**Media, Conflict and Peace Building**

**Main concepts, ideas and questions**

In September 15th Lecture, we studied from page 45 to 46 and from to page 51 to 52.

The main concepts, terms, ideas and question we discussed are the following:

how art, in any of its forms, has an effect on political and social spheres.

-what do you think about it?

-is there any example of it in Somalia?

for **artists** desiring to **achieve material political effects**, the goal of **creating dialogue** or **raising consciousness** is important.

Here it is important to understand this intention from artist to achieve material political effects.

-what do you understand by material political effect?

We can understand from it, the aspiration to have a real and evident political impact. One that can be clearly seen and perceived.

-do you think it is possible? For an artist to achieve material political effects?

-Why would they think it is possible?

We can say that they believe that through non-conventional political strategies such as any kind of art manifestation or cultural expression, politics and society can be moved, affected or influenced.

-is there any example of an artist trying to achieve material political effects in Somalia?

the intention of these artists to create dialogue or raising consciousness.

-do you think that creating dialogue in a political context is important? If so, why?

We can analyze that the field of politics demands and implies dialogue in order to debate on different alternatives, different scenarios, or in order to just analyze a political issue. Politics signify dialogue. Dialogue within government and in between government and society, also politics refers to the dialogue between people who live in a political society, even though they do not belong to a government.

-why do you think artist desire to create dialogue?

We can understand and conceive authors as social and political actors that perform as intermediates or channel of expressions between society and governments. And since they constitute themselves as solid actors to perform such a role, there are possibilities for this to happen, it is likely to happen.

-agree?

-do you think raising consciousness is important within a political context? If so, why?

The important of raising consciousness within a political context resides on the fact that by doing it, by raising consciousness, one is capable to understand, conceive and analyze things and phenomenons as they are. Consciousness allows people to think on their own and to put into practice critical thinking.

-why do you think artists seek to a raise of consciousness?

We can analyze the same that we previously state. That, conceiving artists as active actors on the political and cultural field, they can constitute themselves as sources of expression or channel of expression between society and those in power, and therefore have the ability to create a social or political impact.

Regarding works of **popular culture**, the **Hollywood action movie** Avatar, carries a **critical message** placing the **genocide** committed against **Native Americans** on the **public agenda** and **metaphorically rearticulating a criticism** pointing to **economic interests behind the invasion of Iraq in 2003**.

So, here we have the analysis of an artwork which in this case is an action film from Hollywood, where the authors identify a critical message that focuses on a historic and social event as a genocide, which is put on the agenda after the film.

the idea is to understand how a piece of art, or a cultural expression such as a film can impact on the social and political arena like putting a subject on the agenda.

there is a metaphorical articulation of a critic on the economic interests behind the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

So here we have a second subject put on agenda.

-do you think these impacts that this movie had a true effect on social and political aspects?

-has anything similar ever happened in Somalia?

that **reception** is an **active** **process** of **appropriation** rather than a **passive** **form** of **persuasion** and **ideological** **positioning**.

-do you agree with this? Or do you think that reception understood in this way is a passive form or persuasion and ideological positioning?

readers, viewers, or players of any kind of piece of art or cultural expression, are not necessarily obligated to **reproduce** the **ideological** **frames** and subject **positions** inherent in a given novel, film, artwork, or technology, but that they **actively** **play** with the dominant frames of meaning and practice they **are exposed to**. This happens in and through situated **forms of reception**.

So the statement here focus on the fact that even though we are exposed to certain ideological frames or positions while interacting with any sort of cultural expression, that can be art or video games or any kind of media, is not mandatory that we reproduce it, it doesn’t necessarily happen always, but we actively receive them and interact with them.

-do you agree with this statement? Or do you think this exposition doesn’t necessarily affect the person who performs it?

-or do you think that we necessarily reproduce these frames and positions and influences of any kind to which we are exposed to?

Following this logic, How a particular **cultural** **expression** is **formally** **structured** and **disseminated,** predisposes what can be done to and with it in various contexts of reception.

Do you agree with this?

changing a little bit the topic, the **media–security nexus** refers to the ways in which **media** gives the **conditions** that **shape** how **security** is **conceived** and **experienced** in the interactions between **security** **actors**, **media** producers and **audiences**. the **media** is the main **delivery mechanism** for **public knowledge about security**.

- what do you remember that the media-security-nexus mean?

We are talking about the relation that media and security has, how they are influenced by the other, and how the media communicates security matters and how this way of communicating influences social, political and cultural spheres of a society.

Particularly, the media gives the conditions that shape how security is conceived and experienced by people.

-do you agree with this statement?

We can analyze that the way in which media shows security matters determines how we understand and perceive this security conflicts, for example.

this media-security-nexus enables us to understand **security dilemmas** and to recognize patterns of similarity and difference in how **media producers, publics and policy makers debate and negotiate, legitimize** and contest security policy.

- what do you understand by a security dilemma?

It can be a security issue such as a terrorist attack.

the analysis that needs to be given on how media producers, publics and policy makers debate, negotiate and legitimize security policy.

- what do you understand by policy makers?

They are who create the policies, the one who performs politics, the ones in power, the governments.

In September 8th Lecture, we studied from page 44 to page 45.

The main concepts, terms, ideas and questions we discussed are the following:

Technological innovations during the 1990s such as global 24/7 live television coverage of conflicts and crises carried new socio-cultural dynamics that generated unprecedented opportunities for terror, propaganda, and tacit persuasion.

-what do you personally believe are the consequences of these phenomenon like the 24/7 live television coverage of conflicts?

-do you agree with the statement that it has a tacit persuasion? If so, how do you think this tacit persuasion work?

war turns into ‘infowar’ and global insurgencies revert to ‘infoterror.

-what do you understand by infowar?

It refers to this paradigm of a permanent coverage of war and conflicts along with a manipulative tacit persuasion.

-and what do you understand by infoterror?

It refers to the paradigm of a coverage of war and conflict expression terror such as the terrorist movements do.

this uninterrupted coverage of global media channels regarding war and conflict not only facilitates the propagandistic framing of issues and debates on behalf of governments.

-do you agree with this statement? Do you believe that all the global media coverage of war and conflicts is manipulated by governments?

-do you think all the propaganda achieved through this global media coverage is on behalf of governments?

a second phase of mediatization where key actors not only perceive themselves as constantly exposed to media attention adjusting their policies accordingly, but where the ‘everyday life is increasingly immersed in the mediascape’.

The main idea here is that actors are in a permanent exposure to media, in a way that their every day life is.

-how do you personally perceive this? Regarding media in general and particularly regarding conflict?

While developing the term iWar, this concept for an understanding of the complexities in the relation between new media and war.

that emergent network technologies not only diffuse images and narratives of war and conflict, but also serve to facilitate an increasing individualization of practices and perceptions of warfare and other forms of violence.

Here we have a bunch of interesting concepts to take into account such as network technologies that diffuse images of war and conflict.

-when they that these network technologies increase an individualization of practices and perceptions, what do you think they are referring to?

We can interpret it as an example of the effect that the modern video games technologies we talked about have. The paradigm of someone playing a war or conflict videogame show the individualization of practices and perceptions while this person get immersed on the psychological environment we previously discussed, where perceptions and emotions take place.

this iWar paradigm also permits a better understanding of the capacity of individuals to effectuate network-based cyber-attacks.

-what do you understand by network based cyber attacks?

-has something like this ever happened in Somalia?

Changing the topic to one that we discussed on previous lectures, again, the relation between contemporary art and politics.

-do you remember anything about this relation?

-if not, what do you think this relation refer to?

what an artwork says, and how it is read and interpreted, is often less important than what it actually does in specific socio-economic contexts.

So, what is important here to understand is how they focus on the results or consequences of artworks within socio cultural or socio economic contexts.

Can you tell me about a artwork with an specific sociological, political or cultural impact in Somalia?

In September 1st Lecture, we studied from page 39 to page 43.

The main concepts, terms, ideas and questions we discussed are the following:

**art**, including film art, **defines ways of understanding**, thinking, and behaving.

-do you agree with this?

Why?

If so, can you give me an example of how it defines these aspects?

works of **art** can create **cultural expressions** with **subversive political potential**.

-what do you understand by cultural expression?

-what sorts of cultural expression can be found in Somalia?

-what do you understand by subversive political potential?

-are there subversive phenomenons or movements in Somalia?

-do you agree with the statement that a work of art can create cultural expression with subversive political potential?

 If so, can you give an example? Music, drawings, play on the theatre

For instance, in Argentina we lived a military dictatorship a few decades ago, and after it passed, there were created many films about it, with a critical perspective.

On the other hand, while this military government existed, many artists had to leave because their art wasn’t accepted by the government, or if they created any subversive peace, they had to leave to another country until the dictatorship was over.

-has there been in Somalia any time where you had a military dictatorship or any other social phenomenon where art was forbidden?

an **art film** might have a great **effect** and **frustrate** **audience expectations**. this frustration will lead to increased **reflection** and a **questioning** of received knowledge.

-do you agree with this?

-have you ever seen a film that made you reflect on social and political aspects? If so, which one?

I, personally, saw for the first time the movie Persepolis which is an animated French film about Iran, and it shows how society worked on a crucial political time of crisis, and how reclusive and dangerous it was.

how a **movie** can generate **critical reflection**, and a **reconceptualization** of some phenomenon such as **war, conflict, and enemy**.

-what do you think about this statement regarding US movies of September 11th?

When we see US films about September 11th, we can analyze that the production of these films are intended to manipulate the minds of those who watch it in order to conceive and understand the conflict and terrorism from their point of view, right?

-do you agree with this?

- do you think that is honest?

-What’s the effect do you think it may have?

- Is it and advantage for the US?

-How do you think these movies are understood in middle east?

-And in Africa? How are they conceived?

-how do you understand and perceive this sort of cinema?

-Can we say the same about the war films of Afghanistan and irak?

what is analytically valid for studies of film is also useful with respect to **other forms of cultural expression**.

Regarding video games, **digital recording technologies** such as **helmet cams** show the emergence of more **detailed** and more **affective** **images** from **war zones** and **battlefields**. These **technologies** carry **intimate**, **multi-sensory** **war experiences** from a **first-person perspective** that experiences **strong emotions** and that makes that distance between reality and war seem more difficult.

-what do you think about this idea of affective images?

-what do you think about the concept of intimate and multi-sensory experience while playing?

-do you agree that someone experiences strong emotions?

-do you believe that a person who tend to play these games is more familiarized with war?

-do you think it may lead to more violent conduct?

-do you think it carries propagandistic efforts?

The specific **design features** and technological protocols and procedures point to the fact that the **culture–media–security nexus** is about more than **consciously manipulated messages**.

Here we have again this idea of culture-media. Security nexus.

**Emotions** and **affect** are important arenas where the **cultural sphere**, **subjects**, and **politics** interact.

-Do you agree with this?

-what do you think is the relation between emotions and affect with culture and politics?

it is important to understand this idea of the manipulation that is beyond these phenomenons, as well as the importance of emotions and affect that people experience.

Authors talk about **affective responses** to **cultural expressions**.

It’s important to understand this idea of affective responses.

And regarding the analysis of war video games with the real experience that tools such as helmets bring, is essential to understand that we are talking about the **potential of media effect** and **impacts** and the role of **technology**.

the importance of **technology** and infrastructure for processes of **mediation** and **cultural representation**.

**information and communication technologies** influence, individual and collective **responses**.

-do you agree with this statement?

messages still matter, but that their content cannot alone count for their potential impacts.

the content of the message is not the essential aspect, but the way it is communicated is.

Do you agree with this?

Regarding **social media technologies,** they improved **communication** between **users** and increase possibilities for **political mobilization**.

-do you agree with this?

-are there political mobilizations in Somalia caused by social media technologies?

 What technologies generates depends on both the **designed form** of the **technical object** and the **specific individual, socioeconomic, and cultural contexts** within which it operates.

it is important to always **contextualize**.

In August 25th Lecture, we studied from page 38 to page 39.

The main concepts, terms, ideas and questions we discussed are the following:

how the state responds to issues of security, war, and conflict based not only on rational thoughts but on a cultural sphere that influences attitudes and beliefs of decision makers and the general public.

the role that culture plays on social and political spheres.

an emerging culture–media–politics nexus.

So here we have a connection between culture, media and politics.

-what do you think about it?

cultural sphere has a key function in assigning value to articulations.

This happens, for instance, through the stereotyping of particular individuals or groups.

For example, stereotyping people from the left or the right side regarding how they dress or what they think or publish in their social media.

-can you give me an example of this in Somalia?

popular culture can influence public debate.

-do you agree with this statement?

-does this happen in Somalia? If so, in what way?

involvement of the US military in the production of military films or computer games in order to increase recruitment and have tacit propaganda, as well as the critical evaluation of hidden agendas behind global news coverage.

-what do you think about these strategies?

-do you agree that the us military get immersed in the production of military films and the creation of war computer games in order to promote the recruitment in that field?

-do you agree with the statement that proposes that there are hidden agendas behind global news coverage? Does this happen in Somalia?

global mass media and entertainment industries are the promotors of hegemonic ideological positions that, for instance, serve to sustain domestic support for Western military interventionism and clandestine military operations.

-what do you understand from global mass media?

- do you agree with the statement that global mass media and entertainment industries promote hegemonic ideological positions that generate domestic support for western military interventions?

For example, let’s think about how many war movies and video games have the us created, that perform as a legitimization of their military decisions while they attack other countries or while they generate the war conflicts around the world.

-do you agree with this way of analyzing reality?

art – including film art – is defined by its capacity to define ways of seeing, thinking, and acting.

Do you agree with this statement?

In August 18th Lecture, we studied from page 36 to page 38.

The main concepts, terms, ideas and questions we discussed are the following:

every conflict includes a cultural dimension

-what do you think about this statement?

-can you think about any conflict that implies a cultural dimension?

-the afganistan case, implies a cultural dimension?

-what do you know about it?

technologically mediated cultural expressions such as films or computer games interfere with and impact on processes of conflict formation and transformation.

-what do you think about it? That technologically cultural expressions have this impact?

-what do you think about the video games? We can talk about the war ones. Do you think they have a psychological effect on people?

potential impacts of media, art, and popular culture on politics and society.

-do you agree with this?

-what do you think about it?

-is there any way in which films, computer games, any manifestation of media, art and culture impact on political, social and conflictive aspects in Somalia?

the cultural sphere is seen by the authors as a crucial security sector

-why do you think is that?

roles of art, popular entertainment, and media technologies in processes of de/securitization.

‘“cultural field of security” that privileges cultural and symbolic forms of power’.

increasing role of ‘language, culture, and identity in international conflict resolution.

soft power, culture, identity, and values was facilitated within a cultural turn.

Securitization: process of threat formation and negotiation, multi-actor as well as societal conflicts and antagonisms. growing sensibility for identities and socio-cultural frames, and their implications for political performances and positions.

-what do you understand by antagonism?

discursive positions influence attitudes, beliefs, norm systems

cultural sphere impacts on processes of de/securitization and conflict formation and transformation. This also implies a reconceptualization of aesthetics beyond a focus on art.

The idea is that we must focus on aesthetics beyond the idea that only concerns to art. Not only the artistic aspect of aesthetics matter, but that has implications regarding politics.

certain design features of cultural expressions impact on individuals and socio political processes

-what do you think about this?

-what is an expression of this in Somalia? Is there any?

**On the first class of Media, Conflict and Peace Building from the Master of Peace Studies in August 11th, we studied from the beginning of the book until page 21.**

The main terms, concepts and ideas that we saw are the following:

-conflict, media, communication and security studies

-peace

-war, human security, environmental security and cybersecurity

- The closeness of the corporate media to dominant economic, cultural and ideological forces means that the mainstream largely functions to promote the interests of the military/industrial/political/entertainment complex.

-alternative media

The questions we talked about are the following:

--what would you say is the relation between media and government processes, war, peace building or conflict?

-do you think the role of the media is positive or negative?

-What would they say that media is a facilitator of and/or a threat to peace building and conflict prevention?

-what do you think security studies refer to?

-What do you think is the role of communications and media related to violent conflict?

-There is an approach promoted by journalists who argue that at times of conflict their essential responsibility as professionals is to support the actions of the state.

Indeed, the system of adding reporters with frontline troops (widely adopted by Western militaries since the Vietnam War) has served to reinforce the media’s essential role as propagandists for the state at times of conflict.

what do you think about this political decision to send journalists to war?

-Another popular strategy for journalists is to record accurately what they see. They do not take political positions– they are merely eyewitnesses to historic events.

This approach is related to dominant notions about ‘objectivity’, ‘media freedom’, ‘the public interest’ – and the ‘Fourth Estate’ which stresses the role of the professional media providing checks and balances on abuses of power by both government and other professions.

do you think this type of approach is better than the other?

What do you think about fake news regarding politics and conflict?

What do you think is the source or cause?

Who do you think perform it?

What is their purpose while doing it?

What are the consequences?

--is there alternative or independent media and journalism in Somalia?