Framing Graffiti: "War on Terror" and Iconoclasm in American Writing on War

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Abstract
The paper proposes that the ongoing narrative of "war on terror" and its subsequent framing operates within an iconoclastic project, where alternative forms of media, such as graffiti and street art are tactically employed through transmedial narrations. The logic behind frame-break— as a process of movement from one media to another— entails that the difference between iconoclasm and vandalism is rendered ineffectual in a war situation, and works as a tool that distorts images of power, stereotypes and epistemological frames. The techno-fundamentalist nature of "infoterrorism" transmitted by dominant electronic media is critically counteracted by a mode of "poetic terrorism," in which media images are pirated and subverted to engage with individual histories of war and loss. The paper— with the help of Masha Hamilton's *What Changes Everything* (2013) and recent American writing on war elucidates upon how the notional ekphrasis of graffiti in these writings enters the conversation of "war on terror".

Keywords: War Images, Graffiti, Iconoclasm, Frame, Ekphrasis.

1.Introduction

> "Twin Buddhas, twin towers, interesting coincidence, so what?"
>
> "The Trade Centre towers were religious too. They stood for what this country worships above everything else, the market..."
>
> Thomas Pynchon, *Bleeding Edge* (2009, 338)

The War on Terror, as the epigraph from Pynchon suggest, can be referred to a regime of iconoclasm, in which, the clash of civilizations was at best represented by clash of images. On 5th February, 2003, a remarkable demonstration of this accusation spiraled in the media when the long hung tapestry of Pablo Picasso's mural, *Guernica[i]*, was shrouded by the UN flag prior to Colin Powel's speech on the proposal of war against Iraq. Like the Twin Towers, the fate of *Guernica* was one of symbolic iconoclasm if not downright destruction. Equally symptomatic to the political climate, the existing pathways of media communication saw a dubious morphing in the modalities of narrative, framing and perception. Its consequence had, to a large extent, as Mitchell (2014) claimed, "on the role of verbal and visual images" that defined the war "itself [as] an imaginary, metaphoric conception that had [been] made real".(xiii). With faith in "narrative" or "framing" being put to test, the constant tussle between verbal over the visual image served as a

caution in the choice of content, form and manner to negotiate war conflict. In the above-mentioned work, Pynchon gives quite early, a remark of casualty:

> No matter how the official narrative of this turns out,… these are places we should be looking at, not in newspapers or television but at the margins, graffiti, uncontrolled utterances, bad dreamers who sleep in public and scream in their sleep (322)

This, rather urgent, call for new forms of alternative media —of "uncontrolled utterance"— is not only an attempt to break the ongoing narrative but also to critically experiment upon the self-nourishing designs of that narrative. In lieu of such loss, and thereafter transference of faith, the new frame itself faces a process of reversal in its earlier defined status and becomes strategically instrumental in counteracting advertent acts of misrepresentation. Therefore, Pynchon's iconological task of *looking at* graffiti's potential to puncture the myth of "war on terror" exorcizes graffiti from the anxieties of 1970's America; of it being of "greater peril", and, which had to be, in the anti-war phraseology of Norman Mailer, "defoliated, cicatrized, Vietnamized."(14). This gesture of dramatic belatedness in Mailer was a response to the crusade carried out by John Lindsay's 1972 (New York Mayor) slogan – "war against graffiti". By historical coincidence, it was also the same year when Richard Nixon, in a profound moment, first gave the world its catchphrase: "War on Terror". What becomes discursively significant in this chanced encounter is the transcription of penalty that could be potentially meted out to a certain mode of expressive form (graffiti) and a population of a certain geopolitical space (Middle East). Therefore, one could see it as a disciplinarian act that constitutes framing.

This historical coincidence is viewed as an anchorage to embark on how graffiti, as an alternative medium, participates in the discourse of "war on terror" and follows the aesthetics of iconoclasm to challenge dominant media narratives, and as such transmedially used in conflict and war-related literary writing. The locus of inquiry will be to examine the affect of such transmediation in literary writing and to see if it reframes or maintains existing notions of Graffiti's epistemological status, and to what extent it could be a potential content narrateme in the overall surplus value of literary narration, given its teleological input in war history, both as a practice common to soldiers, prisoners, and war-affected civilians and as a modern day art form undertaking projects of micro-perceptual politics in war zones . The study attempts to show the ways in which graffiti is used both as metaphor in the text to comprehend war conditions and as art by means of notional ekphrasis to advance frame-breaks in the narrative and foreground the present by recalling past wars.

The discussion is presented in three parts: first, it attends to the question of iconoclasm and vandalism; terms which blur each other's boundaries in the context of graffiti and war on terror, second, it moves on to concepts of framing: how framing operates in the transmedial study on war, and third, on how literary texts frame graffiti.

2. Merging Iconoclasm and Vandalism

The idea of iconoclasm and the changing dimensions of its meaning have to be understood in conjunction with its other synonymous variant – 'vandalism'. This becomes specifically significant if one keeps in hindsight, graffiti's notorious reputation as a form of vandalism. Historically, the word "iconoclasm" had a theological connotation in the Greek world, which referred to the destruction of works of art emplaced in a liturgical space and with a divine symbolic value. The etymological derivatives came from the words "break" and "image" (Gamboni,

1997). The secularization of the term later, bifurcated into the ideological and political space, and broadly, referred to the destruction of institutional buildings, monuments, and private property as an expression of resistance and rejection. The difference between 'iconoclasm' and 'vandalism' became pronounced in a disciplinary and historical context. While iconoclasm has been connected to destruction by *meaningful intention*, vandalism meant destruction *devoid of meaning*. Therefore, the assignment of "enlightenment" to the figure of the 'iconoclast' stands in stark contrast to the figure of the 'vandal' pejoratively attributed to deviancy and primitivism.

However, such an approach of differential category-making comes at a risk of resorting to reductive determinism. Iconoclasm could be creative in the way it is used to metaphorically break stereotypes and facilitate critique and vandalism. That iconoclasm and vandalism merge and co-opt simultaneously in a given situation to break existing images of power through the tool of terror becomes vital in understanding their scale of affect in war or conflict. The significance specifically centers on the production of affect that partially aims to lay what is hidden and masked when legal transparency is constantly abetted.

3. Of Terror, Excess and Belief

The factor that pervades the very thought about war is grounded in the terror of excess: one, in terms of the *destruction* to life, property or governments, and the other, in terms of the *production* of excessive fear, chaos and distrust. Graffiti, like any other art form that evolved from the residual debris of oppressive regime systems, capitalizes on the same aesthetics of excess and terror of war to produce affect if not revolution. In his essay, "Art in the Vacuum of Belief", Jacques Barzun (1974), launches an attack on the idea of art for revolution, stating "those who produce works in the spirit of violence and contempt; for they are usually great talents constrained by history to do the work of demolition." He points to a sense of relief in bereavement inducing art by likening the "vandalism" of graffiti to the "iconoclastic movements of the past", which, he considers ,"may have had religious and philosophical motives" but shared the same spirit— in "the hatred of images...for the sake of pure faith."(143-4). To this operational capacity, the registers of graffiti acts— 'bombing', 'burning', 'going over', 'slash', 'massacre'— evoke a gamut of images that conjure a metapicture of military warfare. Their general power of "superimposition", in Italo Calvino's observation, thrives on the idea of "visual anarchy" which surpasses the power of a "book or newspaper" and intervenes by a mode of palimpsest. In a different context of political conflict, when general modes of communication are almost obliterated, such as the graffiti of the Intifada, written for and by the people of the neighborhood from locally gathered information, serve almost as a newspaper[ii]. Calvino (1980) meditates on this kind of context where speech itself is curtailed, and the only form of making any meaningful communication or of building and maintaining social relationships become possible through clandestine visual means. What emerges herein is the symbolic use of iconoclasm, of the destruction of one image through the creation of another image; the spirit of *enfant-garde* positively working through shock and terror.

4. Between Infoterrorism And Poetic Terrorism

The faith in non-formalism and "archaicism" employed above may seem muddied, and therefore in need of clarification. The clash of images, and graffiti's special position of meaningful difference can be understood by looking at two terms from two key theorist of war conflict: James

Der Derian's (2009) concept of "Infoterrorism" and Hakim Bey's (1991) "Poetic Terrorism". "Infoterrorism" mostly operates on the idea of exponential outsourcing of varied media images, video tapes, documentaries, and new forms of surveillance that are politically driven to magnify war situation and perpetuate the flow of terror. Propelled by the principle of "techno-fundamentalism" and "e- motives" (electronically and emotionally induced motives), the age of networked information and media wars work through a process in which "the image[/speed]-based sentiments of fear, hate and empathy come to dominate word-based discourses of ideas, interest and power"(252). "Poetic Terrorism" uses the instrument of "chaote art", a form of vandalism that transforms the "negativity" and "thanotosis" of terror brought by the state or war by means of tactical individual interrogation of the public space. In principle, poetic terror operates through the conditions of 'invisibility' as a defense mechanism to *outwit* any symbolic image of control and violence. It dwells on making art without any expectation for legitimization, and so dependent on the aesthetics of "luddism", public shock, and sudden contemplation in emphasizing truth that is devoid of any promise such as "permanent solutions" or revolution.

However, the point of meaningful departure, between "Infoterrorism" and "Poetic Terrorism" can only happen when the "ontological anarchy" that Bey proposes, loses its utopic adventurism to create epistemological ruptures in the current media discourses circulating on war and "war on terror". This approach would gesture deconstructing existing images not by the act of colonization; which would have the risk of retracing a qualitative kinship of the poetic image to media images, but through the act of piracy and duplication. The 'aura' of terror recreated in this duplication would be one of creative dissonance; having an agency to snap the simulatory effects of the original for a temporary encounter with the truth. In this way, the 'mechanical' reproduction of the image that Walter Benjamin talks about, and that, which is so much implicated in the current market of war images and its accompanied phantasmagoria, could be, as a hypothesis, made meaningful when the process of duplication begins on the logic of a hermeneutics of suspicion and ends in an iconoclastic attack against the capitalistic roots of such image dissemination. Hermeneutics differs from critique, in its emphasis on the humane, rather that of the anti-human (considering the production of war images that are more often about careerism, corporate wars between media companies and the obsession with technological reproduction), of deep contemplation than simply encountering a text or art. Iconoclasm or what Mitchell has hoped of a "critical iconoclasm"[iii] unites in the selective application of Bey's idea of "poetic terrorism"; a technique to break the desensitizing stupor of war images supplied by the media by sabotaging the "means of production"/ "means of communication" to the effect, that, maintains that "there is no *techne* worth more than any humanity."(18)

5. Framing War and Transmedial Narrations

Frame is a polysemic and open-ended term. It is, as Judith Butler (2009) contends, both "ontological and epistemological"; in a sense that a picture frame exceeds its "editorial embellishment" and often makes evident the very nature of the frame's history. Likewise, frame can also mean "false accusation" that carries an insidious and overt aim to charge someone guilty of wrong conduct or deed. This breaking of the frame, Butler claims, "suggest…not only the question of finding new content, but also working with received renditions of reality to show how they can and do break with themselves."(2). The frame-breaking which Butler proposes comes within the project of iconoclasm: in the continual bombardment of a singular narrative that limits truth or the recovery of truth.

Yet the concept of frame during a crisis is a mediated event, one that works between memory and perception. In a way, one can say, war is both montage and the creation of montage for its ideological use of the present; based, as Charlie Wainwright says in Don Delillo's *Underworld* (1997), on a simple rule: "Whoever controls your eyeballs, run the world"(530). It operates as a recall that can be used as testimonial for present action. This makes the frame, a supplement; a cover that would determine the futurity of any narrative based on war; introducing an act of repetition in its content.

Considering framing itself as a transmedial phenomena, transmedial exercises in war art narrativity can accommodate the issues of iconoclasm, colonialism and terrorism when the ontological manifestation in the concept of the source medium and target medium moves beyond its transmissive and semiotic aspect. This emphasizes particularity in the historical and cultural use of media (war art) that is neither neutral nor marginal for popular plaudit.

In a theoretical appropriation of framing, transmedial narrations, such as those that use war art try to take portions of the earlier orchestrated images of the period to create modes of perception by imaging or calling back the attention of public memory. This process is an act of *priming*: the circulated images of war that exist or flow as micro-events serve as add-ons to the project of continuation or end of war. Priming, as Brian Massumi(2015) points, could be pragmatically put to affect not by simple emulation but by "abduction"(66). Abduction is to arrest or hijack the original image to further attention by transforming the image through transfer of both the frame and its framing that in turn determines the ethical shift in meaning and interpretation.

6. Framing Graffiti in American War Writing

War writings have often used graffiti in an "autotopographic" sense; that is, an aesthetic practice used as a material extension for a particular place and its connection to the individual self. Graffiti's context, in varied ways, is represented as a psychic territory of a soldier's life on the war front or as prosthetic territory of the foreign landscape that transposes onto the very materiality upon which it is inscribed as the speech of the foreign– that war is trespass. In his memoir on Vietnam War while recounting the loss of his legs, John Wolfe (2008), a paratrooper wrote:

> a combat veteran's intervals' will be filled with rubbery Halloween mask heads housing skulls shattered into tiny shards, schemeless mutilation, and shocked, pained expressions that violent and premature death casts on a dead face. These images are war's graffiti. They are scrawled across the veteran's mind, defacing the silence and peace others enjoy. (103)

Brian Turner, a veteran Infantry leader of the Iraq War gives a field tour of the war front to newly recruited soldiers, in his brochure like poem, titled, "What Every Soldier Should Know" (2005):

> You will hear the RPG coming for you.
> Not so the road side bomb.
> ....
> Parachute bombs and artillery shells
> Sewn into the carcasses of dead farm animals.
> Graffiti sprayed onto overpasses:

I will kell you, American.[iv]

In the first example, we see graffiti as a rhetorical trope that describes the body's torture —scars, marks or scratches left on the body. It relates to both physical and mental disfigurement: an image of the traumatic body and the very nature of traumatic memory. In the second example, it is an inscription of threat, a fear introduced for having been trespassed; in terms of both territorial and political space. These depictions approximate towards the metaphorical realm of a necropolis; accentuating war as a signifier of death, terror and vandalism. Looking at it from a different perspective we see a clear framing being evoked: where there is war, there are graffiti.

In Masha Hamilton's novel, *What Changes Everything* (2013), street art (post-graffiti art) emerges initially as a paratextual frame, but one that tends to imbibe a cognitive technique similar to the verbal *Bildeinsatnz*: an introductory picture meant as a moral frame to put before the reader not in the form of introductory verbal description but as visual image. The book cover apart from being the physical frame of the novel prepares the reader to the plot and theme of the story —war. Contrary to traditional notions of *Bildeinsatnz*[v], the power of rhetoric does not transfer to the verbal image but remains within the purview of the visual image. Hence the visual –paratextual frame, by its singular capacity interacts with the reader as the basis of a cognitive frame. Looking at the picture (see Fig.1) one sees at the outset a spatialized art put on a wall, and a young woman wearing the American flag on top of a black dress. A bird, having a faint resemblance to a hawk or a dove is perched on her, and on the left, blood drips onto her dress. This painting upon the wall gestures towards a tacit understanding from the onlooker while the wall acts both as a border and as an encounter; thereby creating both space and event. The bird, having the appearance of both a hawk and a dove is reflective of the common similes used by critics to show the obscure transition in the American political system, the switch between Bush (hawk) and Obama (dove) administration, one, that particularly, Chomsky (2008) alluded to, in his essay; "In the Campaign, The Unspeakable War" (26). This picture guides us to the story of the text at hand: of encountering borders (symbolizing America through the flag and Afghanistan through the black dress that might faintly allude to the *abaya*), encountering war,

Fig. 1, Kathleen Lynch and Dawid Ryskil, *What Changes Everything*, Cover design and illustration@ 2013

between death and life, between pain and pride, and between terror and peace. The physiology of the women (inclusive of other depictions of female figures within the text) represented in colors of blue, red, white and black also has a carnivalesque retake on Russian Constructivist painting; a genre that not only stood for its revolutionary ideals in the WWII politics but was also appropriated thereafter by the spoof culture from post-Vietnam era to America's "war on terror". It re-routes American war history to the posters of Uncle Sam, Obama's "Hope" (used for his electoral campaign) and, Trump's "Dope" posters (in response to his recent policy of immigration ban). Evoking a pageantry of national iconography revolving around war and national security at
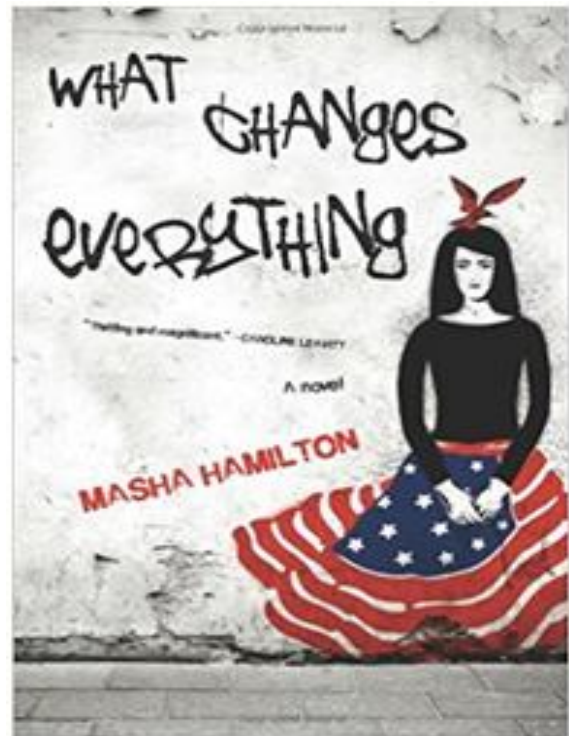
different metareferential levels, the painting on the wall exists as a captivating prelude to the novel. Hence, what one encounters within the text is the extension of the paratext in the form of ekphrastic imaging, i.e. the novel evolves from the picture– the verbal description draws its flesh from the visual one. This cover-painting imbibes the characteristic of both intermedial framing (which refers to paintings on book cover, dust jackets, frontispieces etc) and ekphrastic framing to perform a dual function of amplifying the boundaries between the verbal and visual as well as suggesting the representative spaces of difference "between the framing and the framed"[vi] (211).

While this privileging or reinstallation of the visual significantly justifies the novel's narrative project it alternately legitimizes graffiti as a serious mode of reflection. The ekphrasis that the narrator employs within the text deliberately falls short of the paratextual frame in order to exemplify the break –out of the linguistic frame and as, stated earlier exists independently. It evidently relates to "ekphrastic word-image hybrid", where, as Haiko Wandhoff[vii]following Bolter's inference, points out:

> A case of intermedial reduplication and reinforcement, for the ekphrases turn into painting or photographs on the book's surfaces and at the same time stay where they were and what they were: pictures painted by words (225).

This "intermedial reduplication and reinforcement" in Hamilton's novel brings street art to the centre through which any possible interpretation should begin with. The cover title, in all its visual acuity, "What Changes Everything" immediately connects to Danil's (graffiti artist) ontological crisis: "I feel like a war casualty myself...Is it wrong if I end by benefitting from it somehow?" Just like his brother's death in war, "a version of him had died too, living in its place someone who hung out in deserted buildings looking for signs" (116). Hamilton loosely bases the character of the dead Piotr on Patrick Daniel Tillman, a soldier who was killed by a "friendly fire" by his own fellow soldiers in Afghanistan and whose actual death was kept murky by the United States of Defense and pursued by the media only in terms of martyrdom: a habitual "photo opportunity" to keep simulated America's "war on terror". Even in the narrative frame, the time-space montages between Kabul and Brooklyn; the plotting in 1996 not only foregrounds the brutal assassination of Mohammad Najibullah Ahmadzai (former Afghanistan President) but also recalls America's ventures in the Middle East with the Gulf Wars, from which the idiomatic play of amorphous word-exchange between "freedom fighter" and "terrorism" originated. Setting the narrative in the month of September, her deliberate omission of "September 9" in chapter titles emerges as a metalepsis to the earlier canon of American war literature and the media saturated footages of falling towers from which America[viii] could relay its apocryphal doctrine of preemption. For her, as for Clarissa, whose husband (Todd) kept in hostage by Afghan tribes: "Google turns up a lot of stories" (227). Like her earlier novel, *31 Hours* (2009), here too, Hamilton continually sees a strange meeting ground between the grooming of a suicide bomber and a soldier, in the idea that the "war on terror" operates through the same euthanized principle.

Her project of iconoclasm is realized through the character of Danil and his mother Stella Sidorava. Through Danil, she experiments within the discourse of street art and notional ekphrasis to apprehend and subvert the ideology of "war on terror". Danil's street art is often archaeologising: he targets the crumbling Admiral Row, "once an oasis of stately entryways and arched windows for high-rank military officers of the 1970's"; the same Navy yards that were host to the industry of military electronics (ARC-5 radios) and upon the same ground The World Trade Centre thrived and died (115). Upon these "crumbled wallboards", he made it a point, "to rewrite

the present" as a testimony of Piotr's death; as a "Reminderer" that *The Raveneous war is upon us still.*" (37). His "unpaid, untitled job" of bombing the military remnants is "reclamation work"; the artistic labour of vandalism graduates in the archaic and theological undertone of phrases used: "an angel flight", "holy paint" and "moral" (35-37). The action of "trespass" and his art depicting "woman... dancing on top of an over sized clenched fist" along with his recurring use of the tag" Afgh" retraces its intertextual affinity with the antiquarian Bibilical story of Belhazzer's Feast and the writing on the wall. The inscription, "Afgh" has a similar incantatory power to the prophetic writing: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN"; the consequence of conquest and of stealing lives. Most of his works are images of blood, flames, American flags, and coffins — piercing templates jutting out to vandalize the complacent eye.

Clarissa's encounter with Danil's art makes her think: "Could Street Art over a shuttle track be articulating their barely spoken argument?" (152). The thought itself is legislative and compels the readers to participate in an unsettling contention within contemporary art discourses: of street art's liminal identity between art and crime. But, such confusions subversively underscore the dominant narratives of its framing by involving street art practice to enact micro-perceptual communication in disseminating the message of individual histories or events of war conflict that were hitherto obviated or abstracted by other media. In this capacity, the text exemplifies and transcends the status of graffiti or street art from "crimes of writing"[ix] to "writings on crime." Like the literary frame within which it embeds, street art performs as a testimonial mode for recounting war histories, acting as a possible heterotopic desire through which micro-political processes can be carried out. As Clarrisa reflects upon the painted walls, it becomes clear that attention to private spaces of loss brings a communitarian accord among those who encounter it and ready themselves for "new conversation and alliances" (171). The recurring encounter with the images of anonymous Afghan women, of soldiers, dying children exposes us to the mangled impressions of the present. The flexibility inherent to the medium of street art; of its being as ephemeral and anonymous reduces its risk in literary representation and offers authorial independence to pursue her discursive intentions, since it could easily be framed through notional ekphrasis. Notional ekphrasis, in Hefermen's (2004) conception of the term,

> does not even presuppose the existence of the works of art it describes, it need hardly treat them as exempt from the ravages of time and historical contingency, and in this respect it reflects a conception in the ephemerality of visual art. (91)

The text also illuminates the growth of allied capitalistic entrepreneurship that emerges and functions through war and terror. They exist as semi-privatized firms lobbying capital for the production of a market that caters to war-time consumer goods, of which art remains one. In this context, Danil's graffiti work fits the mode of preference and taste of a larger project that would give esoteric superficiality to narratives of "war on terror". In succumbing to such market, Danil's ethical goals of doing art—" of remembering his brother" that is "too old for vandalism... even in the name of protest art" gets threatened by "some patrons with fat wallets and media connections[who] want to bring attention to war... for the anniversary of the invasion, ...for PR reasons."(35-191). The marriage between capitalist commissioneering and propaganda perpetuates myth-making and categorically restricts street art's earlier dimension and freedom to navigate into the realms of the truth. The whole mission to break the former frame by the art's own ontological necessity undermines the stability of its own frame. In other words, the act of iconoclasm happens in reverse, as the frame meant as counter-site by the other possible frame cannibalizes its original framework and becomes one like it.

Stella's personal letters to Noam Chomsky ("Is it possible that an American military officer would lie to a mother about the death of her son in war" (125)), General Mc Chyrstal ("if you could reply and specify the circumstances of the award he was given posthumously" (187)), Steve Coll ("I am wondering if there are army records that give more details about fatalities than are given to family members of fallen soldiers" (188)) and Bob Dylan ("I'm glad I did because you said something I still remember: "Art, if there is such a thing, is in the bathrooms; everybody knows that"(189)) - recounts the narrative's engagement with questioning the epistemological frames surrounding the "war on terror" and also exist as a verbal conduit to Danil's art. Stella's persistent attempts to know the actual circumstances of Piotr's death corresponds powerfully to Pat Tillman's mother, Mary Tillman whose singlehanded determination to search for the truth exposes and breaks the myth of America's just war policy and security measures. This intertext of real events within the fictional framework expands and revitalizes graffiti by enabling the art form to impart a greater hermeneutical rigor to the main narrative.

7. Conclusion

In his epochal essay, "Communication as a *techné*", Jonathan Sterne (2006) sums up communication as "a philosophical and political problem, because it is a practical art through which people make, break, or maintain their worlds" (97). If this assumption holds true, then it is not more visible in any other form than in war and images on war. This paper substantiates both the theoretical and transmedial underpinnings of understanding the framing of "war on terror" and makes room for the critical reaffirmation of new alternative media such as graffiti and street-art in participating with and against the normative apparatus of image dissemination and meaning production; working best at a micro-perceptual level to clear the "fog of war". Given that undecidability and contortion of reality in the pretext of "national security" and "combating terror" remains untenable in any possible war-situation, the rhetorical use of graffiti through its mediation in literary writing on war stands in contradiction to those frames of "one-way traffic", and has a centrifugal way of offering affect enhancing the different novel ways of responding to it.

Notes:

[i] Walsh, David. "UN conceals Picasso's Guernica For Powell's Presentation". *Worlds Socialist Website*, 8th Feb. 2003, https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2003/02/guer-f08.html. Accessed 20 May. 2016.

[ii] In her article, "The Writing on the Walls: The Graffiti of the Intifada", the anthropologist, Julie Peteet, interviews a young woman from Beit Hanina, a suburb region of Jerusalem in the West Bank of Palestine, who says about the graffiti in her neighborhood: "It's kind of like reading a newspaper. As I walk to the main road, I scan the walls quickly to see what is newly written....I try to quickly read the new graffiti. I think of it as a way of getting the news..."(151), [in *Cultural Anthropology*, vol.11, No.2(May, 1996),pp.139-159].

[iii] In his, "Preface: For a War on Error", W. J.T Mitchell mentions that the power of "critical iconoclasm" should be "a method that recognizes and embraces both the unreality of images and their operational reality."(xviii) (*Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to Present,* University of Chicago Press, 2014).

[iv] Turner,Brian."What Every Soldier Should Know" *Poetry Foundation*.
https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/54140. Accessed 20 May 2016.

[v] As used by scholars to read ekphrastic texts of the Middle Ages. In these texts, the introductory lines were deliberately allocated to a pictorial description of the visual works. Instances of these tendencies can be

found in Virgil's *Aeneid*, where the encounter of the poet with a mural picture about the Trojan War is attended by pictorial description without revealing or incorporating the original picture in the text.

vi See, Wandhoff, Haiko.(2006). "Found(ed) in a Picture: Ekphrastic Framing in Ancient, Medieval, and Contemporary Literature". Werner Wolf and Walter Berhart, Eds. *Framing Borders in Literature and Other Media*, New York: Rodopi. (207-228). Here, he draws the technique of *Bildeinsatz* from Schissel von Fleschenberg(1913), who observed that in classical poetry like "epics, epyllions, and romances there can be found ekphrases and other forms of verbal pictures in initial position" and that can act as a "moral maxim "of the story to be unfolded. (112-113).

vii *Ibid*. Also see, Bolter, Jay David.(1996). "Ekphrasis, Virtual Reality and the Future of Writing". G.Nunberg, ed.*The Future of Book*, Berkeley: University of California Press, (253-271).

viii Novels especially written before and immediately after 9/11 like, Don Delillo's *Falling Man* (2007), Colum McCann's *Let The Great World Spin* (2009) and to a certain extent, Gerald McDaniel's *Night Sweats and Graffiti* (2013) focus exclusively a portion of their work, dramatizing the fall of the Twin Towers.

ix See Susan Stewart,(1992). "*Ceci Tuera Cela*: Graffiti as Crime and Art", *Crimes of Writing: Problems in the Containment of Representation*, U.S.A: Oxford University Press.(206-235). She writes, "graffiti aggrandizes the very culture of novelty and consumption it seeks to attack. It does not create "genuine" alternative to existing forms of artistic expression and consumption, so much as it presents itself as a practice of novelty and individuation quite analogous to such existing forms" (25). However, this can be connected to graffiti made during war or about war, where the emphasis of individuation is replaced by that of geopolitics. I would also claim, that my understanding of graffiti does not see it as a means of protest or revolution (while L.G Chaffe's *Political Protest and Street Art: Popular tools for democratization in Hispanic countries* (1993) and Holly Eva Ryan's *Political Street Art: Communication, culture and resistance in Latin America* (2017) are two sociological studies done in this context) and is strictly limited to the way it attempts to participate in the narrative of the war of images during such precarious political adventures as "war on terror." In this respect, the aspect of illegality becomes its most powerful tool to question the narrative of the status-quo.

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