

Phenomenological Study of the Sensation of Disembodied and Silent Voices in Spike Jones' *Her* and Shehryar Khan's *The Puppeteer*

Abstract

This paper is a phenomenological analysis of the sensation of disembodied and silent voices in the movies *Her* (2014) by Spike Jones and Shehryar Khan's *The Puppeteer* (2015) in light of Michel Chion's concepts of acousmetre and mutes. The research borrows from Michel Chion's philosophy of sound to demonstrate how sound utilizes acousmetre and mutes as sonic agents whose dislocated vocals provide the audience with a phenomenal self-reflexivity and epiphanic understanding of the characters' state of mind and state of living. The analysis explores the phenomenology of pain, love, desolation and fear of the characters as an experiential process identified through the lens of Michel Chion's sound philosophy. Hence, the present paper focuses on the experience of sound through the lens of Michel Chion's Sound Theory of acousmetre and mute characters in contrast to the mimetic use of sound as realistic presentation. It explores how the manifestation of sound in film-making practices subverts the conventional audio-visual link by showing how sound can be a powerful agency independent of any corporeal existence.

Keywords: Phenomenology, acousmetre, mutes, Michel Chion, Pakistan, Spike Jones

Introduction to Phenomenological Approach in Film Studies

Phenomenology is an "approach that concentrates on the study of consciousness and the objects of direct experience" (LEXICO). The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy explains phenomenology as the "study of phenomena" or "appearance of things" in connection to how those things are experienced through involving sensations of sight, sound or feeling (Smith). A

German critic coined the term with the Greek word “phainomenon” (Etymologyonline), which means “a fact directly observed, a thing that appears or is perceived, an occurrence” (Etymologyonline). A German usage of the term “phenomenology” proposes it as an idea of an activity that extends its meaning from a mere experience to the involvement of an active activity (“I make the experience” rather than “I experience”) (Stadler 36). Phenomenology “emphasizes the role of the senses in reception, prioritizing sensations, feelings and other emotional phenomena and consequently valuing descriptive modes” (Harvie 224). Stadler explains that the word “phenomenology” used in everyday life “circumscribes the generally conscious perception of reality or events or the direct participation in events as well as the result of such encounters” (Stadler 41) of “knowledge and consciousness of the self, the past, the world” (Stadler 41). In film studies, a phenomenological approach disregards the spectator as a passive onlooker; however, works to involve a spectator's active participation in the entire experience projected on the screen. The etymology of the word cinema means “envisioning” that suggests diverse ways in effect cinema could be a medium of representation of reality solely through its visual manifestations (Richard Barmas xiii). The present manuscript uses the hermeneutic approach to phenomenology (Neubauer 94). Neubauer defines the goal of hermeneutic phenomenology “as an approach that describes the meaning of an experience - both in terms of what was experienced and how it was experienced” (Neubauer 91). Hermeneutic phenomenology seeks to understand “the deeper layers of human experience that lay obscured beneath surface” (Neubauer 94) of human “awareness” (Neubauer 94), also tries to evaluate “how the individual’s lifeworld...influences experience” (Neubauer 94). Moreover, “hermeneutic phenomenology recognizes” and values “the researcher’s own experiences” (Neubauer 95). This idea intersects the phenomenological approach to film theory that contests seeing a film as a

mere “metaphor of window, frame, or mirror” (Stadler 41) proposed by “the realist, formalist, psychological film theories” of the early twentieth century” (Stadler 41). On the contrary, the phenomenological approach in film studies hinges on the idea of active involvement of the viewers through stimulating their sensual experiences. Presumably, the film was a frame or a window that completely ignored the importance of sound and reduced the film experience on the visuals. Building on this idea, the present study sees how sound through Michel Chion’s *Acousmetres* and *Mutes* is used as a cinematic device to explore the phenomenological experiences of characters. Here the viewer is not merely “a passive onlooker, an addressee, or, at the most, an owner of the gaze and desire” (Stadler 37). Sound and its incongruity used in cinematic presentation allow active participation of the spectators through revivification of their acoustic and visual sensation. It is how Michel Chion’s *Sound* theory falls under the phenomenological approach by presenting a film as an experience of pain, desolation and confinement faced by characters in the age of mechanical and fast-paced capitalism. The rendition of acoustic sensation opens up an array of personal experiential self-reflexes lived through the experiences of onscreen characters. Michel Chion’s proposes sound as “a queen of the senses” (Chion 14) through which spectators envisage sound as a mediator, and they do not hear the sound as an information carrier or a communicative channel complementing the image. Sound encompasses the “role of actually and metaphorically anchoring and stabilizing the spectator’s body and self-perception as a perceiving subject” (Chion 14) in space.

Purpose of Study

The paper looks into the implication of Michel Chion’s sound theory in special connection with Spike Jones’ movies that are deemed suitable to analyse the impact of acoustic sensation in the phenomenological exploration in film studies. The paper analyses a feature film by Hollywood

production, Spike Jones' *Her* (2014), in contrast, to an indigenous short film presented by Sheheryar Khan's *The Puppeteer* (2017). The latter is of 10 minutes duration by a Pakistani UET student selected to examine Michel Chion's Sound Theory against an internationally acclaimed Hollywood film to highlight the progression in cinematic experimentation from Pakistan where presumably film medium dawdles in experimentation or creativity. Subsequently, an academic activity led to curious inspection further developed into a research article to expound different ways sounds is experimentally incorporated by Pakistani filmmakers in phenomenological rendition differently than renowned Hollywood filmmakers.

A brief overview of the introduction of sound in cinema is necessary to clarify how it stands distinct to soundtrack, music, and human voices as dialogues in films before discussing at length about Michel Chion's proposition of Sound Theory in this research. Motion pictures after the First World War witnessed a phenomenal breakthrough when sound entered the realm of cinema. It all began in 1891 when William Kennedy Laurie Dickson, with his associates in Thomas Edison's Laboratory, invented the first motion-picture camera called Kinetograph (Nichols). It was a device with pictures attached in a kaleidoscopic scenic arrangement seen through an aperture or a peephole (Stam 129). This invention paved the way for a newer form of cinema called silent films. Silent films are called non-synchronized sound films due to the absence of any audible sound attached to the on-screen visual image (Richard Barmas 11). The audience, indeed, relied solely on their visual faculties to draw logical inference about the whole film through title cards, written indications of the plot and key dialogue lines displayed to them during the film screening (Kracauer 11). In 1927, the cinema world saw its first sound film called the Talkies or Talking film, followed by a first feature-length Talking Movie called "The Jazz Singer", (Barmas 11) made by Warner Bros in 1927. Talkies/ Talking films, or "talking pictures"

(Nichols 117) are called motion pictures when for the first-time sound was audible that synched with the on-screen image. Hence, the sensation of sound gradually became a preeminent requisite of talking films; since its inception, many film theorists have shown concerns about its artistic applications and its combined relevance to its visual on-screen manifestations.

Nevertheless, the transition from silent films to talking movies has acknowledged the use of sound as an important resource for the film medium but is reckoned to be more than a tool for realistic cinema. In silent films, the moviegoers were passive onlookers who relied heavily on their visual faculties to infer the clues displayed to them through placards or clue posts. But in talkies, the addition of dialogues exhibited a fresh ambience for cinematic realism in movie houses. In movie-making, dialogues were used as a technical device to articulate the verbal sounds and auditory expressions of voices synching with visual movements of the characters' lips, thereby lending a real-life onscreen experience for the cinema-goers. On the other hand, experimentations with sound through on-screen soundtracks and songs gave expressions to the inner feelings, imaginations, dreams and abstractions in a surrealist manner. These innovative demonstrations proved a phenomenal experience for the cinema-goers by transposing the viewers to a metaphysical plain of imagination than the kind of experience rendered by realistic cinema. Those were some of a few examples by which sound had played a significant role in the audio-visual link. However, the exhaustive utilization of sound to have been confined in its "co-expressibility" with visuals (Chion 242) remains debatable for contemporary film critics.

The present paper cedes to Michel Chion's proposition that sound "gives" film a body. He stressed that the involvement of sound or keeping the sounds muted invites a characteristic richness and phenomenal involvement for the spectators. He opposes the conventional modes of leaving spectators as passive onlookers and contests in providing readymade information to

them. He is more inclined to involve spectators through revivifying their sensuous sensibilities as he argues that “we are more susceptible to sound than to visual perceptions” (Kane 4). He exclusively defines sound or sounds to those are heard or unheard “voices” (Hagener 33) Michel Chion’s sound film theory presents a phenomenal experience wherein sound is the prime trope that allows spectators to draw their perceptions through their active participation while watching a movie. Unlike passive spectators, the spectators immersed live through the experiences of pain, joy, desolation and love with characters in the film. The present research aims to explore these phenomenal experiences utilizing Michel Chion’s concept of sound/ image relationship in allegiance with phenomenological film approach where sound demands an active viewership (a subject that constitutes his own experience) (Stadler 37). The research analyses Michel Chion’s concept of dislocated voices or vocals drawn from his book (Chion). The first part of the analysis will explore one of Chion’s dislocated voices termed “Acousmetre”; The second segment of the paper will expound on his second work on dislocated voices referred to Mutism or Mutes.

Initially, the presence of sound congruent with the visuals sparked mixed responses by many film theorists. For instance, in 1928, Russia, Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Alexandrov approved of “non-synchronous mode of cinema” (Learning), that incorporating “dialogues” would be synonymous with “photographed performances of a theatrical sort” (Learning). In the same, the cinematic approach in making films disapproved the usage of sound like a mere regression to the theatre. For example, in France, Germaine Dulac saw cinema “necessarily” as a “silent” form of “art” (Braudy 144). Next, Renie Clare stressed that cinema should “remain visual at all costs” (Braudy 144). In *The Precocious Old Age of Cinema* (1933) Artaud, warned that “sound might prod the cinema to adopt outmoded conventions” (Braudy and Cohan 147). On the contrary, Einstein anticipated “phonogene of sound could potentially complement the photogene of an

image” in cinema (Braudy 147). Erwin Panofsky, an art historian, terms that “sound ceases to express any further than what it has already in its expressibility with the visual presentation” and “that cinema” is restricted “to the mere mechanical reproduction of physical reality” (Chion 242).

Acousmeter extends from the Greek word “akousma” which means “a thing heard” (Chion 18). The original meaning of the word dates back to the Greek philosopher Pythagoras. He presumably tutored his students from behind a curtain “so the sight of the speaker would not distract them from the message” (Chion 19). “Akousma” signifies “listeners” or “auditors (Kane 4) linking it to “akousmatikoi”, the name given to Pythagoras’ students. In the 1950s, Pierre Schaeffer, substituted “akousma” to “acousmatic” that meant an inventor of musique concrète (Gobin 318). The literal meaning of “acousmatic” is a sound heard “without its cause or source being seen” (Chion 18). In the following years a French composer, filmmaker, and theoretician, Michel Chion, coined “acousmatic” (an archaic term describing something that one hears but whose origin is invisible) with “etre”, the French verb “to be” which sums up to be something of a sonic being or nonbeing (M. a. Chion 18). Michel Chion’s characteristics of audibility revolve around human voices that are heard or unheard “voice” (Horton 52). He called it a voice that “has not yet been visualized” (Chion 18) and that cannot connect to a face, “a special being, a kind of talking and acting shadow” (Chion 21). As voices are like “dancing shadows” (Chion 21) that have no tangible body attached to its existence, in the same way, Chion clarifies that these are voices unattached to any visually depicted bodies and faces or figure” (Vernallis 200).

Acousmetre are powerful characters without corporeal bodies that play upon the sensations of the characters and spectators. Michel Chion’s calls acousmetre itself a character with a non-existent body. This disembodied voice has immense power to impose tension which

is disturbingly heard but cannot be located. It can invade, create disequilibrium and is omnipotent in all its attributes. Chion's voices can be diegetic and non-diegetic. Diegetic sound can be either internal or external, onscreen or offscreen, and recorded during production or constructed during postproduction. The most familiar kind of movie sound is diegetic, and onscreen sound that simultaneously occurs with the image that is unedited sounds like footsteps or dialogues between two characters and knocks at the door the ring of a telephone, the report from a fired gun, ordinary dialogue (Barmas 376). Those sounds have specific relevance with the onscreen image. Non-diegetic sound is offscreen and recorded during postproduction, and it is assumed to be inaudible to the characters onscreen. The most familiar forms of non-diegetic sound are musical scores and narration spoken by a voice that does not originate from the same place and time as the characters on the screen (Barmas 376). For Chion diegetic or non-diegetic sounds may have a source but could not be identified with any existing human face or a figure. He illustrates an example of acousmetre in films like Hitchcock's *Psycho*. In this film, the voice directs the protagonist's actions. Critics call it the mother's voice, or it is assumed as the murderer's mother, is disturbingly heard but not seen. The diegetic sounds of footsteps are partially seen, hover as a sinister shadow substantiate its onscreen presence. The voice populates the frame but has no face associated with it. Acousmetre emerges as a character but one with a nonexistent and relatable figure or face. Acousmetre is the voice, mobile, malleable, modular and invasive (Chion 23), and according to Chion, it is ubiquitous, panoptic, omniscient and omnipotent (Chion 25). The analysis draws on Chion's non-diegetic sound of Samantha in Spike Jones' film "Her".

Michel Chion's second work on dislocated voices refers to *Mutism or Mutes*. Unlike acousmetre, he clarifies that Mutes are not biologically mute characters, but they have silent

vocals or exhibit temporary or permanent vocal silence showing dislocation of sound in their entirety within the frame of a film (Chion 100). Mutism defines as those who are seen but are unheard of (Chion 25). They imbibe the gesticulation powers bring uniqueness in their on-screen presence. Chion posits that similar to the acousmetre's omnipotence, mutes or mute characters can function as a silent witness or moral conscience, not necessarily at the centre of the story but operating as a focal point running alongside the main action of the plot. Chion's mutes, unlike acousmetre, have powers of narrational disruption and critical intervention. In this regard, the voiceless body and bodiless voice have corresponding powers. They have angelic powers or could be demonically spectral, are ubiquitous, terrifying, omnipotent and secretly knowledgeable (Chion 96-100). For Chion, the presence of a mute character connotes that a secret exists only the character knows but does not disclose it, which refers back to the roots of cinema when silent films were supposed to carry a 'great secret' (Chion). Mutes also bring out questions of identity, origin and desire, carrying an angelic or diabolical ubiquity because they are not bound to a voice, which calls upon the prominence of language, speech and voice in cinema (Chion 96-100). To function as someone, one needs to call upon him. As separate names but follow the same idea of dislocated voices, acousmetre and mute disrupt the fixity of voice to a body (Chion 101).

Spike Jones' *Her*

Spike Jones's *Her* (2013) revolves around a Theodore who earns his living as a writer. He is a loner and spends most of his time writing for other people. After a happy marriage, his wife leaves him heartbroken and now lives an introverted life drowning himself in heaps of unfinished assignments. Theodore screen played by Joaquin Phoenix comes across a new operating system that is assumed to develop intuitively over time. He installs this program followed by a bright

voice greeting him calling herself “Samantha”, played by Hollywood actress Scarlett Johansson. The movie takes an unexpected turn when Theodore establishes an amicable association with this playfully “unseen voice” which later deepens into love.

Samantha’s voice has the directive powers to let Theodore Twombly break away from his self-imposed confinement. The voice initially plays the role of a secretary in checking his emails, sorting all his unfinished assignments, reminding him of his upcoming deadlines and working through as his professional assistant. Here Samantha’s voice is Michel Chion’s acousmetre whose acousmatic presence is recognized as just a voice, that could be heard but not identifiable with a human face. Later her sonic powers augment with her proclamation that “I am not limited... I can be anywhere and everywhere simultaneously” (Jonze), this is characteristic of Chion’s acousmetre whose omnipresence could be sensed animatingly all over the place. Theodore takes the OS along on long walks and discusses everything with her as a companion. Samantha states that “I used to be...so worried about not having a body...I’m growing in a way I couldn’t if I had a physical form... I’m not tethered to time or space in any way that I would be if I was stuck in a body that’s inevitably gonna die. The growing powers of Samantha’s voice begin to enfold even in the spectator’s body. Her disembodied voice acts like a “talking shadow” evolving into a powerful character whose virtual existence would not decrease but grow

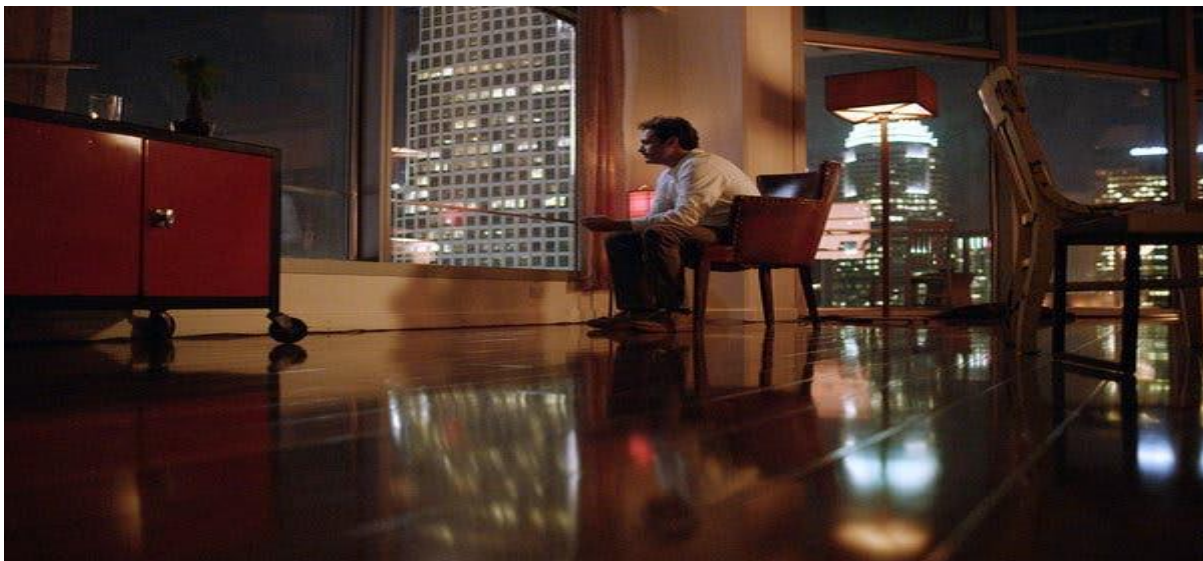


manifold with time. Like Theodore, the viewers cannot locate Samantha's voice but gradually become susceptible to its growing powers. Theodore's vulnerability towards Samantha's voice could be seen through his illusionary relationship with Samantha when he decides to end his marriage with his wife Catherine.

When Theodore's wife, Catherine, inquires about his life, he confesses to having a relationship with an OS and is mocked of someone whom Theodore could not visually see or touch physically but has gradually taken control over Theodore's thoughts, desire and actions. Phenomenological approach focuses on the reading of social behaviour as "the study of human lived experience and that human experience is rooted in people's meanings, interpretations, activities and interactions" (Neubauer 91). We see that Chion's sound theory enables the spectators experience Theodore's loneliness in a capitalist world. He confesses that "I even made a new friend. I have a friend and the absurd thing is an operating system...she's amazing. She's... (s)he's so smart. She doesn't just see things in black or white. She sees things in this whole grey area and she's helping me explore it and we just bonded quickly. I'm weird. That's weird, right, bonding with an OS?". Samantha's friendly ubiquity urges Theodore's desire to see

her, physically feel her and experience sexual intimacy with her. He says: “I wish I could put my arms around you. I wish I could touch you” (Jonze). It is at this point he begins to fancy an imaginary face to a voice accompanying him day and night. One day she shares an incident about “writing a new piece of music” that “captures them both in life together”. He instantly responds envisioning her in the song with him replying that he “can see” her in that musical piece. Samantha is a virtual being, that doesn’t stop Theodore from fantasizing about what he would do if she were real.

Resultantly, Samantha’s bodiless voice grips Theodore to a degree that he finds no repose with any other woman. Theodore and Samantha share movies ending up watching those with x-rated scenes. To accommodate Theodore’s sexual desires, Samantha also arranges a surrogate



named Isabella in her place. It is, partially also, because Theodore desires her bodily presence, which is why this arrangement could help him imagine having sex with Samantha through Isabella’s body. Subsequently, sexual intimacy between the two is identifiable through their first sex scene. That particular scene is so tender and erotically charged that it just demands that a person submits to it. Theodore and the spectators, alike, connect with the idea behind it. The

implication of the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, also called an “interpretive approach” (Dutta 206; Stadler 94), allows viewers assess the reasons behind Theodore’s actions and desires. We see that the entire essence of the scene falls on the experience to be loved, it amplifies the experience of an emotional connection with someone whom one loves. In addition, Michel Chion’s sound sensations pave the way to delve into studying “human lived experience” (Dutta 206). Despite, Samantha’s bodiless presence, her voice provides him with all possible voyeuristic pleasures he has longed for in a spouse. But this could not last long as Theodore becomes distraught and troubled accepting anyone else as a surrogate for Samantha’s voice. The voice overwhelms Theodore’s fancy that now no face or figure ceases to fit the uniqueness of Samantha’s voice. He falls in love with Samantha’s voice and avowals that he has “never loved anyone the way” he “loved you”-Samantha. Moreover, the audience evaluates how human experience is rooted in people’s/characters/viewers meanings, interpretations, activities and interactions” (Dutta 206). The entire film hangs in the epiphany of Samantha’s voice, an acousmetre. She turns out to be a queer cinematic figure or a cinematic tool, one with an audible voice but without any visible body. Her voice gains a strange potency to grip the character in her

powers. The term queer here implies in a metaphoric sense. Building on Marquis Thiel's propositions that "Queer theory is unconfined to sexualities or sexual rights. It also questions



established social, economic and political power relations – and critically interrogates notions of security" (Thiel). Here Samantha's voice performs as "the fluid and humanly performed nature of sexuality" (Thiel). Queer theory envisages" subjective knowledge about constructed aspects of society that are "fluid", "not always in line with societal norms" (Thiel) and do not have "a uniform access to reality" (Thiel).

Samantha's voice may seem to have a queer relationship with real existence. It is magical, but the sonic power has left Theodore drained or perhaps more distraught than the spectators saw him before meeting Samantha. For Theodore, everything boils down to his quest for love and companionship. Samantha's source of existence remained obscure for Theodore, the desire to uncover persists, but it hangs suspended till the end. Mr Jonze, in his interview, expressed that "There are ways that technology brings us closer and ways that it makes us further apart — and that's not what this movie is about. It was about the way we relate to each other and long to connect: our inabilities to connect, fears of intimacy, all the stuff you bring up with any

other human being” (BBCNewsnight). Like Theodore, Samantha’s voice stimulates multiple feelings of curiosity, bemusement, awe, wonder, or even fear among the spectators to be left alone in the world where everyone immerses into their machines and no human interaction could be found.

Sheheryar Khan’s *The Puppeteer*

The Puppeteer (2015) is a short film written and directed by Sheheryar Khan with his group members from the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore. It screened at FiLUM, an International Film Festival arranged, at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) in the category of Celebrating Art and Passion in 2015 appreciated for its unprecedented acoustic artistry employed in the contemporary cinema in Pakistan. In its 10 minutes duration, a mute character appears with a hammer clutched in his hand that seems to be the sole animated existence occupying the major onscreen space. This is Chion’s mute character whose permanent vocal silence suggests dislocation of vocals who does not utter a word, but onscreen agility is complemented with the sonic presence of his heavy panting and staring gaze. As in Spike Jones’ *Her*, here again, the dislocation of sound also acts as an agent inviting the spectators’ active participation. The spectators are no longer passively receivers of their visual information. Their reception is stirred by the acoustical, senso-motorical, somatical and effectively loaded visual texture of the film (Sound 9). The spectators’ vigilant acoustic sensation attached to the onscreen voices in this short film would bring in variegated responses. The voices could be suggestive of multifaceted meanings such as voices suggestive of the unseen Godly



presence, the wrenching hand of capitalistic ideologies, economical strains or man's inner greed that invisibly haunt the entire existence of modern man.

When the camera cranes circularly around a confined room, the mute character is seen to have a collection of stuffed toys. The audience's focus shifts from the mute to different stuffed toys sprawled in a claustrophobic space. The mute character recklessly hammers a stuffed toy against the wall where the non-diegetic sound of a feeble tinkle incessantly ticks the passing moments of time or life in the background. The hammer's thud intercepts the sound of the tinkle followed by a concoction of sounds. This acousmatic mingling of the mute character's heavy breathing with non-diegetic tinkling sound with the thud of heavy hammering against the wall creates a sinister sonic landscape. This amplifies even further as a sonorous laugh susurrates the mute's actions from behind.



The demonic voices of laughter and continuous echoes of calling out of hum agaye hain hain ghar, ghar, ghar which translates, "we have arrived home" are acousmetre who are

intermittently heard but not seen onscreen. Other than the mute character's presence, the voices of laughter and fumbles act as a sonic character whose panoptical gaze pivots the onscreen visuals. The voices are heard but are divorced from their tangible source or a human body which are characteristics of Chion's acousmetre. The mute character function as a silent witness or a silent puppet who may not necessarily be positioned at the centre of the story but operates as a key focal point running alongside the main action of the plot. The mute silent unidentified character is in perpetual surveillance under the panoptic sonic gaze of the bodiless on-screen voices. The short film ends with a clawed hand following the mute character is seen walking with the stuffed toys caged in a small house. But the film has more to offer through a world of a disturbing soundscape. The tone of the entire film muffles, and both the acousmetre and mute act as tropes manifesting a strangulated sonic scape of humanity shackled to its destiny. Chion's mute stimulates diverse questions of identity, origin and desire, diabolical ubiquity because they are not bound to a voice (Chion 100). The mute and the acousmetre are similar in striking ways,



one who is voiceless but has an intense omnipresence, while the other, bodiless but is malleable and invasive. Husserl's phenomenology, Merleau-Ponty views the individual as the body itself, within a time and place, performing in the world in which it lives (Duranti 18). For Merleau-Ponty, the body is "our anchor in the world" or "our general means of holding on to a world"

(Merleau-Ponty 239). Their voice-image relation is analysed through the situation in which the spectators experience themselves, who do not passively visualise the characters but actively participate in the hearing and phenomenologically experience the entire situation.

Conclusion

The research highlights how the sound theory and phenomenology in cinema invokes the dormant sensation of the viewers. It demonstrated how Michel Chion's use of sound/voice is a central feature of sound films. Chion points out, "There is always something about the sound that bypasses and surprises us, no matter what we do" (Chion Xvii). The study shows how Michel Chion's use of sound inverts the sound/image link and utilizes "acousmetre" and "mutes" as sonic agents whose dislocated vocals provide the audience with a phenomenal/sensual experience of self-reflexivity. Straub and Huillet associate the spectators' filmy experience as "hearing with their eyes and seeing with their ears" (Chion 20). Phenomenology is interested in the ways receivers perceive the work: what figures and forms they can distinguish in it, how the figure emerges from the disfigured form from the formless (Pavis 10). And in alliance with Michel Chion's theoretical paradigm of sound, the phenomenological approach in cinema invites the viewers to "develop constructive ideas" about the present conditions of isolation and threat man experiences in the age of technology and materialism. It is a self-reflexive technique that lends a phenomenal experience for the audience, it drags them into the cinematic world as active spectators, stirs their otherwise dormant senses and probes them looking inwards into themselves and finding meanings into their existence and their relations. Hence, the study helps in portraying a unified picture of viewers and audiences but concludes in Stadler's words that film as an experience constructs "not only an active spectator but also a concrete socio-historical background for viewers and groups of viewers" (Stadler 49).

Glossary

The film is a motion picture which is considered as more challenging and serious film derives from the celluloid strip on which the images that makeup motion pictures were originally captured, cut, and projected; movies is simply short for motion pictures. Since we consider all cinema worthy of study, acknowledge that films are increasingly shot on formats other than film stock

Movies are made for entertainment purposes “at a Multiplex” (Britannica)

Diegetic sounds originate from the source within the film, which could come on-screen or off-screen, most of the familiar examples of diegetic sounds are the footsteps, ordinary dialogues (Hayward 83)

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