people.

At such a time, it is good to remember that culture, the relating of oneself to one’s own and to others’ social modes of behaviour, is never a state, but always a process; any “progress” is always under threat and can easily be reversed in times of crisis. The articles in this issue do not address the Covid-19 virus, as they were all written before the existence of this virus was known. But all of them do comment on it indirectly as they comment on political and cultural changes and challenges people face in different parts of the world, as they flag inequalities, attempts at rewriting history and undue pressure exerted by governments to regulate free artistic expression.

The first article, **Applying Burn’s Kineikonic Mode to a Dangdut Music Performance: Via Vallen’s *Sayang* at the 2018 Indonesian Choice Awards 5.0 NET** by Alberta Natasia Adji analyses a specific Dangdut performance from 2018. Dangdut is a genre of Indonesian folk music with influences from Hindustani, Arabic, and Malay traditional music and generally associated with female singers revealing much naked skin during performances. It is also a staple of the working classes’ entertainment. Via Vallen, a rising star in Indonesian popular music, used this genre for her performance at the 2018 Choice Awards, but fused it further with K-pop elements and a very buttoned-up wardrobe choice. Alberta Adji analyses this performance via Burn’s Kineikonic methodology, effecting a visual close reading of the performance. She then contextualises her findings with recent politico-religious developments in Indonesian society, concluding with an analysis of the relationship between Indonesia’s compliant elites, sexism, religious extremism and working-class cultures.

If Adjji's text can be read as an aural sociogramme of Indonesia in the twentyteens, the second text in this issue, Michael Tsangaris and Konstantina Agraftoti's **Psychobilly Psychosis and The Garage Disease in Athens** also deals with music, but this time as a counterculture movement in Greece. Over the last 30 years, Psychobilly music, tracing its heritage from rockabilly and punk, has been a counter-culture sound track to a lifestyle quite removed from the Greek mainstream and mainly acted out in Athens and Thessaloniki. Tsangaris and Agraftoti tell the story of this music genre, interview some of its leading actors and concisely comment on its resurgence as a mere lifestyle fad without deeper political implications.

Kenneth N. Hansen's **Uncivil Rights: The Abuse of Tribal Sovereignty and the Termination of American Indian Tribal Citizenship** analyses the increasing number of tribal terminations of membership in California, tracing it back to legislation allowing tribes to run casinos and thus being afforded the opportunity to make a good living for the first time since their land had been stolen by white settlers. It is the irony of history that due to unregulated tribal governance, exclusion from a tribal register for financial gain of a few is now regularly taking place, thus replaying the disenfranchisement of the many as that of a few. What is so very striking in this is the complicity of the white majority, washing its hands of this practice via legislation claiming that all this is done legally by the minority to its own members.

Going a bit further back in time, "A New and Curious Route to Cairo" – **World's Fairs and the stereotyping of the Middle East (1851–1893)** by Holly O'Farrell investigates a number of World's Fairs in the second half of the 19th century and lays bare the reasons for their success. They were held, both in Europe and in the USA, to purportedly educate the public about far away cultures. The comparison to the rising popularity of zoos at the same time is not too farfetched, as practicing members of these "exotic", mostly orientalist cultures were brought in to perform their culture to the delectation of Western audiences, who were given the opportunity to bask in the alleged superiority of their own civilisation over the exhibited ones. This, and it comes as no surprise, also involved the sexualised gaze when it came to the performance of belly dance spectacles, creating calculated scandals.

Lastly, Jamie N. Sanchez' **Repair: Mongolian Art as Reimagination of Pastoral Identity** explores some of the cultural production of the Chinese province of Inner Mongolia during the ongoing Hanification of Mongolian society. Sanchez describes in detail how much of the traditional lifestyle of Mongolians is being eroded by engineered cultural changes and how some Mongolians artists are working at consciousness raising about this fact and how they are attempting to reverse such cultural engineering and reclaim their culture and traditional ways of life.

Please stay healthy and enjoy this issue of the *IAFOR Journal of Cultural Studies*!

Holger Briel  
Editor-in-Chief

## **Applying Burn's Kineikonic Mode to a *Dangdut* Music Performance: Via Vallen's *Sayang* at the 2018 Indonesian Choice Awards 5.0 NET**

Alberta Natasia Adji, Airlangga University, Indonesia

### **Abstract**

Andrew Burn's Kineikonic Mode theory of categorising visual image texts by sorting them into contributory and orchestrating modes is well enacted as an analytical form. At a micro level, Burn's modes are used to examine elements such as set design, lighting, costume, colour, action, facial expression, filming, editing, and so on. In the following, the examined object is the video of Via Vallen's *Sayang* (a *dangdut* performance) at the Indonesian Choice Awards 5.0 NET, taken from the YouTube channel. Via Vallen is a rising *dangdut* singer who is considered unorthodox for presenting her performances with K-Pop, J-Pop, and Western features, as well as being the first female *dangdut* singer to do so. Vallen's performance at the award event received much praise since her Korean-culture-styled performance was deemed to disregard almost all of the "backward" and "vulgar" stereotypical characteristics of a *dangdut* show in general, providing a notable shift in the music genre's style and attitude. Vallen's success also functions as a prism that reflects the growing Islamisation movement in Indonesia that in religious, social and cultural spheres since the 1998 end of Suharto's authoritarian regime. Furthermore, it also indicates that this empirical approach is fruitful for filmmakers and film scholars and verifies Burn's noteworthy influence in the fields of film and multimodality.

*Keywords:* *Dangdut* music performance, Andrew Burn, Kineikonic mode, Via Vallen, visual image text

## Introduction

This article primarily focuses on the methodological question of how Burn's kineikonic theoretical principles are put to the test in analysing the modal choices of the ground-breaking phenomenon of an Indonesian dangdut performance, Via Vallen's *Sayang* (literally meaning "Darling" or "Sweetheart"), which was performed at the 2018 Indonesian Choice Awards 5.0 NET. It is considered to be a catchy as well as a noteworthy portrayal of the modernity and creativity of Via Vallen, a rising contemporary Indonesian dangdut singer. Within this in-depth discussion of comparing other cinematic scholars, Burn's kineikonic modes are applied to examine the modes and representations portrayed in the video, and they will be seen as the most effective means of reading and elucidating contemporary, globalised cultural products. This article will also connect Vallen's choices of onstage style and representation with how they seem to be effective in countering sexism in the music industry, which go hand in hand with the Islamisation of politics in Indonesia after the fall of Suharto's New Order in 1998.

At the beginning of the twenty first century, British media scholar Andrew Burn garnered a lot of attention for being the author of around half a dozen books and various articles in the fields of media arts education, multimodality and play. But, first and foremost, he is most acknowledged for the development of the theory of the Kineikonic Mode by emphasising how the modes of the moving image (speech, sound, action, colour, etc.) can complement one another in creating kineikonic texts, be it film, video, videogame, animation, and so on. Also, Burn pays attention to how these kineikonic modes can create meaning that is governed by cultural and social norms in the digital era.

Looking back to "the original Western" tradition, the initial semiotic principles were postulated by two primary figures, American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1857-1913) and Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1839-1914). There are three significant points found in Peircian semiotics: a sign classification based on the connection of signs to "the world", the semiosis process, and the interpretant classification (Hodge and Kress, 1988, p. 21). In this way, Peircian semiotics stipulates that sign can only become iconic through its similarity to what it represents, and that its function works only by its connection to "the world", in relation to which the object is represented. Saussurean semiotics is much more relational in that it holds that a recipient creates an arbitrary relation between his/her external world and his/her mental representation and that meaning is only achieved through the whole of the system (Hodge and Kress, 1988, p. 22).

Kress' visual representation perspective was created under the impression of the 1960s and 1970s Paris School, joining the principles of Saussure and other linguists namely Schefer, Barthes, Lindeken, Metz, Nattiez and others (Kress and van Leuwen, 1996, p. 6). Moreover, it also depended on the systemic-functional semiotic concepts coined by Michael Halliday. Kress stresses that mode is indeed something that a certain community chooses to keep and utilise as mode, catering for speech, both still and moving images, writing, action, music, facial expressions, colours, and so forth (Kress 2010, p. 87).

According to Kress, there are two steps constituting the sign-making process, which are the signified and the apt signifier. He also named his intervention the analogy principle (Kress, 2010, p. 70). As an example, if a three-year-old draws five triangles that stick to one another, forming a circle-like object, and declares that "this is an umbrella", it is apparent that the boy grasps the concept of an umbrella from its possession of many (triangle) canopy segments. Therefore, in the initial step, "an umbrella" becomes the signified that is represented by

triangles, and these triangles later become the apt signifiers. Moving on to the second step, the signified “triangle” is represented by the apt signifier of “(closely drawn together) five triangles”, eventually formulating the principle of analogy. The whole concept can be mapped like this:

Step one:

Analogy → “a triangle is a polygon with three edges and three vertices; an umbrella consists of triangles (canopy segments); triangles resemble an umbrella”

Step two:

Analogy → “an umbrella has many triangles (canopy segments); many triangles are like an umbrella”.

In this way, two metaphors are created: “triangles are like canopy segments”, and “many triangles are an umbrella”. The complex sign of “umbrella” is then established as the result of two conjoint signs, along with a double process of analogy, thus creating one metaphor: “this (the complex sign) is an umbrella”. In relation to the analytical discursive, indeed we ought to take the three-year-old’s point of view into account, since it includes his literal, physiological, psychological, cultural and semiotical condition. If the child lives at the suburbs of metropolitan London City that often rains, with so many people carrying and opening their umbrellas whilst walking to and from work, it is easy to perceive that the sign-maker child’s interest and position (affectively, physically, socially and culturally) at that moment has made him see the “umbrella” in that sense. Precisely, given the child’s lack of knowledge, awareness and maturity, his interest is still partial; but then again, all representations are, in truth, partial (Kress, 2010, p. 70).

Kress stresses that partiality of interest for sign-makers is treated as a key factor in creating the signified during the process of sign-making (Kress, 2010, p. 71). Somehow, this interest would mostly change into something else, often resembling the former object that the sign-maker was attracted to, later becoming the sign-maker’s criteria. Still, the interest or attention regarding the organisation of signs working as the motivated relation of a signified and an apt signifier is never anarchic or arbitrary. In general, representations are perceived to be the “whole” and “complete” form of something, but in reality, they are actually partial in connection to the embodied object or phenomenon. As a matter of fact, representations are regarded as “full” when they are linked to the sign-makers’ interest when these people are making the signs (Kress, 2010: 71). Attention is shaped by interest; therefore, the represented world is made up of attention. Meanwhile, analogy stands for interest and selects that which is to be embodied as the signifier into apt means that can represent it, namely the signifier. The outcome of this process is a sign, shaped by the relation of analogy, eventually resulting in a metaphor (Kress, 2010, p. 71). Therefore, a representation speaks for the sign-maker’s interest, while communication aims for the presumed interest of the sign recipient.

In terms of the general mistake that most signs are shaped in order to cater for the interests of the audience, Kress states that those signs are contrary to the normal condition where the social environment and the power relations in a certain environment determine the process of the sign-making (Kress, 2010, p. 72). In the eyes of the sign-makers, any sign-making situation/condition must be suited to their interest, thus steering the semiotic realm away from transparency (the communicational attention required by others) and more into opacity. Undoubtedly, the more powerful a figure is, the more s/he can turn a blind eye to transparency.

Yet, this does not mean that opacity causes a disturbance to the principles of the motivated sign, because those principles have already been embedded with pre-established social power.

Furthermore, Kress goes on to underscore the particular notions that can be discovered within the meaning-making modes. For instance, in writing, there are words, clauses, conjunctions and sentences that are governed by rules of grammar and syntax. Similar aspects can also be found in speech, music, image, and more. The details of the modes depend on each of their origin of social and cultural characteristics, the needs and the demands of their members. Yet, according to Kress' basic point of power being in action within the process of sign-making, these modes can be understood as moving counter clockwise given the presented modes possess the potential to forge a path for forming a different kind of society (Kress, 2010, p. 81).

An overview of the multimodality theory – from which Burn derived his theory – shows well-known semiotic theorist Gunther Kress' visual representation ideals. His basic notion is that the most important aspect of the sign is that we always have to reveal the interest of the socially formed individuals functioning as sign-makers; in this way we can understand what aspects found embodied in social phenomena or objects the sign creators decided to use in producing signs (Kress, 2010, p. 65). Kress and van Leeuwen offer four strata of communication, namely *discourse* (described as knowledge of some aspect in the world), *design* (described as selection of mode), *production* (described as selection of medium), and *distribution* (in which the text is communicatively delivered to its audience) (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001). While these principles are indeed precise, they do not contain the detailed and specified mode categorical distinctions that are necessary to examine texts of visual image. Therefore, another cinematic approach is postmodernist semiotician Christian Metz's cinematic grammar, which heavily stresses the levels of shot rather than image (Metz, 1974, p. 15). Thus, Metz's theory is more like a single-focused critique version (*multimodal microanalysis*) of film within a multimodal approach to cinematic texts (Bateman and Schmidt, 2011).

Other contributing reasons for the emergence of a new visual theory are that first, with preceeding semiotic film approaches such as Eisenstein's montage theory, Metz's film grammar, poststructural and psychoanalysis theory in film by Mulvey, Heath and Metz, any new moving image grammar is up to a point covered by psychoanalytic and poststructural theories (Burn and Parker, 2001, p. 2). The fact makes it obvious that in the world of moving images, there is no clear consensus about structures of meaning. Secondly, the majority of the previous theories were all concerned in the act of viewing films rather than creating them, thus making them unsuitable to the growing practices of viewing and creating moving image products in schools (Burn and Parker, 2001, p. 3). Thirdly, some of the moving image theories have come from Cultural Studies but all of them have yet to establish a significant theory for analysing social and cultural uses.

Andrew Burn and David Parker first coined the term of "kineikonic" in 2003, a portmanteau of two Greek words, *kinein* which means "to move", and *eikon* which means "image" (Burn and Parker, 2003). The kineikonic mode compiles a set of different signifying systems, with the most crucial ones being music, visual dramatic sequences, and the forms of editing, such as shot structure, transitions, duration, pace and rhythm (Burn and Durran, 2006, p 279). Burn notes that the mode was created as a designation for the moving image as a multimodal composition, with the framing structures that form spatial and temporal shapes surrounding sounds and images constructed by other modes (embodied movement, speech, music, and so forth), which are acknowledged as contributory modes (Burn, 2013, pp. 3-4). Among Burn's two major modes, there is some resemblance to Metz's cinematic language. Metz names his



“external” elements in film and cinema as *material expression*, in which they include moving photographic images, sounds, words, and music (Metz, 1974b, p. 24). They are considered the material extension for both cinema and film, and Metz insists on calling them elements instead of modes. Drawing a straight line between cinema and film, Metz posits that the ensemble of films are acknowledged as “the diverse messages of a single code” (Metz, 1974b, p. 37), thus confirming that “external” elements (lighting, audio visual, shot angle, etc.) are more of like continuous scales rather than paradigmatic ones. Meanwhile, Burn rejects his notions and embraces the significance of human sign-creators, and the ways in which they are aware of the degrees of the scale in the filmic grammar (Burn, 2013a, p. 11). He goes on to stress that “This produces something more like paradigmatic choices: camera angles, though adjustable on a continuous scale, become low shot, high shot, bird’s-eye shot...” (Burn, 2013a, p. 11). Therefore, in opposition to most of the filmic multimodal approaches which adopt a homogenous system, Burn’s kineikonic conception caters for multiple but specified dimensions within any moving image creations.

The following categories sum up the features that can be found in two of major modes of Andrew Burn’s kineikonic conception:

1. The contributory modes exhibit the postmodern modes of theatre in catering for aspects such as movement, lighting, costume, objects, sets, and more.
2. The orchestrating modes shows how: a) the camera provides spatial framing, transforms the static location of the audience, making up for proximity and angle to enable events to become mobile, and b) the practice of editing includes cutting and rejoining sequences of film, as well as indicating and adding temporal and locational shifts.

Yet, despite Burn’s clear and concise scholarly principles, at least some criticism has been aimed at his kineikonic mode, by exploring multimodal products that serve as counternarratives using Burn’s kineikonic modes, established as a multimodal microanalysis (Curwood and Gibbons, 2009, p. 59), a bit inconsistent in the case of Gibbons (2010). In her stand, Gibbons refers to various theorists at once: Hobbs (understanding stories produced in media), Jocson (slam poetry), Morrell (hip hop), Black (fanfiction), Burn (digital poetry), Hull and Nelson (digital stories), Burn and Parker (youth-produced videos) (Gibbons, 2010, p. 8). She criticises that these experts have done a tremendous job in examining youth media production, but they have discarded the importance of analysing the process of text creation, ignoring the “larger picture” that consists of a set of different activities and ideologies to create it, the space and location, as well as the creators’ different beliefs and identities (Gibbons, 2010, p. 8).

Moreover, despite these opposing arguments, Burn has been reinforcing and restating his new visual image conception through criticising another theorist’s arguments. In response to French theorist Alain Bergala’s *The Cinema Hypothesis* (2016), Burn states that he agrees with Bergala’s principles that the importance of film as art in education is viewed as a productively subversive practice, and the practices of viewing and interpreting films should be a creative process (Burn, 2018, p. 51). However, he disagrees with Bergala’s notions that language-isms serve as the highest value, and that films should be isolated from other media (Burn, 2018, p. 51). Instead, Burn prefers to build the kind of criticism that allows teachers and pupils to gain from examining representations and structures between and across media. Thus, this article tries to prove that Burn’s kineikonic mode, which is a form of development from Kress’ multimodality, is the most suitable one to read a media product that conveys cultural and socio-political agendas.

## The Dangdut Music Video: Via Vallen's *Sayang* at the Indonesian Choice Awards 5.0 NET

The video selected to test Burn's kineikonic modes analysis is a critically acclaimed performance by rising contemporary dangdut star Via Vallen, which was staged at the annual Indonesian Choice Awards 5.0 NET and held on Sunday, 29 April 2018 at the Sentul International Convention Center, Bogor, West Java. Her performance at that televised event was highly praised by many Indonesian singers and artists as Vallen was perceived to be the most successful figure in re-packaging and turning the long, vulgar-stereotyped dangdut performance into an elegant and a luxurious one, thus making many Indonesian artists feel optimistic about changing the typical "underclass, vulgar, erotic" dangdut's status to a more "elite, upperclass, elegant" music type (Hadiansyah, 2018). Via Vallen's performance was deemed crucial since from the early 1970s until the 2018s, dangdut's image as popular music has been crystallised as the music of "the little people or *rakyat kecil*" for most of its usual audience consisted of poverty-stricken, marginalised, lower middle-class people (Weintraub, 2010, p. 82).

Dangdut, as it is called, was named onomatopoeically for its typical drum sounds "dang" and "dut", and is oftentimes heard in homes, street vendors, public parks, public events, stores, *kampung* or village weddings, and so on (Weintraub 2010: 11). Dangdut is considered a genre of both Indonesian folk and popular music that is partly articulated from Hindustani, Malay and Arabic music, with a constant use of the tabla and a gendang beat during its performances. Therefore, all of its lyrics, musical sounds, performance styles and visual imageries constitute a natural reflection of the common *rakyat* and social issues (e.g. drunkenness, gambling, poverty, prostitution, infidelity, broken families, and more), making dangdut seldom receive the serious critical attention it deserves (Weintraub, 2010, pp. 82-83). Thus, it was apparent that Via Vallen's style performance and costumes, which adopted the rising K-Pop and J-Pop style trends, were deemed a breath of fresh air in the entertainment world of Indonesia. Besides inviting Via Vallen, the NET TV station invited international singers as guests in that event, such as Craig David and Hailee Stenfield, as well as renowned national singers such as Raisa, Isyana Sarasvati, Sheila On 7, Glenn Fredly, Tulus, Reza Artamevia, Anji, and many more.

The highly favorable reviews of Via Vallen's performance of her most well-known single *Sayang* (officially released on 24 February, 2018) at the Indonesian Choice Awards 5.0 NET were later confirmed to be affirmative when her video performance, posted on Youtube by the Netmediatama channel (Netmediatama, 2018), went on to be ranked number 1 on Youtube Trending and was viewed by more than 4.1 million people (Nugroho 2018). Most of her audience that night, which consisted of invited artists and nominees, were seen dancing to and singing Vallen's *Sayang*, much enjoying her performance. Additionally, two days prior to the event, on 27 April, 2018, Vallen had won the 2018 SCTV Music Awards for The Most Popular Dangdut Singer, defeating her "seniors", Ayu Ting Ting and Inul Daratista (Hadiansyah 2018b). That was her second victory, as in 2017 she had also won the same award for The Most Popular Female Solo Dangdut Singer.

The video exhibited the grandeur of a dance-and-music performance of Via Vallen (birth name: Maulidia Octavia), a young rising Indonesian contemporary dangdut *koplo* (a regional form of dangdut from East Java) musician whose works and performances had received widely acclaimed appreciation and prestigious music awards. The video recording gave spectators a brand-new appearance of a creative and elegant young female songstress who dared to go against the mainstream current of dangdut, who performed a dangdut song whilst dressing in a

“masculine” costume of a blue suit, a white shirt, and white sneakers, wearing her hair long with minimum make-up, setting up her back-up dancers in matching black suit costumes, collaborating in her song with young rapper Boy William, and managing her dancing style to appear agile, but at the same time elegant and “cool”, similar to those of Korean Pop boybands. Via Vallen’s life is portrayed to be a ceaseless flow between achievements and setbacks, with less than two weeks after her astounding performance, Vallen claiming to be a victim of sexual harassment by a foreign footballer from the Persija Jakarta club, who had sent her a harassing chat on Instagram (Kurniawan, 2018). Most fellow artists, both female and male, supported her decision in opening up and reporting her case to the authorities. The following month, however, Vallen had a change of fortune yet again as her latest song, *Meraih Bintang* (literally meaning *Reaching for the Stars*), was chosen as the theme song of the 2018 Asian Games, which were going to take place in Indonesia (Pemita, 2018).

The phenomenal video signifies an approach to multimodality on a contemporary dangdut performance. The examined dangdut show does not belong to the “traditional” dangdut presentations, but it is a distinctive array in which many modes found within it have been set to act as counternarratives toward mainstream dangdut performances. By capturing screenshots of the performance video, its modes are categorised as contributory (set design, costume, music, colour, lighting, action, facial expression and speech) and orchestrating (camera shots) modes.

### Microanalysis of Burn’s Modes in the Video: Digest of the Classifications

According to Andrew Burn, the medium of film has in many ways “adopted and adapted the modes of theatre” (2013, p. 2); thus creating two categories of modes: 1) *contributory modes*, which consist of action, lighting, costume, objects, sets, colour, and so forth, and 2) *orchestrating modes* which include camera framing (spatial and arch framing, angle, proximity) as well as the editing (segment, transition, counterpoint), cutting and re-joining of the film scenes. Burn (2013, p. 2) says that the combination of camera and editing makes it possible for the audience to have a mobile point of view of the dramatic scenery. Each of the contributory modes can always be broken down to smaller units such as embodied modes (dramatic action and speech), auditory modes (music), and visual modes (lighting and set design) (Burn, 2013, p. 8).

In contributory modes, there were eight significant “major” modes present in the video which can be viewed from Table 1, namely set design, costume, music, colour, lighting, action, facial expression, and speech. These eight modes equally accounted for the total number of 106 scenes from *Sayang*. The percentages here indicate the significance of the portion of each mode in the video in order to determine which modes count the most in the contributory mode category in Burn’s Kineikonic modes. Here, a scene is defined as a single act which occurs somewhere in a certain time period; it is usually ended by a shift of location or period (Zoebazary, 2010, p. 220). Since this is a music performance video, none of these eight modes cannot be omitted for each of them forms a sequence of the dramatic unified elements of that performance. Furthermore, because of the video’s aesthetic and musical purposes, among these eight profound modes, facial expression mode was the only mode which reached the least percentage (50%) while the other two modes accounted for almost the whole percentage, with costume (90.5%) and speech (95.2%), and the rest of the five modes (100%) of Via Vallen’s *Sayang*. This is the case since many of the shots were taken in order to focus on the “whole” scenery of the performance, with Via Vallen singing onstage surrounded by her male and female back-up dancers, and the large, cheering audience sitting on the ascending seating area.

**Table 1: Scenes classified in contributory modes in Via Vallen's *Sayang* (with total duration of 5 minutes and 48 seconds)**

Modes	<i>Sayang</i>
Set Design	100.0% (106)
Costume	90.5% (96)
Music	100.0% (106)
Colour	100.0% (106)
Lighting	100.0% (106)
Action	100.0% (106)
Facial Expression	50.0% (53)
Speech	95.2% (101)
	Total Scenes 106

In regard to orchestrating modes, the shots of the video (the movement of the cameras) were also examined for their importance in highlighting and reinforcing the modes mentioned before, thus contributing to the meanings these modes convey. From the shooting technique aspect, the video was shot with seven shooting technique categories simultaneously: bird eye view, medium close up, medium long shot, extreme long shot, big close up, sequence shot, and group shot, which can be seen from Table 2. The shooting techniques of the video are mentioned since they strengthen the meaning of each scene. The medium close up, medium long shot, and extreme long shot accounted for more than three fourths of the overall number of scenes in the video (76.2%). These three principal shots were mostly focused on the scenes when Via Vallen was singing and in action, her back-up dancers dancing, and her audience singing, swaying and rocking to Vallen's tunes. Meanwhile, the bird eye view, big close up, sequence shot and group shot accounted for minor portions of the video (23.5 and were more focused on the view of the spectators viewed from above and the scenery of the performance presented inside the crowded venue.

The scenes and the shots alternate very quickly back-and-forth between Vallen and the spectators during the height of the performance, especially during Vallen's singing the much-anticipated refrain of her song. Moreover, many medium close-up shots were focused on Vallen whilst she was singing, medium and extreme long shots were focused on her and her back-up dancers performing onstage, while big close-ups and group shots were taken of the faces of prominent celebrities singing and dancing to the song; bird eye views were focused on the spectators and the performers onstage from far above, and group shot sequence shots were directed to capture Vallen's performance from far away to up close slowly without changing scenes. Since the video was a live performance on TV, the selection of angles was clearly performed in order to stress the significance of certain moments in each performance.

**Table 2: Shots classified in orchestrating modes in Via Vallen's *Sayang* (with the total duration of 5 minutes and 48 seconds)**

Shots	<i>Sayang</i>
Bird Eye View	9.4% (10)
Medium Close Up	32.0% (34)
Medium Long Shot	22.6% (24)
Extreme Long Shot	21.6% (23)
Big Close Up	4.7% (5)
Sequence Shot	2.8% (3)
Group Shot	6.6% (7)
	Total Shots 106

Both modes and shots found in the video perform a reciprocal function towards one another, thus creating a significant impression for the subscribers or viewers of the video. On the whole, Via Vallen's *Sayang* comprised about a hundred scenes which strongly expressed new ways in delivering a dangdut music performance. While Vallen's song lyrics and melodies still remained true to the "classic" characteristics of dangdut songs, with her using tablas and gendang beats as her background music, Vallen has exemplified herself and her performance as the embodiment of the "progress" or "status elevation" in the dangdut tradition. Most of her spectators and viewers' ecstatic reaction has confirmed the notion that the long-underestimated "yokel" dangdut can finally occupy the same equivalent level as that of other types of music.

### 1. Contributory Modes




As it has been explained earlier, the contributory modes constitute a significant part of the filmed performance, with various subcategories that play significant roles in specifying and contemplating one another. Adopted and adapted from the modes of theatre, contributory modes deal with aspects such as sets, lighting, costume, music, action, and so on (Burn, 2013b, p. 2). These sub modes complement one another to form a unity in any performance found in any visual image text. In this part of the discussion, the eight subcategories are combined in twos for their closest correlation to one another. Therefore, the first part consists of set design and lighting modes, the second of costume and colour modes, the third of action and facial expression modes, and the fourth of music and speech modes.

#### Set Design and Lighting Modes in Via Vallen's *Sayang*

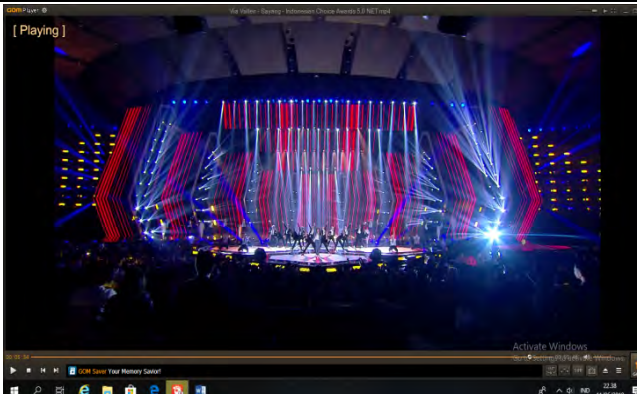
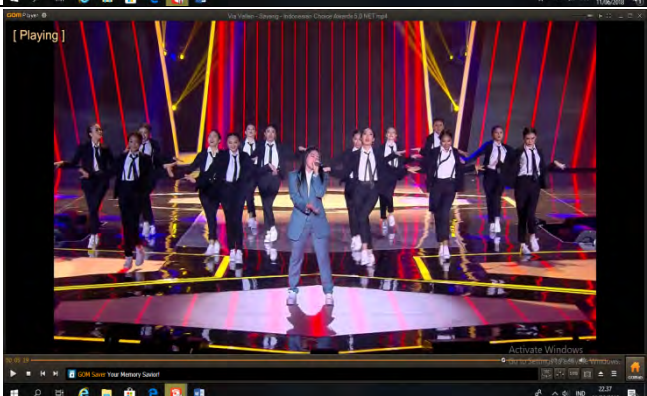
Given that the performance video contains contemporary intercultural characteristics, it is evident that modes of set design and lighting achieve one of the highest percentages (both are 100%), as shown in Table 1. A range of whole images of the flexible stage display, complete with striking, changeable colours of lights that were arranged based on the tone and the mood of the song. In this part of the discussion, summarised in Table 3, the lights also function as the determinants of the performance focus, which is first directed at the backup dancers, then at Via Vallen's entrance as the main "star", at her interaction with the audience, and finally at her complete performance with her backup dancers. While the stage set provided by NET TV for the occasion symbolises the TV station's acceptance and acknowledgement of the "lower-class" *rakyat* (the people) music, the spectacular and eye-catching lighting design is intended to emphasise the significance of the *dangdut* performance, at the same time making the bold statement that as part of Indonesian folk culture, there is no question that *dangdut* has finally been taken seriously and has received the profound support of the media "elites", being no

longer perceived as a mere underappreciated and unsophisticated subcategory of Indonesian pop music. Both modes are present and highly define supporting Via Vallen's performance, especially in providing the noteworthy themes of grandeur, elegance, and splendour all at once, which have significantly contributed to transform the long backward and plebeian-labelled image of *dangdut* music and performance. With such serious and beautifully cultivated set design and lighting arrangements as well as being included in such a prestigious award event (with several international guest singers), Via Vallen's performance has changed not only her own status as a *dangdut* singer, but also the status of *dangdut* music all over Indonesia.

**Table 3: Sample scenes in Via Vallen's *Sayang* identified as set design and lighting modes subcategories**

Set Design & Lighting Subcategories	Illustration	Corresponding Frame
<p>1. – The “standard” set of stage with the cornered rectangle-type of display.</p> <p>- Mostly with yellow lights as the lights statement, with deep blue light as the background.</p>	<p>1. The backstage dancers were performing for the opening of the Via Vallen's <i>Sayang</i> at the Indonesian Choice Awards 5.0 NET.</p>	
<p>2. The silvery blue lights zig-zagging to pinpoint their focus at Via Vallen as the main singer, with muted dark blue background.</p>	<p>2. Via Vallen emerged from backstage to sing.</p>	
<p>3. – The flexible stage, with Via Vallen singing and interacting with her cheering spectators.</p> <p>- The lights onstage are shown to be somewhat muted in order to focus on the signer and the gathering audience.</p>	<p>3. The stage and the performance resembled a K-Pop artist performance</p>	






4. During the peak of the performance, the lights were mostly formed in silvery dark blue and dark red, raining down and above to reinforce the profound moment.	4. The “rain of lights” onstage.	
5. The lights consist of yellow, dark red and dark blue in order to state the cheerful and overflowing energy of the audience and the performance itself.	5. Via Vallen and her female backup dancers were performing.	

### Costume and Colour Modes in Via Vallen’s *Sayang*

The costume and colour modes contribute the highest percentage in the performance (90.5% and 100.0%), as seen in Table 1. Just like the set design and lighting modes, costume and colour modes also serve as the basic elements in supporting moving images, especially since most of these are engaged in displaying performances. In this part of the discussion, seen from Table 4, the focus is on Via Vallen’s choice of costume and colour in bringing out the best in her performance. Vallen wore her long, straight, black hair down, natural make-up, with attire of a silver blue suit with trousers, a white shirt, and white sneakers. This is a complete contrast to the stereotypical music performed by erotic, sexy, extravagant, and revealing clothes that are usually worn by the majority of the *dangdut* female singers (Weintraub, 2010, p. 25). Indeed, the clothes of most female *dangdut* singers are notably different from Indonesian day-wear clothes, with the first category being long evening dresses and high heels, and the second category being revealing clothes which include hot pants, miniskirts, black leather outfits, and knee-high boots (Wallach, 2003, pp. 2–3). Via Vallen’s performance costume was, bluntly speaking, simple, neat, conservative and masculine compared to the extremely feminine, showy clothes of her predecessors. In fact, Vallen’s attire were almost identical to the iconic Korean-Pop male artists who have been known to prefer black tie costumes in most of their performances (Kim, 2017, p. 43), embracing the “cool” idol image of modern-day which belongs to the privileged class taste of entertainment. Her featured singing partner, rapper Boy William, also wore a similar performance outfit, with a burgundy-coloured suit, a white shirt, black pantofel shoes, his hair gelled and styled like many Korean male idols. Vallen’s backup dancers also wore the same kind of attire, with simple black suits, black ties and trousers, white shirts, white sneakers, minimum make-up, hair tightly braided on their heads, and wore simple loop metal earrings. Her audience, who consisted of familiar Indonesian A-listers from the entertainment industry, wore black tie suits. None of them wore revealing, “extravagant” suits with striking colours in the event. Their “neutral-coloured and elegant” choice of clothes and

colour has signified their symbolic status as that of the elite, upper-class society. More notably, Vallen's choice of wardrobe has served as a strong reminder of how significant the role of media industry in Indonesia is, with Vallen having agreed to conform to the standards of NET TV in order to declare her status in the ruling class society. In this way, Vallen and the image of *dangdut* is symbolically freed from all of the subversive predicates of the marginal people.

**Table 4: Sample scenes in Via Vallen's *Sayang* identified as costume and colour modes subcategories**

Costume and Colour Modes	Illustration	Corresponding Frame
1. Via Vallen wore her hair down in a simple, straight style, with her silver blue suit, trousers, a white shirt, and white sneakers.	1. Via Vallen's appearance and style	
2. Vallen's backup dancers wore simple black suits and trousers, white shirts, white sneakers, and hair neatly braided on their heads.	2. Via Vallen singing and dancing.	
3. Rapper Boy William appeared with a white shirt, a burgundy-coloured suit, black pantofels, and gelled, shaved hair like a K-pop idol.	3. Via Vallen and rapper Boy William performing together	






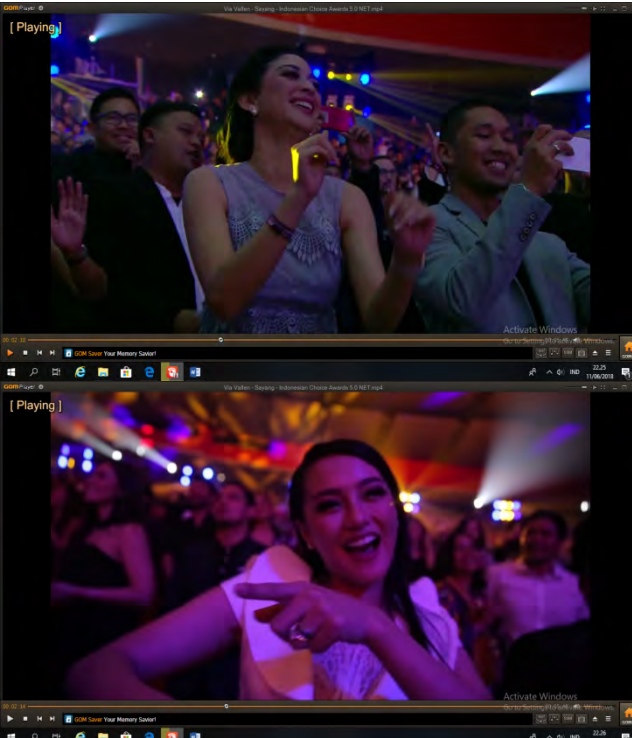


Anti-Pornography Bill (Heryanto, 2008, p. 17). Inul's style was considered "... subaltern and too coarse for the taste of the privileged class", with Inul daring to bring out her creativity in dancing, which managed to attract a significant portion of the privileged class to support her performance style (Heryanto, 2008, p. 27). She managed to gain the support of the former president of Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid, and thus Rhoma Irama finally withdrew his attacks and stopped the simmering dispute between him and Inul. However, Inul's appearance and dancing style were still viewed as expressions of the vulgarity, eroticism, revolt and moral decadence of Indonesian citizens (Heryanto, 2008, p. 27).

Going back to the video analysis, the facial expression of Via Vallen mostly stayed the same during the whole performance. Her mimics remained flat or as a "poker face" for most of her performance, and only from time to time did Vallen show a slight, polite smile whilst looking at her audience, coming up with a slightly energetic face when she announced the appearance of rapper Boy William, and her "I know, right?" sceptical face when she engaged in an interaction with Boy William. Her backup dancers only performed the "*alay*" (girl-like) dance infrequently, and with a comical face each, indicating no vulgarity or sexual seduction. Meanwhile, the majority of her spectators wore a cheerful, merry facial expression while singing and swaying to Vallen's song, which indicates their total support and acceptance in purely enjoying Vallen's ground-breaking performance. All of these facts serve as strong indications for the fact that many Indonesians, lower, middle, and upper class, actually do enjoy *dangdut* music, since it is deeply rooted in the *rakyat* culture. However, with rising Islamic conservatism and the strong image of the privileged class invested in elegance and honour, many of those belonging to that cultural and social group have become very selective in labelling and categorising kinds of entertainment input, according to the "white-collar" standards to which they consider themselves to adhere to. Therefore, Via Vallen's choice of wardrobe and dancing style are indeed heavily infiltrated by all of these social and religious demands instead of coming from her own ideals.

**Table 5: Sample scenes in Via Vallen’s *Sayang* identified as action and facial expression modes subcategories**

Action and Facial Expression Modes	Illustration	Corresponding Frame
1. Via Vallen carefully set her expressions to be mildly happy, flat, or slightly sceptical.	1. The sceptical expression of Via Vallen (During the performance, most of the time she wore the “flat” or “poker face” expression).	
2. Via Vallen only performed her “cool” signature pose by snapping her fingers, and never be seen to be swaying or <i>joget</i> .	2. Via Vallen’s performing her signature “cool” pose	
3. Via Vallen only performed her very few “feminine” actions, with a flat face and no over-the-top gestures.	3. Via Vallen performing the only feminine “...aku nangis...” (“...I cried...”) action.	
4. Vallen’s backup dancers only performed the slightly excessive dance with a comical face, intending it only to be a funny side of the performance.	4. The backup dancers did the “Alay” dance	

<p>5. Many A-listed celebrities were seen happily <i>joget</i> or swaying to Vallen's song, clearly enjoying themselves and approving of the "high-class" <i>dangdut</i> performance.</p>	<p>5. The celebrity audience were swaying to the song.</p> <p>6. The celebrity audience were merrily singing and enjoying themselves.</p>	
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### Music and Speech Modes in Via Vallen's *Sayang*

Both music and speech modes constitute almost the majority of the whole performance (100.0% and 95.2%), as seen in Table 1. The *dangdut* music in this video, just like the stereotypical *dangdut* in general, was accompanied from the beginning until the end with instruments such as *tabla* (the iconic "compulsory" *dangdut* instrument consisting of the two-drum set that gives the sound "dut"), *gendang kapsul* (a set of two small drums), flute, electric keyboard, electric guitars, accordion, mandolin, bass, and additional percussion (tambourine and maracas) (Weintraub, 2010, p. 60). In the video, the *dangdut* orchestra did not seem to appear anywhere, thus it might be possible that for Vallen's particular performance, NET TV had provided her with pre-recorded music, so that the audience would solely focus on her performance. As seen in Table 6, the transcription of Vallen's song *Sayang* contains the typical pattern of *dangdut* songs, which begins with the A section (which also functions as the main refrain), followed by the first verse, then the B section (also serving as the second refrain), going back to the A section, then an interlude, followed by the second verse (which was not sung, but performed in the rapping form by Boy William), going back to A section, then B section, followed by the third verse, going back to B section, and then the closing line.

The song is in Javanese, narrating the story of a woman who has lost her lover to another woman and wondered whether some day he would return to her. *Sayang* was first sung by Indonesian singer NDX A.K.A., and interestingly, the song was re-arranged or re-composed by Anton Obama (who wrote the lyrics) from an original song, *Mirai e*, which is a Japanese song performed by Kiroro, a female Japanese singer (Liriklaguindonesia.net, 2018). Therefore, the song can somehow be considered to be an "impure" Indonesian *dangdut* song since it originated from a Japanese song, with translated lyrics and *dangdut*-styled play. Complete with her K-pop attire and dancing style, Via Vallen's *Sayang* can be closely linked to typical Korean pop songs, with their "infectious beats" and a "simple, earworm-inducing melody" (Lie, 2012, p. 356). In this sense, the Korean-infused style is indeed seen as the effective "uplifting"

element for the traditional backwards-stereotyped *dangdut*, producing a bold statement that unless the “plebeian” *dangdut* is combined with “patrician” musical and performance elements coming from the Western, J-Pop, or K-Pop music, will remain underestimated and pushed aside, never being seriously accounted for being a noteworthy, Indonesian original cultural artefact, never considered equal to other non-Indonesian world-class cultural commodities.

**Table 6: Music transcription of Via Vallen’s *Sayang* identified as music and speech modes subcategories**

The Indonesian (Javanese) Lyric and Musical Chords of <i>Sayang</i>	The Translated Lyric and Musical Chords of <i>Sayang</i>
<b>Part A: (Refrain)</b> E G#m Sayang opo kowe krungu C#m G#m Jerite atiku mengharap engkau kembali A B G#m C#m Sayang nganti memutih rambutku A B E Ra bakal luntur tresnaku  E Wis tak coba ngelaleke jenengmu soko atiku G#m Sak tenane ra ngapusi isih tresno sliramu C#m Duko puja neng ati nanging koe ora reti G#m Kowe sik tak wanti-wanti malah jebul saiki A B G#m Kowe mblenjani janji jare sehidup semati C#m A Nanging opo bukti kowe medot tresnoku B E Demi wedokan liyo yo wes ora popo, E E-D#-C#m Insyallah aku iso lilo  <b>Part B: (Refrain)</b> C#m G#m Meh sambat kalih sinten A B E Yen sampun mekaten, merana uripku A B Aku welasno kangmas, G#m C#m	<b>Part A: (Refrain)</b> E G#m Darling, can’t you hear C#m G#m My heart is crying and hoping you would come back A B G#m C#m Darling, until my hair is white A B E My love will never fade  E I have tried to erase your name from my heart G#m Truly, I’m not lying, I still love you C#m I grieve in my heart but you don’t understand G#m I have warned you but it happened now instead A B G#m You broke the promise, you said till death do us part C#m A But the proof said otherwise, you broke my heart B E For another woman, but hey, that’s alright, E E-D#-C#m By the grace of God, I can accept that  <b>Part B: (Refrain)</b> C#m G#m To whom should I moan A B E



<p>Aku mesakno aku  A B  Aku nangis nganti metu eluh getih putih</p> <p><b>[Back to Part A Ref:]</b></p> <p>[interlude]</p> <p>E  Hari demi hari uwis tak lewati  G#m  Yen pancen dalane kudu kuwat ati  C#m  Ibaratke sego uwis dadi bubur  G#m  Nanging tresno iki ora bakal luntur  A B  Sak tenane aku iki pancen tresno awakmu  G#m C#m  Ora ono liane sing iso dadi penggantimu  B E  Wis tanggung awakmu sik cocok neng atiku  E E-D#-C#m  Nganti rambutku putih atimu ra bakal krungu</p> <p><b>[Back to Part B Ref:]</b></p> <p><b>[Back to Part A Ref:]</b></p> <p>E  Sayang opo krungu tangise atiku  G#m  Mengharap koe bali neng jero ati iki  C#m  Nganti rambutku putih, nangis eluh dadi getih  G#m  Mbok yo gek ndang bali ngelakoni tresno suci  A B  Aku marang sliramu kok ragu meng atiku  G#m C#m  Aku ra iso ngapusi sak tenane neng ati  A B E</p>	<p>If this is it, then my life suffers  A B  Please pity me, my dear,  G#m C#m  Please take pity on me  A B  I cried my heart out</p> <p><b>[Back to Part A Ref:]</b></p> <p>[interlude]</p> <p>E  Day by day, I have lived  G#m  If this is the way, then I have to be strong  C#m  When everything is done for  G#m  But this love will never fade  A B  Truthfully, I truly love you  G#m C#m  There is no one else to replace you  B E  You still belong to my heart  E E-D#-C#m  But until my hair is white, you will never hear it</p> <p><b>[Back to Part B Ref:]</b></p> <p><b>[Back to Part A Ref:]</b></p> <p>E  Darling, can't you hear me crying inside my heart  G#m  Hoping you would come back, inside my heart  C#m  Until my heart is white, crying my heart out  G#m  Just please come back to me, fulfilling our true love</p>
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<p>Mung kanggo sliramu cintaku tetap abadi</p> <p>E E-D#-C#m</p> <p>Selamanya samapi akhir hayat ini</p> <p><b>[Back to Part B Ref:]</b></p> <p>E A</p> <p>Percoyo opo pemujuamu</p> <p>A B E</p> <p>Cintaku tetap abadi</p>	<p>A B</p> <p>While I still have doubts in my heart</p> <p>G#m C#m</p> <p>I can't lie that in my heart</p> <p>A B E</p> <p>Only just for you, my love will always</p> <p>be everlasting</p> <p>E E-D#-C#m</p> <p>Forever until I die</p> <p><b>[Back to Part B Ref:]</b></p> <p>E A</p> <p>You should believe</p> <p>A B E</p> <p>That my love will forever stay</p>
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## 2. Orchestrating Modes

The orchestrating modes are focused on the filming and editing aspects in a visual image text. The process of filming involves various features all at once, namely spatial framing, angle, proximity, camera movement, and provisional duration (Burn, 2013b, p. 5). Meanwhile, editing consists of temporal framing as well as the arrangement of other contributory modes (Burn, 2013b, p. 5). Here, the orchestrating modes account for the “recording” features which allow for any performance to be recorded and viewed afterwards.

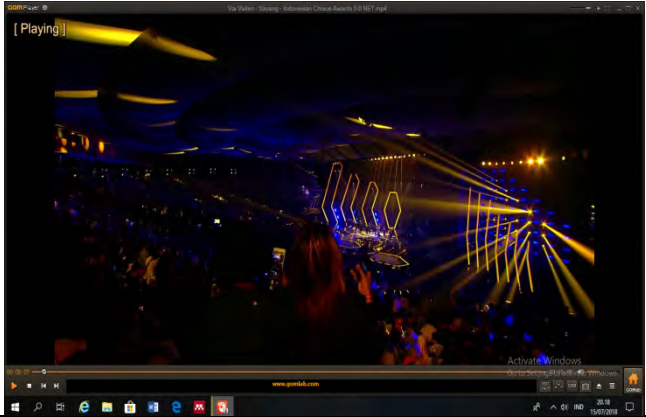


## Orchestrating Modes in Via Vallen's *Sayang*

In Table 2, the categorisation is focused on the angles of the camera during filming, with seven shot categories found: Bird Eye View (9.4%), Medium Close Up (32.0%), Medium Long Shot (22.6%), Extreme Long Shot (21.6%), Big Close Up (4.7%), Sequence Shot (2.8%), and Group Shot (6.6%). In Table 7, the orchestrating mode category is applied to the examples of screenshots, therefore enabling them to be analysed in terms of angle, framing, and shot. The majority of the angles were focused on eye level since the director wanted to emphasize the moments of Via Vallen's performance onstage, as well as the action of the enjoying spectators. This is closely related to the biggest portion which was given to the medium close-up shot in order to capture the costumes, dancing styles, and facial expressions of Via Vallen, her backup dancers, and the cheering audience. Some of the high and low angles were used to display the large number of the mass audience watching the event. This is also in line with the bird eye view and sequence shots found in the video.


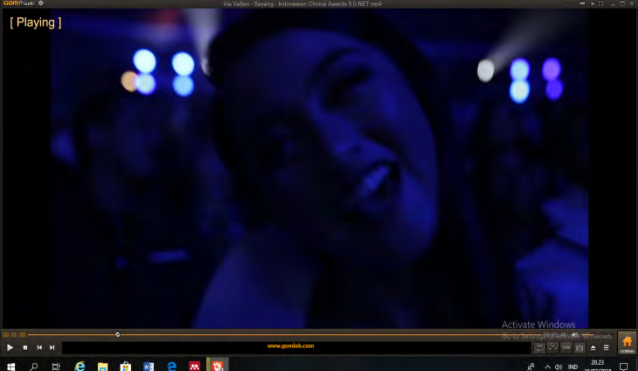


From this standpoint, it is obvious that NET TV intended to declare and at the same time reinforce the belief that the face of *dangdut* music has taken a creative and drastic departure, from degraded, vulgar music to the “cool”, modern and high class performance which is finally appropriate to be displayed to the world. The majority of the eye level angles and medium close up shots confirmed that intention. Many of these two types of angles and shots intended to focus on Via Vallen’s appearance and style, and the spectators’ purely happy faces when enjoying

her performance, signifying the affirmative approval of this new presentable *dangdut* performance.

**Table 7: Scenes of Via Vallen's *Sayang* identified as orchestrating modes subcategories**

Orchestrating Modes	Illustration	Corresponding Frame
1. High angle, Bird Eye View, framing with background	1. The stage is captured far from above, from the right corner behind the spectators' seats.	
2. Eye level, Medium Close Up, framing with no focus on background	2. Via Vallen is performing, the camera is focused on her action.	
3. Eye level, Medium Longshot, framing with adjusted background	3. The backup dancers are performing in unison against a dark backdrop with V blue and yellow lights.	



4. Eye level, Extreme Long Shot, framing with the whole stage background	4. The complete performance seen from a very far distance.	
5. Eye level, big close up, framing on background is blurred	5. A celebrity spectator is singing and dancing to the camera.	
6. Low angle, Group Shot, framing on background is quite focused on the gathering audience spread behind	6. The celebrity guests are swaying, dancing and singing to the song.	
7. High angle, Sequence Shot, the framing is flexible since the camera moved from capturing the stage to the audience smoothly without pauses or stops	7. The entire audience were captured by the camera in the tribune-like rows of seats from high up above.	

### Macroanalysis of Via Vallen's *Sayang*: An Insight into the Social and Political Conditions in Indonesia

In the Indonesian music industry, *dangdut* belongs to one of the popular music genres that is infamous for its objectifications of women's bodies, and close to the heart of the *wong cilik* or "little people". Most *dangdut* singers gain popularity by innovating new dance moves,

sexualizing their own bodies, and sensationalizing their acts in order to attract large crowds as well as record labels and television stations. Once they manage to attract the television industry, which is a rare case, these singers are required to “suit up” in order to fit with the national laws and the norms and interests of the middle-class (Decker, 2016, p. v). That includes cleaning up their act, de-sexualising, and eventually, reshaping their identities. The same can be said for many rising *dangdut* performers, such as Ayu Ting Ting, Zaskia Gotik, Devy Berlian, and of course, Via Vallen.

As mentioned, in 2003, the *dangdut* music industry was shaken when Inul Daratista, who was a skyrocketing *dangdut* performer at that time, had to face a career setback when she was accused of flaunting the Anti-Pornography Bill with her erotic “*goyang ngebore*” or drilling dance (which had become her trademark in many of her performances) (Heryanto, 2008, p. 15). Having become successful with her *dangdut* singing career which had started from performing in *kampung* (village) events, Inul was widely known in East Java, with her performances recorded on VCDs sold everywhere. Although Inul managed to rise to prominence and gain significant influence as an entertainer with the population, Inul’s tremendous fame was short-lived when she was targeted because of her “subaltern” and “vulgar” signature dancing style. Inul’s case proved that the style of dance choreography is a key in determining the future of high-profile *dangdut* entertainers (Decker, 2016, p. 4). With that in mind, new *dangdut* performers who want to “make it big” have to innovate new dance moves that can draw the attention of large crowds but at the same time prove to adhere to the anti-pornography laws, which are backed by the leading religious organisations.

According to Ariel Heryanto, increasing Islamisation has been the most conspicuous characteristic in the first decades of Indonesia after the fall of Soeharto’s New Order in 1998 (Heryanto 2015: 37). Up until a certain point, Islamisation in Indonesia has acted in reframing, setting up boundaries for, and determining the contents of the power struggle in the era of the Post-New Order, despite its impact not being spread evenly to all aspects of social life (Heryanto, 2015, p. 37). Of course, the rise of Islamisation also determines the way of how Indonesian screen culture operates. Many viewers supported the way of Islamisation works as they argued that Islamisation has effectively “fixed” the destructive potentials and influences; Islamisation has done so by replacing them with guided religious and cultural content norms for the (Heryanto, 2015, p. 38). Heryanto (2015) insists that within the secular world, which all this time has been globally dominated by the United States, has been subdued by the rise of Islamisation.

Going further, the most notable characteristic of this Islamisation is the expansion of the point-of-view, appearance, and massive celebration of many of the materials and practical aspects be easily accepted by many Indonesian people and regarded as Islamic values (Heryanto, 2015, p. 40). In screen culture, this can be seen demonstrated by the emergence of the very well-known 2008 religious film, *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (The Verses of Love), a film adaptation of a novel by the same name, written by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. In the *dangdut* music industry, the rising popularity of Rhoma Irama, “the King of *Dangdut*” in the 1970s, was regarded as the most prominent example of Islamic popular culture (Heryanto, 2015, p. 46). Thus, Rhoma Irama’s image is closely linked to patriarchy and Islamic values which dictate the flow of the *dangdut* industry, which all this time has often used female objectification as its main selling point.

It was no surprise that in 2003, Inul Daratista immediately found herself in conflict with Rhoma Irama and was severely targeted for her “vulgar” and “against-the-norm” drilling dance, which was regarded to have violated the conservative values of the mass society. Although the

sensational dispute ended with both parties making peace with one another, Inul's bright career as entertainer was cut short, only to re-emerge a few years later, but failing to achieve the same level of significant influence she had back then. Rhoma Irama acted as the symbol of conservative and patriarchal values which govern and set the rules of the entertainment industry, eventually determining the "frame" of the televised *dangdut* realm. This explains why many female *dangdut* performers have been careful in managing their images, particularly in their performances.

Moving on to the result of the microanalysis of Via Vallen's performance, Burn's kineikonic modes have effectively shown and examined the details of Vallen's choices of costume, dance choreography, and almost the whole "face" of her self-representation. Both the contributory and orchestrating modes, consisting of many detailed aspects that constitute Via Vallen's performance, have acted as supporting elements in establishing and reinforcing her music and dancing style. Since Vallen is still a newcomer in the *dangdut* music industry, her choice of wardrobe, choreography, and self-representation has shown her alert awareness of the growing religious conservatism in Indonesia as well as her will to conform to it in order to create a strong and permanent career. Looking back on the already-tainted history of *dangdut* in Indonesia, it is safe to say that Vallen's preferred performance style, closely resembling the popular K-Pop style, was carefully shaped and managed to suit the interests of the privileged and the influential religious parties, so that no aspects of her image would offend them, thus establishing her image as an innovative and conformative entertainer, safeguarding the future of her career in the public eye.

## Conclusion

Via Vallen's phenomenal performance at the Indonesian Choice Awards 5.0 has produced a drastic shift in style and attitude of *dangdut* music, which will likely be followed by many other singers in a similar vein. The transition from the stereotypically underestimated, backward and "underdog" music to the highly appreciated, Korean-styled, and sophisticated music has served as a prism to the current condition of Indonesian society, in which they have been deeply ingrained in a more conservative religious culture and a growing awareness to social status and images through the wide use of social media. In relation to Burn's kineikonic modes, the microanalysis has proven to be effective in examining visual image texts. Both of his contributory and orchestrating modes, along with each of their subcategories, can work well in complementing one another in highlighting the detailed features of the performance. The study, which has been conducted by analysing the relative proportional representations of the noted modes, revealed the dominance of set design, lighting, costume, action, facial expression, and colour modes in the contributory mode category. Meanwhile, in the orchestrating mode category, the eye level angle and medium close up are the two profound modes which dominated the landscape. Overall, Burn's modes have proven to be highly useful and comprehensive in analysing the video performance compared to other multimodal approaches since Burn's modes provide the intended spaciousness to elucidate the detailed cultural and socio-political symbols that are embedded in the video.

Connected to the essential notion of the meaning of Via Vallen's performance in the video, in the macroanalysis part, the modes have shown that the Indonesian politics of Islamisation, piety and fundamentalism have once again prevailed in dictating, directing, and determining the flow of the cultural taste and disposition. Vallen's show at the prestigious award event has confirmed the undoubted notion that *dangdut*, with its "authentic" performance style characteristics of skimpy outfits, erotic and seductive dance moves which provoke controversies and the

establishment of the Anti-Pornography Bill, will find it hard to surpass the glass ceiling set by the ruling parties and religious figures for they are regarded to be in opposition to cultural, social, and religious norms. Since *dangdut* has already been negatively stereotyped to be vulgar and belonging to the “lower” classes and the uneducated, Vallen’s choice of “cleaned-up” *dangdut* performance seems – at least according to the wide positive audience response – to have lessened the level of sexism that most Indonesian female musicians usually receive. Indeed, the fact also strongly supports the statement that, with the rise of conservative Islam following the downfall of Suharto in 1998, among both old and young generations, most of Indonesian society is still paying very close attention to the “packaging” or the “cover” in determining things that are viewed appropriate for them to consume.

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## **Psychobilly Psychosis and the Garage Disease in Athens**

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### **Abstract**

The complexity and the bizarre nature of Psychobilly as a music genre and as a music collectivity make it very convenient for reconsidering several views in relation to subcultures, neo-tribes and scenes. More specifically, the case of Greek Psychobilly can categorically present how subcultural trends can be disseminated across gender, social classes and national borders. This study aims to trace historically the scene of Psychobilly in Athens based on typical ethnographic research and analytic autoethnography. The research question is: Which are the necessary elements that can determine the existence of a local music scene? Supported by semi-structured interviews, the study examines how individuals related to the Psychobilly subculture comprehend what constitutes the Greek Psychobilly scene. Although it can be questionable whether there ever was a Psychobilly scene in Athens, there were always small circles in existence into which people drifted and stayed for quite a while, constituting the pure core of the Greek Psychobilly subculture.

*Keywords:* psychobilly, music genres, Athens, Post-subcultural Theory

## Introduction

According to the *American Countercultures Encyclopaedia*, Psychobilly is a subculture that emerged in the 1980s from the unlikely combination of rockabilly and punk rock. The provocative and sometimes outrageous style associated with psychobillies (also known as “psychos”) mixes the blue-collar rawness and rebellion of 1950s rockabilly with the confrontational do-it-yourself style of 1970s punk rock, a syncretism infused with themes from monster and horror films, campy sci-fi movies, and even professional wrestling” (Wojcik, 2013, p. 814).

Drawing from personal experience, being a Psychobilly in Athens around mid-nineteen eighties was quite costly and a dangerous adventure. First of all, it was very difficult to get informed about the developments of the British scene because, apart from the fact that Psychobilly was always overlooked by the mainstream music media, there was no internet. There were neither clubs and pubs nor radio stations playing that kind of music in Greece and you could only get imported LPs that cost a fortune. To follow the original British style, you had to travel regularly to London in an era with no low-cost airlines, or get connected with people that lived abroad, as there were no shops selling DocMartens boots, double sole creepers, Harrington jackets, and so on. Walking alone down the city centre of Athens you had to deal with all the people who made fun of you because of your quiff and eccentric looks; while sometimes it was also dangerous in case you ran into skinheads, the bearers of another imported British subculture, that would like to beat you up and get your precious clothes and boots. To avoid all this trouble, it was convenient to hang out in Exarheia, a district downtown Athens which constitutes the centre of leftist, anarchist and anti-fascist communities, where you could meet your punk, new wave, rockabilly, and so on. friends. In this area there were always solid circles of people affiliated to all these imported music collectivities. The wider boundaries of all these music circles were often dubious and overlapped, so membership was frequently partial and temporary. Anyhow, this fact did not mean that the roaming individuals ever abandoned the general network of people that was devoted to the unconventional Anglo-American rock music scene which was rooted in the area.

Psychobilly appeared in Athens as a variant form of mainstream Anglo-American subcultural trends. It used signs, behaviours and values which had meaningful symbolism for other imported subcultures, creating a new hybrid genre. In this respect, it synthesized a new identity which stood at the margins of subcultural music collectivities and, consequently, far out from the traditional Greek culture.

However, globalization and the imminent “space of flows” and “timeless time” brought by the “network society” (Castells, 2013) projected new comprehensions regarding the global (Barber, 1995; Ritzer, 2004) and the glocal (Seago, 2004) after the millennium. Nowadays, imported music genres and subcultures are regarded as natural developments of a globalized world and not as foreign cultural invasions (Pilkington, 2002).

## Theoretical Perspectives

Youth cultures have been the subject of extensive academic writing for many years. This article seeks to explore a music collectivity that was typically related to youth cultures, although nowadays the age factor is revisited by many scholars exploring music constellations (Kotarba, 2005; Bennett, 2007).



While investigating various subsets of society or cultures within the dominant culture, a great number of scholars applied different terms to this phenomenon, such as counter-mores (Lasswell, 1935); contra-cultures (Yinger, 1960); sub-cultures (Gordon, 1947; Cohen, 1959; Cohen, 1972; Hall and Jefferson, 1976; Hebdige, 1979); and recently some more flexible expressions such as neo-tribes (Brookman 2001) and scenes (Bennett and Peterson, 2004; Straw, 2015; Tsangaris and Agraftoti, 2017). Most of them regarded those terms in connection with youth cultures and examined them through various perspectives, particularly as socialization mechanisms, as issues related to social class, as deviance forces, as marginalization or integration systems, and so on, but always in relation to the dominant culture.

Music collectivities are often constituted within a society supported by imported music genres and generally xenogenic subcultural forms. In Business Studies, it has often been asserted that consumers from less developed countries regard with great esteem imported products from highly developed countries (e.g. Goldberg and Baumgartner, 2002). Considering certain imported forms of subculture from the Anglo-American culture industries, such as music, films, fashion or lifestyles, within the framework of the cultural hegemony theory (Sassoon, 2002) we may come to similar assumptions concerning their appreciation that these products receive from individuals of the less developed countries. In short, imported subcultural products from western countries usually enhance the prestige of the host. Furthermore, when a subcultural trend is imported from abroad, several related concepts such as its initial connection with a social class or its socio-historical roots are often ignored. Imported music genres and subcultures are very often adopted from people coming from different areas of the socio-economic strata in comparison with their authentic bearers in the countries of origin (Shahabi, 2006, p. 121).

To counteract any confusion that brings cross-cultural differences into the reception of imported subcultural forms and in order to sidestep the restrictive consequences and excessive fluidity that arise when using different terms such as subcultures<sup>1</sup>, neo-tribes<sup>2</sup> or scenes<sup>3</sup>, we will attempt to use all those terms and adjust them conveniently to the framework of our research.

In fact, Psychobilly can be an ideal example to explicate restrictive tensions or the sense of vagueness that arise with all these terms. Psychobilly is a rock genre and a music collectivity that embraces a great variety of characteristics under the dominant beat of psychotic rockabilly. By keeping a primacy in mixing rockabilly and punk beats, this music style may also include elements of garage, trash, country, blues, hillbilly, glam rock, goth, surf, heavy metal, and so on, very often performing this ensemble via theatrical horror acts.

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<sup>1</sup> Generally, subcultures are regarded as groups of people that have something in common with each other which distinguishes them, in a way, from the members of other social groups (Thorton, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> Maffesoli's (1996) neo-tribe theory refers to ambiances or states of minds that can be expressed performatively by ways of conduct, lifestyles, appearances and zeal, constituting usually ephemeral communities; thus, according to this view individuals can easily shift ground from one social grouping to another or participate simultaneously in two or even more clusters without being dismissed (Gore, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> The term "scene" has been used in the past to describe without significant political and class references or determined stylistic and musicological boundaries the local or universal settings of musicians, organizers and fans, affiliated to music genres in due time (Harris, 2000; Bennett and Peterson, 2004).

Brackenridge's *Hell's Bent on Rockin* (2007) can be considered a significant publication on Psychobilly subculture as well as some other of his books, such as "*Let's Wreck: Psychobilly Flashbacks from the Eighties and Beyond*" (2008), "*Psychobilly*" (2009) and "*Vinyl Dementia: 1981-87 Pt.1: Psychobilly and Trash Record Guide*" (2004). Through these publications, Brackenridge offers a spherical perspective on bands, record companies, fanzines, venues, clothing, haircuts, lifestyles and people that were essential for this phenomenon. In his work "*Deathrow: The Chronicles of Psychobilly: The Very Best of Britain's Essential Psycho Fanzine Issues 1-38*", Wilson (2006), also offers a collection of the "*Deathrow*" fanzine issues which consist very important sources of information concerning Psychobilly music and subculture.

Other valuable sources of information are three documentaries on the subject, namely, Decay's "*Psychobilly: A Cancer on Rock & Roll*" (2004), a Cherry Red studios production called "*Psychobilly behind the scene*" (2006), as well as a Kornowski and Halloween Mike Docu production entitled "*The Story of Psychobillies*" (2006), all of which focus on the British experience but also on the wider Psychobilly scene.

Strangely, apart from a few articles, there is almost nothing published in academic literature about the Psychobilly subculture. Sklar (2008) discusses how the aesthetic of the living dead culture manifests itself in Psychobilly through band names, song titles, lyrics, visual artwork and theatrical costuming. Kattari (2011) explored the interconnected motives which drive Psychobilly musicians and fans to identify with this alternative, underground culture, tracing the integral role it plays in their lives and the ways in which they creatively reconstitute aspects of the cultural past in the present. Finally, Dipple (2015) investigated Psychobilly's origins, focusing upon the contribution of zombie culture to the development of this music subculture with its historical origins in the marginalised wastelands around the Heathrow Airport in the far West of London and the social housing estates of Hammersmith.

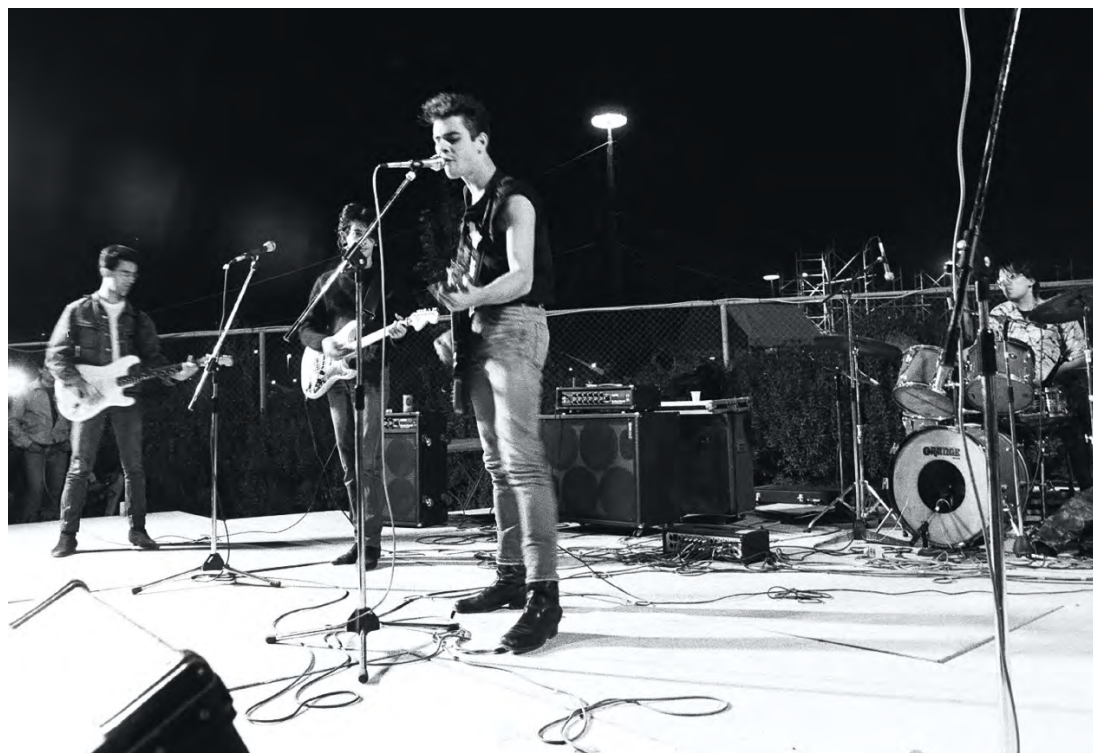


Figure 1: The Last Drive. Image courtesy Giorgos Nikolaidis Photography.

## The Psychobilly Scene

Below, we will consider Psychobilly to be an active worldwide scene in a fluid form, which apart from its particularities of national sub-scenes, includes also trends coming from certain stylistic and music elements related to many other genres such as Rockabilly-Hillbilly, Punk, Country, Blues, Sixties Garage, Goth, Shock rock, and so on.

The term “Psychobilly” was first used by Wayne Kemp in the lyrics of a song that he wrote for Johnny Cash<sup>4</sup> and some years later it was included on flyers promoting The Cramps concerts (Spitz and Mullen, 2001). In the early nineteen-eighties it was performatively adopted by several British bands like the Meteors, King Kurt, the Sharks, Guana Batz, Frenzy, Demented Are Go, Krewmen and many others to describe their peculiar frantic rock ‘n’ roll sound (Brackenridge, 2007).

Thus, Psychobilly as a consolidate music genre gained track during the early nineteen-eighties in Great Britain. Brackenridge (2007, p. 18) specifically noted that the Meteors were the pioneers “at the eye of the psychobilly hurricane”. British Psychobilly embodies the subcultural core of the global scene and justly can be regarded as the major model for its authentication process. However, there could never be an absolute, incontestable authority concerning what the wider Psychobilly scene includes diachronically and globally, as many musicians from several countries have been performing similar tones and styles some decades earlier, such as Hasil Adkins, Marty Lott, the Cramps, Screaming Jay Hawkins, Screaming Lord Such and many others. Furthermore, it should also be considered that Psychobilly is continually in a process of change, evolving as a music genre, as a subculture and as a scene.

As Wojcik (2013, p. 814) asserted, Psychobilly bands celebrated “gruesome, depraved, and taboo topics, usually presented in an ironic manner: revenge, lust, murder, insanity, death, demons, massacre, lurid sex, and apocalypse, as well as hot rods, werewolves, zombies, vampires, voodoo, flying saucers, booze, broken hearts, and outlaw hillbillies”.

After the British development of the scene, these tunes spread rapidly and bands playing Psychobilly music appeared all over the world; Batmobile formed in 1983 in the Netherlands, Washington Dead Cats in 1984 in France, POX in 1984 in Germany, Stringbeans in 1985 in Finland, the Swampy’s in 1986 in Belgium, the Reverend Horton Heat in 1986 in United States, Mad Sin in 1987 in Germany, Cyclone in 1987 in Italy, Nekromantix in 1989 in Denmark, Broncats in 1992 in Spain, the Flatliners in 1995 in Austria, HorrorPops in 1996 in Denmark, the Astro Zombies in 1996 in France, Tiger Army in 1996 in United States, the Lucky Devils in 1999 in France, the Creepshow in 2005 in Canada, and many more (Brackenridge 2007).

A basic factor for the consolidation and the evolution of the early British Psychobilly scene that influenced also the wider global scene was the “Klub Foot”. It was hosted at the Clarendon Hotel in Hammersmith in West London and promoted also Punk, Goth, Rockabilly and Trash groups. “Klub Foot” became a prominent part of the global Psychobilly scene as in nineteen eighty-four it started to release live compilation album series with the title “*Stomping At The Klubfoot*” on ABC records, that built up the music genre. However, within the liquid spirit of Psychobilly scene apart from the “pure” Psychobilly<sup>5</sup> groups like Frenzy, Demented Are Go,

<sup>4</sup> Johnny Cash and the Tennessee Three (1976), “One Piece at a Time”, Hendersonville: Columbia

<sup>5</sup> There is a central discourse in the psychobilly scene concerning authenticity, with Paul Fenech claiming that the Meteors are the only pure psychobilly band (Decay, 2004).

Torment, Batmobile, Guana Batz, those compilations included also rockabilly, garage and trash groups such as the Caravans, Restless, the Primevals, the Milkshakes, the Tall Boys, and so forth (Brackenridge, 2007; Tea & Cake for the Soul, 2019; Pryce, 2015).

The neo-tribe approach concerning youth cultures can be easily applied to the early British Psychobilly epoch of the nineteen-eighties, as according to Brackenridge (2007, p. 49), it was the fans of rockabilly, rock 'n' roll, Oi, punk, ska that provided the followers to the growing Psychobilly followers as well as many ex-mods, heavy metal and jazz supporters. Jo Shalton, a member of the Psychobilly community from that era, affirmed that the psycho scene never had any prejudices concerning the subcultural origins of its followers (Brackenridge, 2007, p. 50). Thus, sometimes people affiliated with other subcultures migrated to the Psychobilly scene for a couple of years or less and then moved back to rockabilly, punk, post-punk, heavy metal, or passed into other music collectivities such as Indie pop or the Madchester scenes, and so forth.

The wider Psychobilly scene initially moved about on the margins of the subcultural environment creating a social network through word of mouth, albums, magazines and fanzines (Wilson, 2005). "The Night Of The Long Knives", "Big Rumble" and "Bedlam Breakout" in Great Britain, "Pineda de Mar Psychobilly Meeting" in Spain and "Psychobilly Earthquake" in Bremen are considered as some of the vital festivals that consolidated the substantial scene (Decay, 2004; Kornowski and Docu, 2006). Subsequently, web sites like "PsychobillyOnLine" and "WreckingPit", and, most recently, a great number of Psychobilly groups on social media, created a virtual Psychobilly scene.

There is general agreement between music commentators that Psychobilly and the people affiliated with it avoid taking political stances, showing their discontent concerning the attitudes of politicians and political youths (Downey, 2004; Katz, 2012; Brackenridge, 2007; Wojcik, 2013). However, according to Mouffe (2001), every form of artistic practice either contributes to the reproduction of the established order or contributes to its degradation and critique; so in this sense, Psychobilly music and its core subculture, although seeming apolitical, performs semiotic warfare against the mainstream youth culture and the music establishment.

Psychobillies are dressed in a combination of different subcultural styles. In the nineteen-eighties, males and females alike, used to wear the same clothes, borrowed from other subcultures, such as rockabilly double sole creepers and tartan shirts, punk style tight bleached jeans, leather jackets and band logo t-shirts, skinhead Harrington or flying jackets and DocMartens boots, and so forth. Gradually, females started to appear also in black dresses, miniskirts and long hair with victory rolls or quiffs, mixing both goth and rock 'n' roll styles. However, the hybrid stylistic elements that can be considered as features of an original Psychobilly subculture are the neo-traditional horror tattoos and the high sharp sculptured quiff hairstyles with shaved the back and sides, which were very eccentric back in the nineteen-eighties, but later were gradually imitated by mainstream fashion.

Brackenridge (2007, p. 144) asserted that, in the early years, there was already a huge number of Psychobilly female followers in the British scene; however, it was hard to find women performing in bands. Be that as it may, by adopting unisex looks, female psychobillies were intuitively expressing their opposition to stylistic diversities and the social construction of (mainstream) gender, reflecting the changing spirit of the era that was moving from the second to the third feminist wave.

When Psychobilly music became a global phenomenon over the next decades, several women appeared in bands that fall in the general realm of Psychobilly, such as HorrorPops, the Creepshow, Nekromantix, and so forth. Thus, while during that period the Riot grrrl movement was globally re-awakening the female consciousness, several Psychobilly women entering the music industry started gradually to differentiate themselves in their outfits from the males of the scene, constructing the image of a devilish femme fatale. It is interesting to note here that in 2010, Patricia Day from the HorrorPops sued Mattel Inc. which had started selling Barbie dolls in her image without her authorization (Farel, 2010); she was one of the first women that constructed a purely female image for herself in Psychobilly.

There does exist a great controversy about the wider diachronic Psychobilly scene and gender equality in relation to go-go dancers and neo-burlesque strippers that often nowadays perform shows during Psychobilly concerts. All those acts are usually considered by most gender rights activists as obvious cases of female objectification. However, event organizers, female psychobillies and the tease queens themselves, declare that these acts resemble artistic parodies that bend gender norms, than female humiliation and objectification (Snyder, 2005). Wojcik (2013) considers Psychobilly to be a strongly heterosexual and primarily white male phenomenon in which males express themselves in a kinds of working-class masculine sexuality, while females present a hyper-feminized look as pinup models, reflecting together the ‘femme fatale’ and the third-wave feminist ‘tough chick’ style. However, it is right to say that Psychobilly women support feminism and reflect “monster/beauty” (Buszek, 2006; Frueh, 2001); which is a condition that deviates from conventional female behaviour and appearance, in contradiction to the standard cultural expectations of beauty. Psychobilly monster/beauty eroticizes bodies that differ in age, race, sex and shape, embracing them without degrading or aggrandizing their natural aspects.



Figure 2: The Ducky Boyz. Image courtesy Maria Boutz Photography.

## Methodology

The qualitative analysis presented below is based on ethnographic research that is supported by analytic narrative autoethnography. It elicited diachronic opinions and experiences concerning the Greek Psychobilly scene (focusing mostly on the Athenian scene), that were gathered by informal interviews during the years 2018-2019, and by the authors' own subcultural involvement, as data for presenting the specific subculture, as participant observers. In analytic autoethnography, the researcher is personally engaged in a social group setting or culture, as a full member and active participant, but retains a distinct and highly visible identity as a self-aware scholar and social actor within the ethnographic context. In this sense, sometimes 'people who were formerly the subjects of ethnography become the authors of studies of their own group' (Maréchal, 2010, p. 43).

During the time period the investigation lasted, the population of psychobillies in Athens was very limited; We therefore used our personal social networks and experience for the selection of the subjects and which was based on two main criteria: (a) affiliation with the scene and (b) age in order to examine differences between Psychobilly generations (waves).

Another factor considered significant for the research was the gender of the subjects. We therefore engaged with the percentage of males and females in the Greek scene that, according to the interviewees' opinions and our own experience, has a ratio of one female to three males. Hence, the study is based on semi-structured interviews conducted with eight individuals between the ages of 25 and 53 related with the wider Garage-Psychobilly scene of Greece during the period 1982-2018. Two subjects were females and the other six were males. Four of the male subjects were themselves involved in bands. Four of the subjects were related to the old Garage-Trash-Psychobilly period and the other four were affiliated with the younger Psychobilly generations. All subjects were related to the Athenian scene apart from one who hailed from Thessaloniki.

An explicit statement of identification as a member of the Psychobilly community was not deemed essential for the selection of the subjects as it became clear that the constellation was quite liquid, complex and controversial; however, all subjects affirmed their strong affiliation with the scene.

A brief introduction was given each time to the subjects followed by informal questions in order to give them the opportunity to develop their narratives. Five of the eight interviews were recorded using audio recording equipment and the rest were conducted online. Our role was to arrange the open-ended semi-structured interviews, to encourage contributions, to manage disruptions and to ensure that the dialog remained focused on the topic of our interest. Thus, the data of the analysis includes interviews notes, journals or books references and dialogue between the authors, using a mixed approach with theoretical research, a typical ethnographic approach, and analytic autoethnography.



Figure 3: The Crazyed. Image courtesy Hippocrates Tavlarios Photography.

### Discussions of the Psychobilly Scene of Athens

According to the researchers' personal opinions, Nick Garrard's compilation album "*Rockabilly Psychosis and the Garage Disease*" represents what the Psychobilly scene meant for Greeks at least at its first phase during the nineteen-eighties. This sixteen-track compilation was released by the British record label "Big Beat" and contains psychotic rock 'n' roll songs from the early nineteen-sixties until the era when the album came out in 1984, and included the bands Hasil Adkins, the Trashmen, the Sonics, Link Wray, the Cramps, the Gun Club, the Meteors, the Sting-Rays, the Milkshakes, Guana Batz and many others. It was this kind of music that the first psychobillies of Athens were mostly influenced by.

The origins of the Athenian Psychobilly scene can be traced back to 1983 when several Psychobilly circles began to appear in various areas of the city such as Patissia, Ampelokipoi, Kallithea and Thiseio, shaped by individuals that were coming from Punk and Rockabilly backgrounds.

Alex from the Last Drive<sup>6</sup> believes that in the early nineteen-eighties, the punk scene was the core that shaped most of the new succeeding scenes in Athens. He admitted that Punk changed the way he personally perceived and understood rock music in general. Then some of his friends introduced him to garage music and he was fascinated. He stated:

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<sup>6</sup> "The Last Drive" is a garage-punk band formed in Athens in 1983.

Those days there was a general movement for change, there was a strange weirdness everywhere, we were very attracted by Punk, but we could listen to many other genres also, we liked Garage, Rockabilly, Psychobilly, etc.

He reckoned that the punk scene in Athens was initially the central frame, and said,

But often people were engaged simultaneously to various scenes, embracing from time to time other subcultures becoming rockabillicies, psychobillies, skinheads, etc.

Harry from the Ducky Boyz<sup>7</sup> asserted that,

When we formed the band in the beginning of the millennium we all came from different music backgrounds such as Garage, Punk and Psychobilly... ..I think that comparing to other western countries this kind of music scene in Greece has always been quite small; people that perform those music genres are very often friends and usually interact and influence each other”.

Kostas from The Thriller<sup>8</sup> submits that, “there are certain core subcultures such as Punk, Garage, Rockabilly and Psychobilly shaping a wider scene in which, once you are in, you cannot move out very easily, however you can shift from one genre to the other”.

Most of the subjects that we interviewed believe that many groups like Speedball<sup>9</sup> or the Bullets<sup>10</sup>, that play different kind of music, were supportive to the wider Greek Psychobilly scene, confirming that during the nineteen eighties and till the millennium there was not an actual Psychobilly scene, but a subcultural condition constituted only by the fans of British Psychobilly groups as there were no Greek bands. Christos from the Crazyed<sup>11</sup> argued that, “there was never a scene from the part of music making until the millennium since there were no Greek psychobilly record productions, only some demos and the first album of “the Last Drive” in the nineteen eighties”.

Furthermore, there were no Psychobilly clubs in Athens that could consolidate the scene. Psychobilly followers in the nineteen eighties used to attend Punk-Garage concerts by groups such as the Last Drive or old-style Rockabilly bands of that era like the Blue Jeans<sup>12</sup> or the Outsiders<sup>13</sup>. They also used to go to clubs that played post-punk and garage music such as “Berlin” at Thiseio close to the historical centre, or “Point”, “Trash”, “Enalax” and “Alothi” at Exarheia downtown Athens.

During the nineteen-nineties, the Athenian Psychobilly scene was in decline as there was still no music production industry from them and the number of Psychobilly fans was decreasing.

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<sup>7</sup> The Ducky Boyz is a garage-psychobilly-surf-punk band formed in Athens in 2002.

<sup>8</sup> The Thriller is an old school psycho-rockabilly band formed in Athens in 2009.

<sup>9</sup> The Speedball was a rockabilly band formed in Athens at the turn of the millennium.

<sup>10</sup> The Bullets is a rockabilly band formed in 1988 in Thessaloniki.

<sup>11</sup> The Crazyed was a psychobilly (psycho rock ‘n’ roll or desperate rock ‘n’ roll as they used to call it) band formed in 2000 in Thessaloniki, however they played a great role for the wider psychobilly scene in Greece.

<sup>12</sup> The Blue Jeans (1984-1995) was a rockabilly band formed in Athens.

<sup>13</sup> The Outsiders is a rockabilly band formed in 1988 in Athens.



According to the researchers' investigation on their social networks, the first-generation fans had already reached a stage in their life cycle that made them want to spend more time with their families, as most of them had gotten married and had children. However, at the end of the decade, Greek Psychobilly bands started to show up again and new fans began to make their appearance after the revival of the global Psychobilly scene.

Nowadays, although there are bands playing Psychobilly music such as the Thriller and the Ducky Boyz, the pure Psychobilly audience continues to be limited. Harry reckons that 'from the year two thousand onwards everything has become fashion'. He asserted that,

Some young kids that incidentally heard some songs from Necromantics and Horrorpops follow this kind of style as a fashion. Surely there are still some authentic and devoted psychobilly followers, but most of the young people related to imported subcultures are shifting from style to style, becoming mods, punks, skinheads, psychobillies, rockabillics, etc. and sometimes they even move on to listen to Greek popular music as well.

Christos argued that the new trend of Psychobilly after the millennium unfortunately appeared to the Greek audience "more like a stylistic tendency than a musical way of life and never got the same resonance as punk". Harry believes that "people affiliated to punk music are probably more committed and constant". Kostas also believes that today, "there are no pure Psychobilly followers in Athens". Some people just listen to this kind of music and when they go out, dress up in this manner, within the neo-tribe logic, that is, that there is little commitment on the part of the fans that can consolidate Psychobilly as way of life and a substantial subculture. Maria thinks that talking about a pure Athenian Psychobilly scene at the present day makes her laugh as "there is no such thing".

Thus, nowadays the concept of "authenticity" is being questioned. Individuals occasionally enter this subculture and act as "tourists" in search of multiple but short-lived weird social experiences. People's engagement with the scene is virtual, plastic and superficial; they are not determined to reflect the stability of a core subculture that would create a more solid scene. There are no clubs to meet each other; there are no fanzines or any other type of alternative media that would hold a scene in Athens. The "neo-tribe" theory provides a useful framework to understand this condition. Identities have become liquid (Bauman 2000) with people acting as nomads, as tourists or as swarms, changing outlooks for each case and shifting from one club to the other.

There is no strong evidence indicating that social class is a determining factor for participation and commitment to this liquid Psychobilly scene in Athens. Alex suggested that in the nineteen-eighties, "the people that were coming generally from punk and rockabilly circles were mostly of working-class and middle-class origins". As far as their political views went, they usually held progressive libertarian ideas in connection with their punk subcultural background.

Harry too thinks that, "before the nineteen-nineties, most of the people were of working- and middle-class origins; they were leftists or anarchists concerning their ideology, so it was very hard to find rich people that appreciated this kind of music. Today, everything got mixed; in more recent punk, Psychobilly and rockabilly concerts, I have seen people from all the parts of the social spectrum, singing and dancing together".

Kostas also believes that nowadays there is no association between class origin and Psychobilly fans. He states that, “everybody can listen to this kind of music and be a part of the scene”; yet concerning their political views he reckons that “Greek psychobillies consider themselves participants of the underground movement”.

Although psychobillies initially presented a unisex style, female roles in the Athenian Psychobilly scene reflected the general subordination of women to the dominant culture. There were no female bands, and Psychobilly girls were often attached to and dependent on their male partners for socialization in the scene. However, George said that “there were some exceptions of small autonomous Psychobilly female circles” during the nineteen-eighties in Athens.

Alex considered that in the early eighties psychobillies and rockabillics believed that “girls embellish the scene with their beauty and everybody wanted them around”, so there was a sexist sentiment at work then and in reflection also now. Nevertheless, he believed that “it was out of the question for someone to treat females as [if] they were inferior”. However, Cathryn said that, “in the early days, psychobillies were biased regarding gender equality, such as most of the people in Greece... there was no difference at all between their opinions about gender and the views of the social environment”. Maria, a younger generation Psychobilly follower considered that women “are not particularly valued” by Psychobilly males.

Although psychobillies then ignore or reject some conventional attitudes concerning the outfit and social behaviour, they still follow some norms and values of the dominant Greek culture. Thus, patriarchy often lurks even beneath apparently rebellious music communities. As female interviewees revealed, gender inequality persists, even in the subcultural lifestyle, reproducing biased gender relations and indicating how power and control is distributed between gender identities.



Figure 4: The Thriller. Image Courtesy Dimitris Voulgaris Photography.

## Conclusion

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the Greek Psychobilly scene, focusing mostly on the Athenian scene. The research question intended to detect the necessary elements that can determine the existence of a local scene. The term “scene” has been used in the past to describe without significant political and class references or determined stylistic and musicological boundaries the local or universal settings of musicians, organizers and fans, who got along around particular rock genres in due time (Harris, 2000; Bennett and Peterson, 2004; Straw, 2015). This research presented that the local Psychobilly scene of Athens is a subcultural space in which a range of similar musical genres coexist like rockabilly, punk, garage, and so on. interacting with each other within a variety of subcultural practices.

Although Psychobilly initially evolved as a marginalized British subculture that was ignored by the mainstream media it managed to spread all over the world. By using whatever means were available, this rebellious youth culture provided a sense of marginalized rock identity and defiant community as it remained largely non-commodified, ignored by the conventional mainstream media until the end of the century. It can be questioned whether there actually was a Psychobilly scene in Athens during the nineteen-eighties as there were no genuine Greek Psychobilly bands; there were only fans of the British Psychobilly scene originating from punk and rockabilly circles.

In the beginning of the new Millennium, after the revival of the global Psychobilly scene, a small number of Greek Psychobilly bands begun to appear, supported by younger fans. The new generation of psychobillies was superficial in character. They were coming from different areas of the socio-economic strata, sometimes just following subcultural fashion trends, shifting from one neo-tribe to another, and changing regularly styles.

However, diachronically the Athenian Psychobilly scene accommodated a central group where a number of people drifted in and stayed for quite a while. Those individuals, are recognized by their adapted eccentric hybrid punk and rockabilly appearance as carriers of the Psychobilly core subculture, an almost complete way of life that includes psychotic rock ‘n’ roll music, unconventional outlooks, horror movies and vintage aesthetics as well as stomping, wrecking and drinking. They declare themselves distant from proffering any political view; however, they are against the mainstream music establishment and fashion industry. Major contemporary bands that represent this central body of the Psychobilly scene in Athens are the Thriller, the Ducky Boyz and the Misty Blue Boys<sup>14</sup>.

Despite its rebellious demeanour and the ‘monster/beauty’ character of Psychobilly females, the Greek Psychobilly scene still reproduces gender inequality by reflecting the old rockabilly biased gender stereotypes; so, the patriarchal relations (also of the Greek society at large) still remain evident.

People invested in the ambience of Greek Psychobilly conceive the concept of the scene as a broader music community that apart from its core actors also includes several other subcultural actors that diffuse values and traits related to Punk, Rockabilly and Garage, building up a shared sense of tribal unity that overall is intent upon celebrating a certain kind of rock ‘n’ roll music.

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<sup>14</sup> The Misty Blue Boys is a rockabilly-psychobilly group formed in Athens at the second half of the first decade of the 21st century.

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## **Uncivil Rights: The Abuse of Tribal Sovereignty and the Termination of American Indian Tribal Citizenship**

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### **Abstract**

Starting in the 1990s, an increasing number of Indigenous people have been removed from tribal rolls, denying them basic citizenship rights, including due process, private property rights, jobs, voting rights, and the like. Popularly known as disenrollment, these individual and family terminations have increased in number and frequency as casino tribes have increased their wealth, and federal courts have decided not to hear cases on individual civil rights violations pertaining to Indigenous peoples. Indians are supposed to be protected from their tribal governments by the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, but it is not enforced by many tribal councils, courts, or federal agencies. This paper analyzes the contributing factors to disenrollment, such as casino gaming and past federal termination policy, along with quantitative data on the numbers of Indians disenrolled from their tribes. Of the 80 or so tribes contained within the borders of the US that have disenrolled substantial portions of their citizenry, 24 of those are located in California. The question is whether there are commonalities to the cases involved in these purges, or if it is simply a matter of bad behavior on the part of some that is emulated by others.

*Keywords:* disenrollment, tribal sovereignty, Indian Civil Rights Act, termination, citizenship rights, human rights, casino gambling

### **Corrigendum**

***Uncivil Rights: The Abuse of Tribal Sovereignty and the Termination of American Indian Tribal Citizenship***

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## Introduction

Indigenous civil rights attorney and blogger Gabe Galanda (August 27, 2014) recently remarked that academics have shied away from tackling the problem of disenrollment in Indian Country. He is both right and wrong. Some of us (Fletcher, 2012; Gonzalez, 2003; Hansen, 2012 and 2008; Mezey, 1996; Wilkins, 2004) have been working on exposing the issue from within the halls of academia, which afford us the protection of academic freedom. However, much more work could be done on the topic. Part of the reason for the paucity of literature on the issue, stems not from our lack of ambition, but because data are so hard to come by. Because tribal<sup>1</sup> governments have inherent sovereignty to govern as they please, they are not subject to sunshine laws that require transparency in government operations, open meetings, or open records requirements. This makes it difficult to collect data that would illuminate discussion and analysis of obscure or obfuscated practices.

My goal in writing this paper is to conduct what I believe is the first attempted quantitative analysis of variables related to the disenrollment phenomenon in California.<sup>2</sup> Though reductionist, quantitative methods can allow us to take a step back from what is at times an extremely emotional, contentious, and controversial topic. However, this requires that we exclude crucial political concepts that are difficult to measure quantitatively (though these can be measured qualitatively through ethnographic or participant-observation methodologies), such as greed, power, election fraud, and the like. Instead, I look at variables that can be ascribed a quantitative value (even if it is only dichotomous), such as whether a tribe has a casino, whether they were terminated, region within California, the type of constitution a given tribe has, and whether they have a tribal court. But most importantly – what is the percentage of the tribal citizenry that has been disenrolled? Of the variables considered, I maintain that termination is a key causal variable contributing to disenrollment from California Indian tribes.

## Literature, Concepts and Variables

The term disenrollment did not exist prior to the 1930s (Wilkins, 2004; Deloria, Jr., and Lytle, 1983). It refers to individuals – or even entire families – that have been removed from, or left off, official tribal citizenship rolls. In the words of Ron Alec, a spiritual elder for the central San Joaquin Valley inter-tribal community, and former chairman of the Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians: “Sorry, Uncle, we forgot to write your name in there, you’re no longer a member” (tribalcorruption.com n.d.). Sometimes the term “dismemberment” (Wass, 2007; Wilkins and Wilkins, 2017) is used, based on the common use of the term “tribal membership” instead of citizenship. But make no mistake, an Indigenous person is a citizen of her/his tribal community in every sense of the word as it pertains to any other sovereign entity (nation or state), with the same presumed human rights protections (Fletcher, 2012; Wilkins, March 19, 2012). It is noteworthy that the only nations on Earth that disown and expel large percentages of their citizenry are Native American tribal governments that operate within the context of “domestic dependency” under the paternalistic colonization of the US government.

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<sup>1</sup> I use the words “tribe” and “tribal government” in a strictly legal sense. This should not be misinterpreted as support for colonization.

<sup>2</sup> Thank you to my research assistant for the Fall 2013 semester, Houa Vang, and to the many good people who have been fighting the battle for Indian civil rights for many years who contributed data to this study. This list includes; Susanna Contreras (Chukchansi), Cathy Cory (Chukchansi), Rick Cuevas (Pechanga), Lois Edwards (Mooretown), Robert Edwards (Enterprise), Bryan Galt (Chukchansi), Laura Wass (Mountain Maidu), and Frances Velasquez (Shingle Springs). Special thanks to *Fresno Bee* reporter Marc Benjamin for keeping the issue in the news, and for his excellent, in-depth reporting on the resulting political chaos and legitimacy crises.

Pre-modern societies around the world did practice banishment, exile, ostracism, and voluntary or involuntary migration, but it was rarely used (Wilkins, 2004; Wilkins and Wilkins, 2017). The erasure or denial of one's lineage or ancestry on paper by a tribal government is something entirely derived from the American colonial experience under the US Constitution. It is a cruel irony of the restoration of tribal sovereignty and self-determination. As a result, basic citizenship rights, including due process, private property rights, jobs, voting rights, and the like, are violated by the very governments that are intended to support them.

Technically, disenrollment should be a violation of the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 that was supposed to protect individual citizens from the abuse of power by their tribal governments. The intent of the law was to allow such abuses to be redressed by tribal and federal court systems by allowing standing to sue via its *habeas corpus* provision. However, the ruling in *Santa Clara Pueblo v. Martinez* (1978), upheld tribal sovereignty as it pertained to exclusive control over membership criteria. David Wilkins<sup>3</sup> (2004) maintains that the ruling “emboldened them [tribal governments] to become more emphatically proactive or retaliatory in their efforts to clarify their membership rolls by modifying their constitutions’ membership criteria or enacting tribal ordinances detailing the grounds on which tribal members could be disenrolled or banished” (248). Once again, the practice of divide and conquer prevails over the collective rights of tribal communities to remain whole and intact.

Wilkins continues by saying:

Perusal of contemporary law and literature reveals four major reasons why tribal governments used to justify the exclusion or disenrollment of tribal members: (1) family feuds; (2) racial criteria and dilution of blood quantum; (3) criminal activity (e.g., treason, drug sales or abuse, gang involvement); and (4) financial issues (e.g., problems related to distribution of tribal gaming assets or judgment funds). Of course, in some disenrollment cases, tribal councils or judicial bodies may, and often do, invoke more than one reason to justify their expulsion of tribal members (Wilkins, 2004, 248).

However, despite these issues there is nothing to suggest that disenrollment will be a permanent condition of life in Indian Country. Since it is a policy problem, it is ultimately amenable to policy solutions and legal remedies. Civil rights are relatively easy to distribute if there is the political will to do so. But a great deal of decolonization and healing remains to be done. What is required is a return to traditional cultural practices, reconciliation, and a rejection of exclusionary politics and policies.

The main research question still needs to be answered: What are the causes of this phenomenon? I argue that disenrollment is tantamount to individual, rather than tribal, termination. However, casino gaming and the distribution of assets is an inextricable part of the context, if not a direct cause. In the methodological section I will evaluate the two, along with a few control variables, to determine if there are causal relationships and correlations between and among the variables. An alternative explanation for cases in Washington State (the Nooksak Tribe) and Oklahoma (Cherokee and Seminole freedmen) is race, but that does not seem to be an explicit consideration in California, so I could not measure it for this study. Another alternative hypothesis is “per-cap” payments to individual tribal citizens, which

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<sup>3</sup>Though David Wilkins is probably the foremost scholar on disenrollment politics, he fails to mention this in any of the three editions of his book *American Indians and the American Political System*. When I contacted him about it, he thanked me for noticing the oversight and said they would correct it in the next edition.

Wilkins and Wilkins discuss as a dichotomous variable in their 2017 book *Dismembered*. But it seems apparent in California that in some of the most egregious cases, fights over who gets the six-figure salaries to serve on tribal councils, or the disappearance of much larger sums of money via corruption, are bigger financial motivators than smaller per-cap payments that might only involve a few hundred dollars apiece.

## Casino Politics

Citizens were typically not removed from tribal rolls in California prior to the advent of casino gaming and class III compacts. Much of the funding for tribal governments came from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, based on population. Ergo, there were incentives and benefits such as “per-caps” to maintain tribal polities. The passage of Proposition 1A in the 2000 presidential primary election radically changed the dynamics of reservation-based casino gaming in California (Cummins, 2011). Once gambling contributed substantial sums to governmental revenue streams, the financial incentive to maintain enrollments was removed.

This level of self-determination was intended by the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988, and the process through which class III compacts are negotiated with state governments, resulted in a relative lessening of tribal sovereignty versus the state, known as the “casino compromise” (see Hansen and Skopek, 2011; Light and Rand, 2005). Consequently, states and federal agencies turn a blind eye to civil rights violations on reservation/rancheria lands. Naomi Mezey (1996) foreshadowed that this would be allowed to happen because traditional culture was not considered when the gaming law was made. Not only does the IGRA not strengthen tribal sovereignty, it also fails to produce long-term economic development for the tribes that need it most. In other words, the rich tribes get richer via a redistributive policy.

Whereas Mezey discusses the redistributions between tribes and states, and between competing reservations, Angela Gonzalez (2003) discusses the redistribution of rights and revenues within tribal communities. She links the practice of disenrollment directly to gaming policy and argues that it is a direct result of colonization:

[I]n the case of tribal casino development the big winners have been the tribes themselves. However, gains to the tribe through gaming development have sometimes been at the expense of tribal members. Even as the revenues from gaming have filled tribal coffers, they have precipitated issues of tribal membership and the right therein to share in the prosperity wrought by the windfalls of tribal gaming. My focus, then, is the involuntary disenrollment of tribal members associated with the creation of tribal gaming operations (Gonzalez, 2003, 124).

Much of the non-Native population remains ignorant of the situation. It is possible that civil rights violations and corruption committed by casino-owning tribal governments could eventually create a political backlash against them<sup>4</sup> among the gambling population of non-Natives, leading to a loss of revenue (Hansen and Skopek, 2011). Again, it should be stated

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<sup>4</sup> Such a backlash may be developing over Proposition 48, which is heavily funded by an odd coalition of anti-gaming interests and casino tribes that wish to restrict the entry of other tribes into the gambling market. Two of these tribes, Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians, and Table Mountain Rancheria, are among those that have been accused of disenrolling their citizens. If they help to generate such an anti-American-Indian gaming sentiment, they may ultimately be cutting their own throats economically.

that not all casino tribes disenroll or violate the rights of their citizens, but most of the tribes that do engage in this practice own and operate casinos.

## Termination

Termination of federal acknowledgement in the 1950s and 1960s is another artifact of colonization. It began with the passage of Public Law 280, which extended state law enforcement authority over reservations and rancherias in violation of their preexisting sovereignty, due to a perceived problem of lawlessness (Goldberg-Ambrose, 1997). This was then followed by House Concurrent Resolution 108 (1954), which permitted the dissolution of tribal governments. The California Rancheria Act of 1958 was subsequently passed, thus terminating some 41 California Indian tribal governments.<sup>5</sup>

Close to half of the terminated tribes were restored following a 1983 class action suit, known as the Tillie Hardwick ruling (*Hardwick et al., v. United States of America* 1983), after its main plaintiff, who was from the Pinoleville Pomo Nation. Some tribes, such as the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians and United Auburn Band were restored later by other means. Still others never have been. As of 2014, 31 of the 41 terminated tribes have since been restored, with great disruption and historical trauma to their citizens, violation of their land rights, destruction of their records, and myriad other problems. It should not be a surprise if citizenship disputes arise from these conditions. Despite the issues that came with the restoration of tribal sovereignty, many of these tribes were able to establish casino operations, often with class III compacts. But once the termination genie was out of the bottle, it was hard to put it back. Terminated tribes and their citizens, based on having their collective and individual rights violated, learned a horrible lesson which has been repeated through the practice of disenrollment. This is why I say the practice has been devolved to tribal governments from other levels.

## Constitutions

One would think that constitutions would protect the rights of Indigenous citizens. The Indian Civil Rights Act is often included in tribal constitutions, but to no avail, as there are few ways to ensure its enforcement. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) refuses to intervene in disenrollment cases ostensibly out of deference to tribal constitutions. However, there are exceptions, such as when a tribe's constitution explicitly allows BIA intervention as a referee of sorts. The Cahto Tribe of the Laytonville Rancheria attempted to disenroll twenty percent of their member-citizens, but the BIA was called upon per their tribal constitution to block the abuse of sovereignty. This action was upheld in court, but was later overturned on appeal by the 9th Circuit, which cited the *Santa Clara* ruling, and then argued for a different interpretation of the Cahto tribe's constitution to the detriment of the disenrolled tribal citizens (*Cahto Tribe v. Dutschke* 2012).

The Honorable Ron Goode, Chairman of the North Fork Band of Mono Indians, a non-recognized tribe of 1,900 members from the Sierra foothills, argues that disenrollment is not something that should readily take place. He maintains that tribal constitutions are often

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<sup>5</sup>Tribes terminated in California included; Alexander Valley, Auburn, Big Sandy, Big Valley, Blue Lake, Buena Vista, Cache Creek, Chicken Ranch, Chico, Cloverdale, Cold Springs, Elk Valley, Guidiville, Graton, Greenville, Hopland, Indian Ranch, Lytton, Mark West Creek, Middletown, Montgomery Creek, Mooretown, Nevada City, North Fork, Paskenta, Picayune, Pinoleville, Potter Valley, Quartz Valley, Redding, Redwood Valley, Robinson, Rohnerville (Bear River), Ruffeys, Scotts Valley, Smith River, Strawberry Valley, Table Bluff, Table Mountain, Upper Lake, and Wilton (*Hardwick v. USA* 1983).

intentionally not that well-written when it comes to protecting the rights of their citizens, so that people could later be disenrolled. He outlines some of the reasons why this was done:

Constitutions [of casino tribes] are frivolous, ambiguous and designed with this sort of empowerment. 2) Their constitutions are not based on their traditional practices and policies. 3) The enticement is the proposed financial gain of owning a casino, only the enticement is based on the more successful casinos, of which there are very few of those. 4) During enrollment, if your constitution is based on family heritage and not blood quantum then once each member is verified it should be very difficult to remove them from the rolls (Goode, 2014, personal communication).

A recent study (Tatum et al., 2014) devotes an entire chapter to defining and revoking tribal citizenship in constitutions. Many constitutions do in fact define the terms under which citizenship can be terminated, but generally not without having committed some transgression against the tribal community, and not without due process. “Some tribal nations do not have any option for revocation or surrendering citizenship – once a citizen, always a citizen. Tribes that include grounds for revoking citizenship list actions such as dual enrollment, misconduct, or ceasing to be a resident” (Tatum et al., 2014, 51). Some tribes permit disenrollment in the event of clerical mistakes or fraud, but these conditions appear in constitutions pretty rarely.

Though traditional societies had social contracts, the idea of a written constitution that has to be followed to the letter of the law is something unique to the American experience. Tribal societies in North America tended to operate much more under principles of common law, convention, and tradition, which were intended to promote reconciliation, not an abstract search for the truth via adversarial argumentation, like in the US system (Harvard Project, 2008). Though some constitutions pre-date the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934, this is the origin for many of the tribal constitutions operating today (Tatum et al., 2014, p. 18). IRA constitutions essentially set up a council-manager form of government akin to cities in the United States, based on the Wilsonian corporate-statist notion of the politics-administration dichotomy. As such, they typically do not have separation of powers into three branches of government, only between an elected council and an appointed manager, the tribal administrator. Many of the bureaucratic functions, including the verification of citizenship, are carried out by committees of tribal citizen-members, rather than professional administrators. Without an independent judiciary it would seem that these tribes might have a tendency to violate the civil rights of their citizens, but this seems to not be the case. In fact, the quantitative model shows that though there are few California tribes with IRA constitutions, they do not typically disenroll their members, and those that do could probably be considered outliers. Tribes with IRA constitutions tended to not be terminated, with a few exceptions; Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Quartz Valley Reservation, and Wilton Rancheria. Perhaps this is part of the reason why tribal governments organized under this institutional framework are less likely to infringe upon the civil rights of their citizen-members.

## **Tribal Courts**

Tribal courts can go a long way in protecting the civil rights of their citizen-members. Though they are rule-bound, courts can make policy. Tribal court systems that also rule based on common law and traditional practices, which are typically designed to be more conciliatory, are able to prevent the disenrollment of their citizens. But like any other institution of government, this requires the political will of those involved. The “Nooksak 306” was a recent

example involving an extended family disenrolled by the tribal council of the Nooksak Tribe in Washington State because they had a Filipino ancestor. They were victorious in getting reinstated by the tribe's appellate court, which ruled that they were members under the tribe's constitutional requirements and traditions. However, despite the involvement of the BIA and federal courts, the issue remains unresolved.

Roughly 24 percent of the tribes in California have a viable court system (California Tribal Court Directory, 2014). This is not a great number, but perhaps can be explained by the fact that California tribes are still governed by Public Law 280, which is a termination-era statute that enables state authority over tribal sovereignty as it pertains to criminal matters (Goldberg-Ambrose, 1997). Hence, if there are tribal courts at all, they tend to be limited to regulatory policy or civil disputes. The disenrollment issue is further complicated by the fact that some of these courts in California have extremely limited jurisdictions and may not hear enrollment cases. Some tribes may not have their own courts, but belong to consortium courts. This may not be a bad thing, however, as they may be more objective when ruling on political issues affecting a particular tribe. They may even have non-Indians sitting as judges (Wilkins and Stark 2011) who may have a different perspective regarding citizenship than tribal governments currently do.

Disenrollment is a serious civil rights violation perpetrated by some tribal governments on their citizen-members. Key variables contributing to the practice likely include tribal casino ownership, a history of termination, lack of an IRA constitution, or a viable court system. The quantitative model discussed below attempts to get at why 24 of the 80 tribes that allegedly have disenrolled their citizens come from California. What is it about California tribes that make them more likely to disenroll their citizens?

## Data and Methods

Data are hard to come by concerning tribal membership issues and population. Tribal governments are not required to follow open records or transparency laws. Most citizenship rolls are kept secure and away from the public eye, even within the tribal community. The Bureau of Indian Affairs doesn't share such information either, on behalf of tribal sovereignty. Many tribal officials deny that they engage in the practice. "We don't disenroll" is a frequent response. They simply maintain that the disenfranchised citizens were never part of the tribal community to begin with. Or, they will use another euphemism like "banishment" to imply something different than the current reality (Wilkins and Wilkins, 2017). This adds insult to injury for those who have had their civil rights violated.

Nevertheless, the people who have been wronged are willing to talk, either to me or to reporters. So, personal communications, media reports, and blogs, comprise the basis for data on disenrollment. Even if they are not academic sources, they are the best we have. American Indian Rights and Resources Organization (AIRRO) and Original Pechanga maintain good reports on what happens with regard to membership disputes, with links to journalistic sources, such as *NDN News* and *Indianz.com*. The most complete list, though a bit dated now, came from Central Valley American Indian Movement (AIM) (Wass, 2007).

Data on population, which I used to calculate the percentage disenrolled, were available from several sources, including the San Diego State University Library (White, 2011). However, data are more readily available on other issues, such as Indian-owned casinos, constitutions,

which tribes were terminated and later restored, court systems, and the like. These sources include, state and federal websites, legal rulings, and interest groups.

## Cases and Variables

The units of analysis for this study are 106 federally acknowledged California Indian tribal governments. The dependent variable is the percentage of the tribal community disenrolled. This can mean that acknowledged tribal citizens were removed from the official membership rolls, or in the event a tribal government had their acknowledgment restored following termination, they could simply have been left off the revised rolls. The key causal variables include the presence of a tribally-owned casino, and whether a tribe was terminated under the California Rancheria Act of 1958. Control variables include region within the state of California (loosely based on the BIA's regional offices), whether the tribe has an IRA constitution resulting from the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, and the presence of an authentic tribal court as determined by the California Tribal Courts Directory.

## Hypotheses

This study considers a main hypothesis regarding the cause of disenrollment. It pertains to both casinos and a history of termination/restoration. A secondary hypothesis considers the role of tribal constitutions and court systems in protecting due process and civil rights.

**H1: Casino-owning tribes that were terminated are likely to disenroll citizen-members.**

**H2: Tribal governments with IRA constitutions and viable tribal court systems tend to not disenroll their citizens.**

I expect to find my hypotheses substantiated. The question is to what degree they will matter. Though casinos are blamed for a variety of social ills, not all casino-owning tribes disenroll their citizens. We should be careful about blanket generalizations in that regard. Termination is likely to be a significant causal factor. In fact, I argue that disenrollments are but a continuation or devolution of the 1950s federal and state extinction/assimilation policy, just on an individual or familial level. The effects of termination are long-term, and have done permanent damage, contributing to current legitimacy crises in Indian Country. The presence of legitimate governance however, may indicate a possible solution to the problem.

## Analysis and Discussion

Roughly two dozen California Indian tribes<sup>6</sup> have been accused of disenrollment, having allegedly dismembered 3,096 citizens from tribal rolls totaling 12,549, or roughly 25 percent of the aggregate population of those tribes (see Table 1). To compute the percent disenrolled,

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<sup>6</sup> California tribes accused of disenrolling member citizens include; Bear River (Rohnerville) Wiyot, Berry Creek Rancheria of Maidu Indians, Big Sandy Rancheria, Cahto Tribe of Laytonville Rancheria, Cedarville Rancheria, Cold Springs Rancheria, Coyote Valley, Dry Creek Rancheria of Pomo Indians, Enterprise Rancheria, Guidiville Rancheria, Mooretown Rancheria, Pala Band of Mission Indians, Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians, Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians, Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians, Pinoleville Pomo Nation, Redding Rancheria, Pit River Tribe, Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians, San Pasqual Band of Diegeno Indians, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, Shingle Springs Rancheria, and Table Mountain Rancheria. Sources: AIRRO 2014; Brennan, 2009; Native Strength, 2011; Original Pechanga, 2014; Tribal Corruption n.d.



which is the dependent variable for the advanced statistical analysis, we need the total population of the tribe, and the number of people disenrolled. Without either one of these, the percent disenrolled is considered missing data for the analysis. In some cases, the percent disenrolled was reported, and from that I could compute the missing figure as long as I had one of the other numbers.

Table 1: Population Data on California's Disenrolling Tribes

<b>Name of Tribe</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Citizens Disenrolled</b>	<b>Percent Disenrolled</b>
Bear River Wiyot (T)	96	*	*
Berry Creek	304	58	.19
Big Sandy (T)	495	30	.17
Cahto Tribe	129	26	.20
Cedarville Rancheria	35	2	.06
Cold Springs (T)	275	60	.22
Coyote Valley	225	100	.45
Dry Creek Pomo	970	143	.15
Enterprise	872	72	.08
Guidiville (T)	*	20	*
Mooretown (T)	240	85	.35
Pala Band	1065	160	.15
Paskenta Band (T)	300	70	.23
Pechanga Band	1370	560	.41
PRCI (Chukchansi) (T)	1600	1100	.69
Pit River	2400	*	*
Pinoleville (T)	305	30	.10
Redding (T)	261	76	.29
Robinson (T)	200	50	.25
San Pasqual	300	150	.50
Santa Rosa Cahuilla	140	35	.25
Shingle Springs	504	138	.27
Table Mountain (T)	290	130	.45
United Auburn (T)	170	*	*
Total: 24	12,549	3,095	.25

Compiled by author from various sources including; AIRRO, Native American Encyclopedia, Original Pechanga, and Wikipedia.

\*Missing data.

T = Terminated tribe under the California Rancheria Act of 1958. 12 out of 25 on this list were terminated.

Many of these tribes are located in the Central California region. Less than a third of casino tribes (17 of 59, or 29%) disenroll, less than 40% of tribes with a history of termination (12 of 31, or 39%) disenroll. But, if one looks at the subset of terminated tribes that own casinos, a substantial majority of these tribes (10 of 17, or 59%) have disenrolled citizens. On the other

hand, tribes with IRA constitutions and/or viable tribal court systems tend to not disenroll their citizens, suggesting that there are perhaps some inherent institutional protections that prevent the practice in these tribes (see Table 2). These also might have been contributing factors that prevented their termination in the first place, hence enabling them to survive with relative stability compared to the terminated tribes, which might have had some sort of institutional instability when the state of California was terminating tribes.

Table 2: Characteristics of Disenrolling Tribes vs. Non-Disenrolling Tribes

<b>CA Indian Tribes</b>	<b>Casino</b>	<b>Terminated</b>	<b>IRA Constitution</b>	<b>Tribal Court*</b>
Disenrolling Tribes (n=24)	17	12	1	4
Non-Disenrolling Tribes (n=82)	42	19	12	21
Total (n=106)	59	31	14	25

Compiled by author from various sources including; AIRRO, Native American Encyclopedia, Original Pechanga, and Wikipedia. Note: not all terminated tribes were restored.

\*Includes tribal consortium courts. Not all tribal courts necessarily hear membership complaints, but many do.

Half of the non-disenrolling tribes have a tribal court system and the preponderance of the IRA constitutions. Of the disenrolling tribes, only the Cedarville Rancheria has an IRA constitution, but is likely a statistical outlier due to the tragic nature of the case. At Cedarville Rancheria in Modoc County, Cherie Rhodes, a former tribal chairperson, and her son, were accused of corruption and embezzlement and ousted from their positions on the council and were in the process of being banished from the tribe and evicted from tribal housing when Ms. Rhodes shot and killed four people at the tribal government office. Another two people were stabbed when her gun jammed and she grabbed a knife out of the kitchen. Cherie Rhodes was found guilty and sentenced to death in California Superior Court (Comstock, April 10, 2017). She and her son remain banished (as their tribal community refers to disenrollment) to this day. If the tragic example of Cedarville Rancheria is excluded, the remaining disenrolling tribes do not have IRA constitutions. Only four of the disenrolling tribes have tribal court systems, roughly 17 percent of the total, meaning that 83 percent of tribes that are accused of disenrolling their citizens do not have viable court systems to protect the rights of their member citizens.

There is a moderate, statistically significant (at the .05-level) relationship between the dependent variable, percent disenrolled, and casino ownership (Pearson's  $r = .250$  and Kendall's tau  $b = .220$ ), and a history of termination (Pearson's  $r = .204$  and Kendall's tau  $b = .196$ ) (see Table 3). The Pearson's  $r (-.092)$  also shows a negative relationship between the IRA constitution variable and the percent disenrolled, though it is not statistically significant. There is a negative relationship between the termination variable and having a tribal court. The Pearson's  $r = -.210$  and is statistically significant. The Kendall's tau  $b$  also reflected a negative relationship ( $-.177$ ) but was not statistically significant. There is also an interesting inverse relationship between region and termination (Pearson's  $r = -.345$  and Kendall's tau  $b = -.340$ , both statistically significant at the .01-level), indicating that most of the terminated tribes are located in the north or central regions of the state, due to the way the data were coded. As it

turns out, most of the tribes with court systems or affiliations with consortium courts are located in the southern part of the state, and these tended to not be terminated. Not surprisingly then, there is a moderate, positive relationship between region and tribal court systems (Pearson's  $r = .361$  and Kendall's tau  $b = .271$ ) that is statistically significant at the .01-level. A caveat though, is that correlation does not necessarily mean causation.

Table 3: Correlations on Disenrollment Variables

		<b>%Disenrolled</b>	<b>Terminated</b>	<b>Casino</b>	<b>IRA Constitution</b>	<b>Tribal Court</b>	<b>Region</b>
<b>%Disenrolled</b>	Pearson r		.204*	.250*	-.092	.032	.042
	Kendall tau-b		.196*	.220*	.264	.884	.904
<b>Terminated</b>	Pearson r	.204*		-.023	-.067	-.210*	-.345**
	Kendall tau-b	.196*		-.023	-.067	-.177	-.340**
<b>Casino</b>	Pearson r	.250*	-.023		-.052	.086	.116
	Kendall tau-b	.220*	-.023		-.052	.139	.116
<b>IRA Constitution</b>	Pearson r	-.092	-.067	-.052		-.161	-.024
	Kendall tau-b	.264	-.067	-.052		-.153	-.028
<b>Tribal Court</b>	Pearson r	.032	-.210*	.086	-.161		.361**
	Kendall tau-b	.884	-.177	.139	-.153		.270**
<b>Region</b>	Pearson r	.042	-.345**	.116	-.024	.361**	
	Kendall tau-b	.904	-.340**	.116	-.028	.270**	

\*Correlation is statistically significant at the .05 level (2-tailed test). \*\*Correlation is statistically significant at the .01 level (2-tailed test).

N = 106. Minus sign simply reflects an inverse relationship.

In the regression model, the beta and t scores indicate a moderate, but statistically significant, causal relationship between casinos (beta = .237,  $t = 2.450$ ), termination (beta = .235,  $t = 2.288$ ), and the percent disenrolled variable. Unlike the correlations, this does indicate causality. Though the R-square is weak, that is probably due to the small sample size and the use of too many dichotomous variables. However, there is a clear distinction between the casino and termination variables, which show statistical significance at the .05-level, versus the IRA constitution, tribal court, and region variables, which function as control variables for the regression analysis and were not statistically significant.

Table 4: Regression Model of Disenrollment from California Tribes

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta	T
%Disenrolled	(Constant)	-.030	.047		-.629
	Casino	.061	.025	.237*	2.450*
	Terminated	.067	.029	.235*	2.288*
	IRA Const.	-.022	.036	-.060	-.611
	Tribal Court	.004	.020	.021	.201
	Region	.015	.020	.078	.728

R = .341

Adj. R-square = .075

F = 2.558\*

95% Confidence Interval for B

\*= Significant at the .05 level

With the first hypothesis, I posited that casino-owning tribes that had been terminated were more likely to disenroll citizens. The statistics, both descriptive and analytical, bear this out. On the flip side, with the second hypothesis I argued that tribal governments with IRA constitutions and viable tribal court systems likely would not disenroll their citizens. The data likewise substantiate these claims. The implications of the latter hypothesis indicate that institutional reforms designed to protect the rights of citizens from their governments are likely to prevent further civil rights violations. Imagine what could be achieved if the *Santa Clara* ruling was overturned and the Indian Civil Rights Act was actually enforced! Clearly the absence of viable tribal court systems in most of the California tribes has had a negative effect when it comes to civil rights protections.

### Conclusion: Decolonization and Traditional Culture vs. Adversarial Politics

The literature links disenrollment to colonization by demonstrating that as tribal sovereignty and self-determination increased, so did the disincentives for tribal governments to protect the human rights of their citizens (Gonzalez, 2003; Mezey, 1996; Wilkins, 2004). The restoration of terminated tribes through decisions like the 1983 Tillie Hardwick ruling, along with passage of the 1988 Indian gaming law, which on the surface appeared to be positive developments, have a dark side. The constitutions of some tribes are unable to prevent the abuse of power that leads to disenrollment. However, IRA constitutions (for reasons that I do not entirely understand) and viable tribal courts do seem to serve as a deterrent to such civil rights abuses. If nothing else, IRA constitutions can serve as a stand-in for continuity in tribal communities, and tribal courts can serve to illustrate the importance of institutional strength when it comes to protecting human rights.

The main contribution of this work is that it demonstrates the nexus between gaming and termination as twin causes of disenrollment. They co-vary. The findings of the quantitative model indicate that the long-term effects of termination are still being felt. That is why I argue that disenrollment is tantamount to individual-level termination. The federal government no longer terminates their recognition of Indigenous tribal peoples. They have instead devolved that practice to tribal governments. And just like during the termination era, people who are dismembered from Native communities are no longer considered American Indians. They are thus deprived of all the rights and liberties inherent in having citizenship in a recognized tribal community.

In today's world, civil rights are rights that government must provide and protect. Tribal governments, just like state governments, are not exempt from this standard. Article 33 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples says as much by recognizing that "Indigenous peoples have the right to determine the structures and to select the membership of their institutions in accordance with their own procedures" (UNDRIP 2006, 12). Many tribal governments have been taken in by modernist notions of political power, such as corporate statism, for instance. Power is seen as something desirable, to be held onto at all costs. To maintain power, politicians have to divide and conquer. There has to be an in-group and an out-group. In certain tribal polities, those who oppose the politicians in power find their citizenship rights and recognition terminated. In the words of former US President George W. Bush – an imperialist if there ever was one – "either you're with us, or your against us." There is no room for dissent. Those who vote the wrong way are simply removed from the polity.

The solution to this cancer of alien power structures in Indian Country is to decolonize. There needs to be a return to traditional culture, and it needs to be institutionalized through recursive practices. What this means is that traditional ways of governance need to be restored, and they need to supersede modern methods through repeated utilization, exercise and practice. The Navajo refer to this as the "life way," which is balanced, and often preferred to adversarial, legalistic politics, known as the "law way" (Harvard Project, 2008). Traditional cultures typically valued the contributions of every individual to society. As such, exclusion was reserved for only the rarest of circumstances (Wilkins, 2004; Wilkins and Wilkins, 2017). Unfounded individual terminations violate tradition. My recommendation for tribal polities is to manage their affairs using as much of the old ways as can be recalled, while relying on constitutionalism to interface with the outside world. Only then can the healing begin.

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## **“A New and Curious Route to Cairo” – World’s Fairs and the Stereotyping of the Middle East (1851–1893)**

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### **Abstract**

This paper looks at the exhibiting of Middle Eastern cultures in the World’s Fairs of the nineteenth century, focusing mainly on the representation of the culture and people through staged scenes purportedly imitating real life. The Middle Eastern pavilions and streets at the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris, along with those of the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago, are looked at for their tendency to portray an image of the Middle East which was loaded with Orientalist stereotypes. Such stereotypes were often driven by imperialist and Western supremacist notions which were wrapped up in moralistic pretensions. The framing of the Middle East as a place which was in decline, barbaric and lacking the ethical makeup of Western Christianity became an important feature of these exhibitions. The presentation of Middle Eastern women at the World’s Fairs and the reactions to their performances reveals popular beliefs about the Orient which continued from traditional Orientalist texts and paintings. The portrayal of the region during these Fairs can be seen to have contributed to at least some of the stereotyping of the region which carries on into the twenty-first century.

**Keywords:** world’s fairs, Middle East, Orientalism, morality, gender, Imperialism

## Introduction

While there had been travel between Europe and the Middle East for centuries, such expeditions were usually reserved for the privileged few. Most people's understanding of the region known as "The Orient" in the West came from travelogues, novels, and art. The World's Fairs of the nineteenth century were, for many, their first introduction to what was presented as an authentic view of the Middle East, its peoples, and cultures. Instead, the expositions more often promoted common stereotypes and continued to portray the Middle East in such a way as to "prove" the superiority of Western civilisation. This paper seeks to analyse the contribution of World's Fairs to nineteenth century perceptions of Middle Eastern culture in Western societies. As will be demonstrated, such perceptions continued into the twentieth century and can be seen to continue to be prevalent in contemporary Western discourse even today.

## World's Fairs

The World's Fairs and Expositions Universelles were a phenomenon which began with the 1851 Great Exhibition in London. The intention behind such expositions was to display the progress, wealth and industry of the great nations of the Earth and their colonies (Flinn, 1893). Great halls, purpose built, were filled with the riches of various nations and industries who had been invited to take part in the exhibit.

The 1851 Great Exhibition began the trend for large scale displays and public attendance. Housed in the so-called Crystal Palace, this exhibition was both an achievement for its sheer size and for the many great inventions which were to be displayed over the five and a half months that the showcase was open. The Crystal Palace itself was a feat of engineering and architectural design; covering eighteen acres of ground, the building was constructed using an iron frame and sheets of glass (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019).

The success of the exhibition in not only displaying Britain's wealth, but also the glory of the many nations who took part, inspired a string of subsequent exhibitions of the same type in various cities around the world. These exhibitions became important institutions for the display of colonial territories, giving the Empire's citizens a glimpse of the far-flung reaches of their imperial domains. Between 1851 and the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, nine exhibitions were held between the empires of Europe, the United States and the British colony of Australia. The style of the expositions changed in various ways over time, according to the trends for exhibiting, with large exhibition halls such as the Crystal Palace being replaced by smaller pavilions built to reflect the building's contents. This meant that certain industries created their own halls while the nations involved in the exposition built pavilions to reflect their cultures (Vegas & Mileto, 2013).

Although the expositions had begun mainly as sites where nations could demonstrate their industry, inventions and the spoils of their colonies, they eventually developed to include anthropological displays which had strong links to the colonial inclinations of Western nations of the day. Paul Greenhalgh writes:

Between 1889 and 1914, the exhibitions became a human showcase, when people from all over the world were brought to sites in order to be seen by others for their gratification and education. The normal method of display was to create a backdrop in a more or less authentic tableau-vivant fashion and situate the people

in it, going about what was thought to be their daily business. An audience would pay to come and stare. (Greenhalgh, 2000, p. 82)

Whole villages would be erected and native people from cultures perceived to be less developed than Western ruling powers were inserted into the mock communities to reside for the duration of the exhibition as living displays of colonial adventure and success. These human displays can arguably be linked back to the systems of taxonomy created by earlier scientists such as Carl Linnaeus (Fries, 2012; Pratt, 2008). The classification of the natural world eventually, and perhaps inevitably, led to the theory that some races and cultures were fundamentally less developed than others. Dividing species for display had been regular scientific practice since the Enlightenment with the foundation of the first curiosity cabinets and later museums. By the late nineteenth century, these modes of scientific classification were commonplace and racist evolutionary theories were popular with a public influenced by both science and religion (Mosse, 1985). As a result, the human displays were perceived as educational exhibits, presenting different cultures in a “sympathetic” anthropological manner.

Native villages became major attractions within the World’s Fairs, on the surface promoting an anthropological means for looking at other races. Underneath this, however, historians argue that the intentions were based on imperial concepts with the displays promoting such beliefs. Greenhalgh writes:

For the European nations who controlled an empire, the showing of native villages had several aims. It placed hitherto unrelated peoples of different parts of the empire together, physically and psychologically, and it centred the empire on the controlling imperial nation. The public could see at a glance the extent of the imperial pickings and feel in a real sense that it belonged to them. More importantly, it ‘revealed’ the apparently degenerate state the conquered peoples lived in, making the conquest not only more acceptable but necessary for their moral rescue. (Greenhalgh, 2000, p. 84)

An example of this was the “Negro Village” at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1889 which held 400 people and was a major attraction at the exhibition. The inhabitants had been transported from colonies to “live authentically” within the constructed village for the duration of the exhibition. These exhibits had a purpose of “promoting the benefits of colonialism and the superiority of European ways of life” (Rabinovitz, 1998, p. 60).

The presentation of non-Western nations, in opposition to Western nations became conventional practice in anthropological displays during the nineteenth century. Within the World’s Fairs displays, communities and cultures were put on show with differences to allegedly more advanced Western cultures highlighted and exaggerated for the benefit of paying customers. Although it was possible to enter the exhibits and walk streets designed to mimic those of far off civilisations, there was never any question of who, psychologically, the spectator was and who was on display. When visitors came from other parts of the world to attend the World’s Fairs, they often became part of the exhibits, their cultural differences depriving them of the privilege of spectatorship. Timothy Mitchell describes this phenomenon in his essay *Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order*, noting that, “as Europe consolidated its colonial power, non-European visitors found themselves continually being placed on exhibit or made the careful object of European curiosity” (Mitchell, 1998, p. 295). Mitchell describes instances in which Middle Eastern visitors to such exhibits felt as if they were the ones on display. The

urge to create a real world within the confines of the exhibition space led organisers to incorporate visitors from these regions into the display. Mitchell writes:

Even Middle Eastern monarchs who came in person to Europe were liable to be incorporated into its theatrical machinery. When the Khedive of Egypt visited Paris to attend the Exposition Universelle of 1867, he found that the Egyptian exhibit had been built to simulate medieval Cairo in the form of a royal palace. The Khedive stayed in the imitation palace during his visit and became a part of the exhibition, receiving visitors with medieval hospitality. (Mitchell, 1998, p. 296)

Although the Khedive may have relished the attention and willingly stayed in the palace, many of the other “human specimens” lived in less desirable settings with their lives a spectacle for the Western public to marvel at.

The various regions which historically made up the Orient had traditionally held the interest of and intrigued Western societies. Orientalist literature and art portrayed an exotic land filled with violence, luxury and illicit sexuality; a place brought to life in the pages of books such as *A Thousand and One Nights*. As a result, the Oriental pavilions and displays were to be among the favourites for visitors to the World’s Fairs (Barnett, 1933).

Considered the first of the World’s Fairs, the Great Exhibition of 1851, officially titled *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations*, was a massive success for London and the various nations that took part. The 1851 Exhibition brought together ideas of industry and nationalism. Badger Reid notes that “nationalism countered the inherent divisiveness and confusion of rabid change by offering a unifying principle which was not so abstract and beyond the popular understanding” (Badger, 1979, p. 4). Many of the exhibits focused on developments in the area of industry and invention with exhibitors coming from abroad to display the engineering and production of their nations. The focus of the 1851 Great Exhibition was less on anthropological displays yet the beginnings of the interest in the Orient at these fairs can be seen in the inclusion of exhibits by the Ottoman Empire and Egypt (Tenniel, 1851). Panoramas of the Holy Land and Egypt were popular features at the exhibit while a polyorama of Constantinople was also available to visitors wishing to see a vision of the exotic (Altick, 1978). For many visiting the Great Exhibition, these displays would be the closest they would come to seeing the Orient with their own eyes.

Later exhibitions became more motivated by the desire to create replicas of foreign lands and cultures and by the time of the Paris Exposition in 1889 the aim to recreate Oriental lands within the exhibition space was fully realised. Commentators on the exhibits write of “genuine Arabs”, “half nude” women, and boys riding donkeys as if they were catching a glimpse of a completely authentic scene from the Orient (*New York Times*, 1889). The Middle Eastern vistas were constructed in wood and filled with all the sights and sounds which the exhibition organisers felt could be seen in a typical Oriental street. Mock mosques were constructed, traditional dwellings along winding streets and the thoroughfares were filled with bazaars and donkeys, men and women producing crafts or practicing traditional music or dance. The work that went into creating an authentic scene was immense, but its authenticity must yet be questioned. The very nature of a representation is that it is the conception of those who create it rather than the authentic object. In this way, these displays will always bear the stamp of those who have produced them. The Oriental streets were not organic and included many sights to delight the Western viewer rather than to produce an authentic reproduction.

Mitchel describes one Middle Eastern visitor's reaction to the Exposition Universelle in Paris, 1889, recounting how the attempts to create a perfect copy of a street in medieval Cairo were so thorough that "even the paint on the buildings was made dirty" (Mitchell, 1998, p. 294). Every attempt was made to create a realistic Cairo street scene which reflected Western impressions of the Islamic world. The donkeys filling the streets, the belly dancers and the "Oriental" men selling their wares created a vision of the Orient which meant to satisfy Western imaginations but as Mitchell remarks, this can never be the reality. "The model, however realistic, always remained distinguishable from the reality it claimed to represent. Even though the paint was made dirty and the donkeys were brought from Cairo, the medieval Egyptian street at the Paris exhibition remained only a Parisian copy of the Oriental original". (Mitchell, 1998, p. 299).

Fernando Vegas and Camilla Mileto concur with this, maintaining that, "The least important part of this spectacle was its authenticity, an example of which was found at the 1894 San Francisco fair, where, since the local Japanese refused to pull rickshaws for the visitors, a group of Germans dressed in Oriental costumes did so instead." (Vegas & Mileto, 2013, p. 198). The questionable authenticity of the scenes at the World's Fairs did not seem to discourage visitors who flocked in their thousands each day to see the sights of the World's Fairs and Exposition Universelles. This type of exhibiting proved immensely popular and the World's Fairs were to have mock streets and living displays as part of the experience until the 1930s (Çelik, 1992).

Over the course of the nineteenth century the types of exhibits changed from industrial displays and scientific demonstrations to being concerned with a more fun and frivolous experience for visitors. By 1893 the World's fair in Chicago was to include experiences for fair goers such as the Ferris Wheel and pleasure boats. Included in the spectacles for visitors were again "native villages" in which visitors could safely explore other lands and have the experiences of real travel without the actual dangers associated with travelling to such exotic places. Behind these spectacles and the evident advantages of visiting a tailor-made native village, the imperial rationale and motivation on the part of exhibition organisers can be clearly viewed in the manner in which more vulnerable, less developed nations and groups of people are placed on display.

The moral stimulus for these exhibits can also be witnessed in the same methods which place those outside the West on opposite sides of an imaginary (or in the case of the World's Fairs, a physical) fence. The "us versus them" mentality had been in practice for hundreds of years before the advent of such expositions, but the development of scientific methods which categorise and group the natural world allowed for an interpretation of different groups of people which was to elevate some to positions of natural primacy over others. The promotion of exhibits of different cultures as being scientific displays attempted to make acceptable the interest of Western audiences in seeing the exotic and apparently primitive peoples. By the time of the 1893 Columbian exhibition, the lure of the exotic Middle East drew visitors who came to the Midway Plaisance to view the spectacles of the Street in Cairo, the Tunisian village and the notorious *danse du ventre*. An umbrella term' the *danse du ventre* or belly dance (English translation), was used to describe the dances traditionally performed throughout the Middle East. Witnesses were taken aback by the wild movements of the women who performed the dances and the displays quickly became news.

## The Exposition Universelle, 1889 and the Rue du Caire

The Paris Exposition Universelle of 1889 included many of the features which are seen as emblematic of nineteenth century World's Fairs. Its North African and Middle Eastern pavilions portrayed a much stylised view of the regions, motivated by imperialism and orientalist traditions. The *Rue du Caire* is probably the best example of Western stereotyping of the Orient during the 1889 exhibition. Constructed to imitate a street in the Egyptian city, the architecture was a mishmash of different styles from various regions and periods. Designed by Baron Alphonse Delort de Gléon, the space was hugely popular with visitors to the Fair who could take part in the imitated life of the city. The *Rue du Caire* and imitation dwellings in the History of Habitation exhibition further contributed to perceptions of the Middle East as a place of disorder and turmoil; a land outside history and incapable of moving forward into the modern day without outside aid. Each exhibit can be seen to have imperialistic intent in presenting European visitors with a vision of the region which played up to traditional stereotypes and promoted public support for Western intervention.

The Algerian Pavilion was one of many pavilions displaying the achievements of different nations. Algeria, as a French colony, needed to be celebrated for its cooperation in the colonial mission. Çelik writes that, architecturally, Algeria was represented as a “rich country, well integrated into the empire, whose culture enriched the dominating culture” and housed its displays within buildings of Islamic style even though, in reality the culture was being repressed at the time (Çelik, 1992, p. 8). While outwardly the pavilions celebrated the North African country, production of these facades alluded to the stagnation of the region and so reinforced the need for a French imperialist project.

The exhibition *History of Habitation* presented an Arab house, which was described in a publication based on the exhibit. The author of the book argued that “Mohammadism” had ensured that there was no development in construction styles of the home (Çelik, 1992). It was asserted that the Arab house had not changed through time and was similar to a nomadic tent. The suggestion that the style of dwelling had not progressed over time fit with the Western belief that the Orient was somehow outside of time and history; fixed and unchangeable. Frantz Jourdain echoes the sentiment that there had been no evolution in Arab architectural styles. Jourdain wrote in his coverage of the exhibition, that “the victor’s house touches that of the vanquished: the Arab, son of the Prophet, elbows the Byzantine, adorer of Christ” (Garnier & Jourdain, 1889, p. 15). The hierarchies of mankind are being clearly drawn within the Habitation exhibition.

The *History of Habitation* exhibition and the publication alongside it helped to promote this idea to the European public, thus boosting support for the imperial mission to raise other nations out of naivety and savagery. The Middle East, and especially North Africa, caught in a time-war, would need the help of France in order to advance as a civilisation. The buildings of the *History of Habitation* supported these ideas and despite presenting the buildings as authentic they simply conformed to stereotypes about the region.

Elsewhere colonial pavilions were set up to represent the overseas territories. A photo book produced by the organisers of the Exposition Universelle in 1889 includes images of these pavilions relating to the various colonies of France. On the page featuring four drawings of the Tunisian and Algerian pavilions a fifth image is placed above the others. This picture shows the “*Palais de L'exposition D'hygiène*” (*Exposition Universelle et Paris*, 1889). Why this was placed among the images of the North African colonies is unclear but considering the efforts

organisers went to in order to show the degradation of the Orient and the need for a colonial presence, the placement of this picture can be seen to hint at a further lacking on the part of the colonies.

As mentioned earlier, the *Rue du Caire* went into great detail, having men with donkeys drafted in to give rides to visitors and traditional dancers popularised the *danse du ventre* in the performance halls (Patrimoines Partagés, 2019). All of this gave the visitor a sense that this was an authentic scene from Egypt. As Çelik points out, the architect of the street contended that “the Rue du Caire on the Champ de Mars was more authentic than the streets in Cairo itself, because, Gleon argued, it was impossible to find an untouched old street in Cairo” (Çelik, 1992, p. 76). The architect goes on to explain that the traditional houses have been broken up by modern abodes which he believes to be “in bad taste”. Evidently, the French architect knows better than the Cairene’s, how to create a street in the Egyptian capital. A reporter for the Manchester Guardian describes the authenticity of the Rue du Caire, stating that going through the fair visitors find themselves “in an exact reproduction of a street in Cairo, with overhanging moucharabis (traditional latticed wooden windows), a mosque, a minaret, cafes, bazaars, the whole peopled by fellahs and natives exercising various trades”. The reporter continues, writing that “in this corner everything is genuine” (*The Manchester Guardian*, 1889). The scenes witnessed on the *Rue de Caire* meant to replicate life in the city but in reality, they were similarly hodgepodge in their lumping together of different styles, customs and traditions. The scene seemed to have been set up, as much to point at the perceived failings of Middle Eastern cultures as it was celebrating them.

As Mitchell notes, the buildings and streets were dirtied in an attempt at authenticity. “The Egyptian exhibit had also been made carefully chaotic. In contrast to the orderliness of the rest of the exhibition, the imitation street was arranged in the haphazard manner of the bazaar” (Mitchell, 1989, p. 217). The sites on the street were hectic and added to the stereotype of the Middle East as a place of chaos with its people being viewed as somewhat lacking in the standards upheld by Western society. One observer for the New York Times writes about witnessing a “girl in half nude dress” dancing “in bare feet, outrageously painted with red and yellow” (*New York Times*, 1889). The author goes on describing seeing the “donkey boys and their patient animals. They truthfully represent the local colouring, and thus far the drivers behaved like so many devils” (*New York Times*, 1889). Another reporter describes the “donkey boys”, writing that “owing to the change in surroundings, to the atmosphere perhaps, they certainly look more devilish than under the uniformly blue Cairo sky, with pyramids as a background” (*New York Times*, 1889).

It was at the 1889 exhibition in Paris that the majority of the Western public first witnessed the *danse du ventre* performances within the Middle Eastern and North African pavilions. The *danse du ventre* exhibitions proved exceedingly popular as visitors were given a glimpse into Orientalist fantasies. The *Manchester Guardian* (1889) reports that “the dancing women are very beautiful, after the Oriental style, and very graceful in their movements”. It goes on to note that “this concert is one of the most amusingly exotic spots in the Exhibition, and it is therefore much frequented by the amateurs of coffee (...) and by those who delight in the garish spectacle of Oriental costume and patriarchal simplicity of manners and customs” (*The Manchester Guardian*, 1889). These displays affirmed traditional representations of the Orient as a place of sensuality, where women were willing captives, at the mercy of men. This idea had long been accepted in Europe, spurred on by the popular literature and painting on the subject. One correspondent for the *Irish Times* writes about the latticed windows on the buildings “no doubt, the gazelle-eyed beauties of Cairo are lurking behind them” (*The Irish Times*, 1889). Later in

this article, the author describes a visit to see the Egyptian dancers “The dance might have a character of its own, danced as it is danced on the banks of the Nile, but our feeling was one of disappointment and somewhat of disgust” (*The Irish Times*, 1889). These two emotions demonstrate the mixed expectations and reactions to these performances. The disgust that is described can be seen to relate to the moral anxieties felt around watching the routines. Evident also is that the realities of the performance did not live up to expectations and, as can be seen in the 1893 Exhibition, the women often came to be viewed as symbolic of the larger problems of the Orient.

The *Rue du Caire* provided much entertainment for visitors to the fair and it became one of the more popular displays. It can be argued that, through the fabricating of the street scene, the Orient had been tamed and sightseers felt safe and comfortable in a way they might not have should they visit Egypt. The Orient, a place traditionally characterised by mystery, sensuality and violence, had been packaged as a fun day out within the sheltered confines of the Parisian exhibition. This may be seen as a microcosm for the larger imperialist project as it suggests the domesticating of the Orient can only be achieved through the guidance of the French. While supposedly celebrating the cultures included in the exhibit, the 1889 exhibition did little to change European perceptions of the Orient but rather drew on long established stereotypes to support imperialist ventures in the region.

### **World’s Columbian Exposition, 1893 and the “Dancing Girls”**

While reactions to the *danse du ventre* seemed to be mixed at the 1889 Exposition Universelle, American commentaries on The World’s Columbian Exhibition were more unified in their disgust. Coming four years after Paris, the Chicago exhibition seemed to be the World’s Fair at maturity. Chicago was to be the largest of World’s Fairs to date and the first fair to include an area dedicated to amusements and sideshow exhibits. This area was known as the Midway Plaisance. The Midway brought together some of the most exciting and innovative spectacles of the day which visitors could witness for a price. It is the Midway and more specifically the Middle Eastern exhibits on the Midway that are the focus of this paper. These Middle Eastern attractions which ranged from the Street in Cairo to the Persian theatre were to give many Americans their first real exposure to Middle Eastern culture and helped to form or cement opinions and beliefs regarding the morality of its people. It was within these sideshows to the main exposition that most Americans first witnessed the *danse du ventre* of the Orient on their own soil.

A major attraction of the fair were these Middle Eastern dancers, whose movement and clothing both created and supported stereotypes surrounding the cultures of the Middle East. What became known as the *danse du ventre* came to popularity in Europe in the decades before the Chicago World’s Fair. The *danse du ventre* label represented a number of different traditional dances from all over the Middle East. The first reports of such a dance had come from visitors to the Middle East region, such as authors Gustave Flaubert and George William Curtis, who described the dance in “careful, almost breathless, detail” (Shay, 2008, p. 131).

Anthony Shay and Barbara Sellers-Young describe the growing fascination, noting that:

Beginning in the eighteenth, and more intensely in the nineteenth century, belly dance was established in the popular imagination of the West through travellers’ accounts that together with spectacular archeological (sic) finds in Egypt, sparked western interest in the Orient. (Shay and Sellers-Young, 2005, p. 6)



The *danse du ventre* or belly dance was characterised by repetitive circling movements of the body. Traditionally these dances were performed by men or women, and by different social classes depending on the region. The dances and dancers went by a variety of different names governed by particular regions and cultures, for example the ‘awalim and ghawazi; terms for the groups of dancers in Egypt (Shay, 2008, pp. 133–134). Shay and Sellers-Young explain the development of the *danse du ventre* term in the West, writing that “once established in the public imagination,” the name “belly dance” was used to refer to a whole range of different dances which came from all over the Middle East region and included moves that engaged “the hips, torso, arms and hands in undulations, shimmies, circles, and spiral” (Shay and Sellers-Young, 2005, p. 1).

During the Chicago Fair, various different names were used for the same group of dances. Donna Carlton describes the dance’s various appellations:

In the Cairo Street theatre, performers most often called simply, ‘dancing girls’, produced a dance that was given many names by contemporary correspondents, among them, ‘contortion dance’, ‘oriental posture-dance’, ‘muscle dance’ and ‘danse du ventre’. (Carlton, 1994, p. 40)

The women who performed these dances were decorated in jewellery and dressed in outfits which were for the most part covering their bodies but often left openings so that their abdomen could be viewed (The Daily Inter Ocean, 1893, p. 5). Rumours of exotic Middle Eastern dances at the Exposition Universelle in Paris had spread to the United States where the public had heard reports of scantily clad women dancing suggestively to strange music. Alongside exposition events, accounts of plays such as Oscar Wilde’s *Salome*, first performed in French in 1893, served to intensify the interest in these Orientalist displays (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019).

Orientalist painting, too, had a significant influence on how Middle Eastern women were visually represented in the West. Images of slave women or harems spread particular ideas about the lives of women in the Orient and became sources of fascination for a public hungry for representations of the Arabian Nights fantasy. These images served to endorse the image of Middle Eastern women as sexual play-things for men in the Orient along with Western men should they be able to access the women. The belly dancing exhibits provided such access.

Amy Taipale Canfield, in her dissertation on women’s performance at the fair suggests that by 1893 publicity surrounding the *danse du ventre* had led to its reputation as being immoral, noting that “Americans first had the opportunity to see this dance at the Philadelphia Exposition in 1876. During that fair, police raided a performance of the *danse du ventre* at the Turkish Coffee House because the dance was ‘immodest in character’” (Canfield, 2002, p. 142).

By the time the Chicago Fair opened, the rumours regarding the *danse du ventre* were well known in American society and the fair organisers knew that the shows on the Midway would be popular. Sol Bloom, the manager of the Midway concessions commented on the dance in his 1948 autobiography, stating that “when the public learned that the literal translation was ‘belly dance’ they delightedly concluded that it must be salacious and immoral. The crowds poured in. I had a gold mine.” (Bloom, 1948, p. 135)

The majority of catalogues, both official and non-official made mention of the “dancing girls” but few did more than that. This may have been because many of the publications were written before the actual opening of the fair so their authors were perhaps unaware of the scandal to be

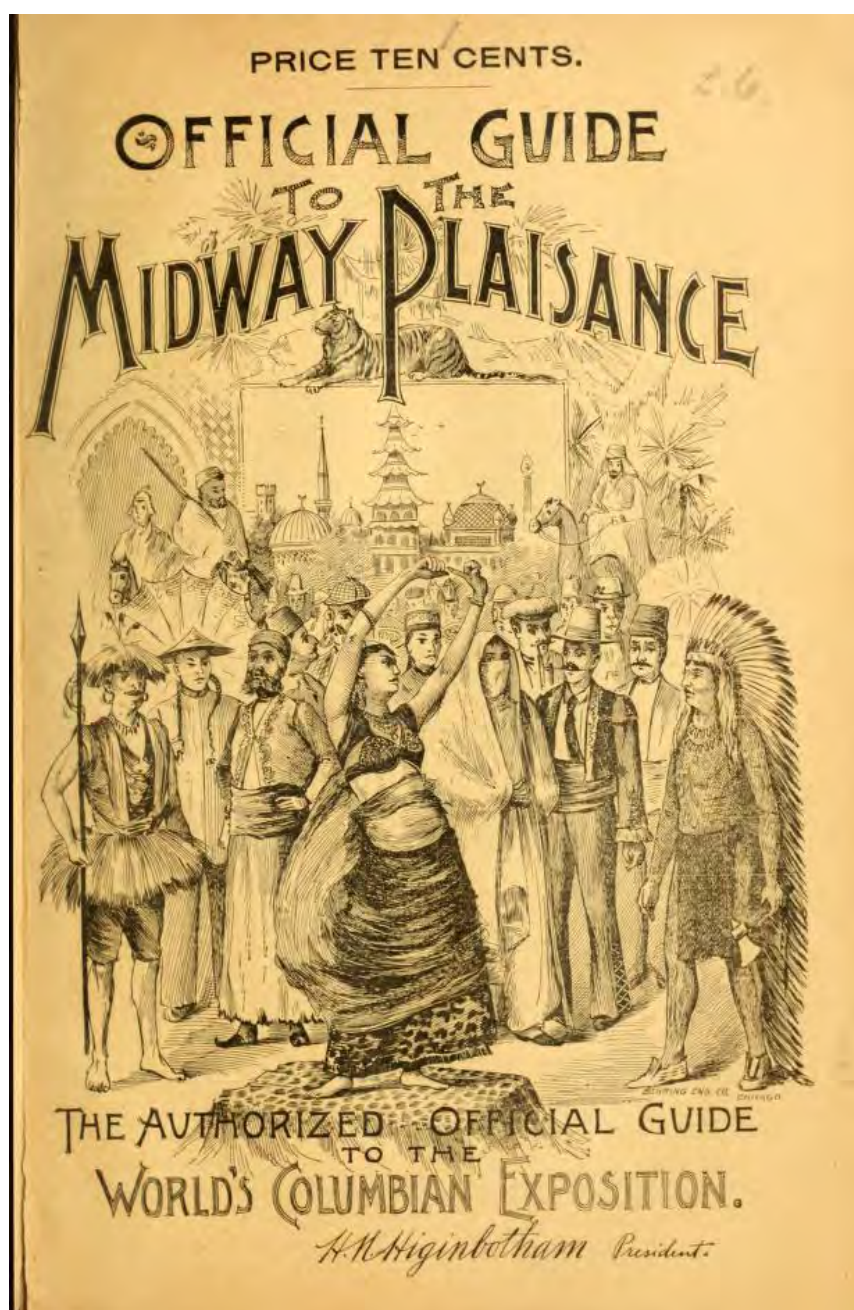
found on the Midway. Another cause for the lack of judgement could reasonably be argued to have been economic. Those producing the catalogues needed willing attendees to purchase their volumes and promoting the Fair as being morally questionable may not have been in their best interests. The innocence of visitors needed to be preserved both for profits and the benefit of the visitors themselves. Better to pretend ignorance of the lewd dances and stumble upon one of the shows than to knowingly seek out a performance.

Most mentions of the dances on the Midway in guidebooks used the term “Dancing Girls” to describe the variety of performances on offer by the Middle Eastern women. Although their reputation preceded them, there is no overt sense within many of the texts that these dances are known to be immoral and both in the construction of the Midway and print descriptions there is an assumption that the dances will be popular. One publication by the Columbian Guide Company notes that “Dancing girls give performances in a hall seating 1,000 persons” (Flinn, 1893, p. 155).

Publications printed, or reprinted, during the months that the fair was open displayed more awareness of the supposedly scandalous nature of the dances. A guide authored by John Joseph Flinn, titled *Official Guide to Midway Plaisance* was reprinted in August 1893 and states that its contents “may be accepted as being absolutely correct” (Flinn, 1893). This catalogue displays on its front cover a drawing of the various people to be found on the Midway, dressed in their traditional costumes. At the centre of the crowd of people is a *danse du ventre* girl. She stands upon her own plinth, dressed in wraps of cloth up to her midriff and an undergarment worn with necklaces to cover her torso. The woman thrusts her hips out and lifts her arms above her head, clearly performing the illustrious dance. Her hands and fingers are placed in a motion, one hand closed in a fist while the index finger of her other hand, in an almost phallic gesture, points into the clenched fist suggesting a sexual act. The woman is surrounded almost entirely by men, the only other clear female stands beside this woman and acts as the reverse of the “dancing girl” in full Islamic covering, only her eyes visible. The men in the image almost all look towards the woman at the centre and she is clearly the main attraction in the image.

Within this catalogue the dances found on the *Street in Cairo* are introduced and their lack of decency hinted at when the theatre is described: “The Theater attracts a great number of persons daily and nightly. Much has been said and written of the dances to be seen here. It is entirely optional with those who visit the Street whether they shall also witness the dances. And it may be said also to be solely a matter of taste” (Flinn, 1893, p. 20).

While there is a hint of caution to the description of the Cairo theatre, the authors clearly felt certain that the “dancing girls” would not be an obstacle to fair attendance. In fact, it seemed that now the fair promoters felt that the opposite was true. The positioning of this “exotic” woman on the cover of the book proves the popularity of such performances. The overtly sexual nature of the image intimates what is on offer to those who pay the price of admission. It can be surmised that the author has read the many newspaper reports on the dance and is presenting a description of the display which both coaxes fair goers to have a look and also fulfils the moral obligation of having warned them of what is inside.



John J Flinn (1893). *Official Guide to Midway Plaisance*, (1893).

Retrieved February 18, 2020, from

<https://archive.org/details/officialguidetom00flin/page/n7/mode/2up>

Upon fair opening the belly dance became a popular exhibit and a standard topic for discussion in newspaper and magazine reports on the Fair. August, the month of the John J Flinn's catalogue publication, had seen much discussion of the *danse du ventre* in the popular print media with much of it pointing to the immorality and scandal of the performance. While women's rights campaigner Ida Craddock argued in an article in the *New York World* that these dances were actually part of an ancient tradition and meant to display sexual restraint, most reporters on the exhibition viewed them from the opposite angle. Dozens of articles were published during this period, describing the shocking and lewd performances and labelling the performers as "immodest", "lascivious", "scum" (*St. Paul Daily News*, 1893, p. 4); (*Morning Oregonian*, 1893, p. 4).

These reports repeat the same accusations, pointing fingers at both the “dancing girls” and those women (or men) who go to see the shows. The main concern here is for the preservation of the morals of the American public against the disturbing exhibitions of the Oriental female body. While Ida Craddock praises the dances as part of an ancient tradition, Reverend B.F. de Costa responds to this in an article in the *St. Paul Daily News* by pointing to the immorality of following heathen religious practices. De Costa comments:

When we propose to tolerate a dance like that of the Midway Plaisance, I would beg the advocates to remember the moral character of the ancient heathen religions. The religion of Baal was of this kind and its fundamental proposition required the sacrifice of female purity as a prerequisite to marriage and entrance into society. (*St. Paul Daily News*, 1893)

Both Craddock and de Costa’s remarks can be seen as part of the tradition of seeing the Orient as a place unchanged by history, their practices part of ancient heathen ritual. De Costa, through his comments in reference to Craddock’s original defence, links the Midway dances with a loss of female purity supposedly seen within heathen religions. Newspaper reporters looked to figures like Rev. de Costa to give their moral opinions of the spectacle but did not shy away from making their own judgements on the decency of the women of the Midway. The accounts of the dances display a fear for the American people and although there can sometimes be suggestions of pity for the actual “dancing girls” their feelings are largely forgotten in the fight for the integrity of the population.

Personal reports from visitors to the Midway, printed in newspaper, often present a different impression of the dances. These reports of the spectacles visitors witnessed while at the Fair often mention the *danse du ventre* but if revealed at all, have different views on the immorality of the shows. These reports often take in the whole exhibition as one event of which the dancing is part of the illusion. Teresa Dean fondly describes the dance and costumes in her article, finishing by stating that “there is no doubt about the world having come to Chicago, and more than one will wonder whether they are awake or dreaming” (*The Daily Inter Ocean*, 1893, p. 5). Kate Field meanwhile, writes about her failure to see how Western dances are so very different to the Oriental style of dance, going on to comment that “vulgar men and women who have set up to howl against this performance would do well to look around the American ballroom and dinner table and discover like food for prurient fancy” finishing my stating that she is “quite sick of Comstockian morality” (*The Milwaukee Sentinel*, 1893).

While these articles present another side to American public opinion, they represent views which are not in line with those in positions of authority and their remarks are refuted by those posing as moral adjudicators. The many articles which describe the dances as vulgar call upon the “upstanding citizens” of the nation to abstain. There was evidently a great amount of interest by the public in these dances and it was felt necessary to broadcast opposition to attendance.

An article in the *Morning Oregonian* writes that “there is room for a wide divergence of honest opinion as to whether any particular dance is morally good or bad. But there is no room for any question, whatsoever, concerning the moral transgression of any woman who deliberately visits what she believes to be an immoral performance, knowing beforehand what she is to witness” (*Morning Oregonian*, 1893, p. 4). This statement hints at the popularity of the dancing exhibit at the Midway and an attempt to bring it under control. As the notoriety of the display spread, more and more people visited one of the shows. This popularity continued after the close of the Chicago World Fair when travelling groups from the Midway brought their shows to other cities

(Carlton, 1994, p. 56). While newspapers spread the opinion that the *danse du ventre* was something to avoid for the sake of decency, American citizens became more and more curious as to the contents of such a display. Travelling shows, mimicking the Midway could be seen in major cities all over America and their popularity continued to incite the abhorrence of moral adjudicators wherever they went.

## Conclusion

The popularity of both the *Rue du Caire* in 1889 Paris and the “dancing girls” of Chicago points to a popular interest in Middle Eastern culture by Western society. However, these displays most often helped long standing stereotypes and served to further distance the Orient from the more “advanced” West in Western minds. The focus on creating dirty, chaotic streets while ignoring architectural styles and developments only supported typical orientalist prejudices which portrayed the Middle East as a place of barbarism, danger and degeneration. Rather than promoting understanding between cultures, the presentation of the “dancing girls” in 1893 further demonstrated the moral degradation of Middle Eastern society by measuring it up to American moral values. As the largest scale public events of the nineteenth century, the World’s Fairs must be viewed as having had a great influence on Western ideas about the Middle East. These exhibitions gave visitors a chance to see far off cultures, offering a glimpse into life in other regions but that sight was clearly and wholly orchestrated by Western players. Instead of fostering mutual understanding, these fairs performed as servants of Western imperialism and supremacy, creating or nurturing stereotypes about Middle Eastern culture which would endure well into the twentieth century and beyond.

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## ***Repair: Mongolian Art as Reimagination of the Pastoral Identity***

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### **Abstract**

Many Mongols in Northern China grapple with threats to their cultural identity. Ongoing economic development, rapid urbanization, Hanification, and the state's historical assimilation policies threaten a distinct Mongolian cultural identity. One way that Mongols grapple with "cultural identity anxiety," is through representation. Material culture has become one mode to represent a distinct cultural identity and to uphold distinct ethnic boundaries. In this article, I analyze a piece of material culture in cartoon art form, titled "Repair," by Mongolian artist Babilig. I use cultural and political theory, historical shifts in Inner Mongolia, and Chinese state discourse and ideologies to demonstrate why material culture is used to construct and represent Mongolian cultural identity. I demonstrate how the artist uses different elements in piece of art critique the impact of the Chinese state's rapid urbanization on Mongol cultural space. I also posit that a distinct Mongolian cultural identity is promoted to debunk the long held Chinese state discourse in which Han are promoted over Mongols. Additionally, I argue that, ultimately, the representation of Mongols as reimagined pastoralists justifies state economic and urbanization policies aimed at ushering Inner Mongolia, and the Mongols who live there, into modernization.

*Keywords:* Inner Mongolia, China, Mongols, material culture, cultural identity

## Introduction

I lived and worked in Hohhot, capital of Inner Mongolia, for about ten years between my first visit to the city 2001 and when I moved back to the United States in 2012. Over the years, like any expatriate who lives abroad for an extended period of time, I slowly peeled my way through the multiple layers of culture starting at the top layers of language and food and into the complicated layers of history, relationships, politics, and so forth. Thus, when on May 27, 2011 Mongolian protests took place in Hohhot, capital city of Inner Mongolia, I knew that there was more to the story than what I could see. Protests were not uncommon in China. But generally, they took place in front of a government building and lasted a day or less. This particular set of protests prompted the local authorities to declare martial law throughout the city which indicated to me that this situation was quite unusual.

Just over a year after I witnessed those protests, I started my doctoral studies. As I began to design my research project, I had the May 2011 protests in mind. I was not interested in the actual protests per se, but in the notion of resistance that was marked by the protests. I wanted to know what else Mongols were resisting. I turned to scholarly literature and to print material, social media, and electronic sources to begin my investigation of the phenomenon. My research combined with my extensive experience of living in Inner Mongolia led me to understand that Mongols grapple with cultural anxiety because of the ongoing urban development and state-driven assimilation policies throughout the region.

As I scoured the internet and social media, I happened upon a piece of cartoon art called *Repair* by Mongolian artist Babilig. This article centers on that piece of cartoon art. Against the backdrop of rapid urbanization throughout Inner Mongolia, which has all but destroyed Mongol pastoral grasslands throughout the region, I analyze this piece of cartoon art as a mode of cultural representation, reimagination of cultural heritage, and resistance against the impact of state-led urbanization.

## Material Culture as an Object of Analysis

Over the last twenty years, academic investigations of material culture have expanded the way the field is conceptualized. There is no longer only an archaeological focus on material culture, but, rather, material culture can include just about anything (Tilley, et al, 2006). Thus, while the field still includes artifacts, it also includes architecture, landscape, memory, performance, and political ideologies, to name only a few examples (Tilley, et al, 2006, p. 28).

Because the field of material culture is both broad and flexible in its definition and application, I chose to use material culture as a framework of analysis for this article. The case study is a specific piece of material culture that, when analyzed, demonstrates the historical and contextual relationship Mongols have with the state, one another, cultural identity, memory, and so forth. The material culture framework allows for a discussion of reflexivity, relationship, and resistance. Additionally, this analytical framework allows for a simultaneous discussion of the Chinese state ideologies, discourse, and economic policies to which the piece of cartoon art is responding.

In addition to the analysis of material culture, I also use cultural and political theory, historical shifts in Inner Mongolia, and Chinese state discourse and ideologies to demonstrate why and how material culture is used to construct and represent Mongolian cultural identity. This is done in accordance with Appadurai and Breckenridge's assertions (1998) that analyses of

material culture can tell us about internal debates and how actors deliberately construct national and ethnic identities and cultural identities.

### **Hanification of Inner Mongolia**

The population transfers of Han to Inner Mongolia are neither accidental nor a new trend in Chinese politics. In fact, this state practice was already heavily critiqued by Owen Lattimore during the 1930's. At that time one of the border securitization practices was to move Han into areas where there was a strong minority population. Lattimore suggested that assimilation was aimed at the "extermination of the Mongols, to make room for the Chinese" (Lattimore, 1935, p. 415). In addition to "extermination," Lattimore used other terms like "Chinese colonization" and "agricultural colonization" to explain that "All policies towards the Mongols, whether Chinese, Soviet or Japanese, appear to start from, a common premise: that something must be done about the nomadism of the Mongols" (Lattimore, 1935, p. 415). A "balance" in the population with an increase of Han interrupted any potential ethno-nationalistic tendencies that minorities may have harbored. It also prevented the border areas from attempting to split from China and align with other foreign forces. These practices are representative of the political ideology that suggests that to be Han is to be Chinese, and vice versa. This ideology remains strong and as is evident in the most recent Chinese state policing of Uyghur people throughout Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, known commonly as Xinjiang.

After the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, Mao Zedong continued the practice of mass population transfers to Inner Mongolia. Pastoralism was viewed as barbaric, following the ideology that Mongols, even all ethnic minority groups, were barbarians (Anderson, 1991; Bulag, 2002). In this way, Han population transfers can be viewed as a mode of civilizing the barbaric practices and people throughout the grasslands.

It goes without saying that The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) was a particularly intense time in Chinese history. The state propagated the discourse that pastoral areas throughout Inner Mongolia were strongholds for ethnic nationalism and could lead to autonomy movements. Under the auspices of security, the state furthered Han population transfers to Inner Mongolia. The idea was that Han would be more loyal to the Chinese state than Mongols (Sanchez, 2015).

Deng Xiaoping's focus on modernization through campaigns like *The Four Modernizations* was a further push by the state to modernize the national economy with far reaching consequences on Mongols. The transformation of Mongols from pastoral people to urbanites became increasingly obvious during this time leading to shifts in the lived realities of Mongols but these shifts and to environmental problems like desertification.

Throughout the 2000's urbanization continued. One driving force was an aspirational economic plan called the *Western Development Program*. This *Program* aimed at developing the economy throughout much of the western regions of China. The focus on raising the standard of living for the growing urban populations often resulted in destruction of the grasslands. Mongolian herders may have been compensated for their land, but as we have learned from other global cases, no amount of compensation is adequate or can replace the self-autonomy and cultural identity often attached to land (Escobar, 2001, p. 162).

The prominent ideology that Han are culturally progressive and all others in China are backwards, has driven much of the state's assimilation policies and continues to guide the state's management of ethnic minority groups. State-driven economic development throughout China's borderlands is thought to be one way the state controls ethnic minority groups living

in the border regions. The state's colonial projects are not unlike the global norm in which state powers have framed *others* as in need of help from the civilized world. North American Indians, Native Hawaiians, and Australian Aborigines have all been ushered into modernity through so-called goodwill development introduced by the civilized world. Stevan Harrell referred to this process as a “civilizing project” in which China's ethnic minority groups have been “subjected over the last few centuries to a series of attempts by dominant powers to transform them, to make them more like the transformers, or in the parlance of the transformers themselves, to ‘civilize’ them.” (Harrell, 1995, p. 3). Thus, modernism, backwards, goodwill can be understood as rhetorical tropes that construct the state's ideology and its aggressive development policies in which non-Han might be civilized.

Although urbanization has removed vast populations of Mongols pastoral lands, the cultural identity connected with pastoralism is clearly not extinct. Rather, this identity marker remains strong as will be demonstrated later in the article. First, however, I will discuss the state's necessity to construct and maintain distinct ethnic identity markers as part of the overall state identity.

### **The State: Construction of Ethnic Identities**

Although Han culture remains the standard culture in China, the state still needs ethnic groups to showcase evidence that China is a multiethnic nation. The proliferation of ethnic groups also helps the state stave off criticisms which blame the state for ethnic minority cultural destruction. However, the state does not leave it to each ethnic group to construct its own identity. The Chinese state has long been involved in “national image-management” in which Chinese citizens become cognizant of the prescribed social order and help perpetuate the prescribed state image of a unified nation (Leong, 1989, p. 76).

During the early Maoist years, the state produced images in which Chinese citizens were depicted as both united in form and function but were obviously distinct from one another (Schein, 2000). After the Cultural Revolution, during which ethnic distinction was prohibited, Deng once again allowed for ethnic differences, which became “picturesque assets” for China's state building efforts (Schein, 2000, p. 144). China's ethnic minorities were put on display through state produced cultural productions to showcase China as a multinational state, in part because multinationalism had become the global norm. The Stalinist model of how an ethnic group should be defined, that guided the Ethnic Classification Project in the 1950's, still directed China's state building efforts during the Deng era. But whereas the prior focus was on social classes, the Deng era focus was on ethnic groups. As a result, Chinese citizens looked to the state's focus on ethnic groups, which included the construction of cultural identities attached to each group, for direction on how to express cultural identity. To this day, the state still sets the parameters for ethnic identity expression.

Cultural identity is often an expression of ethnic group consciousness. That is not to say that *all* members of one ethnic group express cultural identity in the same way. Yet, there are often commonly expressed traits. The construction of cultural identities functions in the same way as the construction of national identities. Benedict Anderson has claimed that “Communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.” (Anderson, 1991, p. 6). Following the assertion that national identities are constructed through an “imagined community,” Stuart Hall asserted that national cultures are also imagined. He stated that “National cultures construct identities by producing meanings about ‘the nation’ with which we can *identify*; these are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and images which are constructed

of it” (Hall, 1992, p. 293). In light of the theoretical positionality taken up by Anderson and Hall, namely that national identities are constructed, how then are cultures represented?

In China, the representation of ethnic groups is managed in such a way that promotes nationalism and legitimates the Chinese state. In what has become influential scholarship, Anagnost pointed out that through the representation of ethnic groups the state has rendered itself “civilized” and “constructed an ‘otherness’ against which the Party can exercise its legitimating activism” (Anagnost, 1997, p. 231). Whereas the categorization of China’s ethnic minority groups coaxed those living on the fringe of Chinese society into viewing themselves as part of the Chinese nation, the construction of ethnic identities coaxes ethnic minority groups to look to the state for directions on how to be Mongolian, or Tibetan, or any member of any other ethnic identity. For Mongols, then, there is an identity that has been constructed and promoted by the state, which helps to maintain ethnic boundaries, in the Barthian sense, between Mongolians and others ethnic groups in China.

### **Who are the Mongols?**

The question is, to borrow from Almaz Khan, “Who are the Mongols?” Khan suggested that “Historical memory plays an important role in how the Mongols are perceived and represented today. This is true both in terms of Mongol self-imaging and representation and their perception and representation by other parties” (Khan, 1996, p. 127). He argued that there is a “homogenizing “Mongolness” for the *public* domain, an essentialized identity grounded in a historical pastoral ecology” (Khan, 1996, p. 126). The assertion that the pastoral identity was a key signifier of Mongolian cultural identity is evident throughout scholarly literature. For example, Bulag has written extensively that pastoralism is a key cultural marker of Mongolness, and Fujitani wrote that pastoralism is “a material vehicle of meaning that helped construct a memory...or that served as a symbolic marker” (Fujitani, 1993, p. 89). Thus, the pastoral identity is a key marker of Mongolian identity and, therefore, is used as representation of Mongols in China despite the diminishing numbers of the Mongolians who continue to work as pastoralists.

This article does not claim that pastoralism and agriculturalism fall perfectly along ethnic lines. There is a need to be aware that the binary divide between Mongolian pastoralists and Han agriculturalists marginalizes those Mongols who are farmers and Han who raise sheep (Bulag, 2000). However, whether or not Mongols are actually pastoralists, they, as a collective group, are often represented as such. In this vein, Henochowicz suggested that, “To be Mongol is no longer to be nomadic, but rather to have the nomadic ideal in mind.” (Henochowicz, 2008, pp. 46–47). This nomadic identity is constructed and maintained by both the state and Mongols themselves, in part because, of the Ethnic Classification Project which “requires perpetual management by the state and continued participation by the people” (Mullaney, 2006, p. 135). In other words, there must be continued and intentional efforts made in order for ethnic groups to remain distinct.

There is a general consensus amongst scholars that China’s minorities have long been represented by an outsider without any voice from within the minority group (See Gladney, 1994; McKhann, 1995). A counter-perspective to this view is the assertion that, in recent years, minority groups have increasingly been active in the public representation of their own cultural identities (Baranovitch, 2001). This article follows the same position and suggests that both the state and minority groups are active in the representation of ethnic minority identity. For Mongols, cultural differences are promoted through material culture, which has become a form

of “resistance within collaboration” (Bulag, 1999, pp. 21–41). In other words, Mongols’ resistance (to land grabs, sinicization, assimilation, cultural identity anxiety) is achieved through a collaboration with the state in how Mongolian identity is publicly represented. Through these modes of representation, the Mongolian culture is portrayed as that of an essentialized minority group in which the discourse of a multi-national state is perpetuated and Mongols are represented in a stereotypical and internally Orientalized fashion.

### **The Idealized Grasslands as Landscape Representation**

The use of landscape as a mode of representation can be traced back to the Italian Renaissance (Cosgrove, 1985). During that time period landscape began to be theorized as a “visual ideology” of realism (Mitchell, 2000). Because landscapes are represented, this “indicates that landscapes are in some very important senses ‘authored’ (Mitchell, 2000, 121). Following this line of argument, landscapes hold cultural power and “have a double role with respect to something like ideology ... It naturalizes a cultural and social construction representing an artificial world ...” (Mitchell, 1994, pp. 1–2). In other words, landscape representations are often created in order to promote ideologies.

Cultural geographers have traced landscape, both the built environment and the representation of it, as a method of exerting power and control over those who inhabit the land (See Cosgrove, 1985; Cresswell, 1987; Daniles and Cosgrove, 1993). Rapid urbanization in China is an example of built environments that exude meaning as a representation of power. Throughout China, built environments have come to represent China’s secured position as a global powerhouse to both domestic and international observers. Skyscrapers built throughout Beijing just in time for the 2008 Summer Olympic games, the transformation of villages like Shenzhen to economic centers of trade, and the expansive urban centers built throughout the western regions of the country all represent and undergird the state’s power.

Landscape representations can also function in the same way: as representations of power. In Inner Mongolia, the grasslands are the key representation of landscape in the province and display the state’s power to represent the land as pristine despite the burgeoning urban growth, coal and gold mines, and other industrial structures that have been built throughout the province. Despite any reality concerning the grasslands, Inner Mongolia “continues to be perceived the way it has always been: as an exotic and wild region where all is boundless blue sky, grassland, herds, and nomads” (Khan, 1996, p. 132). The construction of the grassland imaginary is not accidental but intentionally authored as part of the state’s construction of an identity that both appeals to the local community and benefits the state.

The Inner Mongolian grasslands have been rendered to the imaginary in such a way as to give them permanence and position them so they can spur on human imagination and memory. The reimagination of the grasslands continues to be perpetuated despite the reality in which the grasslands throughout the province are increasingly disrupted with sprawling cities and environmental catastrophes. Ironically, the representation of the grasslands as pristine can also be read as a subtle critique of the state’s destruction of the grasslands. In other words, the representation of the picturesque geography that no longer exists serves as a reminder that the grasslands have been destroyed by the state’s modernization efforts.

The grasslands have long been the setting of an internally colonial experience. Said writes that “more subtle and complex is the unending cultural struggle over territory, which necessarily involves overlapping memories, narratives, and physical structures” (Said, 2000, 181). Thus,

the grasslands are not just represented as idealized for the sake of nostalgia, but they also signify the setting of a cultural struggle between traditional Mongolian shepherding and the modernizing efforts of the state.

### The Grasslands in Disrepair

Babilig is an internationally known artist from Inner Mongolia. He has won several awards for his art in China and in international competitions throughout the world. Several Chinese news outlets feature Babilig in their online publications. His work can also be found on *Facebook*.

The piece of cartoon art below is titled *Repair* (Figure 1). I first saw the piece of art on *WeChat* in 2012. I chose this particular piece of art to examine because it is a commentary on cultural and political change in the grasslands of Inner Mongolia. The elements in this art piece work together to represent Mongolian culture and to create tension in which the overdevelopment of the grasslands is critiqued.

*Repair* depicts the ongoing challenges Mongolian families face in response to over development throughout the grasslands. It is both an imagined representation of the pastoral life and a critique of the impact of modern technology on the grasslands. The geographical setting in this piece of art is the pristine grasslands which, as mentioned above, have become a trope in the construction of a “petrified” Inner Mongolia.



Figure 1: *Repair* by Babilig (Babilig, 2015)

### Traditional versus Modern

There are two men in Babilig's art piece. The most prominent figure is at the center of the image. He is depicted as a Mongolian shepherd wearing traditional Mongolian clothes, called a *deel*, and Mongolian boots. The *deel* is brightly colored, which draws the viewer's gaze towards the man. His pastoral identity is further marked by the sheep in the foreground of the picture. Additionally, the grasslands are presented as wide, open spaces without fences or any

other boundary marker. Boundless grasslands in which Mongols lived as mobile pastoralists was once part of the Mongol spatial identity. Babilig rightly places the Mongol shepherd in a traditional Mongolian space. Finally, the glasses he is wearing seem to indicate that he is an older man. In this way, this man is representative of a past generation for whom pastoralism was the most common occupation.

This is in direct contrast to the other man in the picture who is also a Mongolian man, wearing a *deel*, but who is driving a motorcycle which is representative of modern technology. This man is representative of a younger generation. He is facing forward, in motion, and leaving the past behind. This tension, between young and old, modern and backwards, moving and stuck, is key in this piece of art. The actions of each of the men are juxtaposed in order to critique the impact that *modernism* has had on the Mongolian cultural space and, by extension, on the Mongolian people. The tension created by destruction and repair are a reference to the state's policies in Inner Mongolia in which Mongols were blamed for overgrazing and destroying the land. Chinese state discourse deflects any responsibility for land degradation and, instead, blames local residents (Williams, 2002). Mongol pastoralists are depicted as lazy and as lacking the scientific understanding necessary to care for the pastoral lands.

Thus, by depicting the older Mongolian man as the one who is able to repair the land, Babilig resists the state discourse that insists that Mongols are not able to care for the land. Babilig also avoids the danger of having his art censored in China. This is achieved through his nuanced critique whereby, instead of blaming the state directly for the destruction of the grasslands, Babilig focuses on the Mongolian man's "repair" of the grasslands. In doing so, the focus is on the Mongolian shepherd, and by extension, traditional Mongolian pastoralists, the ones who are able to repair the destruction caused by modern development.

### ***Invoking Nostalgia***

Another important element in this piece of art is the notion of nostalgia which can be described as the "association with (indeed, its disguise as) more genuinely innocent, tender recollections of what is at once an earlier epoch and a previous phase of life" (Resaldo, 1989, p. 108). Nostalgia is invoked in both the constructed image of the grasslands and by the image of a yurt in the background of the painting. Yurts are not as common in daily life as they once were. Instead, they have been transformed into markers of Mongolian ethnicity through the cultural tourism industry which is further discussed in the next chapter. They are used as hotels for tourists who want to have an *authentic* Mongolian experience (Evans and Humphrey, 2002). In this piece of art, there is just one yurt rather than a cluster of yurts, which is more common in tourist locations. This probably indicates that the yurt belongs to one of the men. It is safe to assume that it belongs to the older gentleman because he represents a past Mongolian cultural identity. But, unlike the vivid colors used to depict the man, the image of the yurt is muted. Its faded depiction represents the fading of Mongolian traditional culture. What once was a reality has been relegated to a memory, but even that memory is faded. In this way, perhaps Babilig is conceding the fact that Mongol traditions are in the distant past, and in the distant memory, of the Mongolian people.

Said writes that people look to "memory, especially in its collective forms, to give themselves a coherent identity, a national narrative, a place in the world" even if it is "manipulated and intervened for sometimes urgent purposes in the present" (Said, 2000, p. 179). The image of the yurt is part of the ethnic Mongolian narrative that maintains Mongolness through imagined pastoralism. In this way, memory is also an indicator of the relationship between Mongols and



the state. The fact that a yurt has been relegated to memory is a reminder that the Mongolian cultural identity has been interrupted by state power. It is a “dialectic of memory over territory” highlights the place that Mongols have within the Chinese ethnopolitical order (Said, 2000, p. 181).

### ***Red China Reigns***

The last element of this piece to be analyzed is the color of the dirt beneath the grasslands. It is a reddish hue. Perhaps Babilig drew the dirt red to represent blood. The land is “bleeding” due to the way modern technology has “cut” it. Because of the destruction of modern technology, the land requires a surgical repair by one who knows how to care for the land: a Mongol shepherd. Further, the shepherd is wearing a traditional Mongolian *deel* that is the same color as the land. There is a connection, a unity, between the Mongol shepherd and the land. Thus, if the land is representative of Mongolian culture, then the fissure in the land is representative of the fissure in Mongolian cultural identity. As such, it is a return to the traditional Mongolian lifestyle that will repair the land.

Another possible reading of the color of the dirt is that the red hue represents China. Red is representative of state power. Red is the color of the nation’s flag, the color of money-filled envelopes given at Chinese festivals, and the name for the youth army (Red Guards) during the Cultural Revolution. It is a Chinese (Han) color. At Inner Mongolia University, in the capital city of Hohhot, at the top of the main building on campus, there are three decorative concrete yurts. At first glance, it would appear that the yurts that sit atop the main building of a traditionally Mongolian university were constructed to represent the Mongolian culture. But instead of painting the yurts blue, which is a color that is traditionally representative of the Mongolian people, the yurts were painted red to signify the power that the state holds over Mongols. The color literally covers the yurts, which communicates that any expression of the Mongolian culture must follow the state’s mandates for the public domain. Thus, by painting the dirt red, Babilig is perhaps cooperating with the state by affirming its power in Inner Mongolia. Further, if the land is red, then it could be interpreted that the land belongs to the state. Despite what Mongols may believe about their cultural connection and history with the land, it is the state that owns the land.

### **Modern Modes of Technology to Preserve Tradition**

As mentioned above, I first saw *Repair* on the popular Chinese social media site *WeChat*, and Babilig’s art is also easily accessible on other social media sites. If Babilig is using modern technology to promote his artwork, is it contradictory to my argument that Babilig is preserving a traditional identity? Is the use modern technology contradictory to the resistance theme of *Repair*? I do not think that it is. My argument in the analysis of *Repair* is not that Mongols are not modern or disdain modernity. Rather, I posit that *Repair* is an example to demonstrate how Mongols, in response to development, have reimagined their cultural identity. Thus, modern technology like social media sites are just another mode through which the Mongolian cultural identity can be reimagined and relaunched.

In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson discussed how newspapers were used to promote ideas of nationalism (Anderson, 1991). Printed newspapers have largely given way to social media tools, which include Facebook and Twitter. But the function is still the same: to unify people who live in different geographic locations. In the same vein, the distribution of *Repair* through social media functions to mobilize Mongols through a common identity and purpose. *Repair* is at the intersection of art as resistance and social media as mobilization. Rather than display

*Repair* as a fixed image on an urban wall mural, Babilig's art is accessible through various online sources. It has been "liked" and "shared" and "reposted" widely. Through this prolific dissemination, Mongols are mobilized in the resistance of the destruction of the grasslands and unified into a reimagined pastoral identity.

### Collective Memory as Representation and Resistance

Representations of cultural identity are "not an inert and passive thing, but a field of activity in which past events are selected, reconstructed, maintained, modified, and *endowed with political meaning* (italics added)" (Said, 2000, p. 185). Said's statement helps further elucidate Babilig's poignant piece of cartoon art. In *Repair*, the collective memory of a Mongol pastoral life is not passively represented. Rather, Babilig chooses certain cultural markers, like the setting of the pristine grasslands and the "wise" shepherd as the one who is able to "repair" the grasslands. He maintains a sense of an imagined community through the expression of cultural identity. Babilig's work is certainly endowed with political meaning. Through the nostalgic elements of a past Mongolian lifestyle and through the destruction created by modern technology, Babilig critiques the Chinese discourse of modernization. What is also important in Babilig's piece is the work that collective memory does to harken Mongols back to the pastoral lifestyle. The images of the grasslands, the shepherd, and the yurt are all a representation of a timeless and idealized pastoral identity that Mongols do not want to forget.

Zhao wrote that "the state may rewrite history as a means to colonize ethnic minorities and to control them through coercive policies. It cannot, however, eliminate the historical memory of ethnic minorities" (Zhao, 2004, p. 179). Therein lies another point of tension between Mongols and the Chinese state. On the one hand, it is the state that has constructed Mongolian cultural identity and has relegated pastoralism to the imaginary. Mongols see themselves as pastoralists forced by the state to become "modern." The state views Mongols as recovered pastoralists that are finally moving along the evolutionary scale of social development (See Mullaney, 2006).

*Repair* is also a form of resistance which "attempts to redefine or break down the structures of power that govern resister's life" (Mitchell, 2000, 68). Babilig resists the state's discourses about romanticized Inner Mongolia, backwards Mongols, and the benefits of modernity by depicting the grasslands differently from the way the state would wish them to be depicted. This piece of art has all the elements of the state constructed image of the grasslands, just like the leather painting described above. But in Babilig's rendition, the grassland trope is interrupted by destruction. The fissure through Babilig's piece is, as Cresswell writes, a "purposeful action directed against some disliked entity" (Cresswell, 1996, p. 22). Babilig's drawing is then an act of resistance, different from protests, but still aimed at the same disliked entity: the destructive actions in the grasslands.

The pastoral imaginary is publicly represented because, for the state, the image of the pristine grasslands not only dismisses criticisms of environmental destruction, but it also creates a visual rhetoric in which the grasslands are represented as an idyllic tourist destination. The reimagined pastoral identity can be mobilized and taken on by Mongols. This identity is not an advertisement for tourism but, instead, is a critique of the state's destruction of the Mongol homeland. The critique of the state is a method in which Mongols resist the state discourse of goodwill development that frames Mongols as backwards. Further, Mongols resist and protest the end of a distinct cultural identity because, although pastoralists are quickly disappearing,

the pastoral identity can still be perpetuated, even if only through a nostalgic representation of a past reality.

## Conclusion

In this article, I examined how Mongols grapple with cultural identity anxiety by using material culture in order to deliberately reimagine a notion of “Mongolness.” The reality of a social environment dominated by rapid urbanization, economic development, and Han assimilation has prompted Mongols in Inner Mongolia to turn to material culture as representations of culture, identity, and resistance. Whereas the daily lives of Mongols in Inner Mongolia are marked by the realities of an ever-changing region, representation through material culture helps Mongols preserve their cultural distinction.

The analysis of Babilig’s cartoon art *Repair* demonstrates how Babilig followed the parameters of the state constructed grassland image in his painting, which includes the representation of the grasslands as an idealized space. Additionally, as was also demonstrated, Babilig critiques the state discourse in which Mongols are presented as backwards and unable to care for the land. Babilig’s piece is an example a Mongol response to the claim of the destruction of the grasslands within the state’s dominant framework of representation.

Mongols are constantly negotiating ethno-political challenges in China, the impacts of economic expansion, urban policy shifts, and their own ethnic minority status. Given the shifting nature of daily life in China, various forms of material culture may well be one constant source of identity making for Mongols. As such, material culture will also continue to provide sources of study for scholars who want to understand the nuanced ways in which Mongols seek to preserve their heritage and culture.

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