

VISUAL PLEASURE IN PAKISTANI CINEMA (1947–2014)

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ABSTRACT

The study discusses the evolution of Pakistani cinema as a gendered medium to analyse the changes in visual pleasure and the male and female gaze in regards to representations of real Pakistani women in films released for exhibition before and after the issuance of the Motion Picture Ordinance of 1979. It discusses how the élite gazing at the traditional, introvert chhooi-mooi girls, who never raised their eyes before the elderly and men and closely guarded their self-respect and sexuality in early films, differs from the lower classes gazing at free women who are open with their emotions and sexuality in contemporary films. The study uses the critical theories by Mulvey, Derrida, Rosen, and Comolli and Narboni to discuss male fascination and anxiety with the female form, social formations and epistemology to examine the difference between real women and their representation in films from both eras. For this purpose, it focuses on the chhooi-mooi girls of the black and white (B&W) cinema from Qaidi (The Prisoner) (1962) and Paristan (The Fairy Land) (1968), as opposed to modern exhibitionist "rain dancers" who reveal their bodies and join terrifying villains and vulgar comedians to make "the trio to get-real-culture" in the coloured Sher-e-Lahore (2001) and Choorrian (Bangles) (2001). The study finds that the attitude of the Central Board of Film Censors (CBFC) towards exhibiting films like Chingari (Vigor) (1964) and Sher-e-Lahore (2001) was puritanical earlier and progressive later. The images of real women and their representations mirror shifts in the opposite directions since Zia: the celebrities have become freer and open with their emotions as opposed to the celebrities of earlier films, while real women have become more conservative as opposed to the earlier women. This phenomenon signifies resistance to oppression by women and society in both the pre-and-post-Zia films.

Keywords: Pakistani films, visual pleasure and gaze, female representations, chhooi-mooi girls, patriarchy

THE REPRESENTATION AND REALITY OF GENDER

In the past two decades, Pakistani cinema billboards featuring accentuated curves of bold and beautiful actresses in seductive costumes have remained unharmed by the religious groups that have been damaging advertising billboards and posters showing images of modern women, whether scarfless, sleeveless, revealing or in full clothing. A new phenomenon, the attackers mostly ruin them by throwing black paint on the faces of the models on the billboards in urban centres and on highways. According to Kazi, "Cinema billboards and posters escape condemnation" by religious groups that are constantly targeting "women in revealing clothes on advertising billboards" (2006). The situation poses questions: why are the advertising billboards attacked and the cinema billboards not attacked? What accounts for the disparity of behaviour among strict religious adherents who consider themselves steadfast opponents of modernity? What mechanism: *the* "system of thought and knowledge of a culture" (Richard Macksay and Eugenio Donato quoted in Derrida 1970/2007: 915) functions to inform the disparity in the performance of these strict religious adherents? Apparently, the attackers find the bold images of voluptuous, sensuous and seductive women in cinema harmless, and the images of modern women in advertising threatening.

The threat gives birth to a disparity that in turn points to the perceived difference in the purposes of advertising icons and cinema celebrities as objects, as well as the educational and socioeconomic backgrounds of the women that they depict. The cinema industry relies almost solely on often-uneducated women from the red light area, while the advertising industry seeks upcoming models of sorts with grooming and liberal looks. The model may belong to any background, any family, may already be appearing in catwalks, or conducting herself as a forward looking person in view of consumerism. She may be educated, and, if not, may be willing to invest in grooming: body language and English speaking skills. The religious adherent finds her grooming offensive as opposed to his own, especially when it is combined with the fear of a freedom seen as westernised. Her grooming hurts his sense of pride and challenges the subject-object relationship. The advertising icon is distantiated from him: the subject as an object; she does not offer him the psychological satisfaction that is associated with the hindering conduct of a celebrity and an everyday woman in real life. He condemns the distantiation of what should be the object for the subject, thus, the billboard using female sexual appeal to advertise a product. The revealing cinema billboard does not hurt his sense of satisfaction and agency in the subject-object relationship, while the

advertising billboard does. In effect, the advertising icon does not meet his criteria and objectives while the cinema celebrity does.

The celebrity fulfils the needs of the subject as an object while the icon sells him a product that challenges his status as a produce: "the fruit of the seed sown in the field" (Derrida 1970/2007: 930), a *being* in command as a subject. He is a by-product of "the seed," in fact, an amalgam of two seeds sown in a woman's "field," but is delegated the powers to command as a subject by ignoring and reducing a woman's seed to just her "field." He is annoyed with the memory of *being*: a product of her seed, her apparent control over a product on the billboard, and her ability to make him recall the truth concerning his status, break his monopoly and enter his domain to sell him a produce, thus, attacks.

The attacker attacks the role reversal attempt of the advertising icon due to the fear of the perceived distantiation of the subject from the object by ruining the billboards. The icon's function and grooming and the subject's mobility hinder the process of objectification on the road in daylight while he can exclusively objectify the cinema celebrity in the comfort of a seat in the darkness of the theatre. The advertising icon gazes at him and calculatedly connects his purchasing power to a product. The subject gets uncomfortable with the object's role reversal attempt and control over the product, which ends up producing him as a product. The advertising icon appears unreachable unlike the cinema celebrity who offers him the satisfaction of subject-object relationship and the power to gaze. The celebrity surrenders to his will in the theatre like an everyday Pakistani woman does in real life. The double barrel function of the celebrity satisfies his ego, super ego and libido.

The complexity heightens as both celebrities and icons offer a contrast to real Pakistani women who are increasingly dressed conservatively since Zia's oppression (Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq was the President of Pakistan between 1978 and 1988) and forced Islamisation in Pakistan under his martial law regime in the 70s. Earlier, women gazed at their favourite actresses in order to reproduce their filmic appeal by imitating the style of their costumes later. The outfits of real women and their representations mirror shifts in the opposite directions since Zia. A shift in women's performance in real life and in cinema to opposite poles is also noted. The celebrities became freer and open with their emotions as opposed to the celebrities of earlier films, while real women became more conservative as opposed to the earlier women. In this fashion, the shifts maintained the balance of nature as imaginary and real women exchanged their identities and remained mirror images of each other in both the pre-and-post-Zia times. This balance helped the cinema in maintaining the

subject-object relationship despite the changing status of women in cinematic representations and society, the shift in Pakistani cinema from films that appealed to everyone to films that appeal only to the common man, and a shift in the male gaze over a period of time. The paper discusses the evolution of Pakistani cinema as gendered medium and the changes in reality and representations of women and men and gaze: especially, the female cinematic gaze that signifies resistance to oppression in film as a medium and gives breathing space to oppressed women and society in both the pre-and-post-Zia eras.

CINEMA AS GENDERED MEDIUM

The *mise-en-scène* of Pakistani films constitutes visual, aural, textual and contextual elements and contents that together make a film powerful and trigger pleasure in watching. Their narratives aim at persuasion by exploiting technique and technology to create human stories that are never complete without female characters. However, films employ techniques to trigger pleasure in watching these characters by centralising the pedestal on patriarchy. Pakistani films, like those from cinemas across the world, construct narratives of pleasure to reinforce patriarchy and its values by emphasising pre-existing patterns of female objectification via the gaze. According to Mulvey, these patterns are:

...already at work within the individual subject and the social formations that have moulded him... Film reflects, reveals and even plays on the straight, socially established interpretations of sexual difference which controls images, erotic ways of looking and spectacle... [Hence], the unconscious of patriarchal society has structured film form (Mulvey 1975/2007: 1172).

Films are consciously constructed to subject viewers to the unconscious of patriarchal society and culture. The reproduction of social formations and ideology subjects viewers to what Comolli and Narboni define as: "'bourgeois realism' and the whole conservative box of tricks: blind faith in 'life,' 'humanism,' [and] 'common sense'" of symbolic interpretations of sexual differences (2004: 816). Pakistani films, commonly known as the Lollywood films, build on the interpretations of sexual differences through female objectification, gaze and sexuality like the Hollywood and

Bollywood films that have become part of the national cinema of Pakistan over the last six decades.

The decades long interaction among Lollywood, Hollywood and Bollywood films points to significant changes in portrayals of female protagonists and construction of pleasure narratives and gaze in Pakistani films since 1947. The changes in female representations reflect the departure and the replacement of the real women: the *chhooi- mooli*¹ girls of the past, by bold and beautiful protagonists who only played antagonists' roles in the earlier films. The representations that highlighted the serenity of the traditional against the immorality of the bold in old films no longer differentiate serenity from obscenity, but rather, modernity on the gaze meter, which can be defined as an invisible instrument with the markings beginning with the serene (traditional) gaze and ending at the obscene (modern) gaze in the minds of Pakistani public. In earlier films, the serene was acceptable and the obscene condemned.

The condemned being a taboo, the audience tuned his gaze meter to accept what Mulvey calls: "bourgeois norms of correct behaviour" (2009: 4) and his mind to conform to the knowledge of his culture in old days. The bubble on his gaze meter, which once reflected a state of oscillation between serene and obscene, is now adapted to an alternate motion between modern and traditional, where modern means forward looking and traditional implies a backward woman. The modern woman is more fascinating than the traditional for media use despite the voices to the contrary in real life. This shift from traditional to modern representations of women hints at both notable deviations in governmental film reception, and the needs of the Pakistani society as it moves with the times.

The times reflect subjectivity in the practices of the filmmakers and the members of the Central Board of Film Censors (CBFC). In the early days of Pakistani cinema, the attitude to films was somewhat puritanical but progressive later, especially since the issuance of the Motion Picture Ordinance, 1979. The early films promoted the norms of the civilised, Urdu-speaking *élites* of Delhi and Lucknow through social narratives which have been eclipsed by what the playwright cum director Sarmad Sehbai calls the vulgar comedy, "dirty" dancing and charismatic Punjabi villainy (Raffat n. d.; Gazdar 1997: 1) of the last three decades. These changes reflect an increasing dependence on cheap consumerism. The changes in the ethics and mores of both censors and society are evident. They also point to an alteration in the Pakistani gaze and the reinforcement of pre-existing patterns of male fascination with the female form.

Early Pakistani films promoted the legendary *chhooi-mooi* girl who surrendered herself to the desires of the male viewer. This girl never raised her eyes before the elderly and men. She bowed her head to the male gaze to make an offer of the kind, "I am doing my job. You do yours." She closely guarded her self-respect and the respect for womanhood, meaning "sexuality," without losing her premarital virginity or post marital respect by getting involved in adultery or extramarital affairs, whether under normal or extreme circumstances. Sensuous and seductive protagonist has replaced this traditional, timid, shy, in essence, touch-me-not girl for the common man's pleasure.

The pleasure focused replacement of the shy with the bold women reflects a shift from the fantasy of the former to the gaze of the latter, still conforming to the process of reproduction of the symbolic interpretation of sexual difference. The reproduction of the interpretation begins with the appearances of Asha Poslay, Sawarn Lata and Shamim in the form of the *chhooi-mooi* girls in *Teri Yaad* (Missing You) (1948), *Pheray* (Wedding) (1949) and *Shahida* (1949), and is reinforced through the reproduction of the social formations by Shamim Ara and Nayyar Sultana in *Saheli* (Friend) (1960) and *Baji* (The Elder Sister) (1963). They are replaced by the modern heroines and sensuous and seductive dancers like Reema in *Bulandi* (Rise) (1990), Meera in *Inteha* (Limit) (1999), Nirma in *Sher-e-Lahore* (The Lion of Lahore) (2001), Nargis in *Choorrian* (Bangles) (2001), Deedar in *Ghundi ran* (Femme Fatale) (2007) and Khushbu in *Sajan Ka Pyar* (Love of the Beloved) (2001). These romantic extroverts generously phase in an "I am all yours" strategy, as opposed to the introverted *chhooi-mooi* girls, who were trained to selfishly guard traditions and their virginity, while remaining loyal to their prospective husbands. The pleasure of the "I am all yours" strategy, and a desirous yet subservient participatory action on a woman's part, provided a better option to the satisfaction resulting from the "I am doing my job; you do yours" strategy for male possession. The reversal refers to strategic changes in the agendas to hook male attention and gaze at female characters in films, leaving behind the norms of the Urdu speaking *élite*. The same were promoted till the rise of the trio of dirty dancer, vulgar comedian and charismatic villain in Punjabi cinema.

The Punjabi villain replaced the fake hero and the westernised villain of Urdu cinema. "Fake" refers to the conduct of the hero as a male; gentle and weak, he was not so much a masculine man as a male version of the *chhooi-mooi* girl in view of Punjabi viewer and critic. Quite unlike fake heroes, Mustafa Qureshi and Sultan Rahi fought the political will and the system in search of justice in *Maula Jutt*² (1979) as opposed to Waheed Murad in *Arman* (1966) and Aslam Pervez in *Heer* (1955) and *Qatil*

(Murderer) (1955) who stepped into the shoes of the *élites* of Delhi and Lucknow. As the title implies, Maula Jutt, an Allah's person with the Jutt origins, came to rescue the people against the political will and the system. The intellect of decent comedians like Nirala in *Arman* (1966), Munawwar Zareef in *Mukhrra Chan Verga* (A Face Like Moon) (1969) and Nunnha in *Heer Ranjha* (1970) and *Dubai Chalo* (Let's Go to Dubai) (1979) disappeared behind sexual innuendos of vulgar comedians like Umar Sharif in *Mr. 420* (1992) and *Paidageer* (Scoundrel) (1993), Mustana, Amanullah and Bubbu Baral in *Shartia Mitthay* (Bet It's Sweet) (1995) and *Nikki Jai Haan* (Just a Little, "Yes"!) (1999). They were tagged vulgar because Mehta says: "Sex is Base" (2011). The dirty dancers like Nargis, Deedar and Nirma replaced the symbols of tradition like Nayyar Sultana and Shamim Ara by playing seductive roles and revealing their bodies.



Figure 1: Shamim Ara (left) in *Jalwah* (1966), Urdu feature film, poster 2(20X30).



Figure 2: Rani in *Payasa* (1973), Urdu feature film.



Figure 3: Saima in *Qayamat* (2003), Urdu feature film.



Figure 4: Mumtaz in *Naukar wohti da* (1974) Punjabi feature film.

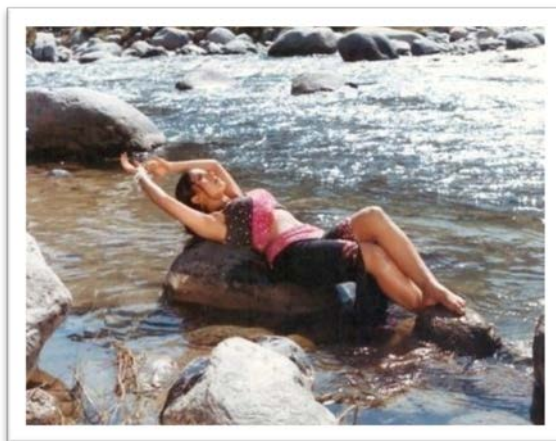


Figure 5: Nirma in *Qayamat* (2003), Urdu feature film.



Figure 6: Saima in *Commando* (2003), Urdu feature film.



Figure 7: Laila and Babrak Shah in *Sarkar* (2005), Punjabi feature film.



Figure 8: Haya Ali in *Ziddi Rajpoot* (2005), Punjabi feature film.

Bodies covered in traditional dresses reflect serene images of Shamim Ara while performing to the song, "Mujh Say Pehli Si Mohabbat Meray Mehboob Na Mang" (Don't Ask Me for the Love I Once Gave You, My Beloved), in *Qaidi* (The Prisoner) (1962) against the flamboyant image of Nilo while dancing to the song, "Mohabbat Kay Dam Say Yeh Duiya Haseen Hai" (Love Makes this World Beautiful), in *Paristan* (The Fairy Land) (1968). Traditional serenity is reflected in the body language and character of the *chhooi-mooi* girls. The audience closely watches Shamim Ara, who keeps her eyes low to avoid eye contact with a *na-mehram*³ (unrelated) male, making the statement through her body language and gestures that "I am doing my job; you do yours," and surrendering to the power of his will and gaze. Shamim Ara does not look into the camera to create an eye contact with the viewer through the lens. She offers the pleasure of the uninterrupted and exclusive eastern gaze to the man gazing at her, displaying her acceptance of bourgeois norms. Nilo appears equally committed and absorbed in the vocabulary as she dances to convey her trust in love to the man gazing at her.

These gazed at eastern women passively yearn for the men gazing at them, making them the center of their worlds. Their emotional yearning is quite visible behind the façades of passivity. Mulvey says:

Their condition is the condition of all women, born to be defined by their physical attributes, born to give birth, or if born pretty, born lucky; a condition which makes it possible and acceptable, within bourgeois ethic, for girls to parade, silent and smiling, to be judged on the merits of their figures and faces (Mulvey 2009: 3).

Though Mulvey is discussing the silent and smiling pretty women from The Miss World, 1970, their physical confines and passivity reflect a narrow destiny similar to that of the two eastern women from *Qaidi* and *Paristan*. In the darkness of the theatre, the male audience judges either Shamim Ara or Nilo "on the merit of her figure and face"; a pretty, eastern woman trained to smile silently before him and exclusively yearn for him in her privacy; the classified yearning emphasises her unspoken and unshown genius for sexuality; thus, she is found suitable to give birth. She is lucky, and he is also lucky: finding her fulfills his "bourgeois ethic" by providing a suitable ground to begin an uneven power relationship. Male maturity is coupled with female immaturity when women demonstrate purity and innocence when they are gazed at in this fashion.

As compared to the two fully dressed characters of the 60s whether serene or bubbly, Nirma dances in the rain to the song, "Jogi" (Snake Charmer), in *Sher-e-Lahore* (2001) to fulfil the requirements of the scenes to act as a mature person and reveal her body to hook the male gaze and Nargis to the song, "Nehrray Aa" (Get Closer), in *Choorrian* (2001). The revelation cum fragmented exhibitionism of the "rain dancer" is a missing, forbidden element in the early Pakistani films. Such scenes now escape the censor and society no longer punishes the artist or the filmmaker for breaking the norm like they did in the early days. The old films were more family oriented as opposed to the present ones that target the common man. Quraishi quotes Shaan on this issue who says: "Those judging and criticising Lollywood have no right to take away the happiness or pleasure of a man on the street whose only avenue for entertainment and thrills is to watch a film in the cinema" (2004). Both *Choorrian* and *Sher-e-Lahore* aim at providing visual pleasure to male audience. The films guide the male spectator to read Nargis' and Nirma's nudity as erotic cum modern and mature sexual behaviour on his gaze meter.

These metrics of nudity provide a contrast to the assumed non-erotic nudity of the entrants in The Miss World competition. Mulvey says, "The Miss World competition is not an erotic exhibition; it is a public celebration of the traditional female road to success" (2009: 3). Mulvey's statement is valid for the western view, but for the eastern spectator, the competition is erotic. The films, *Sher-e-Lahore* and *Choorrian*, display the influence of western culture on the east, and the acceptance of erotic/non-erotic nudity through global media at the turn of the millennium. Nirma and Nargis celebrate their freedom from bourgeois Pakistani Muslim norms in *Sher-e-Lahore* and *Choorrian*, as opposed to Shamim Ara and Nayyar Sultana who publicly celebrate "the traditional female road to success" in *Qaidi* and

Paristan. Sher-e-Lahore and *Choorrian* exhibit change in cultural values and were blockbusters that erased the memories of the dancers like Nazli in *Jab Jab Phool Khile* (Whenever Flowers Bloom) (1975), Niggo in *Heer Ranjha* (Durrani and Pervez 1970) and *Society Girl* (1976), and Mumtaz in *Intezar* (Waiting) (1974).

Nirma and Nargis do not stand in the queue of the westernised antagonists from the past like Deeba and Anita whose scenes were cut out by the CBFC in *Chingari* (Vigour) (1964) and *Khatarnak* (Dangerous) (1974). According to Fayyaz Ashar, *Chingari's* song "Aye Roshnion Kay Sheher Bata" (Tell Me the City of Lights) was fully censored for glorifying immorality and sexuality through the texts and images against our social and cultural norms (Pers. Comm. 14 December 2013). The song reads:

Aye roshnion kay sheher bata	(Tell me the city of lights)
Andhyaron main ujyaron main	(In your light and dark corners)
Yeh kis nay bhara hay zeher bata	(Who has filled the poison)
Sarrkon pay hasin itratai hain	(The beauty displays her pride on the roads)
Gadraye badan bal khatay hain	(The voluptuous bodies keep twisting)
Chhalkay saghar takratay hain	(The wine glasses keep tossing dribs at the cheers)
Jimson ki numaish hoti hay	(The [nude] bodies are exhibited)
Kiyun raat kay pichhlay pehr bata	(Why in the late hours at night)
Aye roshnion kay sheher bata	(Tell me the city of lights)
Tehzeeb nai shaitani hay	(The new culture is satanic)
Bay-sharmi hay uryani hay	(I see the fleshly and carnal)
Yeh daur bada toofani hay	(This period is as bad as a thunderstorm)
Jo sharm-o-haya ko lay doobi	(The one that drowned the introvert [sexuality])
Aai woh kahan say leher bata	(Where has that wave come from)
Aye roshnion kay sheher bata	(Tell me the city of lights)
Bay-chayni hay, bay-zari hay	(There is restlessness and sloppiness)
Bad-hali hay, bad-kari hay	(People are in bad statuses or adulterous)
Tehzeeb nai chingari hay	(The new culture is fiery/vigorous)
Ik aag lagi hay charon taraf	(I see fire in the four corners)
Yeh kaisa mucha hay qeher bata	(What kind of ruthlessness is this)
Aye roshnion kay sheher bata	(Tell me the city of lights)

Though the CBFC condemned the freedom of expression in the case of *Chingari*, Ashar says: a censored version of the song was approved for filmic exhibition after an appeal (Pers. Comm. 14 December 2013). However, the transmission of this song is still banned by Radio Pakistan for glorifying indecency and immorality (Ijaz Hussain, Chief Librarian, Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation Lahore. Pers. Comm. 14 December 2013). It is too bold to comply with bourgeois ethics.

The ethics reflect disparity: CBFC's flexible inconsistency in interpreting the rules that have controlled decency, morality and sexuality in films over the decades. The board cuts scenes of the earlier artists, Anita and Deeba, who, like later artists Nirma and Nargis strike what Mulvey calls: "a blow" against the "narrow destiny, against physical confines of the way women are seen and the way they fit into society,... a blow against passivity" of women (2009: 3–4) in the films and the world outside. The censor authorities do not get outraged with Nirma and Nargis for the visual nudity but with Anita and Deeba for the textual and sexual expressiveness. The post-70s artists are allowed to please common cinephiles unlike the antagonists of the past. Nirma and Nargis are not condemned for what Mulvey calls: "interrupting a carefully ordered spectacle" (2009: 4). The same goes for Nilo in a shift from the depiction of an assumed serenity in *Paristan* to the depiction of nudity or assumed maturity in *Khatanak*. All of these depictions hint at changes in cultural norms of society, the parameters of the male Pakistani gaze, and the enforcement of preexisting patterns of the fascination that images of the female form have for a male audience.

This fascination reflects the replacement of the *chhooi-mooi* girl of the black and white (B&W) cinema by the contemporary exhibitionist "rain dancer" who joins the terrifying villain and the vulgar comedian to make what Raffat calls: "the trio... the great triangle of our get-real culture" (n. d.). These bold and beautiful women have superseded the stereotypical symbols of the exemplary passivity: *haya*.⁴ They fulfil the needs of the logos (father) and the tokos (son) in subservience of the deep-rooted norms of a culture. Their creators claim that their films meet the needs of the common man. As this common cinophile, "the man on the street," remains either logos or tokos, such statements raise questions of and beyond *episteme*, the "system of thought and knowledge of a culture" (Richard Macksay Eugenio Donato quoted in Derrida 1970/2007: 915), in view of the norms of a predominantly Muslim society.

A society creates and follows the system of indebtedness of logos to father of logos that is encoded into films at the conscious and unconscious levels. According to Derrida, within the stratum of the Platonic text "a logos indebted to a father" means "logos *represents* what is indebted to: the father who is also chief, capital and good(s). Or rather *the* chief, *the* capital, *the* good(s)" (1970/2007: 930). This indebtedness demands continuation and exertion of societal norms by tokos in all forms and media whether western, or Islamic. "As product, the tokos is the child, the human or animal brood, as well as the fruits of the seed sown in the field and the interest on a capital investment: it is a *return or revenue*" (ibid.). Thus, the logos and tokos inherently constitute consumerism in addition to the symbolic order that function behind the visual, textual and contextual preferences in filmmaking.

Filmic depictions of *chhooi-mooi* girls and exhibitionists follow the principles of need in fulfilment of the demands of the patriarchal unconscious defined by the father. Derrida says: "The Good, in the visible-invisible figure of the father, the sun, or capital, is the origin of all *onta*, [or beings] responsible for their appearing and their coming into logos, which both assembles and distinguishes them" (ibid.: 931). This concept about the origin of all *onta* hints at the permanent indebtedness of tokos to logos. As bearers of phallus, they both represent what Mulvey calls: "the positive presence as a masculine entity, as opposed to a 'castrated' female entity" (1975/2007: 1172). Hence, they take the responsibility for the continuation of the preexisting norms of male presence and female lack, absence or subservience that is reflected in cinema.

Female absence or subservience takes form of either the passivity or exhibitionism in Pakistani films from 1947 through 2014. The decades offer pictures that build on the objectification and gaze at the *chhooi-mooi* characters like Shamim Ara in *Qaidi* (Gul and Naqvi 1962) and the exhibitionist characters like Nirma in *Sher-e-Lahore* (Butt and Sungeeta 2001) that aim at providing the desire filled emotional pleasure to the common man. These films comprise what Iser calls:

The unwritten texts of apparently trivial scenes and the unspoken dialogue within the "turns and twists" [that] not only draw the reader [or the viewer] into the action but also lead him to shade in the many outlines suggested by the giving situations, so that these take on a reality of their own... Trivial scenes suddenly take on the shape of an enduring form of life (Iser 1926/2007: 1003; also see Holland 1927/2007: 1015).

The male viewer gets involved in the trivial scenes of the films, with the images of Shamim Ara sadly yearning for Darpan (his like), or the revealing images of Nirma dancing in the rain in order to seduce Moammar Rana (again his like), with the texts of the songs, the innuendos between the lines, and the contexts of the situations. The trivial scenes become alive, trigger pleasure in watching, and persuade him to actively participate in the film.

Male viewer's sense of subjective participation and excitement level doubles as he sees the image of his like, Darpan (Yousuf) running towards Shamim Ara (Ismat) to hold and support her unconscious body by putting his left arm under her waist at the Lawyer's office in *Qaidi* (1962). The *precious* object falls down into the arms of the subject; they stand there with their bodies twisted in arcs; they face the audience who sees them in the very romantic body postures with her three quarter face and sideways body curved in an arc and his profile along with the full ventral side curved in a leftwards arc; her left hand hangs by her side and her right hand rests on top of her tummy as his right hand reaches for her wrist over her tummy. "His like" lifts up her right hand up in the air to his right shoulder. The male viewer hears and owns the echo of his dialog: "My sleep belongs to her. My brain belongs to her. My nights belong to her" (*Qaidi*). The male viewer participates in the film, *Qaidi*, through "his like," Darpan (Yousuf), who stands there with Shamim Ara (Ismat) in the very romantic postures; he objectifies her and gazes at her face and bosom as her sari's pallu⁵ (the long loose end) slips down her chest; "his like" holds Shamim Ara's right hand in his right hand between them near their hearts; he loves her face turning towards him in a nose-to-nose posture and him pulling her back towards himself as she tries to pull away saying: "You." The male audience thoroughly enjoys Shamim Ara's resistance yet acceptance and appreciates the dialogs of the lawyer and his clerk who utter together a deep gesture of sound in surprise: "Haain!" and tell each other to keep their eyes closed and let continue "the really nice dream" (*Qaidi*). The male protagonist, the lawyer, the clerk, and the male viewer jointly approve the continuation of the dream: the subject-object relationship (the symbolic order) in the scene. At the closure of the scene, "his like" delivers the dialog that he very much desires to deliver himself: "Don't go lady. Don't go. Not a bad man I am by heart" (*Qaidi*).

The male viewer is fascinated with "the image of his like set in illusion of natural space, and through him gaining control and possession of the woman within the diegesis" (Mulvey 1975/2007: 1177). In the cinematic order, as in the overarching social order which it reflects, men have various orders of power (on screen as well as in the auditorium), whilst women are to a degree powerless and objectified. Thus, the male viewer uses the image

of "his like" either Darpan or Moammar Rana to gain control of the *chhooi-mooi* girl, Shamim Ara, in *Qaidi*, or the seducing girl, Nirma, in *Sher-e-Lahore*. The darkness of the theatre facilitates the scopophlic process of gaining control over the woman, or obliging her by getting into action for her sake. He becomes part of the film narrative. Such processes of persuasion and participation, pleasure and other thrilling action focus on film as business: outrival consumerism and feature a race for viewership among cinemas that constitute the popular cinema of a county. *Narrative persuasion* is the point where Pakistani cinema fails the race to popular Indian and American films in its own country and faces a decline. The success of big budget Indian films reflects an option for a similar cultural experience to Pakistani audience.

THE EVOLUTION OF PAKISTANI CINEMA

In order to explore the evolution of Pakistani cinema in greater detail, this section presents the unpublished work of Kazi, a noted scholar of visual arts, in an academic dialogue with the present author. Pakistani films are often romantic musicals that embrace crime and action as necessary ingredients of plots similar to Indian cinema. The song and dance formula is effective in delineating memorable box office hits out of ordinary human stories. Kazi says, "A very ordinary story can be a box office hit if it has good songs, while a good story without good songs may be a flop" (2006). For examples, *Qaidi*, *Choorrian* and *Sher-e-Lahore* exploit the formula for commercially viable blockbusters despite remarkable differences in their visual treatment, flexible morality and decency. In comparison to the quoted, the finest of the festival films like the internationally renowned Pakistani film *vérité*: *Jago Hua Swera* (The Day Shall Dawn) (1959) failed at the box office because of a lack of good songs, while music and choreography have made blockbusters out of shoddy yarns. A memorable festival film, *Jago Hua Swera* was removed from the cinemas within three days of its release for ignoring the formula.

The original formula constructed plots of *hijr* and *visaal*—meaning separation and unification of male and female protagonists—aiming for a happy ending. It juxtaposed serene images of dancers with spiritual pieces of master musicians to construct the male gaze. Examples include the aforementioned images of Nayyar Sultana, Shamim Ara and Nilo in *Baji* (1963), *Qaidi* (1962) and *Paristan* (1968). Serenity was achieved through powerful *mise-en-scène* and the play of light and dark on soft faces and fragmented bodies of women wrapped in undulating, religiously respectful

costumes which yet accentuated the feminine physique with panache and élan. Consumerism was reflected in highly fashionable and trendy wardrobes that were designed to appeal to both the female and male audience.

The audience relationship to consumerism offers a complex picture of the female affinity for the tools of wardrobe, make-up and body language that hook the male gaze in *Qaidi* and *Paristan*. As both the male and female audience is denied the right to sexual appeal, gaze, desire and consumerism in Islam, the wardrobes were reflective of Islamic values and culture only because they provided "cover" against the male gaze that was operating in the old films, albeit in a different form. The dancers were often shown practicing Islam in personal lives. As Islam does not support dance, music and the gaze, the disparities and dichotomies of personal conduct and professional choices were justified through the depiction of hardships and social realities. The audience, caught between Islam and entertainment, was lost in serene but in fact complex images of human interaction.

These filmic interactions sequestered the meaning of serenity within the boundaries of individual experience because cinema established a primary relationship with the viewer. The complex treatment of the life and environment of a dancer reinforced everything concerning patriarchy, gaze, religion and culture in one's private space. The dancer had an audience inside the story space and the cinema hall. The viewers often went to cinemas just to enjoy the song and dance imagery.

The imagery exploited cultural values through the body language of *chhooi-mooi* girls, but appears redundant in today's scenario. Both serenity and Muslim costumes have disappeared behind bold and beautiful images of free women, often referred to bluntly as "dirty dancers" like Nirma in *Sher-e-Lahore* (2001) and Nargis in *Choorrian* (1998). These women return and command the gaze, but are no longer recognised for the quality of their performances. The *élite* disown this dance trend by expressing displeasure towards the cinema, yet these images remain provocatively popular; as Kazi says:

These films are a public acknowledgement of private desires—desires for social justice, for the freedom to love, for the empowerment of the underdog, whether that is a poor farmer, factory worker, or a wronged woman. In this sense Pakistani film has an important role to play in diffusing some of the frustrations in a society with feudal, legal and religious restrictions (Kazi 2006).

Kazi is hinting at a mixture of typical social, economic and political expressions that collectively configure the complex identity of a Pakistani, and a lack of venues for leisure. The film form provides an alternate to lack and oppression. These problems were always present in Pakistani society, but mounted when everything concerning entertainment was banned in Pakistan in the 1970s.

PAKISTAN: THE 1970s

The 70s military regime used Islam to terrorise the nation and maintain and prolong its sovereign control. The trio of dirty dancer, vulgar comedian and ruthless Punjabi villain was partly born in reaction to the state terrorism by the Chief Martial Law Administrator, General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq. The fake hero of Urdu cinema disappeared along with the *chhooi-mooi* girl, but the song and dance formula evolved to fit the needs of the exhibitionist dirty dancer, vulgar comedian and bucolic villain who fought the establishment. According to Nasir Adeeb, these characters especially the villain fights the oppression by the establishment since he authored *Maula Jutt* (1979). The film was set against the social, political, and religious agendas of the military regime. Kazi finds such stories "bold and challenging" despite their lack of "sophistication and technical quality" (2006) because of the anti-regime setting.

The regime exploited the emotional sensitivities of the common man by using religion to gain control of the populace. This exploitation of the public strengthened patriarchy by intermixing elements of education, entertainment, and religion in media. According to Kazi, General Zia-ul-Haq imported "a rigid interpretation" of Islam and Islamic values from the Middle East and post-revolutionary Iran which attempted to replace the more porous South Asian style of Islam. More and more women started wearing the Iranian/Middle Eastern style of hijab rather than the South Asian dupatta or head covering and burqa. More men have beards and kifafa or Arab head covering, creating a boring homogeneity in a richly diverse cultural context (Kazi 2006).

Zia's brand of Islam inequitably affected the diversity in Pakistan's urban and rural settings, in which religion became a political weapon. His strategies especially affected the women in media as he made it mandatory for the announcers and anchors (not actresses) to cover their heads with dupatta to appear on Pakistan television. According to Mahtab Rashdi:

PTV received a directive from Zia-ul-Haq that on TV men should wear sherwanis [a knee-long buttoned coat] and all female anchors must cover their head... [I refused and] also disagreed to the producer's suggestion to wear a sari and make an entry on camera with [my] head covered but for the rest of the show, the pallu could fall... I wasn't interested in false pretenses and dramatics. I took a stand... [and was eventually] sacked for not covering [my] head ("Flashback" 2011).

Rashdi opted to leave television in protest, challenging Zia's oppression during his period. Though Zia did not force the official dress code and body language on actresses and dancers for filmic exposition, his strategies affected the classical dance performance on stage and the lives of the artists.

Dancing was a regular part of life in Pakistan until the rise in 1977 of military ruler Zia-ul-Haq, who used religion to suppress cultural traditions and only permitted women to appear on state television wearing veils. He banned classical dance performances from the airwaves and cracked down on popular Kathak performers (Mansoor 2011). The strategies were reinforced through the trends extent in the Iranian cinema of the 80s, eliminating the pilferage of 70s fashion trends from the cinema into society.

Until the mid-70s, young urban women often wore replicas of maxis, double breast shirts and bell-bottom pants, and national dresses (Figure 9–11) (Naqvi 1977) worn by female leads in Pakistani films. The author clearly recalls young women in the replicas of the modern and national dresses worn by the leads in *Dil Lagi* (The Naughtiness of the Heart, 1974) at a (dance) party at a very traditional and religious home in Rawalpindi in March 1974 and also on the streets at Rawalpindi at the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr upon the culmination of the holy month of Ramadan the same year. Women especially wore the replicas of Babra Sharif's shirt with three stripes or wide piping at the lower front. However, during the late 70s, such modernisation was condemned, and the situation reversed in urban sectors under Zia's oppression and the Islamisation of the official dress code for women, especially in the media.



Figure 9: Wajiha Raza Rizvi at Rasul Head Works, 1977. Photo by Syed Iqbal Hussain Naqvi (Location category by residence: Rasul College, District Gujrat, Pakistan, lower socioeconomic, rural).



Figure 10: Razia Kazmi (left) in double breast shirt and black and white bellbottom pants and Nasreen Ishtiaq (right) at Noorulain's birthday party at home, 8 May 1977. Photo by Syed Iqbal Hussain Naqvi (Location category by residence: Rawalpindi, Pakistan, lower socioeconomic, urban).



Figure 11: Newly-wed Nuzhat Naqvi (posing like a 70s heroine) on her honeymoon at Murree Hills, Pakistan, 1977. Photo by her husband cum professional photographer Syed Iqbal Hussain Naqvi (Location category by residence: Rawalpindi, Pakistan, lower socioeconomic, urban).

The media impact was comparatively less felt in rural settings in pre- and post-Zia eras. Kazi thinks that "rural life styles... remain[ed] untouched" in the Zia era because either the villagers were "considered politically irrelevant," or were resistant to change (2006). The villagers found urban women freer as compared to rural women who did not have sufficient means to follow the cinematic fashion trends. By default, the following of the trends aimed at hooking the male gaze at the replica—the real Pakistani woman who tried to reproduce the appeal and modernity of the female lead in order to be judged on the merit of the face and figure just like her. The replication or reproduction of the star's image by real woman reflects the reinforcement of passivity and bourgeois norms similar to those of the *chhooi-mooi* girls of pre-Zia films.

Post-Zia films reflect real, social, political and economic tensions through their plots under governmental oppression. Kazi finds these films challenging for their treatment of "the pull and tension between urbanization and urban values and rural culture in the country" (2006), but she disagrees with the rural perception about freer urban women. She says: "There is a huge gulf between the status of women in urban and rural areas; urban women are generally emancipated, socially and economically" (2006). Kazi is pointing to the modes of patriarchy where a higher education rate among women often trades female emancipation for male insecurity; it puts challenges to a male's monetary control over a home; in addition, the metaphysics concerning childbearing and caring reinforce a woman's lack of subjectivity and the power to return the gaze to a man. In many cases,

modern appearances of women reflect their husbands' statuses to an economically conscious society.

Society's perception of freer urban women does not correspond to the reality of their existence. The perception originates from urban women's modern appearance, dress code and higher education level. The difference between reality and representation complicates the meaning of education and awareness outside the story space. A woman bearing the subjective look appears all-powerful inside the story space, but she is not in the real world. The filmic look is for the consumption of the common man, who can subject her to objectification while watching a film. In real life, she is an object for a real man (that is, subordinate as a daughter or wife) but she appears like a subject to the common man, who perceives her as an object of his gaze in the theatre.

To cut it short, the society was susceptible to earlier cinematic fashions because the *chhooi-mooi* girl covered up her body, unlike the exhibitionist women of the latter period. The earlier female icon allowed objectification, while the latter bears greater apparent power with her gazing abilities but is in fact a still more enticing forte for the male gaze. She may appear to be a powerful subject in her own right, but her filmic representation involves a still higher degree of objectification than in the case of her predecessor. The common man does not feel threatened by the subjective powers of the new celebrity, who, he believes, invites him to objectify her in the darkness of the theatre. This wronged woman, whether an educated protagonist or an antagonist in a dirty dancer's role, is subservient to the needs of logos and tokos, to a patriarchal system which uses culture and religion to justify the construction and consumption of these images. However, it is obvious that the Islamisation of the dresses on TV did not affect the emergence of dirty dancers who mirror subjectivity and female gaze in films since Zia.

GENDER REPRESENTATION SINCE THE 1970S

Post-Zia female icons signify resistance to oppression in cinema and popular art. These women, as Kazi comments, are "proud of their bodies," sexually active and "open with their emotions," and "physically expressive with men; the majority of women would never be so bold" in real life (2006). These representations offer a contrast to real women who are trained to express *haya*, or be *ba-haya*⁶—repress their feelings and emotions, as public display of sexual boldness is both un-Islamic and against the culture. However, the disparity between reality and representation can be understood

in terms of film as a medium that gives a kind of breathing space to filmmakers, artists and audiences, includes males and females. They struggle with their repressed feelings and oppression inside the story space and the theatre. As Kazi suggests: "The stories, although presented in a heightened reality, are in fact reflective of real problems and desires... The stylistic device of lifting these stories to an above-reality level allows the privacy to acknowledge they exist without feeling publicly challenged" (2006). The darkness inside the theatre gives the viewers the subjective control of their lives, decreasing the sense of powerlessness against the culture around them.

In the wider society, women are used to denying their real feelings and opposing sexually expressive women as *be-haya*⁷ as sluts. The real women being servile construct these expressions, denials and oppositions against the resistant women in subservience of the symbolic order, hence, roles defined by logos and tokos who Derrida says are the capital and an investment on the capital. Both logos and tokos guard the codes for preserving a system of values, but its mode suits the double standards that often come with the capital, the goods. Kazi says, "Most people in Pakistan feel they are powerless to change their lives against the culture. If the settings [in films] were too real, they would cause greater distress" especially to ladies (2006). The departure of films from reality sorts out their emotional crises by releasing tension. In Kazi's opinion, women look to cinema in order to identify with the representations of free women who ride horses and motorbikes, dance in public, reveal themselves as lovers, prostitutes, seductresses; [they] express their love, run off with lovers, drink, smoke, show a lot of their bodies, take bloody revenge on their rapists, know martial arts, use guns, and talk back! (Kazi 2006). In other words, they return the gaze, exercising their subjectivity and denying the objectification of a *chhooi-mooi* girl.

OBJECTIFICATION OF GAZING WOMEN IN CINEMA

The gazing girls remain the object of the gaze for the common cinephile in the theatre. He finds these objects entertaining and is neither bewildered nor outraged like the Pakistani *élite* who is uncomfortable with the shift in the characterisation of the object of gaze. As such, the common man supports but the *élite* opposes the new form of diurnal public gaze that should be private and nocturnal; that is, the gaze should be *élite* not common, and within this scenario, the *élite* also denies the object's ability to gaze back. He voices for the support of the bourgeois ethic of oppressing women in cinema

and opposing what Mulvey calls: "the exhibitionism of women and the voyeurism of men" during The Miss World contest (2009: 7). Both type of imageries are fetishistic, yet the Pakistani *élite* praises the western bourgeois ethic and culture of the beauty pageant and opposes the construction of the fetish in diurnal form by an eastern thespian.

In *Sher-e-Lahore*, Nirma does not expose what Mulvey calls "the actual female genitals" but conceals and disguises to supplement the "ways which alter the significance of female sexuality," throwing "an unusually vivid spotlight on the contradiction between woman's fantasy presence and real absence from the male conscious world" (2009: 7). Nirma is directed to speak to the man in what Mulvey calls: "the language of fetishism, which speaks to all of us everyday, but whose exact grammar and syntax 'we' are usually only dimly aware of" (2009: 7). In this case, the word "we" is important as Nirma as a gazing thespian does not replicate the character of everyday "we," women from the east. She expresses what should be private sexual desire in public and as such breaks the norm. Though she represents, is not a true representation of everyday Pakistani woman.

Everyday woman condemns sexual expression in public. Women are still expected and trained to drop eyes like the *chhooi-mooi* girls of the civilised *élite* from the earlier films. The male cinemagoer's gaze at *chhooi-mooi* girls created a strong fetish, linking sexual desire to a longing for gratification. The bold and beautiful have changed the mode of gratification from indirect nocturnal with Shamim Ara, to direct diurnal with Nirma. They both are phallic substitutes. However, the first is what Mulvey calls: "punished and humiliated, often by women plus phallus" (2009: 7) in *Qaidi* while the second punishes, humiliates and gazes back as a phallus in *Sher-e-Lahore*. In either form, they reveal male obsession to fetish and his castration anxiety. Shamim Ara hides yet seeks and Nirma just seeks phallic distraction, revealing a higher level of castration anxiety. Nirma is more visible as opposed to the traditional belle who has been appearing as a protagonist in films since Aga Hashr's conventional story times.

Unlike Nirma whose sexuality is too loud for a real Pakistani woman, *ba-haya* Ismat (Shamim Ara with her non-sexual facade) tries to help Yousuf (Darpan) recall their first meeting in order to recover from his loss of memory. She says: "I am the same Ismat who you have forgotten. Remember, Yousuf, when we first met. We looked at each other. Your eyes asked a question. My tongue kept on expressing, 'No, no,' but my heartbeats accepted each one of your invitations; remember, Yousuf" (*Qaidi* 1962). The construction of the part of the dialogue: "My tongue kept on expressing, 'No, no,' but my heartbeats accepted each one of your invitations" hints at Ismat's training to hide yet seek phallic distraction. In her dialog, she admits

the dichotomy of her surface denial and an inner desire to accept him as her partner like a *chhooi-mooi* girl.

Of real women who guard their pre-marital virginity and avoid extra-marital affairs like *chhooi-mooi* girls, Kazi says:

In real life they lower their eyes, ride side saddle on motorbikes behind their men, cover their bodies in layers of clothing, never dance in public, never run around the hills, singing for all to hear, usually marry the men chosen by their parents, in other words make sure they are invisible (Kazi 2006).

Kazi gives a clear picture of invisible women as opposed to visible women in post-Zia films. These women no longer lower their eyes, but return the gaze, drive cars, expose their bodies, dance in public and around the hills singing for all to hear. They have the freedom to display their will and happiness, and never marry men chosen by their families.

Familial and social codes in general appear inferior to their personal happiness. The patriarchy surrenders in cinema, but logos and tokos carefully manage the breathing space of a trained "la belle dame sans merci" (Keats 1884) for the sake of goods, capital investment and consumerism. The men on the streets identify with stories of wronged and desirable women who marry men of their choice against the will of their families. Their innate desire is fulfilled. According to Kazi, Pakistani filmmakers have great compassion for problems faced by women, by the underdogs of society—the poor and powerless. They are not morally judged. The prostitute is seen as a misunderstood woman; the bad girl who smokes and dances in clubs is shown often as a woman driven by an unjust society (2006). Thus, unlike society at large, cinema does not judge them morally, but instead owns their weaknesses and justifies their actions, values and conducts as human and noble.

While the nobility of males in the theatrical profession normally remains unquestioned, women in show business are often stereotyped as having a dubious character, or even as prostitutes. They seek subjectivity and court the male gaze, which is considered a tabooed activity. The profession tags female performers as courtesans who are disrespected for mixing up their personal and professional lives for filmic exposition, career and publicity. Their maltreatment reflects their agency, which provides a contrast to the role of virtuous women who never return the gaze, or expose their bodies. Their personal profiles and expositions for public consumption on media reflect badly on the perception of film as a profession. Kazi says that "those who turn to a career in film in Pakistan are... idealistic

romantics" who do not "have a place in mainstream society" (2006). The idealistic romantics have the courage to join this profession despite the tabooed environment and a general perception that only prostitutes seek careers in film.

Pakistani commercial film has been bonded to the red light area by default since its inception. It perpetuates the dominant symbolic order by projecting the stereotype of good and bad women, and overshadowing progressive roles. Kazi (2006) cites Burney who says that the female stereotypes constitute the poor mother, the scheming [step]mother or sister in law, the jealous woman in a love triangle, the village girl, the bad girl, the prostitute, the madam of the brothel, the wronged woman shunned by society and forced to take revenge, [and] occasionally the confident modern woman who takes control of her life... until of course she falls in love (Kazi 2006).

The whole range of popular stereotypes from mother to prostitute and lover signify the surrendering of the will of woman to the symbolic order. They are designed to help viewers differentiate the good from bad women as wives, femme fatales or protagonists. Characterisation, however powerful, follows the rules set by patriarchy as love eliminates the gazing abilities and subjectivity of a modern woman who happily surrenders to the will of the man.

Nonetheless, it is men who define the terms that delineate female protagonists and antagonists: Chhoti Begum (younger wife), Umrao Jan Ada (courtesan), Madam Bovary (crazy woman) and Zarqa (the freedom fighter). According to Kazi, "Ch[h]oti Begum [is] the symbol of intelligent wife who uses good humour, unwavering devotion and her wits to win the love of her husband"; Umrao Jan Ada is "the famous 19th C courtesan poetess of Lukhnow to whom the best families sent their sons to learn social graces"; Madam Bovary is a crazy "woman who waits for adulthood when she uses her feminine appeal to lay a trap for the rapists of her mother; Zarqa [is] the heroic Palestinian liberation fighter who withstood torture but never betrayed her cause" (2006). They are the key types of roles for women in Pakistani films. In the end, role reversal attempts like Rangeela's *Aurat Raj* (Women's Rule!) (1979) are rare. According to Kazi, *Aurat Raj* is a cult film in which "the women's political party win[s]... and all the women get the strength and voices of men!" (2006). In all of these roles, male protagonists are involved in action around female characters. Women are at the heart of the films, yet without real agency. Men as true bearers of subjectivity guard them as objects; the stereotype predominates.

Plots follow male agendas and lines of action. Rhythm and tempo develop to depict male pursuits of riches and females. According to Kazi:

The men are either falling in love with women, dancing with women, fighting over women, avenging the honour of women; they are protecting their defenseless mothers, or defending their wives from the injustices of a mother-in-law; they are falling in love with courtesans or insulting them, raping women or protecting them from being raped (Kazi 2006).

The actions of male protagonists, antagonists and supporting characters evolve around defenseless female characters: mothers, wives, lovers and prostitutes. Men run the show and protect their women from perceived evils. Physically stronger, they are emotionally weak. The display of weakness aims at projecting male sensitivities, emotions and demands for care and concern by women like a rejecting mother or a dying lover (replicating again the culture of the civilised, Urdu speaking *élite* of Delhi and Lucknow), providing a contrast to social reality of Pakistan. In real life, women, not men, remain constrained to the display of their softer side but control their subjectivity and verbal and sexual expressiveness.

If sexual expression is the domain of promiscuous women, national and regional cinemas reflect inconsistency in their treatment of female protagonists and prostitutes. Urdu cinema uses courtesans; Punjabi cinema relies on "dirty dancers"; Sindhi women appear liberal; women in Pashto films fully command their agency. Kazi says:

The females in Pushto films command their subjectivity and sexuality to the levels of hookers in Hollywood films. There is the less publicized genre of Pushto porn...[in which fat women] perform provocative dances mostly in lycra suits, in defiance of all known images of sexually desirable females (Kazi 2006)!

The images of female artists from Pushto commercial films (that Kazi calls "porn") do not conform to the social reality of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), where women on the streets are disapproved of—along with the entertainment values of modernity—by conservative Muslims. Women on the streets are usually outsiders who may attract life-threatening disapproval if they dare to show the ability to return the gaze. The incidents include the shooting of the youngest Nobel Peace Prize nominee Malala Yousafzai by the Taliban in 2012. The attack was an expression of the disapproval for

girls' right to education in the North West Frontier where, Rasheed says, conservative Muslims also burnt many music stores and video shops to display their disapproval of the entertainment values especially film during the times of *War on Terror* (2010). Patriarchy rules in their strict interpretation of the Islamic ideology and the symbolic order it imposes. In such circumstances, it is unimaginable to think of the freedom of real women in KP as opposed to Pushto film stars who provocatively dance in lycra suits, displaying the duplicity in the social order.

The order reflects inherently conservative Pakistani society dominated by men: logos and tokos, and a struggle for new roles as modernity creeps in. The women in genes reappeared in dramas in the mid-90s while TV still imposed the use of head covering on announcers and newscasters not anchors, and barred women in genes in advertisements. Logos and tokos portray that they are confined to the roles conferred on them by patriarchy but their innate consumerism reflects their desire for profit. The desire for the *revenue* leads them to organize change in women's roles in media as and when needed. An example of the male confinement to the symbolic order is seen in the disappearance and replacement of dancing heroes of early films by gazing heroes of later films. Kazi says that in recent films:

Men rarely dance, almost as if it would be unmanly, but gaze at the females who dance around them... [The dancers have] a special understanding for the style of films—what parts of the anatomy to exaggerate! The men are made manlier or more romantic; women's curves are more accentuated [and clothes too outrageous] (Kazi 2006).

The dancing heroes of yore have disappeared, while females have to a certain extent transformed into free women. The bonding between couples reflects manlier, romantic men and sexually expressive women who command their subjectivity and sexuality and take pride in directing the male gaze at their curves in films and on revealing cinema billboards. According to Kazi, "Their clothes may even be made more revealing [on posters and billboards] than they are in the film" (2006). These bold images of sensuous and seductive women offer a contrast to aforementioned social reality: the escalation in numbers of women in conservative guises.

THE EFFECT OF IDEOLOGY AND MODERNITY

The conservative images of real Pakistani women contradict the revealing images of performers, reflecting a constant tension between the politics of Islamic ideology and modernity. They reflect two-way suffering resulting from the acceptance or un-acceptance of a presupposed relationship with either the ideology or modernity. In doing so, the images produce political meaning. Comolli and Narboni say that:

Every film is political in as much as it is determined by the ideology... Ideologies are perceived-accepted-suffered cultural objects which work fundamentally on men by a process they do not understand. What men express in their ideologies is not their true relation to their conditions of existence, but how they react to their conditions of existence, which presupposes a real relationship and an imaginary relationship (Comolli and Narboni 2004: 814–815).

Ideologies are human expressions of presupposed relationships and reactions to their living conditions that differ for the conservative and the modern. Conservative Muslims presuppose a real relationship with Islamic ideology and culture as practitioners and an imaginary relationship as guardians of Islam, and demand that cinema be turned into an instrument of this ideology. Modern subjects seek the opposite position, while the *élite* support tradition and culture in their modern guise but condemn contemporary entertainment values and dancers as the conservatives do.

Conservative men and the *élite* condemn while common men gaze at dirty dancers in Pakistani films. According to Rosen, Althusser explains the mixed phenomenon. He states that all human individuals are constantly being interpellated by discourses amalgamated with social institutions, which include the binary of religion and modernity. Individual humans "seek secure subjective positions" as social agents as "processes of desire, sexuality, and fantasy are intertwined with consciousness of self, which is produced to counter" castration anxiety and is in "dialectic with it throughout a social formation" (Rosen 1986). Pakistani cinema reflects the dialectics of castration anxiety on the minds of the social agents who are interpellated by their social formation. Thus, the subjective effect on discursive practices is reflected in the male anxiety that creates the binary of concealing *chhooi-mooi* girls and bold beautiful revealers. These roles restrict women to a weaker political position under religion and patriarchy.

Patriarchy points to the continuation of the preexisting patterns of female fascination in the form of *chhooi-mooi girls* and bold and beautiful women. These characters make a Pakistani commercial film despite the surfacing of negative voices. Women rule the film world and are also subjugated. The conservative thought marks the presence not absence of women directors and actors as bearers of patriarchy and continuers of the song and dance formula since Independence. Noor Jahan directed *Chan-vay* (A Beloved Like Moon) (1951) in the fifties. Shamim Ara won director of the decade award for her culturally strong commercial blockbusters in the seventies (Slote 1987: 37). Sangeeta occupies the top most position in the list of Pakistani directors for producing and directing over sixty commercial films since the seventies. Directors rely on the song and dance formula for success and the popularity of their films among the common man, who in turn owns Pakistani cinema for taking care of the pleasure of the man on the streets.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to Dr. Ann Heylen (賀安娟, Associate Professor, Department of Taiwan Culture, Languages and Literature; Director, International Taiwan Studies Center, National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU), Taipei, Taiwan and Dr. Joshua Dale (Tokyo Gakugei University, Guest Editor of this themed issue of the International Journal of Asia Pacific Studies) for their patience and help in developing this researcher paper; Professor Phillip Drummond (Director of Academic Conferences London Ltd.) for his unlimited support; Mr. Muhammad Hussain (Khalid) (Member, Pakistan Film Distributors Association) and Mr. Fayyaz Ashar for their utmost help in locating filmic texts and images for this paper; Late Mr. Yaseen Gareeja for leaving behind a useful source: Pakistan Film Directory (2002) that served as a starting point for my research; Mr. Justice Shah Nawaz Noon (Former Chairman, Central Board of Film Censors) and Dr. Kamran Jahangir (Former Director General, National University of Modern Languages Islamabad) and their respective staffs especially Mr. Ejaz for their support in collecting research materials; Dr. Ahsan Akhtar Naz (Former Director, Institute of Communication Studies University of the Punjab) and Professor Dr. Muhammad Zakria Zakar (Dean, Faculty of Behavioral and Social Sciences University of the Punjab Lahore, Pakistan) for their sincerity and guidance in the research process; and Higher Education Commission of Pakistan and United States Education Foundation in

Pakistan for facilitating the presentation of research at "Visual pleasure in Pakistani films" at the First London Film and Media Conference (2011) and 8th Annual Fulbright and Humphrey Alumni Conference in Islamabad (2011). Thanks to Ann and Joshua, the research has moved many steps forward.

NOTES

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¹ Traditional, morbid, timid, shy, young girl who never raises her eyes before the elderly or men and closely guards her self-respect and sexuality without losing her premarital virginity or getting involved in extramarital affairs after marriage whether under normal or extreme circumstances; in essence, touch-me-not girl.

² Though here a name, Maula refers to the personification of someone who comes to help the needy. Jutt is a cast in Punjab. Maula Jutt is the title of a person with the Jutt origins. However, please note that the author has not provided the translation for the titles that use the character names and titles as film titles.

³ A stranger, a male, who does not have a blood relation like a father or a brother or a legal relation like a husband, shall not get a glimpse of a woman's body or her private parts.

⁴ *Haya* is the sense shame towards openness in sexuality.

⁵ The long loose end of the sari aiming at covering the chest and left on the shoulder.

⁶ *Ba-haya* is a nonsexual and shy person as opposed to one who is sexually expressive and *be-haya* and commits *be-hayai*.

⁷ *Be-haya* is someone who has no regard for *haya* and is sexually expressive whether an ordinary woman, a slut or a prostitute.

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