

Representation of Latinos in Hollywood: Masculinity in Iñárritu's Films

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Abstract: This paper studies the image of Latinos in the United States of America through the Hollywood films production by the well-known Mexican director, Alejandro González Iñárritu. Using content analysis of the Latinos characters in the three films directed by him and in collaboration with screenwriter Guillermo Arriaga, the present paper examines the masculinity frame to see whether the Latinos are portrayed positively or negatively in Hollywood movies. Semiotics in films and the Character theory are used as the theoretical framework. The reason for choosing this director is to control the research for the racialization that might exist if we pick a non-Latino director. The hypothesis is that the portrayal of the main characters is a violent masculinity and a negative one. Regardless of the intentional or unintentional reasons behind it, the effect of such portrayal on the overall picture of Latinos is a negative one in the sense that according to the representation theory, using Goffman Character and Christian Metz's Semiotics theories, people tend to accept something that is repeated enough for them as the reality and therefore act upon it.

Key words: Hollywood, Masculinity, Latinos, Semiotic, Character theory, Iñárritu.

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Introduction

Most of the 315 million people who live in the United States of America are either immigrants or have ancestry to another country. In fact, the only truly American people are the Native ones. This country is based on the idea of immigration in pursuit of a better social and economic life. According to U.S. Census Bureau(2012), there are roughly 52 million Hispanics living in the United States, representing approximately 16.7% of the U.S. total population, and making them the nation's largest ethnic minority. Among Hispanic subgroups, Mexicans ranked as the largest at 63%, followed by Puerto Ricans (9.2%), Cubans (3.5%), Salvadorans (3.3%),

Dominicans (2.8%), and the remaining 18.2% were Guatemalans, Colombians, Hondurans, Ecuadorians, Peruvians, Portuguese, Brazilian and Spanish. The main reason for their migration has been either that they are politically endangered or have financial problems. The Cubans for instance who ended up in America wanted to escape the political conditions back home. Fleeing from the communist Cuba, they were automatically considered as 'political refugees' in America for thirty-five years until 1995. As a result of America's opposition to the Cuban government, they were treated in America better than almost any other ethnic group. This has also been partially because of their high level of education and professionalism before migration (Martin, 2006).

Some of the Latinos are immigrants that have crossed the border voluntarily, legally or illegally; however, many Latinos living in Mexico gained independence from Spain but their land was separated from Mexico in 1815 because of the Mexican war of 1846-1848 and they were consequently colonized again. These areas include Texas, New Mexico, California, Colorado, Utah, Nevada and most of Arizona. There have been attempts among Latinos to regain their position as an accomplished separate proud ethnic group rather than a minority, and consequently, to be originally American. In 1960s and 70s, Mexican Americans started a political activity led by Cesar Chavez and Reies Lopez Tijerina in order to grow ethnic consciousness. This movement was very similar to that of the Blacks: both wanted to exercise their rights and have equal economic and cultural opportunities; both declined in the course of recent decades but managed to draw the attention of Americans to them as a big minority group. The story of Puerto Rico was somehow different, as it became an American territory in 1898 after the Spanish-American

War and its people became American citizens in 1917, which enabled them to come to America freely.

Latinos, Mexicans in particular, mostly live in the Southwest; almost half in California and Texas. Puerto Ricans are mostly in the East and Cubans are in Florida. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, legal Hispanic household income is only 75 percent of White American income. There is also a high rate of poverty and unemployment among them, and their socio economic status is at a low level. The reason behind this situation is partly their jobs being the lowest paid ones, their low level of education, and employment discrimination (Camarillo and Bonilla, 2001). They are present in the news, advertisements, election campaigns, political debates, television and films. The common major feature that is present in all of these portrayals is the anxiety and problems related to them that should be solved. These problems are varied: from time to time it is the illegal immigration from the South that brings up economic concerns as well as security ones; every so often it is their language that initiates discussions on allowing or banning bilingual education; now and then is their labor force that takes the low paid jobs; sometimes it is their involvement in illegal activities, crimes, drug dealing and human trafficking. They also appear in talks on welfare, healthcare and other governmental social programs: 'a burden on the other American taxpayers'. Hence, they are generally associated with problems.

In the film industry as well, they are frequently being used as antagonists, villains and masculine in stories. In the past, Latinos started appearing in movies with the role of the great passionate lover, a more feminine role. Hence, they started appearing as the not very intelligent bandit in i.e. Western Spaghettis. Later, the sometimes female Latino roles turned to maids that at times were young and beautiful and had wasted talents, or were older and kind and usually without any knowledge of the English language, occasionally silly gardeners working for wealthy people. Sometimes they have had more serious and more positive roles as well.

Theoretical Framework

The present paper applies two theories including Goffman character theory and Christian Metz's Semiotics theory on films.

Character Theory is used for the analysis of the media texts or productions

such as films. It studies actors' role and is usually based on stereotypes and different characteristics associated with them that can be positive or negative (Hinton, 2000). Among character theorists, Erving Goffman (1959) that focuses on films states the four main characters in films as:

- 1- The protagonist (leading character)
- 2- The deuteragonist (secondary character)
- 3- The bit player (minor character whose specific background is not totally clear to the audience)
- 4- The fool (character that uses humor to convey messages)

The protagonists as the actors are usually present in most of the scenes of the movies and they are the ones around whom the story is built. Goffman also applies this theory to everyday life and the way people behave. There is a certain amount of acting in our interaction with people. Sometimes it is driven out of the situation and the circumstances, and sometimes we do it on purpose to get what we want or to leave the image we like. It also contributes to the fact that people believe the things presented to them to a certain degree.

On the other hand, Semiotics includes the study and analysis of signs and symbols in text as well as in pictures or films. It has three branches including Semantics which is the relation between the sign and what it refers to; Syntactics which is the relation between signs in a structure; and Pragmatics which is the relation between the sign and its effect on people who see it. Though, Christian Metz applied film Semiotics including the analysis and study of signs and codes. He was the one who applied Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of Semiology, Freud's psychology, and Lacan's mirror theory to movies. In 'Film Language' (1968), Metz argues that cinema is structured like a language. Adopting Saussure's models, Metz makes the distinction between "langue" - a language system - and "language" - a less clearly defined system of recognizable conventions. Metz contends that film cannot be regarded as comprising a "langue", in the sense of having a strict grammar and syntax equivalent to that of the written or spoken word. Unlike the written word, film's basic unit, which Metz argues is the shot, that is neither symbolic nor arbitrary but iconic; therefore, it is laden with specific meaning. Metz suggests that film is a language in which each shot is used in a sequence and like a unit in a linguistic statement. In his theoretical model known as the "grandesyntagmatique",

Metz argues that individual cinematic texts construct their own meaning systems rather than share a unified grammar. Later, Metz himself became more interested in the psychoanalytical aspect of films.

For Metz, shots are the organization of narratives that are important when considering film as language. It is the way that the scenes are edited and shown that determines how the story is told. His theory applies to movies when there are certain visual elements to associate a specific feeling or characteristic to a role. Certain shots serve as reminders or indicators of abstract or hidden meanings. In three films studied in this paper, there is no straight timeline or storytelling; rather, it is a mixture of scenes that do not follow each other chronologically.

Hollywood and Latinos

In the 1970s, film industry witnessed participation of Latino actors in legendary pictures, but without leading roles. As early as 1908, D. W. Griffith's 'The Thread of Destiny' film used the term "greaser" for the Mexican "bandit" type movies while in recent years, Latino youth gangs have emerged as modern variants of the Mexican bandit type films. A second early stereotype was the Latin lover that was first popularized by Italian actor Rudolph Valentino (Trevino, J. S., 1985). In the 1980s, there is a greater participation and leadership role demonstrated by the professionalism of some of the Latino actors (Peña Acuña, Beatriz, 2010).

In 'The Chicano' film, historian Frank Javier Garcia Berumen (1995), relates the impact of these images to his own and others' sense of self-worth. He also mentions that without any role models to look up to, young Latinos cannot become very successful in terms of living as well as assimilation. Therefore, it was to America's own benefit not to expand the stereotypes any further. This is why the roles started to change and improve; however, globally-known and famous actors like Bardem who has been praised for his acting, have yet more negative roles than positive ones. In his famous films after 2000, in about half of them he has played the role of a criminal, crazy and extremely violent, such as a cruel killer in 'No Country for Old Men' or the terrorist in the 'Skyfall'. This is also true about Benicio Del Toro who in 7 out of his 11 films since 2000, has appeared as the villain or at least a dark character.

The claims that these stereotypes have a grain of truth in them are not sufficient

for such stereotyping of Latinos. Not all of them are gang, villain or cartel members, or involved in crimes, while it is also not true that all of them are decent religious and hard working family men, as is the case with other ethnic groups. By looking at the representation of Latinos in the United States, it is not surprising to point out that the media, including Hollywood movies, has a huge effect on people's minds as a result of the fact that these portrayals are repeated over and over. According to a research conducted by the University of Cincinnati, Latinos are the most affected by false and exaggerated public perception (uc.edu , 2012).

Iñárritu Films

Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu was born in Mexico City on August 15, 1963. Though raised in a middle class neighborhood in downtown Mexico City, his family was shaken when his father, a banker, declared bankruptcy, forcing them into lesser circumstances. His father, later, reinvented himself, which provided the family with stability and a steady income. Alejandro says his father has been his inspiration because he took care of his family "with the virtue of a warrior". As an adolescent, first at seventeen then at nineteen years old, he crossed the Atlantic Ocean in a cargo boat, working as a laborer on the boat. He attributes these physical and intellectual experiences during this time as a major influence in his work. He also believes that reading the classic existentialist writers during this period of his adolescence has greatly influenced his later works. In 1984, while studying communications at Universidad Iberoamericana, Iñárritu became a radio host at a rock-and-roll station called WFM, putting on a three-hour talk show which included sketches and commentary, not only of music, but of politics and pop culture as well. In 1988, he became the director of the station. While music had more influence on him than film, he studied theater with the well-known Polish film director Ludwik Margules. He later studied directing actors in Maine and Los Angeles under Judith Weston. In the nineties he created Z Films Company with Raul Olvera in order to produce feature films and television programs. By 1995, Z Films was one of the biggest and strongest film production companies in Mexico, created with seven young directors that then all went on to direct feature films (imdb, 2013).

As a director, Iñárritu, a Mexican living in US has a trilogy with the theme of death. His films which have won many awards and have been successful in the box

offices attracted many English speaking (particularly in US) and Spanish speaking audiences. This means that the way Latinos are depicted in his films matters a lot. This article examines the three feature-length films which had been the result of collaboration between director Iñárritu and screenwriter Guillermo Arriaga: *Amores Perros* (2000), *21 Grams* (2003) and *Babel* (2006). The first film under examination, *Amores Perros*, introduced Gael García Bernal in his first role in cinema. This gritty look at the underbelly of Mexican life garnered an 'academy award' nomination as well as a BAFTA film award for best foreign language film, the Critics Week Grand Prize and Young Critics Award at the year 2000, Cannes film festival. It was awarded with over sixty awards from film festivals worldwide. He also directed a segment of the independent feature *11'09"01* (2002), a collective movie about the influence of September 11 attacks on the world along with other famous directors. The second movie discussed in this paper, *21 Grams*, was directed in USA and starred Benicio del Toro, Naomi Watts and Sean Penn. The film was presented at the Venice Film Festival, winning the Volpi Cup for the best actor Sean Penn. At the 2004 Academy Awards, Del Toro and Watts received nominations for their performances. The third joint work is *Babel*, which consists of four stories set in Morocco, Mexico, the United States, and Japan, in four different time frames, starring Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett. At Cannes 2006, director Iñárritu earned the Best Director Prize and further received 7 nominations at the 79th annual Academy Awards. It won the Best Motion Picture in the drama category at the Golden Globe Awards in 2007.

Common to all three films is the divided narrative, where the story of the film is split into multiple stories told, or shown from different perspectives and from different points in time and locations. *21 Grams* and *Babel* are set in a number of locations, whereas *Amores Perros* is set entirely within Mexico City and thus concentrates its commentary on the social injustices and hardships of this specific city through the combination of location and narrative. Interestingly in all three films, the focus is not on 'femininity' but on 'masculinity', though sometimes the major character is a woman.

Film Analysis

In analysis of the Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu's three films, using the character theory and by examining the semiotics, the masculinity in each film is evident. In

these films, the symbols and signs are mostly in relation with the main characters as are discussed below.

1- *Amores Perros* is a story about loyalty and cruelty. Almost all the characters are people that take part in violent or cruel action and they are connected with a car accident in Mexico. The main character, Octavio gets involved in dog fighting to earn money. Dogs are totally symbolic and what they represent is mostly masculinity, and they are also the driving force of the movie. The main incidents are initiated by the violent dog fights. Octavio is an adolescent who tries to seduce his brother's young wife, Susana. Thus, he ends up having an enemy in the business and after stabbing him with a knife; he has an accident while fleeing. Octavio's brother gets killed in an attempt to commit bank robbery. The other characters are also full of flaws and mistakes with bad consequences, and in each episode we see a protagonist: Octavio in the first one, Valeria the model in the second, and Chivo in the third. They are the ones that decide, act and mainly cause the consequences. Furthermore, in *Amores Perros*, emphasis by Iñárritu on the body as a privileged medium of conveying meaning is noticeable; a car crash which reunites the three narrative lines in the film, and at the same time, displays with swift and intense force, the damage inflicted upon the characters' bodies by the accident.

It is worth noting that most of the main characters are men. Masculinity in this film is represented as both a gender performance and a return to animal instinct and that it is portrayed in an extremely negative light as men are compared to dogs and monsters who not only attempt to control and contain women, but are also constantly at war against one another and with themselves. Indeed, men are depicted as competitive, aggressive, violent, dominant, sexually promiscuous, unfaithful, corrupt and selfish (Borreye, 2009). He argues, "Masculinity is shown more in terms of hyper masculinity as it is characterized by aggression, violence, rivalry, sexual promiscuity and demonstrations of pugnacity. Not only are men at war against each other, but they also appear to be at war with themselves and this is all the more evident in the context of queer masculinity. Indeed, men struggle to maintain their (hyper) masculine image, yet certain inconsistencies in some of the male characters' behavior or appearance reveal their queerness and thus lack of compliance with the ideals of machismo" (Borreye, 2009).

Octavio's adolescent masculinity is presented as tragically destructive as he

causes the death of his best friend, arranges the beating of his brother and has intercourse with Susana. In an attempt to assert his masculinity, it is he who holds the knife to stab Jarocho, his nemesis. In this set of power relations, the knife that penetrates can be read as the phallus and the act of stabbing as an alternative violation of the flesh: a dangerous and devastating behavior on those around him which O'Sullivan calls it 'violent masculinity'. Hence, for him, such behavior of Octavio can comfortably refer back to Kristeva's abject "with those fragile states where man strays on the territories of animal" (Cited by Fletcher et al.,1990, p.12). However, Susana with some wrongdoings, still acts morally; "the excesses caused by her burdensome corporeality are resolved through recourse to traditional methods: an excess of morality. She repents for breaching the marital contract and refuses to renew the relationship with Octavio; instead she chooses to sacrifice herself and raise her two children by herself. Her return to traditional patterns is emphasized by her choice to name her second child after her late (not to mention violent, unfaithful and abusive) husband" (Pierseca, 2011, p.120).

In short, both El Jarocho and Mauricio display a machista image in order to pass as heterosexual males while often employing other devices to emphasize their hyper-masculinity (dogs, business, subordinates, guns). In the *Amores Perros* (2000), the dogfights which symbolize the underground war taking place in Mexico City is another aspect of the film which serves to hint this crisis in the gender order, and in particular, in masculinity (Ibid). What is important is that for whatever reason and purpose problems of Mexico are pictured in terms of gender and social relations, the thing left with the audience is the bitter taste of all the violent deeds of the Latino characters.

2-The second film is *21 Grams*, which is presented, in a non-linear arrangement where the lives of the characters are depicted before and after the accident. The three main characters each have 'past', 'present', and 'future' story threads, which are shown as non-linear fragments that punctuate elements of the overall story, all imminently coming toward each other and join together as the story progresses. Film stars include Sean Penn, Naomi Watts, Danny Huston and Benicio del Toro. *21 Grams* interrelates the stories of different characters by an accident. All characters make decisions, take steps, and conduct in such a way that creates a spiral of events; however, the Latino character is mainly seen as the antagonist but not in

the old sense. He, Jack Jordan, is an ex-convict who has redeemed himself and has become extremely religious and tries to bring religion to every aspect of his life and others around him. He has his truck covered with religious signs and paintings. He believes that Jesus has given him the belief and he would take it away if he wants. However, he kills a man and his two daughters in a hit and run. The man's organs are donated and his heart is given to a person called Paul. Filled with remorse, he turns himself in because he thinks he has a duty to God. He feels betrayed by Jesus and tries to kill himself. When he is freed from prison, he leaves his family to work in manual labor. Paul becomes a friend of the dead man's wife and while his body has rejected the heart, he is persuaded by the woman to kill Jack. He does not do it and just asks Jack to disappear, but in the end, Jack shows up in his room asking to be killed, the three of them start fighting and Paul shoots himself to avoid a painful death. Jack helps him to the hospital and tries to identify himself as the shooter. Nobody believes him, and at the end he joins his family.

All the signs and features display Jack's religiosity to some extent in a scary way, but when his faith is tested, he cannot hang on and gives in. In the first scene when Jack Jordan appears, he is talking peacefully to a boy trying to reason him and persuade him to stay away from trouble; however, immediately after this, he starts fighting with another boy z. a big tattoo of a cross on his arm, his truck is covered with paintings of cross and signs of his Christian faith. It is literally the symbol of his faith, and when he doubts Jesus because of the circumstances, he disfigures it by using a heated knife in a symbolic act, showing that he is in disbelief and feels forsaken by God because of what has happened. This also serves as a reminder of the Bible and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the moment when Jesus, like Jack, is in excruciating pain and asks why God has forsaken him. There is a scene with Paul sitting beside an empty pool that has been left that way for a long time, symbolizing how he feels about his life, facing an early death. Even the loud sound of the machine that the boy uses for blowing the leaves, works as a tool to foreshadow the horrible accident.

Although all the characters are brought together in a chain of actions, the Latino's has a bigger and more effective consequence. The film criticizes the stereotypes held by mainstream about Latinos. This is a positive point in the movie; however, the presence of other Latinos with similar problems could have helped in

depicting a fairer picture. The only other Latino is the young boy that cleans the streets and sweeps the floors. When the movie finishes, what is left of him in the viewer's mind is a person culpable of ruining not only one life or family.

3- In *Babel*, the last film of the death trilogy, we see four different stories brought together. It takes place in Japan, Morocco, Mexico and the U.S., and it is mainly about the consequences that our actions bring about, and the effects they have on other people's lives. The film shows how different languages and interpretations of people lead to misunderstanding or lack of understanding with each other. As Sean Rutledge (2007) writes in a review for IMDB: "cultural assumptions and biases that tend to obscure reality and how our perceived differences keep us from connecting to each other". The story with the Latinos is the one that takes place in America and Mexico. A middle age Latino woman is the nanny of the American family who are stuck in Morocco, as a boy shoots a woman of an American family. The Latino woman plans to go back home for his son's wedding, however, she has no choice other than taking the children with her. They have a bit of a cultural shock on the way back. The real problem is that on their return way to America, the nanny's relative who drives the car is drunk, and when faced with the police suspicions, he leaves the nanny and the children on the road. They get lost in the dessert and as the Latino nanny looks for help, the border police arrest her. The father of the children does not press charges, but the woman is permanently deported from the United States, the country that has been her home for many years and she pays a high price.

Although the movie is filled with people's rather mindless acts and flaws, chain of events are involved in the film. Other stories take place in other locations. At first, the Tokyo story seems to be the segment most unrelated to the events taking place in Morocco. The establishing shots of the sparsely populated Moroccan setting are deliberately contrasted with the crowded shots of Tokyo, in order to intensify how disparate these two places are. However, the film uses the classic technique of foreshadowing to hint at the underlying connections between these two sections in *Babel*. The photograph showing Chieko's father holding a rifle and kneeling next to Hassan Ibrahim (the man who sells the rifle to the Moroccan father in the beginning of the film) indicates that the rifle is the link between these stories-as the accident was in *Amores Perros* (Rothlisberger, 2012).

According to Iñárritu himself, Babel "is about how our everyday lives are affected by walls, miscommunications and barriers" and what he "want[ed] to make clear in the film [is] that it's not about the physical borders, it's not the politics of the government, it's about the politics of the human" (Cited by Stratton, 2006).

Conclusion

An important aspect of the Latino's recent portrayal in Hollywood has been the notion of masculinity. Although the portrayal of masculinity is evident in Hollywood films, it is with the consideration of male 'types' with a long filmic history (such as cowboys, fathers, losers, serial killers, or detectives) which enable the viewer to refer back to the established masculine clichés such as individualistic nature of man, the acceptability of violence, the complications of fatherhood, the justifiability of compulsory heterosexuality. However, Hollywood has distanced itself from its stereotype masculinity (McDonnell, 2011).

As Deleyto and del Mar Azcona on their book on Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu (2010, p.21) put it "One of the 'Best Picture' nominees of last year exemplified this greatly, 'Up in the Air', in which the climactic scene is the female subject's rejection of the male, in favor of her 'real life.' This rejection, while jarring at first to the viewer, fits perfectly within Hollywood's dissolution of masculine stereotypes". Another example is 'The Social Network' film, a front-runner for the Oscar's Best Picture, which focuses on the geek-male, who is Mark Zuckerberg, on a path of loss. Mark loses nearly all of his female companions and friends as a result of the website he has created. This is exactly the opposite of the past depictions of masculinity, which focused on the male gaining what he desired, rather than completely losing those desirable objects. According to Stiehm, masculinity, unlike femininity, needs to be reaffirmed and thus appears to be more of a performance than its counterpart: "Biology is certainly not destiny, but it remains true that women can give birth to and nurse the young children, while men cannot. In contrast, there is nothing men can do that women cannot. Because men do not have a unique capacity by which to define themselves, they tend to define themselves by oppositeness - specifically, as being the opposite to women..... Again, because their special role is only socially defined, men need to assert and protect it. This is because their masculinity is vulnerable, more vulnerable than women's femininity" (Borreye, 2009).

All the three films examined in this paper present the viewer with the notion of masculinity (a violent and hyper one in the *Amores Perros*) pulled between a restrictive gender performance and a savage return to nature. Not only are men at war against each other including against their own brothers and peers, but also they fight with themselves and their own identities. This seems to be, as Borreye (2009) puts it, partly due to such a restrictive gender order and queerness is just one symptom of this current crisis in Mexico. Although some have perceived *Amores Perros* as reactionary with regards to gender, others including Borreye (2009) in his article 'The Significance of the Queer And the Dog' classifies these films as much more progressive in that it constitutes an urgent call for change in society, change which it appears, need not only come from political institutions but also from individuals and particularly male individuals as they are the ones who perform masculinity and hold most power and perpetrate most violence as it is shown in these films. The fact that each episode focuses on male characters at different stages of their lives highlights the fact that they are somehow at the center of this national crisis represented metaphorically through either the car crash or the rifle.

The second notion of analysis is that these three films have some recurring stylistic and thematic motifs, but are not connected to each other by any continuity in their plots or characters, even though Gael García Bernal and Adrianna Barraza star in two of these three films, playing different characters. *Amores Perros* deals with the theme of converging fates. *21 Grams* takes this theme further by scrambling up the temporal sequence, and *Babel* takes the experimentation one step further by adding multiple countries and settings to the mix. *Amores Perros* could be regarded as the less "mainstreamed" of the three, while *21 Grams* is perhaps more communicative (to U.S. audiences) than *Babel* because of its setting and production (Hassapopoulou, 2008).

The third point of analysis is the negative representation of Latinos through the character roles they are given. In all these three films, there are signs that symbolize either the darkness of people's souls or their wrongdoings. As mentioned before, the 'dogs' in *Amores Perros* symbolize the dark side of human beings and all the violence that they bring upon each other, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Applying the Semiotics, what this actually symbolizes is the burden of the Latino male's feelings of guilt for things he has done. In *Babel* also there is the scene when

the white children witness the killing of hens that they have just finished playing with. They are the only ones who panic and are surrounded by Mexicans that seem to be quite amused. The white children are the only symbols of innocence, although there are other Mexican kids there too. All the movies are filled with negative and gloomy events and are all centered on Latinos. Criminals are Latinos and most of them try to atone for their wrong deeds, and bear the heavier burden due to their mistakes. Although the director and writer are Latinos themselves and it does not seem that their aim is to offer a negative image of Latinos, however, it is obvious that the story line and the Hollywood directions bring the films to this outcome. What matters is that many people watch such films and it has the power to attract international audience.

Whilst in Hollywood films most of Latino actors are not given serious roles, the famous ones such as Xavier Bardem, Benicio del Toro and Gael García Bernal mostly play antagonistic roles. Hence, according to Character theory, while there are non-Latino characters, Latinos play the villain roles and those associated with problems and negativity. Hence, one might conclude that in such a situation, seeing a Latino or hearing his/her accent might bring a negative picture to the viewer's mind. This is while most Latinos are not even trying to assimilate, and adding their socioeconomic status, it has caused controversies at different US socio-political levels. Hence, in most US news, they are mostly presented as problem people, illegal workers and gangs, and only in election times, when their votes are needed or they support a candidate, the solutions to their problem are presented.

As Iñárritu puts it on his trilogy, "the story is about how vulnerable and fragile we [Latinos] are as human beings, and when a link is broken, it's not the link that is rotten but the chain itself" and that is why "the most terrifying loneliness and isolation is the one that we experiment with ourselves, our wives, and our children"(Cited by Levy, 2006).

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