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Writing an/as Infrastructure

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On a typical afternoon on Zoom, a few months after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, a colleague of Hubert's interrupted the conversation to share that he had purchased the same office chair as him—an Ikea chair, which they had both chosen because of its respectable price-quality ratio. In the weeks that followed, that chair seemed to multiply from one Zoom screen to the next, gradually taking over the uncertain material conditions of the remote university. While sharing this anecdote with Monica as we began editing this issue, we realized that this moment of mutual recognition was emblematic of the situation's configurations. This movement of replacing kitchen chairs of questionable quality into ergonomic work furniture seemed a banal testimony to the strange ambivalence of the transition of our academic activities online, prompting us, at rhythms somewhat synchronized, to reimagine the material and aesthetic configurations of our daily lives.

This collective transition to the *zoomverse* has certainly taken on the appearance of what Lauren Berlant (2016) calls a glitchfrastructure, a material and affective modeling of social forms operating through a succession of breaks and hassles. At this first online edition of the Canadian Communication Association's annual conference, the succession of material and social breakdowns caused by the pandemic led us to join each other at a distance, to meet our peers in their revised virtual settings, to welcome each other's technical prowess and difficulties, to get to know each other via our GatherTown avatars, and to adjust to the rhythms of our respective virtual fatigues. While the event was enjoyable, for many, it was also sometimes awkward or uncomfortable; yet, we were all there, trying to make something out of the situation. This is what Berlant foresees in an episode of infrastructural collapse: a latitude in the institutional circuits that keep communities bound to regimes of norms. In moments like these, the emergence of such latitude becomes an opportunity to reinvent these circuits by imagining new ways of doing things.

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Reflecting on this introduction, we found that despite these movements of adaptation and adjustment, writing is a practice that persists. While teaching, conferences, and meetings demanded a reinvention of our individual and collective material configurations, writing seemed to retain its potential to withdraw from circumstances. In such persistence, writing becomes an intimate practice that brings us to fully inhabit collapse as latitude, by embracing the uncertainties and discomforts raised by the crisis, by reflecting on the potential it activates, or by trying to implement possible alternatives. Here, then, is a modest hypothesis about the situation that brings us to this issue: writing is both an infrastructure of the research community and a practice of composing the infrastructure for a world in transition. The authors who participated in this issue, each in their own way, write as/an infrastructure, meaning that their writing practice seems particularly animated by this dual potential. Through their words, we have discovered a multiplicity of ways of doing and thinking about this world in transition, testifying not only to the vast scope of interests of graduate research in communication studies, but also to the richness of students' intellectual and political engagement with the field.

Tucker's opening article, *The 1980s War on Drugs, the FERET Database, and Building Future Infrastructure for Facial Recognition Technologies*, examines the history of a technological and bureaucratic transition in the Americas, that of the gradual automation of facial recognition technologies, in order to demonstrate their participation to a broader transition from disciplinary biopolitics to interdiction technologies. By working with a media archaeology of the protocols and documents involved in the deployment and maintenance of such techno-political regimes, Tucker's writing "infrastructuralizes" the history of this transition by making visible the complexity its technological, social and material connections.

In *Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism in China: The Construction of the Chinese Identity on Television Show Singer,* Zhao explores the construction of an international cultural scene and the ways in which this scene participates in the imaginary of Chinese national and cosmopolitan identity. Zhao's writing is characterized by its particular attention to the intersections between the mechanisms of popular representations, in the reality show under analysis, and the historiographical and cosmopolitical fluctuations of Chinese nationalism.

In his article, *'Fit for the Job': A Programmatic Inquiry on Style and Aesthetics in the Workplace*, Dion analyzes his experience in the restaurant service industry to conceptualize style and how it is mobilized in employee management as a semiotic paradigm for social modeling. Through a writing style that flirts with autoethnography, Dion engages the tension between aesthetic dimensions and rhetoric of appearance in the experience of waitressing work while opening his considerations to broader socio-organizational dynamics.

Donison's concluding article *Sonic difference: Reflexive listening and the classification of voice* deconstructs the ways in which listening practices tend to reiterate Eurocentric power relations, while also putting forward alternative forms of listening through which to renew, perhaps even decolonize, our listening relations and their construction of the external world. By presenting the practices of pausing and listening out, Donison's writing makes tangible the different forms of discrimination that are embodied in sound experiences while suggesting concrete avenues towards their emancipation.

We are honoured to present the work of these four authors and to have prepared this issue, written and thought in a very particular context. Enjoy your reading.

L'écriture d'une/comme Infrastructure

Lors d'un après-midi comme les autres sur Zoom, quelques mois après le début de la pandémie du COVID-19, un collègue d'Hubert interrompt la conversation afin de partager s'être procuré la même chaise de bureau que lui – une chaise Ikea, qu'ils avaient tous deux choisie en raison de son rapport qualité-prix somme toute respectable. Dans les semaines qui suivirent, cette chaise lui a semblé se multiplier d'un écran Zoom à l'autre, s'emparant progressivement des conditions matérielles incertaines de l'université à distance. En partageant cette anecdote à Monica, alors que nous commencions l'édition de ce numéro, nous en sommes venus au constat que ce moment de reconnaissance mutuelle parlait bien des configurations de la situation. Ce mouvement de remplacement des chaises de cuisine de qualité discutable en chaises de travail ergonomique témoignait banalement de l'étrange ambivalence de la transition de nos activités universitaire en ligne, nous incitant, à des rythmes somme toute synchronisés, à revoir les configurations matérielles et esthétiques de nos quotidiens.

Cette transition collective vers le *zoomverse* a certainement pris les allures de que Lauren Berlant (2016) dénomme une pépinfrastructure (glitchfrastructure), une modélisation matérielle et affective des formes sociales opérant par succession de bris et de tracas. À cette première édition virtuelle de la conférence annuelle de l'Association canadienne de Communication, la succession de bris matériels et sociaux provoqués par la pandémie nous a amenés à nous rejoindre à distance, à rencontrer nos pair·es dans leurs décors virtuels revisités, à accueillir les prouesses et les difficultés techniques de chacun·e, à faire connaissance via nos avatars GatherTown et à nous ajuster au rythme de nos fatigues virtuelles respectives. Pour plusieurs, si l'événement était agréable, il était aussi parfois gênant ou inconfortable ; et pourtant nous y étions tous et toutes, à essayer de faire quelque chose de la situation. C'est bien ce qui s'invite dans un épisode d'effondrement infrastructurel, toujours suivant Berlant (2016) : une latitude dans les circuits institutionnels qui maintiennent des collectivités dans un régime de normes. Dans des moments comme celui-ci, l'émergence d'une telle latitude devient une possibilité de réinventer ces circuits en imaginant de nouvelles manières de faire les choses.

En réfléchissant à cette introduction, nous avons constaté que malgré ces mouvements d'adaptation et d'ajustement, l'écriture est une pratique qui persiste. Alors que l'enseignement, les congrès et les rencontres demandaient une réinvention de nos configurations matérielles individuelles et collectives, l'écriture semblait garder son potentiel de retrait des circonstances. Dans sa persistance, l'écriture est une pratique intime qui incite à habiter pleinement l'effondrement comme latitude, en embrassant les incertitudes et les inconforts soulevés par la crise, en réfléchissant aux potentiels qu'elle active ou encore en essayant de mettre en œuvre des alternatives possibles. Voici donc, en ouverture de ce numéro, une modeste hypothèse sur la situation qui nous y amène : l'écriture est à la fois une infrastructure du milieu de la recherche et une pratique de la composition de l'infrastructure d'un monde en transition. Les auteurs et autrices qui ont participé à ce numéro, chacun·e à leur façon, écrivent une/comme une infrastructure, en ce sens où leur pratique de l'écriture nous semble particulièrement animée par ce double potentiel. Au fil de leurs mots, nous avons découvert une multiplicité de manières de faire et de penser ce monde en transition, témoignant non seulement de la vaste étendue des intérêts de recherche études supérieures en communication, mais aussi de la richesse de l'engagement intellectuel et politique des étudiant·es dans le domaine.

En ouverture de ce volume l'article de Tucker, *The 1980s War on Drugs, the FERET Database, and Building Future Infrastructure for Facial Recognition Technologies*, se penche sur l'histoire d'une transition technologique et bureaucratique dans les Amériques, celle de l'automatisation progressive des technologies de reconnaissance faciale, afin de démontrer leur participation à une transition plus large des régimes de disciplines biopolitiques aux régimes des technologies de l'interdiction. En mettant en œuvre une archéologie médiatique des protocoles et des documents participant au déploiement et au maintien de tels régimes techno-politiques, l'écriture de Tucker « infrastructuralise » l'histoire de cette transition en rendant visible la complexité de ses connexions technologiques, sociales et matérielles.

Dans *Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism in China: The Construction of the Chinese Identity on Television Show Singer*, Zhao explore la construction d'une scène culturelle internationale et les manières par lesquelles cette scène participe à l'imaginaire de l'identité nationale et cosmopolitaine chinoise. L'écriture de Zhao se caractérise par son attention particulière envers les intersections entre les mécanismes de représentations populaires, mises en œuvre dans la téléréalité analysée, et les fluctuations historiographiques et cosmopolitiques du nationalisme chinois.

Dans son article, *'Fit for the Job' : A Programmatic Inquiry on Style and Aesthetics in the Workplace* , Dion analyse son expérience dans l'industrie du service de restauration afin de conceptualiser le style, et la manière dont celui-ci est mobilisé dans la gestion des employé·es, comme paradigme sémiotique de modélisation sociale. Par une écriture flirtant avec l'auto-ethnographie, Dion engage la tension entre les dimensions esthétiques et les rhétoriques de l'apparence dans l'expérience du travail de serveur·euse tout en ouvrant ses considérations à des dynamiques socio-organisationnelles plus larges.

En conclusion de ce volume, l'article *Sonic difference: Reflexive listening and the classification of voice* de Donison déconstruit les manières dont les pratiques d'écoute tendent à réitérer des relations de pouvoir eurocentrées, tout en mettant de l'avant des formes d'écoute alternatives par laquelle renouveler, voire décoloniser, nos relations d'écoutes et leur construction du monde extérieur. En présentant les pratiques de la pause et de l'être à l'écoute (listening out), l'écriture de Donison rend tangibles les différentes formes de discrimination qui s'incarnent dans les expériences sonores tout en travaillant concrètement à leur affranchissement.

Nous sommes honoré·es de vous présenter le travail de ces quatre auteur·es et d'avoir préparé ce numéro, écrit et pensé dans un contexte bien particulier. Bonne lecture.

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The 1980s War on Drugs, the FERET Database, and Building Future Infrastructure for Facial Recognition Technologies

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Abstract:
By the late-1980s, human-centric facial recognition technologies (FRTs) were fast becoming obsolete; the increase in the global mobility of goods and populations put increasingly greater stress on human-centric identification systems. The accompanying biopolitics of flow and control, grounded in securitization, demanded monitoring of continuous movement and the idea of stopping each face for sustained human observation quickly grew outmoded. This paper examines the shift from human-centric FRTs to automated FRTs, encompassed by the establishment of the Facial Recognition Technology (FERET) database (1993-96) and the later Face Recognition Vender Tests (2000-present). This trajectory is defined by the aforementioned shift from technologies rooted in disciplinary biopolitics to those based in interdiction that is further paralleled by the turn from Cold War ideological battles towards the War on Drugs as the central truth regime justifying the establishments and improvement of FRTs into the turn of the millennium.Sponsored by the American Counter Drug Technology Program, in partnership with DARPA, construction of the FERET began in 1993. Not only was this database essential to the later Face Recognition Vendor Tests (FRVTs), but it also provided incredibly influential and expansive documentation and methodologies for the creation and deployment of future FRTs. Such infrastructure remains deeply relevant in a post-9/11 world, in particular during the ongoing crisis of the global Covid-19 pandemic and the near future of climate catastrophe and mass migration.

Keywords: Face recognition technologies, War on Drugs, computer vision, media infrastructure.

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The late-1980s move away from human-centric facial recognition technologies (FRTs) to automated and decentralized FRTs coincided with the increase in global mobility of goods and populations that gave rise to biopolitics of flow and control, grounded in securitization, that demanded monitoring of the continuous movement of resources and populations. Stopping each face for sustained human observation grew increasingly outmoded, and, as such, FRTs moved to strategies based in interdiction.[1] The primary strategy of interdiction speaks directly to American desires for control of their national borders: interdiction involves 5 phases, central to which is "the sorting of legitimate traffic from that which might be illegal" (Joint Counterdrug operations, 1998, p 1-13). This meant a rise in so called non-intrusive forms of vision technologies that could enable the quick and efficient sorting of illegal from legal traffic without disrupting the general flow of goods and populations (Office of National Drug Control Policy Counterdrug Technology Assessment Center (ONDCP-CTAC), 1995; Pennella, 1997).

Accompanying this rise in interdiction was a shift in the vigilance within the FRT observer from detecting opposing ideological forces arising from the Cold War to the monitoring of the movement of goods and populations named as illegal in reaction to the War on Drugs. As Isacson writes, the War on Drugs replaced the containment of communism as the main rationales for American desires for global securitization (2005). As the 1980s finished, the War on Drugs demanded that notions of health and security turn from protecting citizens from invasive and harmful ideas to protecting citizens from the crime and death that rampant drug use promised. While past scholars typically point to President Richard Nixon as initiating The War of Drugs, there are many American precedents, ranging back into the late-19th century.[2] However, President Ronald Regan and the First Lady Nancy Regan are

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[1] There were, of course, other forces at work compounding such developments. There was a concurrent widespread adoption of personal and work computers, with a growing incorporation of the machines into an increasingly larger portion of governmental, educational, and corporate infrastructure; while the Internet, as a networked technology, was still relatively nascent, it was growing and poised for an explosion in the early to mid-1990s. This concurrence of a proliferation of corporate and personal hardware, an increased public comfort and knowledge about computational systems, and the emergence of a globally networked form of information sharing and transferring in the Internet, provided the grounds on which to expand FRTs into an effective mass technology

[2] See: Manning, P. (2013). The Mediated Regulation of Intoxication in the Age of 'Old' Media. *Drugs and Popular Culture in the Age of New Media*, Routledge, 61-87; Whiteford, A., and Yates, J. (2009). *Presidential Rhetoric and the Public Agenda: Constructing the War on Drugs.* The John Hopkins University Press.

seen as bringing the War of Drugs to the forefront of public discourse, with the 1980s producing both policy and rhetoric that enhanced internal and international drug enforcement. These policies and discourses formed what Michel Foucault called truth regimes, which he defined as "a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and functioning of statements"; truth regimes act under diffuse systems of power to form constellations of practices, norms, laws, and scientific knowledge, functioning to regulate what is accepted as a truth (1977 p 14). Unlike the Cold War's truth regimes, which tethered enmity to nation states, drug smugglers' non-national affiliation short circuited almost any hope that disciplinary strategies, such as border walls and/or human-centric FRTs, would have any real effect. In solution, the War on Drugs produced and circulated truths justifying the need for technologies of interdiction, which, in turn, began to drive the desires for increasingly automated and decentralized versions of FRTs.

This paper outlines the larger context for the production of 1980s and early-1990s truth regimes emerging from the War on Drugs, linking these to the developments of the Facial Recognition Technology (FERET) database and the Face Recognition Vender Tests (FRVTs) in order to establish how both FERET and the FRVTs acted as core infrastructure for the explosive growth of the technology post-9/11. Initially funded by the U.S. Defence Counterdrug Development Program, the establishment of the FERET database and the FRVTs owe a great deal to the desires to better police America's borders and disrupt the transnational chain of drug commodities. Though a full genealogy of FERET and the initial FRVTs is outside the scope of this paper, a partial tracing of the developments of both by way of their internal documentation reveals how resonate they remain. Doing so activates Lisa Gitelman's understanding of media archeology, which leverages the protocols captured within the internal and external documentation of a media in order to recreate "the vast clutter of normative rules and default conditions, which gather and adhere like a nebulous array around a technological nucleus"; following from this, tracing documents' sprawling and low level bureaucratic functioning makes clear the tactics and strategies of governance saturated into the media's everyday functions (Gitelman, 2006 p. 7; 2014). While my current book-length work takes a larger three-pronged approach to media archeology in order to best recreate the constellations of technical, representational, and political protocols throughout the histories of FRTs, focusing here on Gitelman's media archeology allows a more fulsome understanding how both FERET and the FRVTs have been incredibly impactful on contemporary versions of the FRTs.[3] This paper then draws further from Critical Infrastructure Studies scholars such as Douglas-Jones, Walford and Seaver who argue that focusing on the social life of documentation and data practices, and the assemblages they are deployed within, link directly to their larger infrastructural import, simultaneously making visible both top-down and bottom-up forms of power.[4] Taken together, the bureaucratic documents and protocols gathered via undertaking Gitelman's approach to media archeology gives the critical evidence necessary to support work done within the perspectives of Critical Infrastructure Studies, in turn showing how crises, whether the American War on Drugs or the latter events of 9/11, have been essential to FRTs' future entrenchment within the functioning of everyday life.

Kelly Gates's *Our Biometric Future* (2013) and the more recent "Seeing Infrastructure" by Stevens and Keyes (2021) look at FERET, both arguing that the sheer size of the standardized database was an important step in the development of the state of the art of FRTs; Gates goes further in linking FERET to the FRVTs, but glosses quickly through its impacts (p. 71; p. 76). This paper, in contrast, examines the internal documentation of FERET and the FRVTs in order to trace how both shaped the representational, technical, and political protocols that coalesced into the large-scale building and testing infrastructure that would be amplified further in the 21st century. Doing so makes clear how 1990s FRTs began as tactics serving largely top-down forms of power guided by national security, then transitioned, post-9/11, to the current moment where the technology is a normalized and ubiquitous presence, expanding algorithmic governance from sites of border security and law enforcement to malls, job interviews, test-taking environments, cruise ships, and beyond.

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[3] In order to best reconstruct the historical constellations of representational, political and technical protocols within FRTs, my larger-scale research builds a three-pronged media archeological methodology that utilizes Gitelman's work alongside Wolfgang Ernst's understanding of the the operative moment (*Digital Memory and the Archive.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013) and scholars like Anna Munster's work on how the body is represented within digital media (*Materializing New Media.* Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 2006).

[4] My larger arguments on FRTs and infrastructure draw heavily from the decades of work Bruno Latour has undertaken, but also includes *Thinking Infrastructures* (edited by Martin Kornberger, Geoffrey C. Bowker, Julia Elyachar, Andrea Mennicken, Peter Miller, Joanne Randa Nucho, and Neil Pollock, 62. Research in the Sociology of Organizations. Emerald Publishing Limited, 2019), Paul Edwards's The Mechanics of Invisibility: On Habit and Routine as Elements of Infrastructure" (*Infrastructure Space*, 2017. Berlin: Ruby Press, 2017), and many others.

The War on Drugs and Technologies of Interdiction

In general, the United States Department of Defence, via entities like DARPA and the CIA, has been central to the history of biometrics.[5] Drawing from Cole's work in *Suspect Identities* (2001), Magnat further details the increased use by governmental entities like the FBI, who leveraged rationales of securitization into widespread surveillant practices that engrained the use of punchcards and fingerprints beginning in the 1960s (2011, p. 54). At the same time, the National Institute of Technology (NIST), as well as the U.S. National Bureau of Standards, were deployed as testing and standardizing forces beginning in the 1960s through the present, continuing to provide much needed infrastructure for fingerprint identification and face recognition (Wayman, 2007, p. 266).

The American infrastructure for contemporary FRTs grew directly from the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), which was formed from the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act and the appointment of Bill Bennet as the first Drug Czar of the United States; by 1989, the U.S. Congress had named illicit drug trafficking a clear and immediate threat to the stabilization of the nation's economy and security. Soon after, the responsibility for enforcing counter-drug trafficking was given to the American military, with special attention being given to disrupting the source of drug supplies from countries mostly in Central and South America. Doing so meant relying on a variety of new and developing technologies, each of which was increasingly automated and decentralized; the 1990 establishment of the Counterdrug Technology Assessment Center (CTAC) was used to fund research and development technological projects under the strategy of interdiction (Manning, 2013; Corva, 2008; Stemen, 2017).

Under such strategies, face recognition was seen as a key potential technology: by working with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the technology was proposed as a viable way to potentially match faces with known drug traffickers at border crossings (ONDCP-CTAC, 1995, p. 18). Aided by the previous decades' gradual

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[5] Gates, K. (2011). *Our Biometric Future: Facial Recognition Technology and the Culture of Surveillance.* New York University Press. Gates writes thoroughly and extensively about the American government and its military and intelligence infrastructures have been a central part of the development of FRTs throughout its history, with the first key example being Bledose s team s company, Panoramic Research Inc, and its funding by the U.S. Department of Defence and the CIA.

improvement of technical protocols, the FRTs were pitched as an effective governing tactic by way of transforming the face into a digital identity document. From this, the imagined future of FRTs was clear: "advanced algorithms will be developed to improve the use of facial recognition technology at ports-of- entry and 'detention' facilities. These improvements will assist in correlating people being detained with known drug traffickers, terrorists and criminals" (Ibid., p. 23)

Doing so meant strengthening the abilities to build, improve, and spread the use of FRTs. Prior to 1990, the growth of FRTs was hamstrung by the scattered development of the technology across different corporate, university, and government sites, as well as by the small and varied datasets used in such research. In order for FRTs to progress to a mass scale and automated field of vision, there needed to be a more centralized and standardized infrastructure put in place to improve, evaluate, and discuss the developments of FRTs.

FERET (1993-996)

As previously mentioned, the FERET database (The National Institute of Standards and Technology, 1993) was sponsored by the Defence Counterdrug Development Program under the ONDCP and in partnership with CTAC, with many of the early tests taking place at the U.S. Army Research Laboratory (ARL) in cooperation with a number of other academic labs from across the United States (Phillips, Rauss and Der, 1996). The FERET database was initially rationalized primarily as a transnational technology in order to gain increased control of mobility, in particular the monitoring and control of the flow of goods and people across its borders; strategies of interdiction, grounded in heightened vigilance, assured that the technology's field of vision was intended to cover ever good and/or individual that passed, guilty or not.

Following from Gitelman, downloading the FERET database and exploring its internal documentation and file structuring logics showcases how both elements work to build truth regimes that justify the expansion of FRTs while also building a replicable and digitally-mobile version of the database that would ensure large-scale adoption of the FERET database itself, its discourses, and its technical protocols. With control of mobility and the flow of people and goods at its core, the description of FRTs within the FERET documentation gestures to the technology's potential, ranging from the searching of mugshots; the monitoring of sensitive security areas; verifying identities at ATMs; verifying identities for the automated issue of driver's licences; and controlling access to different facilities (Ibid., p. 9). Within this list, there is a sense of the multiple strategies that FRTs could serve as effective tactics for, in turn centralizing desires for the monitoring and management of mobility within specialized and everyday environments alike. It is clear then that FRTs were being envisioned as technology for which its mechanics of interdiction and non-invasive vision could be an effective and crucial infrastructure for both the top-down surveillance of sensitive security sites and bottom-up forms of power, where citizens make themselves legible to such systems in order to receive access to some form of resource.

The authors of the earliest publications detailing the work of FERET lay out three major goals for the project: to discuss and develop the state-of-the-art of FRTs; to produce a large database of facial images that could be used by the FERET program and other FRT researchers; and to build a government-monitored testing and evaluation infrastructure that would utilize standardized tests and test procedures (Ibid., p. 7). From its inception, the FERET program was built to be both a producer of bureaucratic facial materials as well as an infrastructure to test and improve the work being done outside its immediate research. The steady and methodical nature of the database's construction is shown in how the project grew: in 1996, 1109 sets of images were in the database totalling 8525 images of 884 individuals; by the project's final stages the database had expanded to include 14126 images of 1199 individuals (Ibid., 14). While FERET began by testing 5 algorithms, by its end the testing had expanded to include 12 algorithms, including 2 fully automatic algorithms (Phillips, Moon, Rizvi and Rauss, 1999, p. 1).

As the first large-scale and centralized facial database, FERET set the protocols for future FRTs, most notably in its image-making. As clearly outlined within the database's internal documentation and later public reports, the technical protocols were made very clear, as a standardized database of facial imagery was essential: there is detailed description of the type of camera and film used; the retrieval, storage, and translating of the files into the digital; the file-naming conventions; the specific size and resolution of the images; the optimal standardized interocular distance; and the stressing of the need for the same physical picture-capturing sessions, that included the plain background and the semi-controlled multiple positions of the head. Importantly, the database detailed that images were to be taken of the same face from different angles in order to potentially best translate into less controlled environments: this includes further instructions on capturing frontal images, the specific angles of profiles, the use of 5 irregularly placed positions, and the mixing in of glasses and hairstyles (Phillips, Rauss and Der, 1996, p 11). These technical protocols homogenized the image-making within FERET and beyond, effectively producing reproducible best practices that still echo through contemporary FRTs.

Looking within FERET reveals the sprawl of the digital automated FRT as machine ensemble and the ways in which the data-driven practices built from the infrastructuralism within FERET would become engrained in later versions of the technology. The CDs and DVDs that contained FERET do not hold the image themselves, but rather folders and subfolders within which mostly various compressed files sit in orderly fashion. Folders contain the tools needed to view the images, such as the compression program bzip2 and libbzip2, and manuals for their use; other folders include zipped files that must be decompressed to reveal the images, encoded as .ppm files. The metadata for the ground truth images is associated with accompanying images by way of their head position, with the files mapping the x-y coordinates coordinates of the eyes, nose and mouth. Internal files like "documentation.txt" give more detailed descriptions of the database than the public reports, with further statistics on how many pictures are within as well as detailing any changes between different versions of the dataset; it also lays out the particular subsets, or partitions, within the dataset which hold labelled ground truth images that are recommended for use in future testing of FRTs.

As discussed in the introduction, the move from human-centric to automated FRTs, spurred by developments in late twentieth-century digital computing, was an essential point in the media archeology of the technology as it engrained biometrics in core truth regimes around securitization while also solidifying its bureaucratic treatment of faces as digital data-objects while simultaneously constructing a centralized, governmentally-minded production and evaluation infrastructure whole technical protocols and data practices would become the standard for the technology. Knowing this, FERET should be seen not only as the first large-scale FRT database but a whole apparatus that was built to be digital, with the images and metadata attached interlocking in a series of digital mechanics and organizations that would ultimately aid in the increasingly automated versions of the technology that were being deployed outside of laboratory settings. Further, not only were the faces within FERET digitally compressed informational objects, but so were the data practices and distribution of the database, effectively providing the tools to aid in its own replication so as to provide the digital infrastructure, the documentation, and software technology to allow different actors to undertake what FERET itself had done. This allowed for FERET's influence to spread further, reinforcing the proliferation of its technical, representational and political protocols.

As importantly, the FERET database was also used to create and deploy an early version of what would eventually grow into the FRVT. The report "The FERET Verification Testing Protocol for Face Recognition Algorithms" details the 1996 series of tests undertaken and also clearly outlines the methodology for its evaluation, scoring procedure, and performance statistics, arguing that "for face recognition systems to successfully meet the demands of verification applications, it is necessary to develop testing and scoring procedures that specifically address these applications" (Rizvi, Phillips and Moon, 1998, p. 2). The widespread adoption of the FERET database by the FRT research community, also meant the adoption of their evaluation methodologies. This allowed a doubling of FERET's influence: first, the facial images and associated data granted a massive database to use to improve future versions of the technology, and the database would continue to be used for generations of the technology afterwards; second, the evaluation infrastructure would allow for the comparison of algorithms, with the resulting benchmarks forming the truth regimes for what a "successful" FRT is and does, including the tolerable levels of inaccuracy and biases. While the FERET tests were done on a relatively small scale, the testing methodology that the FERET database generated would be scaled to increasingly larger and more wide-ranging databases and instances of use while at the same time remaining very adaptable to, as the conclusion to this paper will address, the oncoming crises and technical developments that would define the 21st century. On the strengths of such infrastructure, the future envisioned in initial FERET documents have been realized, whether the technology is a key tactic within larger top-down and bottom-up circulations of power.

It must not be forgotten that underneath the development of these technical protocols and infrastructure is the desires for non-intrusive interdiction and the accompanying suspicion that rationalizes the expanded field of automated vision that interrogated everyone and everything under its observation. That civilian faces were used in the creation of FERET and within FRT testing does not hide the fact that the technology was being developed by the American military in order to target populations deemed threats; reiterating, the gaze produced by such apparatuses were built to look at every single person as if they were guilty, then use the technology to prove their innocence. This undercurrent runs through the following 25-plus years of the development of FRTs, although most directly within the relationship between FERET and the FRVT.

The Face Recognition Vender Tests (FRVTs)

The third goal of FERET, to create a standardized and independent set of testing protocols for FRTs, was realized in 2000 with the first FRVT. Within the FRVT's first report there is an acknowledgement that the technology had already greatly progressed since the inception of FERET less than a decade earlier (Blackburn, Bone and Phillips, 2000, p. ii). However, the FRVT would build on the infrastructure laid out in the 1998 report and would be the first to evaluate and rank commercial FRTs, providing a centralized authority on which of those systems perform best. Many of the same entities were involved, including the American Department of Defence Counterdrug Technology Development Program Office and DARPA, with additional co-sponsorship from the National Institute of Justice.

P. Jonathan Phillips was a DARPA computer scientist who runs through the history of FERET and the FRVTs: he was one of original architects of FERET and is the lead or co-author on numerous papers related to the building of the database and the transition into the FRVTs. His paper "Meta-Analysis of Face Recognition Algorithms," co-authored with Laine M. Newton (2002), echoes one the central argument of this paper: the technical progression of the technology not only depends upon stable modes of evaluating and benchmarking the technology itself, but also evaluating research into and experimental results using FRTs. Using 24 papers as their corpus, each of which used either the FERET or ORL databases, the authors outline the key elements to look for when evaluating FRT research, in effect attempting provide an increasingly homogenized framework for building the technologies: their 10 criteria are built from Phillips's work establishing the aforementioned FERET methodologies, arguing that "to establish a sound foundation for the incorporation of standard control algorithms into an experimental method, it is necessary to establish accompanying standard evaluation protocols and image sets" (Ibid., p. 5). Phillips and Newton's article showcases the logics for the subsequent 2002 FRVT that built from the core of FERET, contending that there must be an infrastructure in place that can both define the evaluation protocols and then carry out those protocols in order to advance the state of the art of the technologies.

Imbued with such logics, the FRVTs set out to be the gold standard of FRT evaluators, buttressed by the fact that "everyone cited the FERET program because it is the de facto standard for evaluating facial recognition systems" (Blackburn, Bone and Phillips, 2000, p. 5). Within the first FRVT in 2000, co-authored by Phillips, the initial goals of the FRVT were established as two-fold: to make "a technical assessment of the capabilities of commercially available facial recognition systems"; and "to educate the biometrics community and the general public on how to present and analyze results [from evaluations of FRTs]" (Ibid., p. ii). Immediately, the importance put on technical improvements of the technology are placed alongside controlling the discourses surrounding the technology itself. The FRVT has been a key step in not only expanding the technical capabilities of FRTs, but also a way of framing which versions of the technology were "the best" and therefore the most effective. The rationales and logics for using FRTs worked symbiotically with such framings: the situations in which FRTs might be used dictated what systems were best at the same time while the best systems also delineated how FRTs might be best used.

Based on the legitimacy granted by the FERET program, the FRVT grew steadily: the first FRVT included five submitted vender algorithms that underwent the three step evaluation protocol, with each using the same 13, 872 images from the FERET database as well as the HumanID database (Ibid., p. iii)[6]; the first three reports would show incremental growth as 10 algorithms were submitted in 2002, using a database of 121,589 images of 37, 437 individuals (Phillips et al, 2003, p. 1), with the number growing to 14 algorithms in 2006 (Phillips et al, 2007, p. 9). Recalling the introduction to this chapter, in order to announce the death knell of human-centric FRTs, the FRVT definitively compared automated systems to human systems, with the results overwhelmingly favouring automated versions of the technology (Ibid., p. 3).

The FRVTs did not abandon interdiction nor the vigilance and suspicion that had produced the FERET database in the first place, instead rerouting such desires into expanding the FRTs to greater and greater fields of automated vision. Importantly then, the tests each took on increasingly more difficult and "real-world" problems that encouraged the migration of the technology outside of more restrained and cooperative environments, such as laboratories, into non-cooperative such as airports.

Comparing the first two FRVTs with Gitelman's media archeology front-of-mind makes transparent how the most urgent uses of FRTs were driven by a changing landscape of crises and vigilance while also cementing truth regimes and the production of power centred around the value of decentralized and automated interdiction, as well as the need for infrastructure that would continue to improve upon and expand the use of FRTs. As such, the initial FRVTs show the evolution of the types of problems that FRTs were being asked to solve and the truth regimes that

[6] The establishment of the HumanID program by DARPA and methodology in the early 2000s is indicative of the ways in which FRTs, and evaluations of the technology, were changing: spurred by Phillips and Newton's conclusion that researchers should take up the more difficult of FRTs, HumanID aimed to improve the technological abilities to identify people at a distance. With Philipps again at the centre, the HumanID program mixed biometric measurements, such as iris scanning, gait measurement, and face recognition, in order to improve the abilities to identify those in less structured and non-cooperative environments, doing so meant building methodologies to combine these different biometrics, but also the establishment of a series of biometric databases. Phillips, P. (2002). Human identification technical challenges. *Proceedings. International Conference on Image Processing;* DARPA. (2000). Human ID at a Distance. http://dtsn.darpa.mil/iso/programtemp.asp?mode=349 [URL broken, accessed through Wayback Machine]

accompanied such problems. In 2000, the two tests undertaken included one in a more controlled environment and one with a scenario of controlling access to a building in real-time. However, in 2002, the databases and tests change in the wake of 9/11: 2002 introduces expanded tests for environments and instances with high variability, including within moving images; it also included a “watch list” test, wherein a non-cooperative environment is monitored in order to identify any potential peoples of interest, such as known terrorists and drug traffickers. Doing so meant expanding the datasets involved from FERET to include Mexican non-immigrant border crossers as well as VISA application materials; further materials where provided by the HCInt dataset, MCINT data set as well as the HumanID dataset (Phillips et al, 2002, p. 15).

The inclusion of border crossing and VISA materials is a key shift away from the laboratory-driven, more consensual data practices present in FERET, and should be put alongside the FRVT use of mugshot databases in its testing. In both cases the databases utilized in the tests that the FRVT undertook dictated the use of the technology: when the FRVT tested algorithms for their effectiveness on mugshots, immigrant, or VISA materials, it was endorsing and promoting the use of the technology for that use. While the FRVTs frame such actions as based almost entirely in technical protocols, that technical performance is intertwined with the representational and political protocols that are embedded within that infrastructure and those facial images. In this way, truth regimes around the technologies’ usage meld to the technologies’ operations: if the monitoring of the mobility of terrorists and drug traffickers is the rationale for the technology’s use, the technology would likely rely heavily on logics of difference, most obviously aligned along racial identifiers, that would justify its expanded field of vision so that it covers anywhere a potential terrorist or drug trafficker may be; at the same time, any citizens captured within that field of vision are subject to the same circulations of power. While such an expansion was justified by 9/11, the progress in FRTs’ state of the art made in the early 2000s would become the bedrock infrastructure for its future use, not disappearing after the War on Terrorism had subsided but instead made normal to the point of near-invisibility within the monitoring and sorting of citizens’ everyday lives.

It is undeniable that the FRVTs were essential in expanding FRTs’ field of vision. The rationales tied to the improvement and deployment of FRTs were focused on monitoring and controlling the increased mobility that would come with the circulations demanded of global capitalism and the free movement and immigration of individuals and populations; within these apparatuses, each face was looked upon with suspicion first, then proven innocent by FRTs' acts of identification and verification.

Conclusion

The FERET database and the FRVTs shows how the benchmarking and improving of media like FRT is very often centralized within infrastructural bodies with large amounts of resources at their disposal. Such centralizing, in turn, creates a monopoly of legitimating the technology while homogenizing the technology by way of its testing standards and technical protocols. Initially driven by desires for interdiction brought about by the War on Drugs, the legitimacy and technological bedrock that FERET and the first FRVTs provided granted the technology the flexibility and adaptability to become an effective tactic in the War on Terror after 9/11. The vigilance enacted within these examples of FRT usage created the foundation for the post-9/11 proliferation of internal and external borders, with the technology enacting further control over citizenship and the resources of citizenship under the guise of new forms of societal security and health. The technology's adaptability to different datasets and different tasks made, and continue to make, FRTs nimble enough to work alongside nationalistic rationales during moments of crisis, such as 9/11. This nimbleness, however, is aided greatly by infrastructures, like the still-ongoing FRVTs, so that within moments of societal instability FRTs have a sturdy set of protocols to fall back on in order to improve and address the problems arising from a crisis. As I have expanded in "Solving the Conflict Between Breathability and Masked Faces within Facial Recognition Technologies," producing an infrastructure for technical evaluation of FRTs that can produce statistical comparisons of different versions of the technologies' performances then provides a framework of knowledge to then evaluate and adjust the technology in moments of crises while also addressing new and/or expanded uses of the technology (2021).

Further, as the last two decades' consistent expansion of FRTs into more and more daily activities demonstrates, protocols within entities like FERET and the FRVTs are normalized and spread into further applications of FRTs. Some of such practices link to strategies and tactics based in deterritorialization and incarceration as well as the physical and social mobility which are often amplified by compounding intersectional forces based in logics of precarity and debility as well as life and death. While outside the scope of this paper, there are strong connections to be made between the continued used of mugshots within the development of FRTs and truth regimes such as the War on Drugs that disproportionately target racialized populations.[7] When this automated field of vision, defined by the political and representational protocols captured within mugshots, expands to observe the whole of citizenry, the inscriptions of bias form what Ruja Benjamin calls the New Jim Code, which she defines as the use of new technologies and discriminatory design practices that amplify hierarchies, replicate social divisions, and trigger narratives about what kind of person is behind their data (2019). Such thinking is expanded by texts like Safiya Noble's *Algorithms of Oppression* (2018) and Virginia Eubanks's *Automating Inequality* (2018), both of which detail how algorithms based in difference produce technological redlining, consistently red-flagging populations so as to create a feedback loop of injustice resulting in those populations being relocated to digital poorhouses.

The use of media archaeologies, such as Gitelman's exploration of bureaucratic protocols and documentation, are essential in reconstructing how mass technological infrastructures are built, expanded, and maintained. Not only can the past be traced, unveiling the vectors and actors that brought about key changes in FRTs, but such information can be used to project into the future so as to anticipate both the use of such technologies, but also how they may be further cemented into the melding of large-scale corporate and governmental infrastructures. Looking forward, the near-future crises of climate catastrophe and resulting mass migration show how important FERET and the FRVTs work on national border security was. Both entities worked alongside the more general adoption of biometrics into the spaces of immigration and refugee control, such as legislation like the Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act implemented an Alien Border Crossing Card (Wayman,

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[7] Under the 1980s and 90s War on Drugs, new forms of control, which included expanded police presences in minority neighbourhoods and mandatory sentences for drug possession, fit within long-standing truth regimes that associated racialized bodies with illicit activity and the need for their reform for the safety of society at large; such control connected with previous forms of biopolitics, where the War on Drugs became a way, as Manning (2013) states, to legitimate the deepening strategies of formal regulation and surveillance" (Cited in Note 2, p. 83). As a result, as Dominic Corva (2008) and Michael Tonry (1994) clearly argue, the War on Drugs disproportionately affected young black men through the accompanying practices of punishment and incarceration; the appropriation of mugshots within automated FRTs demonstrates how the rationales for domestic law enforcement use of FRTs collide with over-policing and the resultant over-representation of liminal populations within its databases that have roots in the War on Drugs.

Corva, D. (2008). Neoliberal globalization and the war on drugs: Transnationalizing illiberal governance in the Americas. Political Geography, 27, 176-193. Tonry, M. (1994). Race and the War on Drugs. University of Chicago Legal Forum. 25-82.

p. 271). The sorting of illegal from legal forms of citizenship drove a number of the truth regimes that expanded and improved FRTs in the 1990s; this form of political recognition was enforced at national borders but also internally, as exemplified by the expansion of the powers of immigration officers and employees in 1996 that allowed for the abilities to arrest and interrogate suspected “alien” non-citizens (“Powers of immigration officers and employees,” 1996).

Much like the War on Drugs, FRTs in this instance are not just technical acts, but acts of political recognition driven by vigilance and suspicion. Already, this location of political recognition within automated technologies like FRTs has only increased as the 21st century has progressed. Petra Molnar and Alex Gill’s “Bots at the Gate” illustrates the ways in which biometrics like FRTs “will have life-and-death ramifications for ordinary people, many of whom are fleeing for their lives” (2018, p. 1); nation states are attempting to “introduce algorithms to help determine ‘risk’ and ‘fraud’ in refugee status applications. However, it is not clear what these terms mean and what exactly an algorithm is supposed to be looking for during the application process for protection and permanent residence” (Ibid., p. 27). Molnar goes further in “Technological Testing Grounds,” contending that under current biosurveillance practices “refugees and people crossing borders will be disproportionately targeted and negatively affected” (2020, p. 1); most damagingly, nations states then develop power and knowledge monopolies which “are allowed to exist because there is no unified global regulatory regime governing the use of new technologies, creating laboratories for high risk experiments with profound impacts on peoples’ lives” (Ibid., p. 3).

Knowing this, it is essential to scrutinize the current and future use of technologies like FRTs while also scrutinizing their past and the vectors of power that formed the current constellation of forces and truth regimes that operate today. From this perspective, FERET and FRVT greatly advanced the technological progress of FRTs while simultaneously providing the groundwork to build the effective and mass-scale contemporary versions of the technology that are extremely dangerous for many populations.

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Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism in China: the Construction of Chinese Identity on Television Show *Singer*

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Abstract:
Even though the People's Republic of China (PRC) is known as a culturally unified state with a nationalism propensity, it has a long multicultural history, 56 ethnic groups, a globalized economy, and a modern and cosmopolitan lifestyle. China demonstrates the qualities of a cosmopolitan country in naturalizing the cultural variety and digesting social and cultural conflicts within the nation-state. Firstly, the cultural differences in China come from not only ethnic groups but also customs from various regions. Hence, the emphasis on Chinese history and traditional culture, especially Confucius ideology, are critical factors in constructing a unified Chinese identity. Moreover, Greater China and the pan-Chinese nation are used to include people from Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and all ethnic Chinese around the globe. Meanwhile, under the influence of globalization, China becomes home to people who are not ethnic Chinese. The modern Chinese community represents the value of cosmopolitanism, naturalizing the existence of foreign visitors and multiracial Chinese. As one of the most popular programs on Chinese television, under the direction of the National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA), the production of winners on *Singer* (also known as *I am a Singer*) reflects the construction of an imaginary modern Chinese community. Through analysis on performances, interviews and comments related to the finals of three key winners (the Mongols Chinese winner Han Lei, the Chinese American winner Coco Lee, and the British winner Jessie J), this paper will discuss the confluence of nationalism and cosmopolitanism in the construction of an imagined Chinese identity. The representation of *Singer* depicts an open, modern, and diversified cultural sphere, in which multiethnic, multinational, and multiracial appearances are naturalized.

Keywords: Nationalism; Chinese identity; cosmopolitanism; popular music; popular culture.

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In People's Republic of China (PRC), the production and distribution of media content on all platforms, from television to the Internet, are controlled by the National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA). Usually, the NRTA re-edits movies or TV dramas that are overly sexual or excessively bloody. Particularly, due to a political dispute between China and South Korea, K-pop contents have been hugely limited on Chinese television since 2016. Television drama, music, celebrities, and other South Korean cultural products were exported to China earning a record of $5.3 billion in 2014 (Maizland, 2017, para. 3). However, in 2016, as a result of South Korea's attempt to build a missile shield system, THAAD, Chinese officials warned that "China felt firm opposition and strong dissatisfaction" (Maizland, para. 1). Consequently, Chinese television programs have rarely invited celebrities from South Korea since the end of 2016 (Wu & Wang, 2017, "What is THAAD"). As a result, the popular imported television show, *I am a Singer,* was rebranded to avoid the restriction from the ban on South Korean related content. However, after changing its name to *Singer* (henceforth, *Singer* will be used to refer to the series), this show continued to invite singers from the UK, the Philippines, Kazakhstan, and Russia. This show constructs an internationalized cultural stage that indicates the existence of cosmopolitanism in the Chinese television culture.

From censorship to strict laws on prevailing cultural products, the Chinese government shows a tendency to build this imagined Chinese community with the limited representation of media. Even though China always appears as a culturally unified state with a nationalism propensity, it has a long multicultural history, 56 ethnic groups, a globalized economy, and a modern and cosmopolitan lifestyle. Therefore, China must be a cosmopolitan country in order to digest all the social and cultural conflicts within the nation-state. Hence, by investigating the representation of cosmopolitanism on television in China and studying the music entertainment show *Singer*, this paper intends to answer these questions:

- To what extent is the "uncensoring" of unnaturalized faces on Singer representing cosmopolitanism in the modern Chinese identity?
- What is the relationship between the representation of ethnic minorities in Singer and the cosmopolitanism in Chinese identity?
- What is the relationship between the representation of greater China on Singer and the cosmopolitanism in Chinese identity?
- What is the relationship between the representation of unnaturalized faces on Singer and the cosmopolitanism of Chinese identity?

Literature review

To answer the questions above, this study will explore scholarly articles that define nationalism as well as cosmopolitanism and investigate the complexity of nationalism in China with the implementation of censorship on television.

Nationalism and cosmopolitanism in China

The existence of nationalism and cosmopolitanism in China can be traced to ancient China of the Zhou dynasty. Ancient residents of China referred to the current mainland China as the Huaxia area with various states and communities lived in contestation and collaboration (Qian, 2011). Until the West Zhou dynasty united the various nations in the 11th century by establishing a centralized governmental institution of feudalism, West Zhou dynasty was seen as an "international organization" (Qian, 2011, p. 31) that intervened between the fellow states (houguo) and governed the Chinese region, which was considered the whole world (tianxia). As a result, ancient Chinese had an open view towards international relationship so that states could collaborate and maintain peaceful engagement through marriage. However, states with different political agenda and/or a non-agricultural lifestyle could not be assimilated by this union (Qian, 2011). With that said, the boundary of early China was built on lifestyle and political agenda rather than ancestry. The propensity of West Zhou dynasty set the foundation for an inclusive civilization.

Inspired by the West Zhou dynasty and its ideal of building a world government, Confucius and other scholars cultivated political influences in Chinese states and proposed the early Confucianism, a political, ethical and ideological structure for the Chinese community. With benevolence as its central ideology, Confucianism promoted the "human-heartedness consists in loving others" as the ethical standard for international communication and daily routine of citizens and rulers (Feng, 2015). However, Confucianism also considered ancient China as the civilized with the duty to civilize barbarians and assimilate other states. Confucianism functioned as the super structure (Solé-Farràs, 2014) that guides development of Chinese culture, so even Qing emperors had to adapt to the Confucianist cultural and psychological structure and present them as the Son of Heaven of Confucian ideology (Han, 2013). Even in contemporary China, Confucianism is adopted into the construction of Chinese nationalism, which leads to the complex assimilation and celebration of cultural diversity.

Since the first notion of nationalism proposed by Sun Yat-sen, Chinese nationalism have undergone several stages of development. Nationalism [Minzu zhuyi] and Han minzu [Han majority] was introduced by Sun as the uniting force that motivated people of different languages and cities of origins against the Qing government (Gladney, 1994). After the new establishment of the PRC, the CPC considered Han majority as the more developed group and classified certain minority groups as less developed (Han, 2013). With the Marxist vision, the CPC considered it a goal of the developed Han to help ethnic minorities to reach a universal standard. As the government standardized minority languages and promoted the bilingual education with Mandarin and minority languages, they also subsidized minorities that lived in peripheral regions and encouraged Han majority to learn the cultures of minorities for better integration (Han, 2013). As the contemporary China established a new nationalism with Confucianism as the main source of community identity, the CPC considers welfare of people, great unity and loyalty to leader and love toward the PRC as the counterforce against international invasions of foreign culture, against the Han ethnocentrism, and supports CPC at the center of the national identity (Solé-Farràs, 2014). With that said, the cultural nationalism in contemporary China shows the fluctuation between assimilation and the acceptance of diversified cultures.

Multi-ethnic China

In a country with different cultural elements, nationalism celebrates the similarity among its people. By studying the 2006 season of *Canadian Idol*, Boulou Ebanda de B'béri and Ruth Middlebrook find that, through the selection procedure, the show "eliminated the contingent, plural, and multicultural dimensions of Canadian identity" (2009, p. 28). In this show, a champion from a particular region of Canada was selected to represent the multicultural country. During this process, Canadian identity was naturalized. Similarly, despite China having 56 ethnic groups, Han constitutes 92 percent of the population (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 4). Hence, modern Chinese culture is usually represented by people of Han, whereas other cultures are celebrated and embraced on national events. Nationalism allows cultural differences to prosper within the country, but it also finds this similarity among different cultural groups to unite them (Boulou Ebanda de B'béri & Middlebrook, p. 28). As a result, culture is used as a medium to communicate and unite the ethnic groups in China.

The promotion of traditional culture is part of the construction of modern Chinese identity. Tyfield and Urry illustrate that, in the dilemma between modernity and Chinese identity, nationalism was "a trump card against political challenge" (2010, p. 282). According to Tyfield and Urry (p. 283), the civil society of China is still under the huge influence of Confucius. Confucian ideology emphasizes the respect of hierarchy within family and country as well as the opposition to "scepticism regarding knowledge claims and their authority" (p. 283). In Chinese history, culture and civilization are more important than ethnicity in constructing Chinese identity (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 14). Therefore, the Chinese identity can be seen as a convergence of the shared value of Confucianism and the emphasis of Chinese traditional history.

Greater China

After the foundation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the country established a new imagined community to unite ethnic minorities within the national boundary and Chinese people who live outside the Chinese mainland. Since the end of the Qing dynasty in 1911, China suffered through years of foreign invasions from imperial countries (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 5). After the war, in order to unite people from mainland China, Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Chinese immigrants in other regions, China had the need to form "a solid national identity" (Gorfinkel, p. 5). Greater China is a term that has been used to include the two Special Administrative Regions, Hong Kong and Macau, as well as Taiwan (Gorfinkel, p. 4). At the same time, "pan-Chinese nation" (Gorfinkel, p. 5) is used by Chinese media referring to all ethnic Chinese around the globe. However, since Greater China has been governed by different parties for decades, even though people from Greater China are represented on media in the Chinese mainland, their representation is under more influence of censorship.

All television and other media in the PRC are under the supervision by the National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA). From the China Central Television (CCTV), which is known as "the mouthpiece of the Party" (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 55), to the provincial satellite stations, the NRTA regulates television programs to correct the direction of public opinion and creative orientation (National Radio and Television Administration, n.d., para. 3). The first appearance of an artist of Greater China on mainland television was Hong Kong singer Zhang Mingmin. Before the return of Hong Kong in 1998, he was invited to perform "My Chinese Heart" ["Wo de zhongguo xin"] at the *1984 Spring Festival Evening Gala*. As Lauren Gorfinkel illustrates, "The lyrics . . . are about a man who grew up abroad and dressed like a Westerner, but who steadfastly clung to his Chinese identity, declaring that it was something he would 'never change." (p. 125).

Even though the representation of Greater China has been diversified on current mainland television, respect for the PRC's political ideology is a critical part of the Chinese identity.

Multiracial China and cosmopolitanism

As China opened up in the era of globalization for economic development, foreign faces are also represented on the CCTV's Gala. China has been an important part of globalization in terms of the global flows of capital and labour, while the modernization and urbanization brought new ideologies to the younger generations in China (Tyfield, & Urry, 2010, p. 281). After the reform and opening up, Chinese citizens have been introduced to overseas idols (Tyfield, & Urry, p. 282). However, to be represented on Chinese media, foreigners were trained with Chinese language and culture. As one of the first foreign performers on Chinese television, Dashan (also known as Mark Rowswell) became popular in China after his performance of crosstalk (Xiangsheng) comedy on *the 1988 Spring Festival Evening Gala* (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 17). According to Rowswell, Chinese audience accepts him because "Dashan represents a Westerner who appreciates and respects China, who has learned the language and understands the culture and has even become 'more Chinese than the Chinese'" (as cited in Gorfinkel, p. 17). Moreover, Gorfinkel argues that foreign faces are accepted when they are trained from strange "barbarian" to civilized citizens by learning Chinese culture and expressing their love for China (p. 16). The representation of unnaturalized foreign faces demonstrates a confluence of nationalism and cosmopolitanism in the imagined Chinese community.

Even though television is still under strict censorship, the changing values in Chinese society reflect the trend of globalization and cosmopolitanism in China. Contemporary China has been a convergence of nationalism and cosmopolitanism as it displays both concepts of globalization and solidarity within the nation. Even though nationalism seems to be incompatible with the recognition of multiple identities of cosmopolitanism, these two ideologies are "both projects of modernity, of 'imagined communities' and 'invented' traditions" (Tyfield & Urry, 2010, p. 279). Both nationalism and cosmopolitanism emphasize the role of local experiences and media content in shaping an individual's social identity, whereas China has been a globalized nation that negotiates with modern and foreign concepts. As previously mentioned, the reform and opening up was a critical change of China towards a contemporary society that embraces global flows. Tyfield and Urry also describe China as "a 'cosmopolitan realism', that national interests can be bound in, transformed, and made more powerful through international openness and collaborations across borders" (p. 279). In brief, the construction of the political identity as a Chinese citizen shows both nationalism and cosmopolitanism.

Originate from Greek, cosmopolitanism emphasizes the openness to the world and embraces "changes through intercultural interaction" (Sobré-Denton & Bardhan, 2013, p. 11). Cosmopolitanism is a composition of Greek words “kosmo”, which means “world”, and “polities” that refers to “citizen”. According to Miller (2007, p. 24-25),

Their claim was that human beings everywhere formed a single community, governed by a law that was discovered through the use of reason—though in some versions of Stoicism cosmopolitan citizenship was reserved for the wise and the good.

However, like the invention of Confucianism world peace, cosmopolitanism was invented against statism because national states were not the dominant governmental institutions (Anderson, 1998). Both Confucianism and cosmopolitanism were initially proposed to promote “voluntary ethical community of intellectuals to a world political community grounded in right” (Anderson, 1998, p. 22). Likewise, cosmopolitanism asked for the cosmopolitan right, which is the claim for humanity and consequently the respect to citizens and other states.

The early stage of European nationalism was distinguishable from cosmopolitanism, as national culture was not confined to the territorial boundaries of state. Nevertheless, as globalized commercial transaction and production enabled the imagination beyond state borders, cosmopolitanism also encouraged mobile citizenship and repudiate the bond to territorial state, which is the opposite of the “official nationalism” (Anderson, 1998, p. 26). In result, cosmopolitanism represents a multicultural force with a goal of “common norms and mutual translatability” (Anderson, 1998, p. 13). With the multiculturalism studies in immigrant country Canada as an example, multiculturalism emphasizes the social and political integration of immigrants and an acceptance attitude towards intercultural adaptations, which requires the local society to adapt the needs of immigrants (Mann, 2012). According to Li (2003), integration to Canadian society requires immigrants to engage with local communities, contribute as local members, and connect with the local world, which is similar to the co-existence of cultural nationalism and cosmopolitanism in China that assimilates but also encourages the diversities of national minorities. However, cosmopolitanism differs from multiculturalism because of its rejection to the distinctiveness of culture. Jeremy Waldron (2000, p. 233) argues that even if someone lives only in one city their whole life, they are still influenced by the result of globalized economy and cultural interactions regardless of their self-awareness, so participation in one particular culture already displays a cosmopolitan dimension. In comparison, multiculturalism is still limited by the territorial boundary and integration of immigrants, whereas cosmopolitanism emphasizes the mobility of world citizens.

Cosmopolitanism describes an identity generated from absorbing various cultural elements of the different environments. Christensen and Jansson state that, local experiences, including where people lived and where they grew up, are critical in shaping their sociality and the sense of belonging (2015, p. 93). For immigrants living in different cultural and social surroundings, cosmopolitanism also introduces the "mobility" to identify oneself as a convergence of different identities and to switch between "identificatory categories" (Christensen & Jansson, p. 97). In other words, a cosmopolitan identifies themselves with multiple ways of belongingness and switches to one of their identities when they try to adapt to a local surrounding. Compared with traditional notion of cosmopolitanism, the recent proposal of vernacular cosmopolitanism allows the coexistence of national identity and cosmopolitan humanism, so cosmopolitans may maintain connection to their local culture while develop an openness to diversity and international engagement (Christensen & Jansson, 2015). The complicated history, the diversified cultural practices, and globalized society in China fit with the description of cosmopolitanism so that the imagined Chinese identity is constructed by representing this complex culture.

With the complexity of 56 ethnic minorities, Greater China that follows different political systems, and the unnaturalized foreign faces in China, cosmopolitanism is a more suitable means for China's political inclusion. As a community of 56 ethnic minorities, China can be seen as a migrant country that follows the definition of cosmopolitanism (Xu & Wu, 2019, p. 5). Moreover, as cosmopolitan cities, such as Beijing and Shanghai, grow and create more job opportunities, citizens migrate from small cities to cosmopolitan cities in China. As an example, Figure 1 (see Appendix A) shows the density of migrant workers in each area of Beijing. While the city of Beijing is segregated by ring roads, the center of the city is within the 1st ring road. With that said, according to Figure 1, roughly 48 percent of residents between the 4th ring road and 5th ring road are migrant workers, while almost 62 percent of residents between the 5th and 6th ring road are migrants. Similarly, Christensen and Jansson (2015, p. 87) argue that foreign migrants in Sweden live in the outskirts of the city which leads to a strong alienation between migrants and the local society. Despite migrant workers in Beijing are mostly Chinese citizens from other provinces, the cultural varieties could still alienate migrants from local citizens.

Nevertheless, as a result of globalization and digitalization in urban China, the use of social media by contemporary citizens reflects cosmopolitan values of tolerance. In a recent study, Deya Xu and Fang Wu (2019) investigated the user habit of Momo, a mobile application to make friends with strangers, and demonstrated the changing social habit from a society of acquaintances towards a society of strangers. In a traditional Chinese society, people who live in villages used to cultivate their network based on their relatives and geographical relationships, but because of urbanization, citizens must live with strangers from different cultural backgrounds (Xu & Wu, p. 4). Similarly, Momo is a mobile application that helps people expand their networks with strangers. Hence, this app represents not only the social revolution of "neoliberal values" in China but also an openness to other people and new values, "and regard it as a routine part of city life" (Xu & Wu, p. 14). However, the authors notice that the cosmopolitan value in China is an "'insensitivity to others' rather than 'tolerance of difference'" (Xu & Wu, p. 14). Due to the various cultural, ethnic, and political backgrounds of Chinese people and the occasional foreign visitors in China, Chinese citizens learn to behave normally towards strangers of all kinds. Still, this insensitivity shows a cosmopolitan perspective in modern Chinese identity.

Methodology

To study the complexity of the imagined contemporary Chinese community, this research analyzes the content of Chinese television show *Singer*. Due to the censorship from NRTA, television depicts China's political and cultural inclusiveness and consequently reflects the imagined community for the construction of the Chinese identity. For this reason, content analysis on what are represented on television should provide a vivid image of the struggle between cosmopolitanism and nationalism in developing the imagined Chinese community.

Among all television stations in China, CCTV usually represents the Central Party of Communist (CPC), while satellite television stations are more commercialized. Therefore, the commercialized provincial stations reflect both the rules of the NRTA and the need of the market for "diverse themes, styles, and formats" (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 52). Specifically, Hunan Satellite TV, one of the most popular provincial stations, imported *I am a Singer* from MBC Korea in 2013 (Gorfinkel, p. 62). This Chinese version became a huge success since the first season, and its seasonal finals in 2013, 2014 and 2015 were listed in "the top 30 rating comprehensive arts and entertainment episodes on provincial channels between 2005 and 2015" (Gorfinkel, p. 62). *I am a Singer* (later rebranded as *Singer* in 2017) mostly invites well-known singers to perform and compete with various music genres and regional characteristics (Hong, 2014). Performances are voted only by 500 live audiences. After every two episodes, the least voted singer has to leave the show. Music, especially popular music, can help with the establishment of cultural identity since it can evoke and organize "collective memories and present experiences with an intensity, power, and simplicity" (Gorfinkel, p. 4). Likewise, culture is an important tool in constructing an imagined Chinese community. In other words, under the influence of the NRTA, the production of winners of *Singer* indicates the construction of a modern Chinese community. Therefore, by connecting with existing theories and similar cases, the analysis will include reviews over the song choices and how each song is presented to grasp the representation of *Singer* in constructing an imaginary China.

This study analyses three key winners and a censored performer from *Singer*. Han Lei, Coco Lee, and Jessie J are chosen because they are respectively the first multiethnic, American Chinese, and non-Chinese winners of *Singer*. The analysis will focus on the finals, including the performances, interviews with the singers, and a few online comments regarding their winning. To analyze these singers, conventional content analysis will be adapted, so codes can be developed during the process of data analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1286). By investigating the existing literature on the construction of Chinese identity and the role of media in it, this research intends to explore the complexity of Chinese modern society via the representation of *Singer*, in order to find whether China has a nationalism that interweaves with cosmopolitanism.

Analysis

Singer, aired in January 2013, has produced seven winners up until April 12, 2019. Among seven winners of the show, Han Lei is the first ethnic minority winner from the second season in 2014. Then, Coco Lee, competed in the fourth season in 2016, is the first American Chinese winner, and Jessie J won the rebranded *Singer 2018* as the first non-Chinese winner. As the show reflects a seemingly increasing openness with the cultural and political identities of the winners, performances in finals demonstrate both the culture each winner represents and the complexity of the imagined Chinese community. On the contrary, a well-known Cantonese singer, Hins Cheung, was invited to *Singer 2017*, but he was erased from the aired episode due to public rejection. This case will also be analyzed to complement the discussion on the identity of Greater China in the imagined Chinese community.

Ethnic minority

Born in Hohhot, the capital of Inner Mongolia, Han Lei is a Mongols-Chinese singer. In the final of *I am a Singer* in 2014, he performed a popular Uyghur folk song and a remix of a Mongols ethno-pop song with two of his hit songs as his final performance for the competition (Hong, 2014). The first song, "Lift Up Your Veil"

["Xianqi ni de gaitou lai"], is one of the most well-known folk songs in China. Then, Han Lei's second performance combined "Swan Goose" ["Hongyan"], a Mongolian-Chinese ethno-pop song, with "Walk to Horizon" ["Zou sifang"] and "Borrow Another 500 Years From the Heaven" ["Xiangtian zai jie wubai nian"]. The second performance started with traditional instruments, such as kobyz, mandolin, and horse-headed fiddle, to build an exotic atmosphere (Hong, 2014). "Swan Goose" originates from a folk song from Inner Mongolia ("Menggu zu minge", 2016, para. 4). This Chinese version illustrates the beautiful grassland where the swan gooses settle down after travelling to illustrate the nostalgia of a man who left his hometown. In addition, Han Lei and his band members also wore traditional Mongolian costumes.

Due to the complex ethnicity of China, ethno-pop is one of the music genres that are often used to celebrate national unity. This genre in China usually combines Mandarin lyrics with music or visual elements from ethnic minorities, so it celebrates the colourful cultural diversity of China with the national language (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 85). Compared to other Chinese music genres, ethno-pop borrows elements from popular music, so it is a more commercialized genre for Chinese audiences on mainstream media (Gorfinkel, p. 85). By balancing between the diversity of minority culture and the sameness, Han Lei represents the modern Chinese identity by expressing in a shared language while "allowing cultural pluralism to flourish" (Boulou Ebanda de B'béri & Middlebrook, p. 28). Similarly, instead of directly promoting a political message, ethno-pop and Han Lei's ethnic identity are "softer representations" that highlight the talent, creativity, and cultural diversity of China (Gorfinkel, p. 111). The performances reflect minority culture's contributions to the development of a vibrant and cohesive multiethnic China (Gorfinkel, p. 111). Therefore, Han Lei's two performances can be seen as nationalistic celebrations of the national unity among different minority nationalities.

As a peripheral minority culture becomes a characteristic of the Chinese identity, ethno-pop is also used to highlight the unity in mainland China to face the cultural invasions by globalization and Greater China. In the final, Han Lei had to challenge with singers from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Malaysia, and Hong Kong singer G.E.M. lost to Han Lei as the runner-up of the season (Hong, 2014). When music from Taiwan and Hong Kong dominated the popular music industry, ethno-pop was one of the genres that were promoted to show the unique mainland culture (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 99). Similarly, grassroots nationalism in China worries for the cultural invasions of globalization in destroying domestic culture, regional preferences, and Chinese traditions (Gao, 2012, p. 182). According to Gorfinkel (2017), by showing tolerance and respect to ethnic minorities, China builds a positive image of a culturally diversified country to the citizens and the world (p. 92). Ethno-pop is also marketed as a “world music” genre to diversify the Chinese modern music culture (Gorfinkel, p. 98). As an example, a YouTube user commented on Han Lei’s performance:

> As a 22-year-old, I’m supposed to enjoy popular music, but I’m so tired of it. . .. Han Lei is refreshing, a quality other singers lack, and his grassland music washes away the hustle and bustle of city life . . . I do not know if people from Taiwan or Hong Kong will agree with me. (Liyao, 2014)

Facing challenges from other regions and countries, Han Lei’s folk and ethno-pop performances represent the diversified Chinese culture, so his victory can be seen as a representation of the “ethnic harmony” (Gorfinkel, p. 111) and creativity of modern China.

Nevertheless, the diversified performances of Han Lei also illustrate the cosmopolitan tolerance of the modern Chinese community. During Han Lei’s second performance, the camera displays the exotic traditional instruments, the backup singer who performed hoomei (or Mongolian throat singing), and Mongolian costumes of the performers to highlight the exotic cultural symbols Han Lei represents (see Appendix B). By interacting with a minority culture, the performance articulates the “social plurality” in developing a civil society (Tyfield & Urry, 2010, p. 279). Moreover, the lyrics of “Swan Goose” also emphasize the nostalgia of people who left their hometown, which is relevant not only to ethnic minorities but to all migrant workers who live in another city. Media has the ability to construct an imaginary “realm of belonging” for people who are alienated in the local community (Christensen & Jansson, 2015, p. 95). As a result of the 56 culturally different nations in China, ethnic minorities are living in peripheral areas, similar to the “othered” Muslim migrants in the Swedish society (Christensen & Jansson, p. 93). Specifically, Han Lei is from the Inner Mongolia, one of the five autonomous provinces in China. Han Lei’s performance constructs a nostalgic scenario that is relatable to all migrant, from ethnic minorities to cultural minorities. Therefore, *I am a Singer* allows Han Lei to mediate an imagined home to all migrants and cultural minorities in the cosmopolitan Chinese society.

Greater China

As the first Greater China winner, Coco Lee joined and won the fourth season of *I am a Singer* in 2016. Born to an Indonesian father and a Chinese mother in Hong Kong, Coco Lee moved to the United States when she was nine. After high school, she started her career in Taiwan. Therefore, Coco Lee represents all types of Greater China: Special Administrative Regions (Hong Kong and Macau), Taiwan, and overseas

Chinese. In the final of *I am a Singer*, Coco Lee chose “Earth Song” by Michael Jackson and her iconic hit “A Love Before Time” [“Yueguang airen”] to compete with a mainland rock singer, a singer from South Korea, and four other Greater China singers (Hong, 2016). Her first performance featured a guest celebrity from the United States, Ne-Yo, indicating her international influence. The song “A Love Before Time” was from the movie *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, and it was nominated and performed at the Academy Awards (“Liwen”, 2001, para. 1). Since the movie tells a story regarding martial arts in the Qing dynasty, the song was arranged with a mixture of Western instruments and traditional Chinese instruments, such as xiao (Chinese flute) and Chinese zither.

Coco Lee shows her Chinese cultural root and becomes a symbol of the musical and cultural achievement of Chinese in the international cultural market. On YouTube, a comment describes her second performance: “the arrangement of this song is like from a Chinese martial arts movie, bringing people into the fantasy of a Chinese legend” (Ren Liu, 2016). Similarly, Gorfinkel suggests that people of Greater China are “compatriots” (*Tongbao*) to mainland China, and China is the “motherland” they can go back to (2017, p. 136). In other words, even though Coco Lee grew up in the US, her performance reflects how much she values traditional Chinese culture and her Chinese identity. Additionally, as performers achieve their successes in mainland China, they attract “positive family links” from Greater China (Gorfinkel, p. 160). By allowing celebrities from Greater China to pursue their career in the Chinese mainland, Chinese television becomes a reminder to Greater China that they can work with China for “economic and scientific development” (Gorfinkel, p. 160).

At the same time, the achievements of Greater China elevate the value of the pan-Chinese nation and elevate the imagined Chinese identity. As Coco Lee invited American singer Ne-Yo to perform together on *I am a Singer* (Hong, 2016), she lifted the value of this stage to an international level. Compared to mainlanders, performers from Great China were modern, trendy, cosmopolitan, and economically superior, so their appearance on Chinese television has helped to build the image of China as a country of international influence (Gorfinkel, p. 164). As the cooperation between successful celebrities from Greater China and the mainland enhances the positioning of China on the global level, it also evokes more cosmopolitan openness in the construction of the imagined Chinese identity.

By establishing her identity as both a Chinese and international artist, Coco Lee on *I am a Singer* represents cosmopolitan China as a member of the pan-Chinese nation. The final of *I am a Singer* is between one singer from mainland China, five singers from Greater China, and a singer from South Korea. Usually, Hong Kong artists are marked with subtitles "China Hong Kong" on CCTV, while other regions are marked with "China Taiwan" or "China Macau" to indicate their political nationality (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 164). However, the representation of *I am a Singer* treats every singer equally without naming their political identity with subtitles. While cosmopolitanism is defined by global openness, the openness towards Greater China compatriots incorporates their cultural diversities to mainland China (Tyfield & Urry, 2010, p. 279). Therefore, the articulation of *I am a Singer* and Coco Lee's victory show the cosmopolitan openness of China in accepting the cultural differences, while Greater China is accepted to represent the diversified Chinese culture.

Furthermore, not only Coco Lee's performances reflect the cosmopolitan tastes in China, but she also indicates her mobility to switch between two different cultural backgrounds. The cooperation between Coco Lee and Ne-Yo, along with her identity as a singer of Greater China, demonstrated the diversified cosmopolitan modern Chinese tastes. Hybridity, in the mixed use of English and Chinese, was utilized by other singers to attract youth audiences (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 165). In the same way, through two culturally different performances, Coco Lee showcases her diversity and "mobility" (Tyfield & Urry, 2010, p. 279) in representing the modern Chinese community that negotiates traditional Chinese culture with Western culture. Coco Lee's performance connects the show with an imagined global belonging. When Coco Lee performed the song she sang at the Academy Awards, the audiences temporarily "imagine and experience" (Lu & Chu, p. 367) her transnational glory. As the winner of *I am a Singer* in 2016, Coco Lee represents the openness to cultural differences and the mobility to articulate different cultural identities of the modern transnational Chinese community.

Although the victory of Coco Lee connotes the existence of cosmopolitanism in the imagined Chinese community, two events regarding *I am a Singer* display limits of cosmopolitan China. Provincial television stations may have some freedom to negotiate with the NRTA, but the basic rule is "not to cross the boundary, delimiting politically, socially and culturally sensitive content" (Zeng & Sparks, 2019, p. 61). Under the influence of the dispute between China and South Korea, as an imported show from South Korea, *I am a Singer* was rebranded with a new name, *Singer* (Hunan weishi [Hunan Satellite TV], 2016). Likewise, Cantonese singer Hins Cheung was one of the first singers joining *Singer 2017*, but the show had to erase him before the seasonal premiere. According to a social media post by the Communist Youth League of China, Hins Cheung supported several political events in Hong Kong. His multiple appearances created a supportive image for the Hong Kong independence movement (Qingnian liwang zhaoliangchen [The Power of Youth Zhao Liangchen], 2017). Even though he is a mainland-born Chinese who developed his career in Hong Kong, he was still boycotted in the mainland on the Internet. This event demonstrates that the One-China policy is a core value in the culture of mainland China. Canadian comedian Mark Rowswell also suggests that to be represented on Chinese television, people need to understand “what is culturally acceptable to a Chinese audience” (as cited in Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 18). Since cultural identity weighs more than ethnic identity in the Chinese community (Gorfinkel, p. 14), even if Hins Cheung is from mainland China, he was still rejected by the public.

Unnaturalized faces

Despite both cases above show nationalistic limitations in the cosmopolitanism of China, Jessie J’s victory indicates another cosmopolitan development of the imagined Chinese community. To compete with six other singers representing mainland, ethnic minority, and Greater China, in the first round of the final, Jessie J performed her hit song “Bang Bang” with Coco Lee and another guest singer from the Philippines (Hong, 2018). Although she did not sing in Chinese, this song was rearranged with Chinese instruments and remixed with a Chinese hit song, “Dragon Fist” [“Longquan”], performed by Coco Lee. In the second round, after Chinese rock singer Wang Feng’s the patriotic “I Love You, China” [“Wo ai ni zhongguo”] and Mongolian singer Tengger’s “Wolf on Earth” [“Canglang dadi”], Jessie J won the final with Whitney Houston’s “I Will Always Love You”. Jessie J is not only the first non-Chinese winner of *Singer* but also the first singer who never sang in Chinese in the history of *Singer*.

Among Jessie J’s interview, performance, and supportive clips from the UK, three nationalistic aspects can be found from her representations on *Singer 2018*: the friendship between China and the UK, her song choices, and the Chinese remix of her music. According to Lauren Gorfinkel, if foreigners want to be accepted by the Chinese media, they need to “appeal to a national spirit” (2017, p. 208). Similarly, the ambassador of the UK recorded a video to congratulate Jessie J’s achievements on *Singer 2018*. The ambassador emphasized Jessie J’s important role as a travel agent of the UK, bringing awareness and knowledge of the UK to Chinese youth (Hong, 2018). Comparing to the role of Greater China as “the great imagined Chinese family” (Gorfinkel, p. 5) on Chinese television, foreigners are usually portrayed as “friends” who love an open and modern China (Gorfinkel, p. 16). Following Gorfinkel’s argument, Jessie J might first appear as a foreigner, but after being trained with Chinese culture, she grew from a “barbarian” to a “civilized” citizen (p. 16).

Although Jessie J sang English songs through the season, her songs were carefully chosen for the Chinese audience. “Big” English song refers to English classics that require strong vocal ability, such as Beyonce's "Halo" or Michael Jackson's "Black or White" (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 63). In contrast with Chinese singers who build their cosmopolitan identity through these "big" English songs, Jessie J adapted her music choices to the understanding of Western music of her imagined Chinese audiences. The last evidence of remixing "Bang Bang" with Chinese musical elements can be understood as a mixture of nationalism and cosmopolitanism of Chinese media. From the nationalistic perspective, performing in Chinese is a pragmatic method to attract more audiences. In the first round, the traditional Chinese instrument, pipa (Chinese lute), connected the upbeat Western melody of "Bang Bang" with the Chinese song "Dragon Fist" (Hong, 2018). The song "Dragon Fist" is named after a kind of Chinese martial arts, and the guest star Coco Lee highlighted parts of the lyrics, "the world is waiting for me, the dragon hero", to appeal to local audiences. A former employee of a talent show argues that audiences are not able to connect to the English lyrics, so singers attract and resonate with audiences by choosing Chinese songs (as cited in Gorfinkel, p. 63). Hence, by mixing a Chinese song with "Bang Bang", Jessie J found a method to resonate with local audiences. However, Jessie J's performances through the season were all in English, so Gorfinkel's theory is challenged by the diversified and modernized articulation on *Singer 2018*.

From the cosmopolitan perspective, Jessie J's success on *Singer 2018* could be a result of the combination of the cosmopolitan culture of China, the double exotism that attracts the audiences, and the insensitivity of the public to foreign strangeness. The fact that Jessie J performed only English songs on the show could mean that China has a modern, diversified, and cosmopolitan society. In Lauren Gorfinkel's work, she discusses the imported television shows that displayed an "international dimension" to the Chinese audiences in the 1980s (2017, p. 52). As these shows introduced the idea of cosmopolitanism to the Chinese audience, "becoming cosmopolitan and transcending locality has become symbolic of a stronger, rising China" (Gorfinkel, p. 52). As the Internet familiarizes Chinese citizens with foreign countries, inviting Jessie J, a symbol of an international level of music experience, to compete with Chinese singers can be seen to showcase a strong and confident cosmopolitan China.

Furthermore, the mix of traditional Chinese musical elements into a popular English song combines two exotic elements to generate a cultural innovation. On other Chinese television shows, foreigners in China tried to perform music from minority nationalities (Gorfinkel, 2017, p. 206). These performances are defined as "double exoticism" because they combine "internal and external otherness" to draw attention to the "harmonious multiethnic society" (Gorfinkel, p. 206). Likewise, the remix of "Bang Bang" shows a new possibility for the internally othered traditional

Chinese music. It also familiarizes the externally othered English pop song. As a result, they become a new and cosmopolitan product for the Chinese audience.

Finally, even though Xu and Wu (2019) only argue for the insensitivity towards strangers in the urban city as a symbol of the Chinese cosmopolitanism, their theory is also applicable to the naturalization of racial representations on Chinese television. Due to modernization and urbanization in China, Chinese citizens are insensitive to people "with different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds" (Xu & Wu, p. 14). In the same way, an audience commented on the final of *Singer 2018* that,

> Jessie J's win thanks to, first of all, the live audiences who voted for the music instead of the song title [referring to "I Love You, China"]; and, secondly, Hunan television station or even the NRTA who valued the professionality over other elements, showing respects to the highest standard of the [music] industry. (Flora Y, 2018)

Instead of focusing on the nationality or the race of the singer, by allowing Jessie J to win in China, *Singer 2018* naturalizes a racially different winner and showcases a cosmopolitan China.

Conclusion

Since the Chinese economic reform in the 1980s, China gradually became a diversified nation-state allowing 56 ethnic nationalities, compatriots from Greater China, and foreigners to interact and realize their dreams. Under the management of the National Radio Television Administration (NRTA), Chinese television vividly reflects the construction of an imaginary modern Chinese community. While the censorship from the NRTA symbolizes nationalism in China, the analysis on Singer captures the existence of cosmopolitanism in the development of the imagined Chinese identity.

During the second season of I am a Singer, Han Lei as the first ethnic minority winner displays the cosmopolitan diversity in the seemingly nationalistic Chinese community. As Han Lei converges ethnic culture with national language, his music also represents every migrant worker who left their hometown whether they are part of the ethnic minority or not. The representation of cultural diversity and the mediated relocation effect of the television connect cosmopolitanism with the ethnic nationalities and cultural differences between provinces.

For people from Greater China, the representation of Coco Lee on the fourth season of I am a Singer shows generous acceptance, but disrespect towards Chinese ideologies leads to a nationalistic rejection from the public. On the one hand, Coco Lee's performances in 2016 symbolize both the diversified tastes of the Chinese audience and the cosmopolitan mobility to switch between Chinese and Greater China identities. On the other hand, the rejection of Hins Cheung by Chinese audiences displays nationalistic limitations in the cosmopolitan in the imagined Chinese identity.

Finally, Jessie J is not only the first non-Chinese winner of Singer, but she is also the only singer who performed solely in English. Even if she expressed her love for China to develop her identity as a friend to China, her victory symbolizes the cosmopolitan cultural development of China. Therefore, as depicted on the show Singer 2018, China is accepting foreign cultural products, combining exotic culture for innovation, as well as developing an insensitive attitude that gradually naturalizes multiracial faces in mainland China.

Overall, the representation of Singer constructs an open, modern, and diversified cultural sphere as the imagined Chinese community, in which multiethnic, multinational, and multiracial appearances are naturalized. However, as this research attempts to investigate the main categories of identities in the Chinese community, it neglects many nuances, especially the multi-racial identity in China. In the future, to further complement this study, scholars could extend this study to investigate the representation of the multiracial community in China and compare if their representations differ from others.

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Appendix A

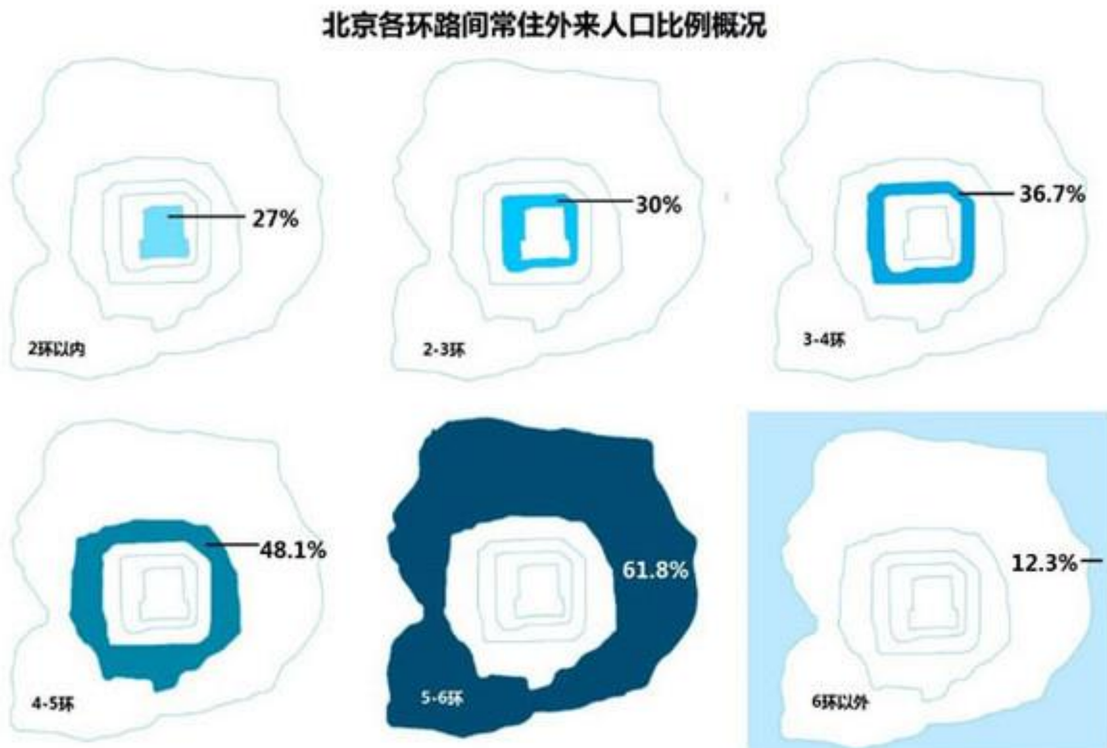

Figure 1The proportion of resident migrants between each ring road in Beijing. Adapted from “Shuju jiedu chengshi: Beijing bendi ren VS waidi ren [City analysis through data: Beijing, local vs migrants],” by Xiaoya & Xiaolang, December 4, 2015. Retrieved April 15

Appendix B

Figure 2Mongolian costumes and musical instruments on I am a Singer [Screenshot]. From "I am a Singer - Second season - 13th episode - Han Lei "Swan Goose" + "Walk to Horizon" + "Borrow Another 500 Years From the Heaven" [HunanTV Official 1080P] 20140404," by Ch

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'Fit for the Job': A Programmatic Inquiry on Style and Aesthetics in the Workplace

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Abstract:
This article showcases central aspects of an operationalizable notion of 'style' that aims at studying the aesthetic dimension of organizational life. An example of the agency of aesthetic experiences in organizational processes, taken from the author's background in the service industry, is first presented as a mean of problematization. A number of theoretical imports from rhetoric, sociology and discourse analysis are then considered in their potential to help make sense (Weick, 1976) of the processes accounted for (Garfinkel, 1984) by the author. The relevance of the resulting framework is then evaluated in light of this preliminary data, before further research is considered.

Keywords:
Organizations, style, aesthetic, ethics, ethos, rhetorics, meaning.

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It is well known among students in Montreal that being a server often represents an incredible windfall of financial resources, especially in relation to the minimal formal qualifications that most of those positions require. A server position can represent earnings sometimes two or three times larger than what is usually expected from other types of student income. This order of magnitude does a lot for the attractiveness of this particular professional occupation among this specific population. As such, a lot of people want in, even though the world of service in Montreal is, in another way, a rather closed world: most restaurants require experience for server positions, and few are willing to train from the ground up.

One of the restaurants where I worked for the biggest part of my career as a server was an exception to that. Relatively unattractive working conditions had made it quite usual to hire inexperienced people as kitchen staff and have them move up to a server position when one became available. Critically, the selection of whom was to get promoted to the service team was often done without regard to the simple order of seniority. Rather, people were judged on a plethora of ill-defined, certainly flexible, criteria that were supposed to be indicators of an ability to sell products, represent the company and build customer loyalty. Where one teammate could sometimes be selected on the basis of having proven in previous professional experiences that they should be able to accomplish the diverse tasks associated with the position, another candidate was construed and considered in their alleged property of being visually appealing (unsurprisingly, considering certain tropes about the alleged general handsomness of servers). Another person, maybe less perceived as answering to canons of physical beauty, could nonetheless cut the line of promotion because, for those in command, that person's behaviour simply showed that they "had it[1] .

What I would like to examine in this paper is the undefined nature of these criteria. Clearly, in the cases just mentioned, the body "spoke" (Kirby, 1997), as management made sense of its marks, tokens, and the other discrete signs that it would be brought to bear: A piercing could be taken as the mark of certain ideological sympathies, a linguistic accent as the mark of a particular social upbringing, etc. But the bodies weren't only speaking, in the stricter sense of producing conventional

[1] This paper shall not reproduce the view that a category of people generally perceived as beautiful is in any way homogeneous, coherent, or conclusively discernable, nor that any generality could be said about the members of such a category, whatever it could be found out to be. However, the issue of appearances is nonetheless problematized in many spheres of social life and is oftentimes decried as being very active and consequential.

meaning. They were also producing other kinds of effect – certain impressions left by an hardly properly readable "magma" of trace-signs (Galinon-Mélénec, 2011). To get a sense of who would be suitable for the job and who would not, managers mobilized complex interpretive protocols that included rationalization, instinct, experiential knowledge of what a server is supposed to look like and how they are supposed to act, and inferences about the clientele's expectations and biases. The questions I would like to ask, then, are as follow : How can we, as social researchers, describe or understand such methods? And what do these methods entail, strategically and morally, for social actors using them or being subjected to them? What does it tell us about the possible ways in which humans make sense of their surroundings and their peers?

The following sections present an overview of some classical answers to this longstanding question (Ewen, 2002) of appearances and the nature of their effects in social processes. The rhetorical notion of ethos is first considered, and criticized for its logocentrism (Peters, 2000). We'll see that although it is conceptualized as the aspect of a discursive act related to the body and a speaker's "character" (Maingueneau, 2016, p. 95), the notion is lacking as a heuristic device for an inquiry on the aesthetic dimension of social life, a dimension that does nevertheless imply said bodies and characters. In an attempt to sidestep this shortcoming, section 2 turns to explicit approaches of aesthetics, one stemming from the field of organizational aesthetics, and the other from art criticism. In a third and final section, a synthesis is attempted between these reflections on the aesthetic dimension of (organizational) experience and the rhetorical emphasis of appearances and style as a symbolic mean of discursive and therefore ethical action (Fairclough, 1992).

Rhetoric of style

As mentioned previously, the selection of candidates for server positions in the restaurant I was working for was based on other things than easily identifiable marks and tokens of demonstrable skills, although those would of course also come into play. My contention is that this selection was operated from a form of aesthetic experience of others. The question was "would they fit or not?" in the picturesque conception of "our" table service that the managers had to constantly redraw.

I contend that *style* is one of the ethnomethods (Garfinkel, 1984) by which this aesthetical experience of self and others is thematized in ordinary language. Personal style is indeed the site of recurrent injunctions. As Nickson et al. (2001) point out,

> Aesthetic skills are clearly the key skills demanded by designer retailers, boutique hotels and style bars, cafés and restaurants, not just in Glasgow but across the UK. Employees who look good and sound right are commercially beneficial, these companies believe (p. 23).

Considering this, I refer to style as the modalization of an action or an appearance, which through repetitive perceived occurrences, can become a habit (Peirce, 1903c). In the case at hand, the selective constitution of a restaurant's staff, such a "habit", traceable in the candidates bodies, influences the abductive sorting out of potential candidates by grounding hypothetical answers to sensible questions such as : is it foreseeable that they will appropriately model "the sell," "the table service," "the brand?" To get access to this job, a person needs to show that they can appropriately modalize such typical actions as "selling" "serving" and "reprensenting" in a way coherent with the restaurant's own operational and relational goals.

Indeed, appearances have frequently been thought of as support of a content aimed at persuading (here, of one's proficiency for waiting tables). This instrumental notion of appearances, mobilized intentionally in public performances of persuasion stems from a long tradition initiated by Aristotelian rhetoric (Vivian, 2002), namely its complex conception of ethos, the character that a person develops for themselves in speech to make it more persuasive. Modern rhetoric, from Perelman (1955) onwards, then expanded the domain of the argumentative function to eventually all verbal utterances (Ducrot, 1980; Grize, 1996; Maingueneau, 2002), giving rhetorical style (and therefore, aesthetics) a broader sphere of action.

Ricoeur (1975) has shown, in his seminal analysis of metaphorical speech, that this renewed, more pervasive, notion of argumentation still does not account for the extent of the constitutive, world-generating, function of aesthetic experience. Since self-presentation has at least some aesthetic component to it, the lack observed by Ricoeur there (in the analysis of language games) might be reproduced when analyzing other forms of semiotic behaviour. We should therefore be cautious that a argumentative perspective might not exhaustively account for appearances' agency in human experience and the constitution of social facts (Garfinkel, 2002). In order to illustrate what is meant by this lack in the argumentative (or rhetorical) perspective, let us turn to Ricoeur's (1975) argument. As he points out, metaphors do not simply "decorate" speech, nor are they only an alternative way of designating a relation of resemblance or analogy between its two poles (i.e.: "the man wore a flower on its head," where "flower" equates a part of the form of a hat with a part of the form of flowers). Metaphors also have a rather generative power, in the same way a synthesis, in its stronger, properly dialectical acceptation has: the meaning content of "flower" in the preceding example is a literally non-existing quality present in both flowers and the man's hat. It is a resonance between the two items, a quality that exists neither in the man's hat, neither in flowers, yet somewhere in-between, in a space radically opened up by discourse and/or by the original phenomenological experience that that discourse attempts to express. Metaphorical truths (such as "it is true that (for me) the man wore a flower on his head") exist in a kind of tension between being and not being (Ricoeur, 1975, p. 313). Metaphors are ways of expressing propositions, but express more than that. As aesthetic acts of conceptual arrangements, metaphors also express some other things, some "alive things" (hence, the original French title of Ricoeur's book, *La métaphore vive* : "The Live Metaphore").

> Metaphor is living not only to the extent that it vivifies a constituted language. Metaphor is living by virtue of the fact that it introduces the spark of imagination into a 'thinking more' at the conceptual level. This struggle to 'think more,' guided by the 'vivifying principle,' is the 'soul' of interpretation. (Ricoeur, 2006, p. 358)

The aesthetic qualities of metaphors are not simply signals of an attention given to oratorial prowess, or a social identity as a trained speaker, nor are they shallow, nearly inconsequential adornments worn by a sentence's components that could have just been more simply stated. They can be meant to be used in such decorative or persuasive fashion, but their potential exceeds such instrumentalization. It is in this way that metaphor can show us how intelligibility might actually not be a relevant property of meaning.

A similar argument can be made out of Currie and Frascaroli's (2021) failure to argue convincingly in favour of an absolute possibility for any poetic meaning to be communicable through paraphrases. Some contents might not be paraphrasable at all (not being definite phrases to begin with). In the face of those "elusive" contents of communication (p. 435) lingering among the more explicit meanings of any given text the authors recognize the circularity of the argument they have been led to make in order to sustain their position that paraphrase is a possibility :

> One might take the view that we have done no more than rearrange the labels on things. You want to insist that there are no ineffable meanings? It is simple: rule out things which look dangerously ineffable by declaring them not to belong to meaning. We are aware that our proposal needs further support and that other plausible pathways might lead to a different conclusion (p. 436).

Although one can't help but take seriously Currie's and Frascoli's (2021, p. 434) advice that "it is wise, once again, not to be dogmatic in this area [of the limits and nature of what we call 'meaning']," I can find no reason to take the pervasiveness of non-propositional meaning as an opportunity to exclude it from our general notion of what meaning is. This leaves open the possibility, against what the authors are advocating, that part of the meaning of a poetic discourse might not be expressible in paraphrases; some of it might reside at the limits of intelligibility, somewhere along the domain of the barely accountable firstness (Peirce, 1903c, p. 268). A focus on semiosis (Peirce, 1907) that would attempt to account for all types of interpretive processes and their interplay, proves simultaneously more economical and less arbitrary than a focus on meaning contents[2] ; a focus that for some reason would justify sorting out which thoughts or impressions can be said to be meaningful, and which cannot. Furthermore, once meaning is understood as relational, we're bound methodologically to study semiotic processes, and not semiotic objects (Hjelmslev, 1984, p. 36). The distinction between "determinants" and "constituents" of meaning (Currie's and Frascoli, 2021, p. 434), a substantialist one, does not hold to this. Again, the result is that non-propositional contents mediated by any type of object – be it a poem or a body – shouldn't be excluded from the realm of meaningfulness.

These two polemics regarding the superseding potential of metaphorical meaning and the liminalities of paraphrases are just some examples of the kinds of (redhibitory, in my view) difficulties awaiting a conception of meaning too much focused on the symbolic communication of propositional content. Considering this, one should question if the notion of ethos really suffices to account for the agency of appearances in social situations. The presentation of self (as considered in the influential work of Goffman [1956] or Bourdieu [1979]) always seems reducible to a statement: "I am well-to-do," "I am professional," "I am a musician," "I am trustworthy," "I am not one of those who worry about their appearance." Ethos is said to be "what speaks as the speaker utter words" (Barthes, 1970, p. 212). But appearances don't always speak – not a language, at least.

Ethos has demonstrated its relevance for the analysis of many types of social processes in a plethora of works and disciplines (Baumlin and Meyer, 2018). Through the lenses of ethos, self-presentation appears as a symbol indexed to some value in a normative system, whether ideological, moral or positional. It is a mediator between these symbolic systems and the logics of action that they motivate or explain (Bédard, 2015), but self-presentation and appearances in general play a larger range of

[2] As one might see from the reference to Peirce (1903), this argument is nothing new. It also parallels Quine's (1992) thesis of the impossibility of translation and indeterminacy of meaning.

semiotic functions than that. The notion of ethos alone cannot, from what we've seen, exhaustively account for everything that might contribute to the kinds of selective processes we mentioned earlier ongoing in the organization of a staff team. Following this, ethos should not be thought of as synonymous with "the presentation of self," as Amossy (2010) puts it, referring to Goffman (1956), because the presentation of one's self displays more than just ethos. It at least also implies a style. The new server must not only be trustworthy and competent and signal these traits through various performances: they must fit in physically, noticeably (which implies semiosis), with the overall aesthetic of the particular space they are trying to integrate. It is in this regard that the notion of style can contribute to a reflection on the aesthetical dimension of social processes.

A notion of aestheticism

In the case of organizations, aesthetics (Strati, 1999; 2018) has already been considered as an important factor in the transmission of tacit knowledge (Ewenstein and Whyte, 2007), the permanence of characteristic "trademark" practices (Bazin and Korica, 2021; Dobson, 2010), the specificities of intra-organizational intercultural communication (Louisgrand and Islam, 2021), and, in general, a number of specific tasks often overlooked and now researched under the heading of "aesthetic labor" (Mears, 2014). For Gagliardi (2006), a major representative of this subfield of organizational studies called organizational aesthetics, aesthetic experience participates in organizational life by serving three interrelated roles:

1) As a type of knowledge (to be distinguished from an "intellectual" knowledge). It is gained from aesthetic experiences of one's environment (typically, though not exclusively, when artworks are part of that environment) and it is, critically, not fully translatable in language.

2) As a form of action: disinterested, formed by an impulse that seeks to express itself, such as the act (before it is commodified) of drawing a figure on a latte, of wearing those prettier shoes to work, of choosing to play this music in the desks area, etc.

3) As an act of communication, because actions become perceptible and objects of further knowledge, in a logic similar to the idea developed in Watzlawick et al. (2011) according to which any behaviour is communication.

This three-step definition of "aesthetic experience" allows us already to consider it in a host of effects. I would simply revise this definition by freeing it from the remnants of an overly constraining association between art and aesthetics, an association that ties the latter to canonical notions of beauty or expressive authenticity as its higher general principles. Consequently, I don't think that the term "intellectual" is necessarily the right one to oppose to aesthetic knowledge. It echoes anti-intellectual tropes of the “sanguine, exuberant and driven artist[3],” as when identifying disinterestedness as a characteristic of aesthetic action. Not only does aesthetic experience concerns everyone, and not just artists, but even in their case, the assumption seems debatable. As Dewey (1995) points out, “The odd notion that an artist does not think and a scientific inquirer does nothing else is the result of converting a difference of tempo and emphasis into a difference in kind” (p. 15).

Working out the distinction between artistic value and aesthetic value, partly from Dewey’s stance on the subject, Goldman (2013) points us to a “broader,” much more essential and intricate notion of aesthetic experience. One that does not need an intervention of the sublime and that can therefore apply to many daily situations: “Sensuous perception, informed by cognition, enlarged by imagination, and prompting emotional response” (Goldman, 2013, p. 233). Before an artwork is given artistic, social or performative value, it simply is, in itself, the depositary of its own qualia, its own disposition to affect that is the source of emergence of all possible value (Massumi, 2018). Any aesthetic experience, because of its ubiquity, its banality (Carnevali, 2020), its totalizing presence in human experience, can be resituated and should be thought of as a radically ethical dimension of experience. As an embodiment of the knowledge (at times ineffable, at times more explicit) gained from this essential dimension of experience, style intervenes in a critical way in the organization of our social relations.

Furthermore, as shown by Foucault (1985), style contributes to a process of constitution of the subject, not as a moral subject in relation to an ethical standard, but as an aesthetic subject (Foucault, 1985), existing in the world both as a certain aesthetic response and prompt to it. This brings us to the aesthetic possibility of a project of the self which is no longer based on an introspective relation to the soul but

[3] This idealized figure was described in passing by Barthes (1957) as being, in his time, notably attainable by unrepentant intellectuals through the ritual act of drinking cheaper popular wine, which made them “drop the act,” leave the glamorous and snobbish atmosphere of “expensive cocktails” and renew themselves as sharing the bond of the wine with the average French person.

on the realization of an individual's potentialities, which they discover along the way and which emerge from the contact with themselves and their environment. This is the possibility that Foucault (1985) tried to open up, inspired by Nietzsche's (1900; 1901) reflection on the moral constitution of the subject.

The relation of aesthetics to the senses thus implies an important relation of aesthetic experience to the material conditions of its emergence. Not anyone can be a "gruff giant," for example, that is, the aesthetic project that one can try to formulate and embody is affected by the material one is working with. Aesthetic experience becomes therefore the focus of an individuation (Macé, 2016). Each one perceives, expresses and acts in their own way and can (if not must) thus formulate in their own way their own project, their own becoming. Additionally, if the relation to oneself can be aesthetic so too can be the relation to others. The Goffmanian logic of the actor who knows that the others are also actors extends until there (Goffman, 1957). This also opens the possibility of a political aesthetic where certain judgments of taste become conventional, and can take on an imperative dimension (Ferguson, 2007).

The problematic relation between aesthetics and ethics

Having laid some foundations for a notion of style operationalizable in an empirical study of social processes, we can come back to the notion of ethos in order to formulate a more definite distinction between the two. Broadly speaking, ethos is the self-expression of the constitution of individuals as subjects of moral conduct. It is a set of indexical signs that serves the function of indicating in contingent, devisable ways which conduct to expect from any one person. Aesthetics can inform this relationship to self and others, according to "affective intensities" (Massumi, 2018). Importantly, whereas ethical norms and principles are designable through the use of linguistic symbols, aesthetic knowledge might not be as easily represented or signified.

According to Peirce (1903a), aesthetics supersedes ethics because the aim of ethics, electing an adequate idealized course of action, can only be achieved after having discerned what ideal ends are possible in the first place, which is, according to him, aesthetics' function as a "normative science." This sheds some light on the ethical character of aesthetic experience mentioned before. This ethical nature is entailed by aesthetic experience's potential to reveal or hint at new ideals and, therefore, new courses of action oriented towards these ideals. Aesthetic knowledge is consequentially ethical. Pictured as normative sciences, ethics and aesthetics are proper types of knowledge-constituting endeavors. Both produce their own type of knowledges which can be invested in future behaviours or thoughts about behaviours or state of beings (Peirce, 1903b).

What is interesting for the organizational ethnographer is that the resulting appearance, working as a singular media for both forms of knowledge, exhibits them both simultaneously, entangling them in such a way that complicates any analytical distinction one could try to make on the basis of phenomenal data. Such data – the resulting appearances of a behaviour modalized by style and ethos – can then be mobilized by lay actors, just as it is by social scientists (Schutz, 1972b; Lemieux, 2018) for future reference in the course of action or reflection, modalizing new appearances and so on, in a circular relationship such as the one represented in figure 1.

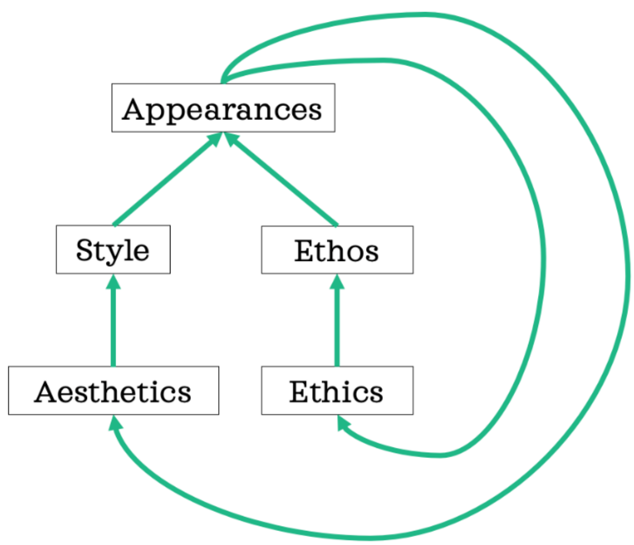

Figure 1A proposition of the location of style in relation to aesthetics and ethics

Aesthetics-as-modalized-in-style and ethics-as-modalized-in-ethos are simultaneously mediated in a synthetic appearance. On one hand, this interweaving could be an explanation for appearances' recurrently unsatisfactory treatment in modern thought (Carnevali, 2020), as their holistic value was rarely considered but by some (see Carnevali's [2016] argument regarding Simmel's perceptivity on the matter, for a counterexample). On the other hand, it could also explain why aesthetics has been overlooked by large parts of philosophical and social research (Ewen, 2002; Macé, 2016), or only reluctantly considered as a serious matter by social actors (Carnevali, 2013, Taylor, 2002).

Conclusion: Making sense of organizational practices

Yet, it is clear that style is part of social dynamics. Style is not simply a possible aesthetic project that each and every one of us can give ourselves, but a project that can then be apprehended, affected, confronted and problematized by others. On this subject, an interesting approach is the one that Gagliardi (2006) suggests, where bodies could be thought of as artifacts, accomplishing a function of stabilization of meanings in collectives (Caronia, 2018), and susceptible therefore, as other artifacts, to be aestheticized by organizations. Style is not an individual project because many things enter in its composition. It is also not a project that only interests the individual, but can also be interpellated by many.

Bringing us back to the organizational dynamics of staff selection, it seems that these theoretical considerations may help us reframe the experience that I recounted in the first part of this article. The new server must not only be trustworthy and competent: they must fit in physically, noticeably, with the overall aesthetic of the particular space they are trying to integrate. Their presence must be adjusted, as much as possible. And so, the intuition (justified or not) that such a person "would not do" can be enough to disqualify them. Gifted with an aesthetic intelligence, a person can try to appear appropriate for a position. It is possible to try to embody an aesthetic that will potentially designate one as the next in line. Even after being chosen, we still need to realize that aesthetic. We trade the kitchen shirt for the service shirt, we take a black tablier instead of a red one, we liven up our movements and sharpen our repartee. All these are ethnomethods (Garfinkel, 1984; 2002) that actors use in order to elicit certain responses or impressions in their surroundings, or just as a way of being in a way that suits them because it seems or feels appropriate. As ethnomethods, they contribute to social facts in the making and therefore should not be left unattended. Although it is true that documenting tacit knowledge, ineffable experiences as I described above might pose serious methodological problems for the social scientist, the work of Garfinkel (1984) and Schutz (1972a) opens up a tried and proved way of tackling these. The essential characteristics of any given aesthetic experience do not need to be defined – and, in fact, do not even need to be definable – for an inquiry on the social effects of such an experience to be possible. What matters is that these experiences matter for actors and that they somehow account for themthrough any kind of behaviour. From there, it’s all about paying a close attention to what actors do with and about these considerations. An ethnography of the organizational practices of a restaurant’s staff is just one way of doing this.

After considering tendential oversights in the rhetorical tradition regarding the semiotic potential of appearances, we introduced some elements of definition inspired by organizational aesthetics. The instrumentalization of appearances as symbolic tools in social performances, “cynical” or not (Goffman, 1956), is attested by many authors (Brummett, 2010; Hariman 1995) and it is not this paper's aim to deny the existence of these practices. By drawing from the work of authors attentive to aesthetics' phenomenological centrality, we showed how parts of the story might still be missing. The aesthetic dimension of experience is irreducible to symbolic acts of communication, even though it can contribute to these. Peirce (1903c) insisted on the variability of semiosis. It is a process that links many different types of things to many others, through a relation that itself fluctuates in its nature. We briefly illustrated what kind of organizational phenomena could be illuminated by such an aesthetic approach, most notably through the notion of style, the effective embodiment of aesthetic knowledge by social actors. What's left to do is to demonstrate how well this theoretical frame will hold when put to the task of an empirical study of organizational phenomena. Running such a test shall not only allow us to revise the prototypical theory of style described above, but will also contribute to a decried lack of empirical studies in aesthetic studies (Ladkin, 2018).

Yes, the server's clean shirt, opposed caricaturaly to a dirty t-shirt, might grossly amount to saying "I'm a well-kept, orderly and trustful person." But the way that shirt is worn and is integrated to the rest of the person's appearance and cadence, and to the whole context, might tell a completely different story, made of impressions, feelings, analogies and rhythm. Only in regard to all of this might you get that person's "groove", or not. Isn't this consequential?

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Sonic Difference:

Reflexive Listening and the Classification of Voice

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Abstract:
Listening is not a passive practice, but an active response and construction of the exterior world. Attaching a physical or mental image to a sound produces a sense of reassurance in how we understand our environment and perceive our relation to others. However, although labelling voices with identity markers helps self-orientation, it can perpetuate false distinctions between "us" and "other" due to the voice's continually changing, multi-faceted sound and resulting meanings. Jennifer Lynn Stoever (2016) argues that "listening operates as an organ of racial discernment, categorization, and resistance in the shadow of vision's alleged cultural dominance" (p. 4). Listening does not dismiss racial essentialism, but culturally reconstitutes it. Difference exists, what matters is how we classify these differences. By philosophically theorizing listening, people may come to a better understanding of the different ways in which people interpret the world sonically. Sound studies scholars such as Nina Sun Eidsheim (2019) and Stoever (2016) have written on voice discrimination and how listening to sound in different ways can help address these discriminatory essentialist practices standardized over time. This article further articulates a two-stage reflexive listening practice toward an understanding of sound and voice as markers of identity through "pausing" (Eidsheim, 2019) and "listening out" (Lacey, 2013; Muscat, 2019). These two reflexive modes of interpretation can be used together to help challenge dominant listening practices grounded in Western thought and value and consequently encourage people to unmask their voices against listener expectations.

Keywords:
identity, race, representation, sound, voice.

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Listening is not a passive practice, but an active response and construction of the exterior world. Attaching a physical or mental image to a sound produces a sense of reassurance in how we understand our environment and perceive our relation to others. However, although labelling voices with identity markers helps self-orientation, it can perpetuate false distinctions between "us" and "other" due to the voice's continually changing, multi-faceted sound and resulting meanings. Jennifer Lynn Stoever (2016) argues that "listening operates as an organ of racial discernment, categorization, and resistance in the shadow of vision's alleged cultural dominance" (p. 4). In a Western context, listeners judge voices linguistically and sonically based on their expectations grounded in cultural training, previous experiences, and familiar societal norms. For example, many listeners of Western audio broadcasting have come to expect a certain "White" sounding voice and vocabulary (Brice, 2018). In contrast, "other" voices sonically and linguistically are valued in relation to these Western, "White" expectations.

When using these terms of *listening* and *voice*, this article refers to how people interpret and value other people's voices, how people make meaning of others' opinions in person and through the media, and how listener expectations influence the voices we hear sonically and linguistically. This article examines how the sound of the voice has discriminatorily been valued and how listening to sound in different ways can help address these discriminatory essentialist practices that have become standardized. Listener expectations can cause speakers to change the way they sound and/or speak to conform to normative characteristics since the voice is alterable. By critically reflecting on their listening, people may come to a better understanding of the different ways in which they interpret the world sonically. This article articulates a two-stage reflexive listening practice toward an understanding of sound and voice as markers of identity through "pausing" (Eidsheim, 2019) and "listening out" (Lacey, 2013; Muscat, 2019). These two reflexive modes of interpretation used together can help challenge dominant listening practices grounded in Western thought and value and consequently encourage people to unmask their voices against listener expectations.

Voice and Listening

Our first act of listening is to the voices of people and objects (Ihde, 2007). Nina Sun Eidsheim (2019) argues there is an assumption that by locating voice, we can "know" the object or person we are hearing. Yet as many sound studies scholars agree, listening to voice does not allow us to truly identify its source or origin, even if we can locate its physical position (Pettman, 2017). In other words, "knowing" requires an examination beyond a surface encounter with sound itself to analyze its social and cultural influences, how it came to be. Dominic Pettman (2017) notes, "You can never be sure of the [voice's] true source, and you can never be sure of what it signifies, even as you may feel you understand the signal within the noise" (p. 58). Pettman is referring to how humans interpret the world's sounds within a conceptual framework of a supposedly "universal" human voice. Listening within this confined framework creates a boundaried understanding of the world where people value certain sounds as signalling universal meanings, but that are actually culturally specific. People listen for sonic cues in the voices of others in the hope of understanding them culturally (Schaeffer, 1966/2017), but cues are contextual across time and space, and across humans and nonhumans.

The indeterminacy of sound was a central focus for French composer and theorist Pierre Schaeffer who used the term "acousmatic" to refer to "*a noise that is heard without the causes from which it comes being seen* [original emphasis]" (p. 64). Mladen Dolar (2006) similarly states, the acousmatic voice is "a voice whose origin cannot be identified, a voice one cannot place" (p. 60). The acousmatic interrogates the assumption that any object's produced sound is unique to that object alone. Furthermore, the acousmatic is not only a reflection on sound, but also on the practice of listening itself at a particular moment (Kane, 2014). When scrutinizing a sound's origin, listeners must move beyond the physiological and towards the cultural since each individual's physiology does not have a history prior to its construction. Indeed, people need to be attentive to how an individual's voice carries symbolic meaning, how the individual's voice is culturally influenced to convey such meaning, and how the voice is interpreted to confirm or deny the individual's intended meaning based on the listener's cultural influences (Eidsheim, 2019). Therefore, if the voice is embedded culturally as much as it is physically, we may agree with Shaeffer (1966/2017) that the acousmatic question cannot be answered, that one's voice is the voice of all its predecessors it has encountered and does not uniquely belong to any one individual. In other words, although organs are tools for emitting voice, how people sound and how people speak are shaped by their environments culturally and the traditions carried by them.

Discriminatory Classifications

Recently, scholars have investigated Schaeffer's "acousmatic" theory by evaluating histories of racial and ethnic oppression through sound as a primary epistemological tool (Stoever-Ackerman, 2010). When listening to a sound without seeing its producer (e.g., through audio media), how can people identify the sound as belonging to that producer? If people can see the producer of the sound, how do they classify the sound itself if individual voice is not shaped biologically, but culturally?

Here, discriminatory practices occur in underexamined fashion, especially considering Stuart Hall's (1992) notion that race:

> is the organizing category of those ways of speaking, systems of representation, and social practices (discourses) which utilize a loose, often unspecified set of differences in physical characteristics – skin colour, hair texture, physical and bodily features etc. – as *symbolic markers* [original emphasis] in order to differentiate one group socially from another. (p. 298)

For example, Stoever (2016) illustrates that during the 19th century, slave advertisements contained linguistic descriptors of a supposedly "Black" voice, including the words "coarse" and "loud," which represented non-Whiteness. Opposingly, "White" voice is considered "refined" and "quiet." This racially discriminatory binary does not consider the cultural binds that enforce voice generally, like geographic region and education that can speak to the conditions and environments of different communities and classes. Instead, it focuses on essentialized listening that constructs a "Black dialect" presented as biological and applicable to all non-White humans. People map their listening experiences on others as objects, even at a distance. Similarly, "a listening subject is *comprised* [original emphasis] of auditory information processed through interactive and intersectional psychological filters" (Stoever, 2016, p. 32) that seek to distinguish the person's voice they are hearing. Eidsheim (2019) states that "the assumption that we can know sound, and that the meaning we infer from it is stable (and indeed essential), allows for the *projection of beliefs about people onto the sound* [original emphasis]" (p. 49). There requires a shift away from subject-to-object listening towards subject-to-subject positioning (Robinson, 2020). By doing so, people may then begin to examine not only how listening can perpetuate discriminatory classification, but also how such classification influences vocal production itself.

Masking Voice

A vocalizer's sonic response to a listener's previous valuation can evoke the vocalizer's "double consciousness." Referring to African Americans, W. E. B. Du Bois (1903/2007) defined double consciousness as the psychological process of "always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul … One ever feels his two-ness, – an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body …" (p. 8). In other words, double consciousness is the colonizing process where an individual views their own racial identity and social practice based on the perception they have of themselves and on their perception of how a dominant culture views them. Similarly, Hall (1992) notes, "Identity arises … from a *lack* of wholeness which is 'filled' from *outside us*, by the ways we imagine ourselves to be seen by *others* [original emphasis]" (p. 287). People may alter the way their voice sounds in particular exchanges since listeners can discriminatorily associate intonation, accent, rhythm, and other oral descriptors with particular values (e.g., intellect) in a Western context.

In Frantz Fanon's (1952/2008) analysis on Black students travelling from Martinique to France's White metropolis, he argues that students do not carry their Martinique identity, but supplant it with a new cultural identity of the colonized land in order to be accepted. This notion of "acceptance" can be implanted in the minds of racialized groups by White-constructed, social conditions that classify certain sounds as "uncivilized," "savage," and inherently racial. Thus, "the usually raucous voice gives way to a hushed murmur. For he knows that over there in France he will be stuck with a stereotype …" (Fanon, 1952/2008, p. 4). For Fanon, because "Black dialect" was a weapon used by dominant cultures to insinuate racial sonics of colonized groups as uncivilized, out of place, and unmodern (Stoever, 2016), Black students would alter their voices to appear "civilized" in response to hegemonic, sonic protocols shaping racialized double consciousness. Fanon's (1952/2008) analysis indicates that individuals are forced into preconceived categories based on supposedly innate racial characteristics or they alter their voice, or mask it, to align with accepted sonic characteristics attributed to the dominant group. Listening places value on people's voices (Couldry, 2010) and can resultingly influence how people articulate themselves to align with "accepted" sonic characteristics that hold particular social and cultural capital.

People may be unaware that their listening practices are potentially discriminatory. As Schaeffer (1966/2017) argues, "The same physical signal reaches ears that we suppose to be identically human, potentially alike, but their perceptual activity, from the sensory to the mental, certainly does not function in the same way" (p. 88). People can hear the same sound but interpret it or place different value on it based on how they have, even subconsciously, been taught to listen. People can begin reflecting on how their listening influences their understanding of sound and voice as markers of identity by practicing "pausing" and "listening out," two reflexive modes of interpretation challenging dominant listening practices rooted in Western thought and value. "Pausing" is grounded in sound studies (Eidsheim, 2019) and refers to the voice sonically. "Listening out" is grounded in media studies (Lacey, 2013; Muscat, 2019) and refers to the voice politically. These two practices create a dual-pronged approach to listening where people initially remove themselves from valuing voice based on their previous encounters and cultural teachings, and then engage with voice afterwards from an openly political position.

Pausing

"Pausing" is a practice that Eidsheim (2019) argues requires people to question and interrupt listening practices that continually establish dominant narratives of sonic essence. Because naming is subjective when different cultures listen and label sound, pausing can help a listener develop an understanding of multiple meanings, or shed desire for meaning altogether and listen to sound for its own sake (Robinson, 2020). Stoever (2016) echoes this sentiment, arguing that one can use "silence as an opportunity to listen to others' listening, a metacognitive practice enabling new forms of listening and selfhood to emerge" (p. 69). Are there alternative ways to interact with the voices people hear besides naming and identification based on pre-existing expectations/interactions? If a listener withholds from trying to define the meaning and intention of a person's voice, this can allow the vocalizer to have their own agency, to be heard openly since "voice is not innate because we hear it according to the differences assigned by a given culture" (Eidsheim, 2019, p. 173). Simply put, pausing is a practice for reflecting on how people value certain sounds over others as "normal" in a region or culture and questions the desire (Robinson, 2020) for locating a distinct meaning from voice.

However, voices unarguably have characteristics lending themselves to regional identification. Dolar (2006) refers to accented voices, or vocal sounds that break away from the standardized tone heard as the ruling norm in a society, to argue that intonation and accent are important sonic characteristics for articulating identity in media interactions. Jacob Smith (2008) adds that accents are used for typing ethnic/regional performance. For instance, in Gloria Khamkar's (2015) study of post-war Asian community radio in Leicester, they compare how Asian migrants were historically represented sonically with how they represented themselves. "When ethnic minority communities become active producers, they themselves are in control, more or less, in portraying the real – and not stereotyped – image of ethnic minority communities" (Khamkar, 2015, p. 160). Khamkar concludes that community radio is a potential site of ethnic affiliation for racialized communities who hear voices that sound like their own. Accented voices are not biologically or racially determined, but are environmentally taught, yet in Western contexts, accent is often heard as having certain social and cultural value in relation to normalized Whiteness. For non-Western communities, accent can be a source of connection and community. Listeners can implement pausing to conceptualize accent beyond institutionalized, dominant representations by hearing how other people interact with voices without assigning Western values to sonic characteristics.

Scholars have used the term “accented radio” to engage with identification in particular media environments. “Accented radio” refers to a radio station’s programming/content, or the opinions voiced, as well as the ability to understand a community based on the medium’s aesthetics and the voice’s sonic quality, including accent (Moylan, 2018). According to Katie Moylan (2018), accent articulates individual and group identity by sonically reflecting the heard voices of that community and region. The sound of the voice produces its own meaning of identity in addition to the linguistic content articulated, and has a distinct quality representing a particular ethnic community or regional affiliation. Accents have been evaluated culturally based on established social capital, where certain accents are given value over others. Yet when reflecting on listening to media texts, for example, people can start to hear the voice as “both structure and topic” (Moylan, 2018, p. 286) that facilitates identity through the narrative being told (or opinions expressed) and accented sound that reflects a region or environment. Here, voice is not valued on a hierarchy, but is instead heard as cultural expression in a particular context. Pausing to critically reflect on one’s own listening practices of audio media like radio provides potential for understanding voice beyond the values people automatically assign based on their previous listening experiences and expectations.

Listening Out

Another reflexive practice is political listening, or “listening out.” From a media studies perspective, Tanya Muscat (2019) notes that listening out is an active and anticipatory action to hear beyond sound to its political relevance and potential. Who is being heard and, perhaps more importantly, who is not being heard? Additionally, Kate Lacey (2013) states, “Listening out is the practice of being open to the multiplicity of texts and voices and thinking of texts in the context of and in relation to difference and how they resonate across time and in different spaces” (p. 198). Listening out is an epistemological shift away from the historical distinction between public and private listening. For Lacey (2013), media audiences are not passive consumers subsumed under a homogenous label. Rather, intersectional audiences can be politically engaged through the “freedom of listening” (Lacey, 2013, p. 177), or the ability to interpret what others say and how others sound in culturally specific contexts through media.

Listening out allows people to critique a supposed plurality of voices in the media since the listener registers what is being heard in relation to other voices. Instead of pausing to reflect on their listening practices, as Eidsheim proposes, Muscat and Lacey insist people listen openly to voices sonically and linguistically in media and scrutinize how these media representations have political connotations for different listeners. Similarly, Tanja Dreher (2009) argues “that a redistribution of material resources for speaking is inadequate unless there is also a shift in the hierarchies of value and esteem accorded different identities and cultural production” (p. 454). It is not the existence of racial or ethnic identity labels that is an issue (Crenshaw, 1991). Rather, it is the values that people assign to these labels that need to be critically examined, as well as the systems organizing these values.

In their research on Black-owned-and-operated radio in Chicago, Catherine Squires (2000) states that:

> conversations concerning issues that are pertinent to the entire body politic are often considered relevant only to members of the class considered “typical” citizens: whites. In addition, the pool of experts consulted regularly by mainstream media outlets is predominantly white. (p. 85)

When enacting political listening, the listener seeks to understand why certain voices are presented over others, how people make meaning through sound and expression of these voices being transmitted, and how people can move towards shifting these institutional value systems and practices favouring and standardizing dominant, often White, middle-class groups. Shifting hierarchies of value are important in media engagement since “those who speak might all speak with the same voice, either through choice, coercion or the conditions of the marketplace” (Lacey, 2013, p. 177). Listening out helps people critically engage with how racially and ethnically marginalized groups voice themselves, rather than how dominant culture, facilitated through dominant media, tries to silence these communities or force assimilative cultural practices through standardized sonic and linguistic production. Lacey (2013) suggests that people should “listen out for otherness, for opinions that challenge and clash with one’s own, for voices that take one out of one’s comfort zone” (p. 195). Listeners can equally listen out to other auditory subcultures, like White supremacist groups transmitting discriminatory discourse, to openly confront narratives and better understand how these subcultures mobilize cultural communication.

Listening out is an individual internalization but can be enacted during the communal act of media consumption. Fanon provides an example of this communal listening in “This is the Voice of Algeria” (2012). Fanon explains that listening to radio during the Algerian revolution was a communal effort to recapture the essence of the nation, or the characteristics that made Algeria what it was. Listening over radio allowed one to politically participate and follow the movement by listening to updates provided by the Algerian public rather than a small group of the political elite. As a form of listening out, Algerians listened to citizen voices and content that symbolically spoke against the political censorship of national citizens themselves. Fanon's sentiment of listening as a national practice is reflected in Susan Douglas's (2004) work. Douglas (2004) notes, "Some modes of listening have helped constitute generational identities, others a sense of nationhood, still others, subcultural opposition to and rebellion against that construction of nationhood" (p. 8). Broadcasting forms a listening community sharing an experience and sense of self, especially in its use for revolutionizing or opposing those with dominant positions politically or who control media and thus, control who is being heard on national scales. The sound of the voice and the opinions expressed can be engaged with through pausing and listening out, which helps listeners critically consider what voices are being heard and valued in a region or culture and how they value these voices and opinions themselves.

A Combinatory Approach

I conceive pausing and listening out as complimentary practices that together offer a critical approach to reflexive aural engagement with voice. Pausing is the first step because it offers an interval before evaluating a voice sonically or politically based on cultural training and cultural value systems. Dolar (2006) states that "the silent listener has the power to decide over the fate of the voice and its sender; the listener can rule over its meaning, or turn a deaf ear" (p. 80). Here, Dolar is referring to the power a listener possesses when engaging with voice since it is the listener's interpretation that dictates what the voice means in that interaction. Until a response is made, and thus a meaning produced, the listener can value the voice in whatever way they wish. The importance of pausing is prolonging the evaluation of the voice to engage with it more thoughtfully and critically. However, as Lacey (2013) argues, "listening without political judgement is simply a communicative act; it is not an intrinsic political good unless directed towards the virtues of political judgement and action" (p. 197). In this way, pausing is effective in suspending judgement based on potentially discriminatory listening. Yet without listening out as an additional step, there remains a gap in political mobilization or activity.

Listening out is important after pausing to first critically engage with what is being heard, and then respond since politically "there is a point where truth has to be vocal …" (Dolar, 2006, p. 109). Responding after listening out as an anticipatory and political act allows people to engage with the voice sonically and linguistically. Pausing initiates reflection on people's interpretive framework and the cultural protocols that influence them (Smith, 2008). Listening out then establishes newer potentials for engaging with voice openly rather than ignoring unfamiliar or unappealing sounds and opinions. Just as Dolar (2006) suggests that the listener can "turn a deaf ear" (p. 80), Lacey (2013) forwards that listeners "hold the responsibility not to close their ears to expressions of opinions with which they might not agree…. [T]here is also an ethnical responsibility for … listening out for voices that are unfamiliar or uneasy on the ear" (pp. 177, 191). Listeners are active agents addressed by an acousmatic voice, which is often transmitted through audio media. Listeners therefore possess great influence not only on how the voice is valued, but resultingly how the voice may be produced and transmitted in the future. Speakers can refuse masking based on new listener responses. In this way, pausing and listening out as a dual-pronged and reflexive approach to engaging with voice offers great power in suspending reactionary meaning making from culturally specific training and instead opening ears to a multiplicity of meanings, or listening to sound for its own sake (Robinson, 2020).

Pausing and listening out are also dependent on the listener's positionality, including their intersectional identities and the spatial and temporal contexts in which they engage with voice. Dylan Robinson (2020) suggests, "Like positionality itself, engaging in critical listening positionality involves a self-reflexive questioning of how race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and cultural background intersect and influence the way we are able to hear sound, music, and the world around us" (p. 10). Smith (2008) similarly argues, "The modern sound media have offered texts that need to be heard from these multiple positions, since the voice is always saying so many things at once – speaking of culture, identity, technology, and performance …" (p. 249). Robinson and Smith emphasize the need for listeners to question their assumptions when engaging with sound based on their positionalities influenced equally by their cultural environment and their previous experiences of hearing the world. Pausing and listening, although introduced in this article generally through a predominantly theoretical lens, can be further conceived and assessed in more specific temporal and spatial contexts, and across interactive environments and through various media moving forward.

Conclusion

This article has briefly reviewed how listening embodies discriminatory values and perceptions of the voice historically within a Western context. By distancing oneself from such value systems, listeners may begin to engage more openly with voices since there are a plurality of voices culturally influenced across temporal and spatial contexts. From a sonic perspective, although the voice is produced physiologically, sound is not biologically determined. Rather, the sound of the voice is culturally trained, representing not only oneself but the community and environment one is a part of. Although listeners may not be able to determine who the speaker is when they listen to a voice, as the acousmatic suggests, they can begin to think about the voice outside of normalized cultural production and Western values. As Lacey (2013) argues, "Listening is the most fundamental mode of communicative reception, understanding and reflexivity …" (p. 20). Evaluating such cultural production through listening across time and space has been made possible through audio media capturing the ephemeral nature of the voice.

Pausing (Eidsheim, 2019) and listening out (Lacey, 2013; Muscat, 2019) are only two forms of listening presented in this article as potential practices for addressing discriminatory listening. To avoid a reconstituted mode of what Robinson (2020) calls "hungry listening," or "settler colonial forms of perception" (p. 2), it is important to note that there are many other potential forms of listening produced cross-culturally. Furthermore, to say that people should learn new ways to listen suggests that there are normalized ways, which have been Eurocentrically produced (Thompson, 2017). This article has aimed to address the Eurocentric practices of discriminatory listening and meaning making by suggesting two alternative ways of engaging with voice, though they are not *the* definitive modes. However, they do, at the very least, offer additional ways of thinking about listening as a practice. Firstly, pausing is reflexive for understanding people's own value systems shaped culturally. Secondly, listening out engages beyond surface encounters with voice sonically and linguistically and the institutions disseminating such voices. Together, both practices seek critical reflection on how people assign meaning to what they hear and how they can change these ideological meanings to help speakers resist sonic and linguistic masking in response to new listener expectations.

If voices are given certain value and are perpetuated by dominant institutions as a source of power and control, people may transform the way they sound or the language they use to align with preferred listener values and expectations. By doing this, certain sounds become normalized and taken as status quo, while others are deemed negative in their given contexts. Robinson (2020) argues, "As part of our listening positionality, we each carry listening privilege, listening biases, and listening ability that are never wholly positive or negative; by becoming aware of normative listening habits and abilities, we are better able to listen otherwise" (p. 10). By questioning and ridding their expectations through pausing and listening out, people may reflexively consider their own implicit biases and assumptions, which in turn can address how voice is valued in certain regional and cultural contexts in relation to their own positionalities.

Perhaps critiquing listening will help open more spaces for more people to speak where privileged voices are regularly heard since audience/listener expectations will not be essentialized and commodified. This can resultingly influence a plurality of voices rather than a single, "accepted" voice traditionally favoured sonically and ideologically. I have presented a very broad and introductory task to voice and listening here. By first pausing, and then listening out to voice, people may begin to listen more openly for new understandings about the cultures behind voices in relation to their own subjective value systems. These understandings are not attached to race, and the values aren't organized based on biological characteristics, but instead, these understandings are focused towards sounds as cultural traces representing communities in specific places and times. In this process, people do not have to mask their voices to align with accepted expectations, but instead can voice themselves in ways meaningful to them and their communities.

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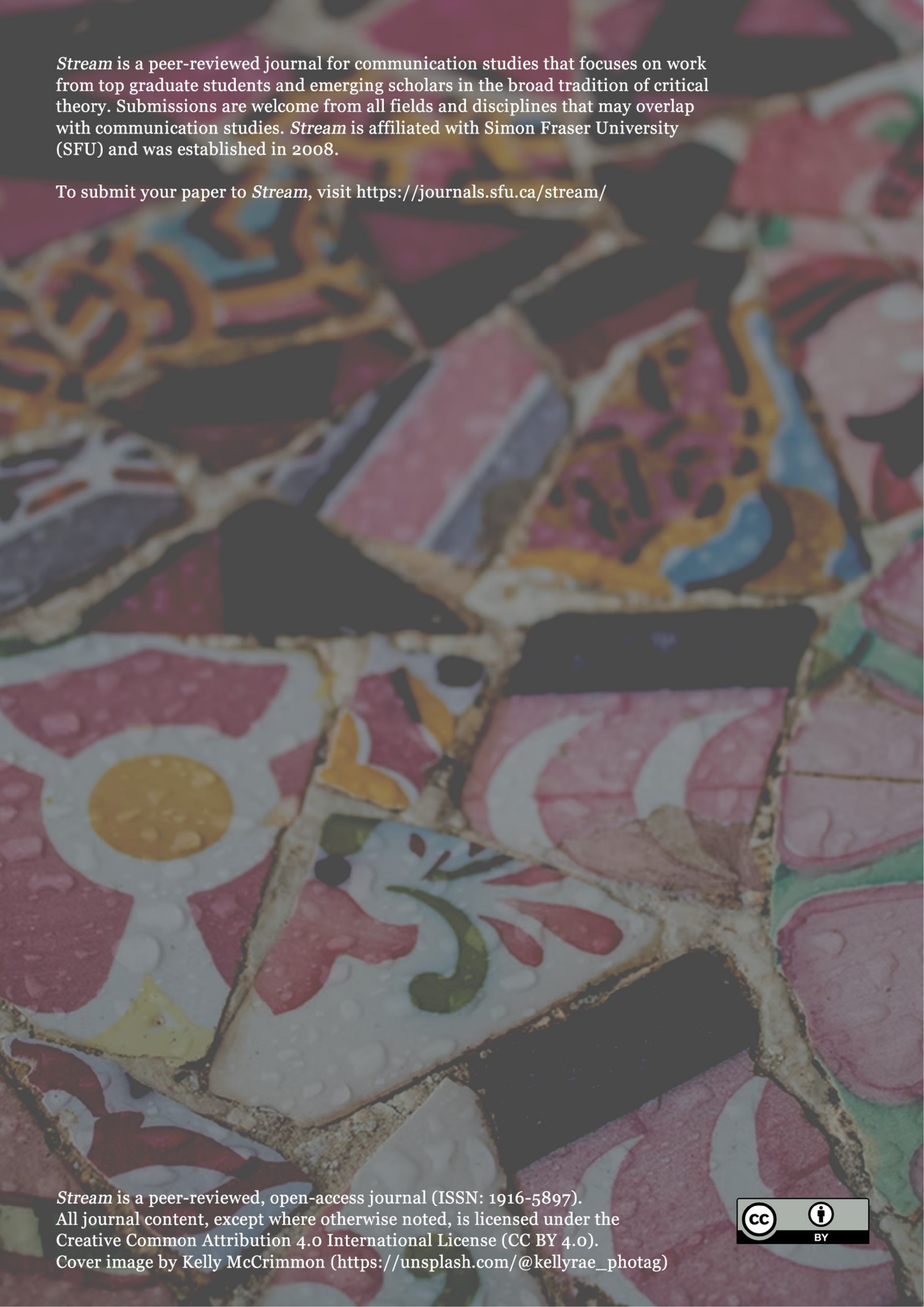

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