

# **The Truman Show: Exposure of The Illuminati**

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## ABSTRACT

The realm of *The Truman Show* is exceptionally intricate. It depicts the circumstances and experiences of Truman Burbank surrounded by another world in which he is the focus. The complexity of the film comes from the perplexing nature of the way actors are represented and the unclear connections between them. This suggests that cinema, in general, is conditioned by how audiences perceive it and by the complexity of its figurative representations. It is also determined by the code system which provides understanding of what the essential meaning of a film actually may be. In order to explain *The Truman Show*, this thesis will be based on film semiotics. The rationale behind basing the analysis of *The Truman Show* on the film semiotics, which looks, in particular, at film language, is to provide understanding of the semantic content, the language discourse and the nature of how the film is delivered to the audience. Discussion will be presented in terms of such concepts as family, reality, truth and lies, rebellion and escape.

Furthermore, *The Truman Show* will be studied in relation to the Illuminati defined as a secret society which exerts power over the public by manipulating media and providing information to impose attitudes and control audiences. The Illuminati is characterized by the control of both information and disinformation (corrupt information aimed to mislead) through the ownership of such sectors of mainstream media as publications (newspapers, magazines), radio, TV, and broadcasting (filming). A few decades ago the general purpose of films was to express some kind of a lesson concerning the rules of right behavior. What we see today is total/absolute

impurity, vulgar exposal of behavior, concepts, religion and women. Here, the actions of the Illuminati will be exposed by focusing on the concepts of control, religion, human rights and perceptions and illusions in *The Truman Show*. The discussion will be concluded by considering issues regarding the past and the present, and especially, the contemporary relationship between the media and the Illuminati, its world and its actions.

**Keywords:** Semiotics, The Illuminati, *The Truman Show*, Secret Societies, Media Control

## ÖZ

*The Truman Show*, gerçeğin son derece karmaşık olarak gösterildiği bir dünya şeklinde karşımıza çıkıyor. Truman Burbank'ın hedef olarak alındığı bu dünyada, onun etrafını saran bir dizi koşul ve deneyimler sergileniyor. Filmin karmaşıklığı, aktörlerin rol yaparken kendi aralarında net bir bağlantı olmayışının şaşırtıcı şekilde doğal olarak yansıtıldığından kaynaklanıyor. Bu da gösteriyor ki; sinema, seyircinin filmi nasıl algıladığı ve figüratif simgelerin karmaşıklığı ile bir anlam kazanıyor. Ayrıca filmin temel anlamının ne olduğunun anlaşılmasına 'kod sistemi' yardımcı oluyor. *The Truman Show*'daki sunulan dili ve anlamı yorumlamak için, film semiyolojisi esas alınacaktır. Film semiyolojisinin *The Truman Show* filminin analizinde esas alınmasının amacı, anlamsal içeriği, dilin kullanımını ve filmin seyirciye nasıl aktarıldığını inceleyebilmektir. Bu tez aile, gerçeklik, hakikat ve yalan, isyan ve kaçış gibi kavramlar açısından incelenecektir.

*The Truman Show* filmi, gizli bir toplum olarak tanımlanmış, medya manipülasyonunu sağlayarak fikir ve düşüncelerini kitlelere empoze edip onları kontrol altında tutan Illuminati'ye göre de ele alınacaktır. Illuminati, hem doğru olan hem de yanlış olan bilgiyi (yanıltmak amaçlı olan bozuk bilgi) kontrol edebilmek için medya gibi sektörlerde: (gazete, dergi), radyo, TV ve yayın (film) gibi yayınlara mülkiyet yoluyla sahip oluyor. (Dice, 2009). Benzer şekilde, Illuminati yanlısı eylemler artık filmlerde de görülebilir hale geldi. Yıllar önce filmler hayatın gerçeklerini ve kurallarını ifade eden bir ders şeklinde düzenlenmekteydi. Bugün ne gördüğümüz ise; davranışların, kavramların, din ve kadın konularının kesinlikle

saflıktan uzak ve basit bir şekilde sergileniştir. Illuminati yanlısı eylemler *Truman Show*'daki kontrol, din, insan hakları, algılar ve yanılsamalar kavramlarına odaklanarak ortaya konacaktır. Bu tezde savunulan konu, geçmişte ve günümüzdeki sorunlarla ilgili medya ve Illuminati dünyasının eylemleri arasındaki modern bağlantı dikkate alınarak tamamlanacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Semiyoloji, Illuminati, *The Truman Show*, Gizli Toplum, Medya Kontrol

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Storyline of *The Truman Show*

*“However, my biggest criticism of the stage play people insist on calling “real life” is the script- varying between the mundanely predictable and the wildly implausible” (Niccol, 1998).*

A film ‘*The Truman Show*’ directed by Peter Weir in 1998 depicts Truman Burbank’s life who has been picked as a baby by a television company called ‘Omnicom’ to turn into “the subject of a bizarre experiment” (Brearley & Sabbadini, 2008). Truman does not have any idea that he is the innocent victim who is being recorded from his birth until death, “24-hour-a-day documentary soap opera called *The Truman Show*, with every moment of his life broadcast to a worldwide audience” (Niccol, 1998). Truman does not know that everyone surrounding him, including his family, friends and other people, are actors, and that the whole world is watching him (see Appendix B).

The storyline in *The Truman Show* can be said to be deceptive in a way that it spreads propaganda. As a possible suggestion, *The Truman Show* seems to provide insight into reality including the Illuminati. The film shows the culture we live in and

how we are not only entertained but affected by it. Delusion is created around Truman's perception of his own reality.

The main characters in *The Truman Show* are Jim Carey as Truman Burbank, Laura Linney as Meryl Burbank, Noah Emmerich as Marlon (Truman's friend), Natascha McElhone as Lauren/Sylvia, Holland Taylor as Truman's mother and Brian Delate as Truman's father. Laura Linney as Meryl, playing the part of Truman's wife, has a challenging role. Her task is to play act to the cameras with a smile announcing the qualities of the product that she has to advertise apart from acting as Truman's wife. Although Meryl acts sincerely most of the time she does not convince anyone that she is real. In the proceeding parts of the movie her portrayal changes into absolute disturbing figure when Truman begins to unveil the truth. Marlon, as Truman's best friend since childhood, seems to play a role of a character who is the closest person to Truman. Throughout the movie, Marlon's task is to make sure Truman believes that nothing is wrong. Marlon plays his part well, being exclusively convincing and spreading deception.

Natascha McElhone, as Lauren, plays the part of a woman who mysteriously appears in Truman's life, turning his life into an unidentified but sweet and quick experience leaving questions behind. Lauren is trying to tell Truman about the truth, however, at the very exposal she is removed by the creator of the show, Christof.

Ed Harris plays the part of Christof, the creator of the show controlling the flow of events everyday in Truman's life as well as the audience in the movies. He is

introduced in a central interview at the beginning of the show. Only later we can see Christof on a huge TV screen trying to stop Truman. Ed Harris plays a role of an unusual character who has maintained his own ethic of the created world for 30 years. He seems to be captivating, difficult and misunderstood in terms of his beliefs and actions. In one hand, Christof could be the one giving clues about engagements behind the show, and at the same time he is shown as an individual having his own delusions although it may seem weird and gross.

The film proceeds flawlessly: life seems leisurely and restful. Although there is a conspiracy behind the scenes, it is hidden out of sight. The audience is captivated by the show they are presented with which goes hand in hand with what Christof aims at. Everyone including the audience, Truman's friends, and family seems to be comfortable around Truman except Lauren. Actions engage the viewer with a rich combination of sentimentality which is at the same time disturbing. The final scenes of the film display different reactions of the audience who watches the show on their TV screens, closing the shot by those who seek for anything else which is on TV to continue watching. This shows in a way the extent to which people get attached to what media offers. The director of the film, Weir, portrayed a completing knowledge in the form of a powerful tale deserving appreciation. *The Truman Show* is saying something about the fakeness of our lives and culture. It in a way confirms the show we live in. It also educates the viewer and sets up TV representations of the good life.

## 1.2 Constructed vs Real

*The Truman Show* is a fiction movie, recognized as a drama-comedy, illustrating situations of fiction itself in which the “star” Truman is trapped in an artificially created world. However, Truman himself does not know that the world around him is fake and people including his family, wife, friend, and neighbors and everyone he sees in the streets of Seahaven are actors. Seahaven is very peaceful place where Truman beliefs to have been born and raised.

Truman does not have any idea that he is being recorded from his birth until death, an involuntary actor in a “24-hour-a-day documentary soap opera called *The Truman Show*, with every moment of his life broadcast to a worldwide audience” (Niccol, 1998). The journey of Truman’s escape starts when he finds himself surrounded by fictitious bounds of his life where everyone and everything around him start to seem suspicious.

The narrative of *The Truman Show* carries a pitiful, rational and funny, to some extent, story. At first, Truman’s life is represented in an ordinary flow of everyday actions and interactions; eventually it grows into deep thinking which triggers his curiosity concerning what is going to happen. On the other hand, Truman’s curiosity grows and his tolerance runs out and he is determined to discover reality. The message given in *The Truman Show* shows us how illusive and misleading the reality we believe in can be. In other words, *The Truman Show* reveals the real face of the world today. That is, we are surrounded by multimedia, advertisements, most of us live by relying on or following what is prescribed to be true and real. People become

unconscious of or get detached from authentic values of life, people and things around them. They get convinced by a comfortable representation of products and services, sometimes even concepts are represented in the way media wants them to be perceived by people and people fall for it. Our thoughts, choices, what we do, where we go, what we wear are controlled by media giants dramatically. TV, the Internet, news, magazines, radio, cinema are the factors that change attitude, preferences, behavior, thinking and limit people's choices to what is offered by the media.

Truman is misled by organized truth which is under the control of an unnatural uniformity. That is why he is disappointed whenever he tries and fails to go beyond this uniformity. Similarly, people try to go beyond their scope when they are influenced by any innovation or representation by media. However, it is not always successful or affordable, practically, to apply or follow what is represented in a comfortable and easy way. Truman is left weak because his ideas and urges are met with irony. His friends and family do not show any understanding and do not support him.

*The Truman Show* is often compared with *The Matrix* as both figuratively represent truth and reality; indirectly showing what is beyond the things we see or what is represented. They depict particular distinctive elements of our being and the reality surrounding us which can be challenging to explain in words and which needs to be seen. Truman, just like anyone else in his position, must be feeling awkward and miserable to realize that the world he believed to be true is in fact an ongoing TV

show broadcasting his every stage and moment of life to the whole world. Just imagining your life as being for public observation already sounds unethical and against human rights. Some audience members view Truman sarcastically, which is humiliating. However, that is exactly what is happening today around the world. Spending hours sitting in front of the screen and watching people's lives has become a life long routine for many of us. *The Truman Show* is an evident proof for that. People spending their time watching TV, dive into the events and in a way they feel so into it under the influence of actors brilliantly represented, breath-taking accomplishments, action flows make the audience believe that this is the right way. *The Truman Show* highlights that the reality is accepted in the way it is represented, for this reason throughout the movie Truman is shown as being unaware of the fact that he is surrounded by a fake reality. In short, *The Truman Show* keeps the audience on the edge and instills faith that Truman will discover the truth soon. In almost every scene Truman get closer and closer to finding out the truth, but then he is interrupted by other actors who know the truth and to try prevent Truman from going further. And this is the moment when tolerance of audience is frustrated but we keep hoping and craving to watch the movie until the end to see the victory. Truman, being trapped, seems to be in pain, suffering from not knowing why everything is so disheartening and frightening for him and why no one is willing to help him. However, the fact that knowing the truth may hurt more than being sheltered with dishonesty, which makes one happy most of the time, leaves uncertainty (<http://filminsight.net/2011/06/06/the-truman-show-film-analysis/>).



*The Truman Show* is a true commentary on media agents which covers the world with illusions. “From their high-tech centers, they increasingly script and stage-manage events, creating the danger that we will find ourselves living inside seamless works of theater ” (<http://www.transparencynow.com/truman.htm>).

Never before was there such revelation of human life by media to the entire eye of public. Nor was there such a conscious awareness of how media is controlling and affecting opinion, and the choices and lives of people. The media has covered all that is around us controlling and replacing facts with fiction, and it is hard to escape from friendly represented products, services and entertainment. Just as in *The Truman Show*, Truman tries to find his way out of the media-invented artificial world. Multimedia manipulates people and if people do not want to be under its influence then they should find shelter to make themselves safe from misinterpretations and fiction spread by the media.

Huge arena in which Truman is being filmed and broadcasted is the world we live in, technological recreations of nature (rain, sun, etc.) in *The Truman Show* is the virtual reality we are surrounded by, a TV studio that displays every stage of Truman’s life is the media watching how we purchase and consume media-produces goods and services. Fortunately, our instinctive power enables us to feel the environmental provocations. In this case, Truman’s instincts make him curious and suspicious about his surroundings. He starts to realize the illusion created around him, although unsure but he tries to break his fear and find the truth. The movie metaphorically represents

our reality full of politics, advertisement, media-driven affairs, and illusions that people fall for.

The huge arena with technological recreations of nature (rain, sun, etc.) in which Truman is being filmed and broadcasted represents the world in which today's society lives. In *The Truman Show* is the virtual reality we are surrounded by, a TV studio that displays every stage of Truman's life is the media watching how we purchase and consume media-produces goods and services. Fortunately, our instinctive power enables us to feel the environmental provocations. In this case, Truman's instincts make him curious and suspicious about his surrounding. He starts to realize the illusion created around him, although unsure, but he tries to break his fear and find the truth. The movie metaphorically represents our reality full of politics, advertisement, media-driven affairs, and illusions that people fall for.

As people get used to the reciprocal connection with media, they are unwilling to disconnect from it. In Truman's case, his fear is reflected in his unwillingness to leave the world he lives in. We try to avoid media-fabricated reality because life would seem dull without it as we got quite used and even attached to ongoing Hollywood events, celebrities, entertainment; by spending hours in front of TV screens we are taken away from problems, enjoying eye-catching representations of products by the media. The main character who does not want Truman to escape is the producer of the fabricated world and in our reality it is the media enterprises, media politicians, and news governments who try to instill their fiction and misinterpretations and ensure their people keep following their system. We receive

the delivery of media in one way because it entertain us, and in another way because it seems live and easy for us. This is when our life is defined by the media, and we accept it. On the other hand, by observing what the media is trying to do, we may try to detach from it and try to differentiate between reality and fiction fabricated by the media. This is when we disapprove what media attempts to do and that is when we regain a self-governing state of mind (<http://www.transparencynow.com/trusig.htm>).

The signs of the Illuminati appear to be everywhere in *The Truman Show*. For instance, “seeing eyes, pyramids, the sun and mythical figures” symbolize the logo of the Illuminati (see Appendix D). The rise of the sun, the moon, the sign at the entrance of the building (Seahaven Life and Causality) that has the triangle with sunlight around and the eye in the middle of the triangle indicates the sign of the Illuminati. Triangle-shaped signs can be noticed everywhere in *The Truman Show*; on the elevator, the window design in Truman’s office and at the door of his house. In addition, the rise of the sun and the beginning of the day is shown as enlightening the rooves of the houses which suggests the concept of enlightenment signifying the Illuminati which stands for “enlightened” in Latin. As a possible assumption, the Illuminati is controlling the enlightenment, which takes as it’s foundation human reason and rational action. It might be said that the Illuminati rob people of their existence. Another sign which gives reference to the Illuminati concept is the heading of the newspaper “Seahaven-the best place on earth”. As Christof imposes, his created world is a world of happiness.

Truman reflects the current state of any of us. The film conveys a message that the world is waking up, this can be clearly observed in the end of the film when Truman find a way out of the world created by Christof. At this stage, the concept of awakening or enlightenment can be touched upon. We, eventually, may realize the reality and the truth through the message given to us in *The Truman Show*.

*The Truman Show* obviously speaks of some kind of religion; attitude against God. The world of Truman, represented in the film, a constructed reality show which does not involve questioning of the Creator. Fortunately or not, Truman does the opposite; he tries to find answers to his questions. An ironic message is given by the director, Weir, to illustrate that Truman is a True Man or maybe he is one of us, and the world should wake up and see the truth as presented by the Illuminati

## **Chapter 2**

### **SEMIOTICS**

#### **2.1 Origins of Semiotics**

Semiotics entails the study of signs, significations and signifying systems. Signs shape culture representing meaning which individuals make sense of via language relating them to their life and experiences. Language, being a sign system which combines grammatical rules and communication system serves as a tool that human beings use to try to get their meaning across (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).

The story of semiotics has started with the curiosity of Western philosophers to look beyond language itself, specifically in relation to expressions and its symbolic representation. Greek philosophers tried to understand whether meaning is given to words and things according to logical connection or based on socially accepted norms. Some claimed that meaning was based on natural association of words with objects. Others claimed that it was random. As Hermogenes explained, designations have no connection with their nature, rather they carry a pattern of tradition. On the other hand, Aristotle associated signs with words in relation to psychological actions. That is, names were given on the basis of how people recognize words. In other words, Aristotle regarded the sign as having connection with “words and mental

events”. In his view, words are “significant sounds” and spoken words are “symbols or signs of affections or impressions of the soul”. Language was a set of terminology for Aristotle; names were given to words by identifying different places, persons, animals, qualities and so on (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).

With the emergence of the issue of realism, semiotic discussion in terms of meaning portrayal took place around such areas as “Platonic Realism”, “Aristotelian Realism”, “Naive Realism” and “Common-Sense Realism” each representing distinct interpretations of perceptions about terms and concepts. In “Platonic Realism” concepts have no connection with how people identify them while the “Aristotelian Realism” views universals as being surrounded by objects. On the contrary, in the “Naive Realism” universals exist on the basis of human perception whereas the “Common-Sense Realism” does not support naïve existence of universals. In the following periods, Saussure’s symbolic representations, “the signifier”, “the signified” and “the referent” notions gained attention (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).

Modern semiotics follows linguistic system of language perception and analytical inquiry of the concepts and processes. Metalinguistics embraces the study of language interchange including elements of speech and other signs and representations in cultural and social contexts. In this regard, it can be said that semiotics implicates areas of metalinguistics and linguistics as it continually requires semioticians to use language to explain abstractions (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).

Decades ago, Saussure was the initiator of ‘semiology’ as a science, while the concept of ‘semiotics’ was introduced by Pierce. As literature in the field explains, Pierce contributed to the understanding of the semiotics of films. There are three units which help to make sense of concepts. They are the sign with its objects and its interpretant. Specifically, the sign represents the object and the connection of the sign and the object is mentally interpreted. Additionally, Pierce introduced signs as three types which are iconic sign- signifying object of likeness, indexical sign- expressing connection between sign and interpretant and symbolic sign- demonstrating symbolic forms of language. Saussure classified signs into paradigmatic and syntagmatic types. Paradigm includes set of units which can be either similar or different to each other, for example the alphabet can be a paradigm as it consists of letters which can form words. On the other hand, syntagm involves sequential relationship of speech and its “arrangement into a signifying whole”. In other words, language units are related to each other in conveying resemblance or difference and are used to create words. So, the letters (paragrammatic operations) are selected and formed in words (syntagmatic operations) (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).

The Russian Formalists used semiotics to analyze poetic language and literary texts. Later on, literary texts along with the inner speech concept encouraged film semiotics. The arrival of structuralism powered semiotics towards the study of narrative and was used in analyzing myths, folk tales. The dominance of semiotics could be observed mostly between the 1960s- 1970s when film semiotics rose.

Discourse notions and programs related to cinema took place in France, spreading to Britain and United States in the 1970s (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).

## **2.2 Cine-Semiology**

The language of film was already a well-known trend for early cinema academics. Russian Formalism made great contributions to the understanding of the relationship between language and film highlighting features like poetic language. Cinema was viewed as an observable realm containing semantic signs stimulated by the illusions of cinema techniques. Film features were analyzed in terms of subjective signs and natural language with signs that resemble the representation. It is noted that cinema can be grouped into three elements of signs which are: “icon”- object representation resembling it, “index”- “photo-chemical” record of the natural, and “symbol”- use of language and script (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).

Generally, the issue of a code is incorporated in studying symbolic illustration. In linguistics, code refers to language system, set of rules, choosing and arranging language components. Code with regard to film analysis, is a systematic organization of comparatively independent meaning. It is suggested that filmic analysis involves types of iconic signs: “perceptive codes, codes of recognition, codes of transmission, tonal codes, iconic codes, and iconographic codes, codes of taste and sensibility, rhetorical codes, stylistic codes, codes of the unconscious”. In other words, film can be examined in terms of how it is understood and identified, classified culturally, represented as images, artistic resolution, segmented into symbols, and visual ideas (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).



There has been a great deal of effort on the part of cine-semiologists in exploring accurate correspondence concerning language and filmic components. As a result of debate, the concept of double articulation emerged in relation to the field of semiotics. Double articulation is comprised of two linguistic units called morphemes and phonemes representing minimal meaningful unit and segmental unit of sound of words. Minimal units of filmic language are in the actual entities that exist in the setting. As Mertz argues, discourse of film lies in the signification represented which are related to each other in combination (Metz, 1974).

### **2.3 Textual System and Analysis**

Film involves a textual system speaking about film-text which is structured as a particular part of the whole. This system follows organization in which the meaning is encoded by the film analyst. In this case, text is analyzed and understood with the help of filmo-linguists. According to Metz (1974), textual analysis is done in order to encode what is communicated in films. Predecessors of textual analysis can be traced back to critical interpretations of biblical texts, scientific study of literary texts. Regarding the semiotic process to analysis of texts, filmic semiotics prescribed components that were revealed by conscious methods of analyzing multiple separate shooting based on linguistic and narrative structures, psychoanalysis and literary semiotics (Metz, 1974).

Talking about language and cinema, the relationship seems to be in the intersection of phonetic features and image representation. In the case of the absence of verbal language in films, inner speech concept provides the element of understanding of the

language which is communicated. In this case inner speech can be regarded as the internal code or the muted expression of a linguistic form. The authors suggest not only looking beyond the signifying representations of films but rather relying on semiotic approach to cinema. In other words, developed by the Russian Formalists a system of signs; language and its written form, offer abstraction of artistic language, in other words, the language which is constructed in the context of fictional domain. In this way, the nature of the film is perceived through a representation of the film features and sequences by giving the analyst an understanding of filmic arrangement and a construction of meaning (Stam, Burgoyne, & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).

## **2.4 Understanding Film Narratology and Film Semiotics**

The theory of film narratology is based on foundations of semiotics which relies on structuralism and Russian Formalism. As a contemporary area of semiotic investigation, narratology allows to analyze film from a narrative perspective. In order to analyze film, there is a need to examine the text within its narrative structure and its artistic language to understand the nature of film discourse. Narrative analysis helps to expose the existing relationship of what is represented and hidden messages of the narrative structure of the film. In all cases, the narrative structure involves a model of significations which follow some kind of a code system to be encoded. As a result the represented meaning is to be perceived and analyzed in various ways. Basically, every story involves a framework in which characters, plot, settings, context and style are interrelated with each other. For example, the story contains a particular setting which is the actual world of the story itself; the story takes place in a particular context in which characters interact based on specific style

or culture, history, fiction. On the whole, the story is made up of those episodes, shortly referred to as plot. These episodes are linked by their relationship in terms of configurations, structure, reason, consequence or any correspondence that may lie beneath the events of the film. Speaking about configurations, artistic elements may include multiple interpretation on the basis of perception of the analyst. On the whole, the perception of the analyst regarding the film is reflected by the narrative structure embedded in the story world. As a result, semantic understanding is followed by conscious recalling of actual information of the story world (Metz, 1974).

As the cinema responds to art to a certain extent, the task here is to understand the language of the cinema which requires linguistics in order to understand and analyze cinematographic expression of film. However, the task of the semiologist requires the knowledge of *diegesis* which stands for “narration” in Greek (Metz, 1974). Regarding the narrator of the film, there are several roles that the filmic narrator plays. In a character-narrator the narrator is actively communicating the story inside the setting of the illusory sphere. Specifically, the character-narrator unlike other types of narrators misrepresents the imaginary world expressing facts of the world. Homodiegetic narration takes place when the narrator acts as an actor in the same story whereas a heterodiegetic narrator does not have a role in the story. Extradiegetic narrator refers to a case when the narrator is evident in the filmic codes and a network of communication (Stam, Burgoyne & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992; Metz, 1974).

With the development of cinema and narrativity, the concept of semiology and its applications in terms of cinema emerged. Metz (1974) notes that film semiotics embraces a wider area than simply film related features. That is, depending on the purpose of the analyst, semiotics of film involves elements of narrative strategy as well as depiction of historical records or actual representations of events, or films which are oriented towards digital representation of the advances of technologies (Metz, 1974). Economical advances have driven the approach of films towards technology advertisements which is so commonly represented in films. On the other hand, some films express educational or even instructional components giving the audience a message or a lesson to be learnt to some extent. However, nowadays the majority of films are purely advertisement-driven, aimed at convincing audiences by a commercial offering and boosting consumption of the goods and services. This is done by representing the goods and services in association with particular value in the mind of the consumer (Metz, 1974).

As a philosophical and artistic role, cinema expresses impression of reality reflecting illusion represented in the form of shots, narration, artificial art and imitation. Introduced by Metz (1974), cinema semiology refers to a film theory used to analyze cinematic language. Inspired by Saussure's examples, he further defined the differences between "langue" which stands for system of language and "language" which embraces mechanism of language conventions between users. According to Metz (1974), film can be considered as being effected by representational conventions. That is, elements of film involve patterns loaded with explicit associations which are beyond written or spoken logic. Moreover, there is a language

cycling in a series of units semantically spoken and film text is based on inference structures. Filmic structures are surrounded by some kind of a fabricated context; made-up and fictional environment, involving texts as ongoing components to be inferred and analyzed. Accordingly, film texts are then analyzed growing into the aspects of narrativity. In this way, the discourse of the narrated layer is exposed. On the whole, the outcome of the analysis on the most part is shaped by the spectator's association and understanding of the films and various progressions of the film texts. Communicative states of film elements define semiotic correspondence in respect to conceptual and perceptual credit in the mind of the analyst. Within a structure of narrative context, filmic composition is characterized by the image representation. With regard to semiotic context, signification and its meaning is revealed from the narrated events, the plot, the character, montage, sounds, and different filmic effects of the film (Metz, 1974).

Nowadays, with the development of technology, film making has taken a more advanced form giving cinema a more sophisticated look with the help of more developed camera, equipment, sound and special effects. All these provide special challenges to the understanding and they infer more hidden meaning. Film makers depict stories, events in a certain way to enable people to be more affected by the represented moving image. With regard to *The Truman Show*, there is a multifaceted complicated representation in which different worlds exist; one world is surrounded by another world. Which actors belong to which world is confusing, and Truman is a victim trying to get out of it.

Talking about the techniques used in *The Truman Show* as a style to represent its world, there are certainly special equipment and effects in filming the actions. Camera angles are used differently; shooting of a particular scene suddenly grows into a different style trying to hint that there are secret cameras to the audience. Moreover, the way the actors are communicating and acting in *The Truman Show* and Truman himself speaks in a style which is not common in comparison with other ordinary films. For example, in the middle of a conversation Meryl turns to the hidden camera and advertises the product "Chef's Pal". *The Truman Show* is intended to express meaning which can be considered as being beyond conventional films as there is a message conveyed to the audience that Truman is being filmed under the observation of the world without his being aware of it.

## **Chapter 3**

### **THE ILLUMINATI**

The information included in this chapter has been organized in terms of several related concepts: the historical background of secret societies, the control of the media by the Illuminati, secret affairs, the Illuminati's actions and involvement in politics, show business, religion, mainstream media, and commercials, the signs and ideology of the Illuminati.

#### **3.1 Historical Background**

The Illuminati, is assumed to be a secret society, that has existed for centuries and is said to influence world events. Any unclear, unexpected event is believed to be initiated by this so called secret society for certain purposes involving personal, professional and/or financial advantage. "Conspiracy theory" is referred to a speculation of such cases (Dice, 2009). In a world of continuous problems of dealing with economics, crime, and injustice people find comfort by detaching their mind from reality and getting attached to what media presents through the screens of television. Such a disconnection from the real world provides well-lit representation of images and actions which relax the mind and transform it to a world of visual pleasure and entertainment. However, the sincerity and truthfulness of the media are left unseen. On the other hand, there is always a visible trace that only some can see.

There have been various claims as well as individuals as members of the Illuminati exposing information some of which was believed to be true but some merely a matter of imagination (Dice, 2009).

The Illuminati are characterized by possession of information as a means to control sources of mass media. The Illuminati is assumed to hold and govern all the mass media sources ranging from TV, newspapers, radio to cinema studios. Exposal of needed information is controlled and decisions related to which information needs to be kept hidden are governed by the Illuminati. Producers and editors do their job so that secret information is not revealed to public. Although not completely, but to a large extent, unwanted information including news, stories are filtered carefully not to harm the aims and actions of the Illuminati. Besides, news and stories are presented to public according to how they are preferred to be presented. Obviously, something is always hidden or prevented from broadcasting or if it is presented it is filtered before it appears on screens or for public audience (Dice, 2009).

It might be hard to accept that mainstream media could be owned and governed by some powerful societies that intend to take control of all sources of information including knowledge, facts, worldwide events and touching upon religious issues. *Survivor*, a realty show is an example of a conspiracy involvement by a secret group of people who participated in the show. Failure of some competitors was merely a sign of misfortune. However, in fact it was believed to be a conspiracy between some other members who covertly helped each other to advance their goal line. In such a tricky way a union by those deceitful people would bring higher achievements and



promote activities of secret societies. Unfortunately, secret societies do exist in commercial, political, social, economical and religious sectors. The best way to ensure the development and spread of such propaganda is to have people, who are part of this propaganda, in all the mentioned sectors playing a role of an ordinary citizen and at the same time executing its secret affairs. However, it may seem difficult to comprehend or believe in such happenings as there is no evident proof or sufficient source of information concerning the existence of such secret societies. As Dice (2009) mentions, “just like the most careful criminal, secret societies often leave clues behind”. No matter how prepared and careful the members of secret societies work, there can always be traces left which will give signs verifying the actuality of secret societies.

In fact, in the 1970s, some individuals have admitted that they used to be members of the Illuminati secret societies and that now they may have converted to Christianity. They also tried to reveal what they know concerning the Illuminati secret society; principles, aims. The original writings of the Illuminati secret society are considered to be truthful for certain, however, it is doubtful to accept that it continued its practices given that its existence and governance over people, business, politics, mainstream media and religion was exposed. On the other hand, it might be true that criminal organizations have secretly carried out their work at the expense of others. Events from reality are often used in the narratives of film schemes of which are very recognizable in the Illuminati. It is obvious that the producers may be well aware and informed about the Illuminati. As a matter of fact, fictional stories are often aimed to deliver a moral or communicate an important point to the audience. For example,

subject in “Hollywood movies include plotlines surrounding terrorism, mind control, Big Brother, secret societies, and occult mysticism and magic”. That is to suggest that those movies in a way symbolize ideas of the Illuminati or underline moral messages expressed through fictional stories (Dice, 2009).

There are some people or groups of people belonging to particular organizations who work for promotion or a reward that was promised to be given. Even though they know that the work they do carries some kind of secrecy, they do not realize that it is actually a part of a “larger conspiracy”. The reason may lie in the pursuit of money and the status and position that goes with having power and the ability to control. However, those who work for the Illuminati can possibly get obsessed with reward that is promised to be given without realizing the consequences that may arise.

The Illuminati, perhaps, are in pursuit of information, the possession of which brings power as they believe. The ownership of accurate and inaccurate information enables manipulation of media, and therefore, the audience. People believe in what is represented on TV, reported in the news, broadcasted on the radio, written in the newspapers and magazines and shown in advertisements. For instance, if “Fox News or CNN” didn’t show it, people think “it must not be happening” (Dice, 2009). Only in recent years, with the emergence of the Internet, we have access to information that has been hidden from the public which only specific websites expose.

The Illuminati may presumably, embrace not only political, media and commercial sectors but religious circles as well. Secret agenda manipulates religious trends by

“fueling the construction of the New World Order and the systematic enslavement of the human race”. The disappointing fact is that people who take part in “bizarre satanic rituals” are the most cultured, the richest, and those having good education. The philosophy of the *New World Order* upholds the leadership of the Illuminati. They believe that a New Age Christ is coming and that “he will unite all the world’s religions into one compatible formula, and that he will fulfill prophecies of the coming world savior” (Dice, 2009). According to the beliefs of the Illuminati, this New Age Christ could remove insufficiencies, diseases, bias, and law-breaking actions. As an explanation for their secrecy and mysterious existence they claim that it is a cover from opponents. *The New World Order* is believed to stand in opposition with Christianity and Islam because it is claimed to have an Antichrist ideology. The deceptions and illusions are viewed as sinful and spirit damaging by Christianity. *The New World Order* is assumed to be a theory carrying conspiracy and power leading a secret and global program with an aim to rule the world by means of one controlling government. Following this idea, the aim of the *New World Order* is assumed to bring one universal worship of Satan. For this reason, there appears to be the opposition with Christianity as well as Islam (Dice, 2009).

Knowledge is believed to have power. Back in the days, Egypt and Greece can be characterized by having people who possessed knowledge which was only shared with those who belonged to the so called *Mystery Schools*. These *Mystery Schools* prevailed as having “the brightest men in the society” (Dice, 2009). In addition to that, mystical illumination was carried out by rituals and ceremonials to infer fictional meaning. This may suggest that by time these evolved into organizations

having secret agreements related to certain agendas whether personal, political or religious.

It is quite unclear if the Illuminati tries to prescribe its beliefs and ideologies by spreading misinterpretations and instilling falsehoods to people for the reason that they do not want the truth to be revealed. In fact, any religion in the world gives answers to human existence. The Illuminati do not seem to accept these beliefs. The same can be applied to those of leading followers who intrude upon these religious beliefs and choose to be involved in and controlled by the principles of the Illuminati.

According to common claim in most religions, there is life after death and everyone will have to go through the judgment day in front of God. Those who live a dishonest life which includes stealing, lying, and/or killing will be punished. Regarding the beliefs of the Illuminati, there is no life after death as their activities include lying, stealing and even killing. However, just imagining life without religious beliefs frightens and seems very unsafe as it would have no morality, people would be spiritually deserted. Power blinds a person in a way that personality and honesty turn into egoism and immorality. As an example, Adolf Hitler who was obsessed by having power and ruling the world had ended in a suicide along with some of his followers. The consequences of such cases can be said to be upsetting. By having faith in God “one has potentially everything to gain and nothing to lose by doing so” (Dice, 2009). However, the Illuminati seems to intend to break the rules by which people live and instill falsehoods to gain control over people’s life and the world.

By owning the mainstream media the Illuminati is said to manipulate and spread right and wrong information in the way they want it to be heard, perceived and understood. All sources of information are in the hands of the Illuminati including TV, radio, cinema, newspapers and magazines. In order to protect their survival, they regulate what should be presented by filtering the information they control; what should be revealed to public, how a particular public figure should be presented, which specific parts of events or news should be reported. As Adam Weishaupt noted, one very operative way to manipulate the human mind is to take control of the sources of information that that public reads. By doing so, the Illuminati may gain power by fueling people with information that they control and therefore, people's mind, attitudes, and choices are directed by what is imposed to them. Just as the Illuminati may control collection of written and verbal distribution of information, they may well manipulate cinema industry and TV shows with the same success. So TV entertainment is assumed to be in the hands of the Illuminati. This possibly indicates an entire control of the content of what is shown on TV by the Illuminati. Unlike past times, the films and TV series of today have quite explicit sexual content with most of them having no particular moral aspect to be learnt from. Thus, people including adults and children, are greatly influenced by what they watch on TV in terms of social, psychological and cultural respects.

Theoretically, the Illuminati is characterized by the control of both information and disinformation (corrupt information aimed to mislead) through the ownership of such sectors of mainstream media as publications (newspapers, magazines), radio, TV, and broadcasting (filming) (Dice, 2009). Similarly, the Illuminati actions can be

observed in the films; back in the days, nude scenes, violence were not exposed in the movies, however, the contemporary sexually and uncontrolled, violence explicit broadcasting has taken a place in a quite spreading manner. A few decades ago the purpose of the films was based on some kind of a lesson expressing the rules of right things. What we see today is total/absolute Impurity, the vulgar exposal of behavior, concepts, religion and women. In recent times, women have become nothing but an object for attraction of products and services that are advertised to the consumers to be purchased. In a way, women themselves may feel special for being placed on top, having right to stand and to speak for themselves, raise a voice and represent particular concepts. However, it only seems appealing; they do not realize that it is a manipulation of their mind and body; they are enslaved to attract and are used to represent products and services for the purpose of advertisement. As a matter of fact, men without doubt are affected by women which means that women can serve as an effective tool to control men; their mind, choices, attitudes, behavior and even performance.

There are various claims related to the origins of the Illuminati. The origins of the Illuminati is supposed lie in “the genetic inbreeding between reptilian extraterrestrial race and humanity”. That is, its’ background is traced back to the inhuman interplanetary battle with humankind. Recent perception of the Illuminati belongs to Adam Weishaupt, who abandoned Catholic Church and initiated the Illuminati by taking help from International investors in 1760s. The aim of the Illuminati was to overpower religions and regimes by creating one government. Thus, the Illuminati is believed to feature in entirely all world events provoking war to reach their goals.

For example, when Britain and France were at their best in holding power in the world, the Illuminati were involved in setting fire on the war aiming to put an end to the French Empire. However, the Illuminati were imposed to go concealed when the Bavarian government revealed their rebellious operations. For this reason, the Illuminati had to be secretive but continue to perform the intended activities. (<http://people.virginia.edu/~sfr/enam481/groupa/illumhist.html>).

According to an article by Wes Penre (2009), the Illuminati “are the Super Wealthy, who stand above the law. Many of them do not even appear on the list of the wealthiest people in the world- they are *that* secret. What is driving them is power, money and control over life and death of others and themselves” (<http://www.illuminati-news.com/moriah.htm>). It is likely to infer that the Illuminati involve great secrecy and can be said to be successful in holding power over the world.

### **3.2 Secret Societies**

*“...The rise of the Christian Church brought persecution of the classical intellectual pattern’s ideology, driving the guilds into greater secrecy; but all have continued searching for human happiness under a variety of rituals and symbols; and they still exist, as the Order of the Quest”*(Hall, 2008).

“Enlightened democracy” is a term used to describe current movement directed by the secret societies for the purpose of building contextual understanding. For many years, secret societies have theoretically, prevailed carrying “religious and

philosophical”, “political”, and “social” character. Their initial drive was to secretly exercise their theories and principles. These by time grew into spreading of their principles and ideologies to other members, still secretly. Their practices and contribution are assumed to be seen in varying sectors such as political, religious, and social often acting to offer help, to provide comfort and security. However, it is possibly a kind of cover they use to appear kind and to gain the trust of people.

Members of secret societies were believed to held extraordinary abilities and wisdom in such areas as “mathematical secrets of proportion and design, certain knowledge concerning universal dynamics, and a philosophical, religious, moral and political conviction concerning the perfecting of human society”. With the emergence of the “Christian Church” this system carrying talent-based character was drifted apart as they were non-believers. Secret societies as a protective manner became more secret presenting their own allegory among members. These societies are assumed to exist carrying out their practices, although their tendencies took a different form of direction, their “intellectual pattern’s ideology” is quite flourished (Hall, 2008).



## Chapter 4

### SEMIOTICS OF THE TRUMAN SHOW

The rationale behind basing the analysis of *The Truman Show* on film semiotics, which looks at film language, is to provide understanding of the semantic content, the language discourse and the nature of how the film becomes clear to the audience. Discussion will be presented in terms of such concepts as family, reality, truth and lies, rebellion and escape.

*The Truman Show* develops in a kind of artificial way. Truman is adopted as a child by the corporation. The diegesis of the film shows isolation of Truman from others in a way that the discourse represents symbolic order (Jagodzinski, 2005). That is, there are various signs which symbolize certain concepts related to reality. For example, the Illuminati signs are implicitly represented in *The Truman Show* in various scenes. This issue will be discussed in the Chapter 5 in details. Truman acts like a child which is obvious in the way he speaks, and uses body language, especially facial expressions.

In her essay Kafalenos (2003), writes that *The Truman Show* is “a real-time televised representation of life that is on air twenty-four hours every day”. Here, *The Truman Show* is analyzed through “double coding”, a term which belongs to Yury Lotman,

and refers to the existence of two things where one occurs within another as in “play within a play” or “a film within a play”, or a TV show within a film. In the case of *The Truman Show*, it is a film within a film in which one film is encoded within a film (Kafalenos, 2003).

*The Truman Show* is a movie which is also a television program depicting Truman’s life since his birth broadcasted live to the world. Truman is a hero who does not realize in the beginning that he is actually being exposed to the whole world’s observance. When he becomes aware of it, he tries to get out of the chaos. What we see in *The Truman Show* is the world of a television show and the world which is created for Truman including the audience (Kafalenos, 2003).

*The Truman Show* can be identified by a genre which involves comedy to some extent as well as drama. That is, at first it seems like a comedy but it develops into drama eventually as the sequence of scenes grows into dramatic events and sadness. Truman plays a hero who lives in his world of exceptional thought different from what others think and do. He is surrounded by anti-heroes who try to confuse Truman by continuous lies and weird behavior. Initially, Truman is not aware of all the weirdness around him as he thinks he lives in a normal world (see Appendix C). Extreme point of this situation is the two contraries which are existence of bright and dark sides of the world in which Truman finds himself.

On-screen description of Truman’s life integrates “the external element”, or the episode of the scene established as a shot to identify the setting, and the film itself

demonstrated as a “television show” falls under the “embedded section” in other words, the fragments that the scenes are set in. On the other hand, the world created by Cristof, Truman and the flow of actions are related to the “embedding section”. “Gate”, which is the door through which Truman goes out of the television show at the end of the movie, is the medium through which Truman finds his way to escape from the show to the world of Cristof and “window” is referred to a medium through which the audience is watching the show from Cristof’s world. According to the “window”, as can be observed above “embedded and embedding sections have the same medium” and the “subordination of the external to the embedding voice be indicated according to the conventions of a semiotic system appropriate to the medium”. *The Truman Show* as a television show confuses the mind of the real viewer of the film in a way that “both the embedded section and the embedding section, effectively blurring the line between the two”. What puzzles the viewer is the amount of facts to be inferred as part of one or another or mutually. In the beginning of the show, Truman is represented as the main role of the show; however, by the end of show as he is told the truth, he turns into one of the actors who were a part of the audience. Since the “medium” is Cristof’s world, everyone under his manipulation is interconnected and can’t stand independently (Kafalenos, 2003).

#### **4.1 Family in *The Truman Show***

Truman by chance meets his father in the street. A man with outfits of a poor person comes into Truman’s path but Truman is unable to fully recognize the man as he disappears suddenly from the view (see Appendix C). Truman accepted his father’s death as true and all this time he thought his father really died in the boat trip. This

accident is the reason for Truman's fear of the water. Truman being confused and unsure whether to believe his eyes or not shares it with his mother but does not receive a desired explanation for his doubts. Truman tries to feel connected to his family which is obvious from his collection of his father's photographs or Meryl's sweater that he keeps. This clearly shows a weak condition in the family and explains emptiness in the relationship and connection of Truman with his family. We know that its all fake; however, this fact is unknown to Truman and it puts him in a great disconnection, doubt and a lack of sense of belongingness to family on the part of Truman. An emotional reunion occurs when Truman with his friend Marlon are found at the bridge chatting about their friendship and dreams. Marlon, who is directed by Christof, tells Truman that there is a "surprise" waiting for him. It turns out to be Truman's father coming out of the foggy space towards them. When Truman realizes that it is really his father walking to him, amused and touched Truman approaches his father and submits himself to his father's embrace. The scene is meant to be delicate giving the audience a touch of emotions and drama highlighted by a tune on the piano and "tears" as a sign of a sentimental link between father and son (Klemens, 2003). Truman is disconnected from his family and he has a constant need to try to find comfort and reunion by any means, even illusionary.



Figure 1: Truman meeting his father

#### **4.2 Reality in *The Truman Show***

Reality is misrepresented specifically on TV screens and by the mass media as a whole. This is well illustrated in *The Truman Show* which is based on ironic construction of the story. Course of actions in *The Truman Show* represent him as an ordinary person unlike the rest of the characters. (Jagodzinski, 2005).

*The Truman Show* illustrates problems with which the hero becomes more and more disturbed in a non-stop projection of his life that is revealed to the whole world for the purpose of illustrating and giving notice to art, big screens and fiction, but he is not aware this is happening. Truman's vision is directed by his instinct which provision knowledge and decode the mystery behind his speculations. Signs of visible thoughts of Truman bring him to a point where he discovers himself and the environment which he finds himself surrounded by. It can be said that Truman is abnormal in a way that he is the only one who is confused and the rest are observers who collaborate in an inspection of conspiracy powers. Along with entirely

“scripted” and “choreographed” actors in *The Truman Show*, there is metaphorical and factual representation of the end of the world that marks out issues with “being/non-being-though this may get equated with existential questions of freedom, knowing, madness, enslavement, ignorance, sanity”. All of them are vividly observed in *The Truman Show*. In addition, such concepts, related to inner self, as “inner/outer, me/not-me, being/non-being” grow together bringing about more confusion of the self and surroundings.

Geivett & Spiegel (2007) describe Truman as a true man who represents “human authenticity”. Truman is not an actor; he is real, unlike the rest of the people playing in the film. Truman is adopted by a media company called Omnicam. Truman’s life is relaxed and at the same time a boring and ordinary life in the town of Seahaven Island Township village. Truman’s behavior can be characterized by childish manners. His family, his mother, best friend, and wife are not real. They are actors who know the truth and are paid to play the roles. Other people in the movie are actors too including neighbors, work partners, shoppers etc. Hidden cameras are located all over the place where Truman lives and moves about. In short, Truman’s life, including his private space, is exposed to the world. Life of Truman seems very ordinary and easy-going with people around him who act and say things in the same style, acting as if they are programmed to do so. Truman himself is a friendly and obedient person; however, he has got some kind of an intrinsic drive or desire to get on daring explorations in mysterious places of gloomy and foot-dragging environments. Truman is predestined to live a false life of custom. This explains his constant curiosity for adventures, dreaming and feeling incomplete as if there is some

kind of a gap that needs to be filled. Something seems to be missing in Truman's life, whether it is related to his childhood, family, romance, confusions of his present life, the truth, desire to explore or fully express himself is not quite clear for Truman. It can be suggested that certainly Truman's family does not have a healthy order in which one would live having no such confusing thoughts and disturbing feeling to find answers to many questions. There is an evident dilemma related to relationships and belongingness to and with family, friends and private life that Truman is encountering. The woman that Truman falls for, disappears leaving him in a big confusing and unidentifiable situation she tried to tell him the truth; all that is around him is fake and intentionally filmed for the whole world's observance (Geivett & Spiegel, 2007).

#### **4.3 Truth and Lies in *The Truman Show***

Fear stimulated by the incidental flow of events and provoking oddness of people acting around and refusal, unavailability of information and flight tickets, Meryl's fingers crossed in the wedding photograph, Lauren taken away at the moment when she tries to say something very important and appearance and sudden disappearance of the father who was believed to be dead, 'T. S' initials, Meryl's acting to the cameras placing a product advertisement, hearing a radio broadcast of his own direction at the moment when he is driving his car, all these occurrences required explanation in Truman's mind. Realizing that people in his family lie and act according to some mysterious regulation, some kind of a plan is being operated behind his back and he is certainly exploited for an unknown purpose for someone's will, he is under control as it is obvious from limitations he is confronted by, Truman

is determined to defend himself as a natural reaction to the conspiracy being driven on him. As Truman tried and failed to find answers and explanations for his suspicion from people and his observance of his environment, he is eventually ready to face and overcome his fear of water to sail out in search of freedom. His attempts to escape by means of the bus, which was told to be broken on purpose, the airplane, for which there were no tickets available, his car, which Maryl stopped on the way when Truman was so determined to drive away, were purposely made unavailable. Although frightened inside by the unknown consequences of what is hiding under the secret throughout his life and where his determination is going to bring him, Truman does not have a second thought about his escaping. However, as he was still being watched and controlled by Cristof, another obstacle was waiting for him on his way in the sea. Cristof, as he is the creator and the controller of Truman, did not want to admit that his world and his “hero” are crashing down. At this critical point, Cristof, blinded by his fear of loosing it all dares to stop Truman no matter what consequences be to the extent of risking his life. In this point of the show, we observe a mutual feeling that both the creator and his creature share. The fear that Cristof implanted in Truman has come around to Cristof. Truman is in the middle of struggling with his fear on the way to escape and release himself from this fear; on the other hand, the expense of Truman’s release from this fear is the fear being instilled in Cristof at the moment of Truman’s escape. Cristof plans to create a storm for Truman while he is sailing out in the middle of the sea. Unfortunately for Cristof, Truman’s self-rule and inner impulse for authenticity overcome his fears and he stays alive. At the moment when Truman reaches a huge wall which seems undefeatable, Truman sets free his emotions. It is perhaps a sudden awareness and disappointment



of such a long-awaited moment appearing in front of him as a wall, blocking his way again. On the other hand, his sentimental reaction maybe be due to the happiness that he has at least overcame his fear and came all the way to where he stands now. Nevertheless, it is not his escape yet. As he moves on to walk out of his unfinished mission, stairs leading to a door labeled as “exit” come across his way. Truman approaches the door and the door opens. At this moment, Cristof has no choice but to speak to Truman, hoping that he can convince Truman to stay in his world. However, Truman has never been so determined to accomplish his mission no matter what awaits him on the other side of the exit. This is the moment when Truman escapes; finally liberating himself from the falsehood he was once deceitfully, unethically placed as a central character to be the hero of the show broadcasted live for the audience, which intentionally had to be kept engaged in an ongoing money-making purpose. With Truman’s walk through the door, the show ends. The audience was left without their entertainment looking for another show to be engaged in. The goal of the show business is to offer appealing content for viewers and keep them engaged in the show. The viewers are unable to recognize the trick in which they are unconsciously though willingly submit themselves by diving into the flow of events and admiring the character of the show (Fazlon, 2011; Klemens, 2003). As a possible suggestion, it is worthy to note that not only Truman is tricked but the audience too. The film is actually trying to show the audience that they are, just as Truman, tricked. Everyone in the film can be said to be a victim of the pre-set propaganda.

#### **4.4 Rebellion and Escape in *The Truman Show***

There is an exemplary portrayal of ones' ability of "self-determination" in *The Truman Show*. Freedom in *The Truman Show* is restricted; Truman is constrained of behavior and individuality. He lives in a quite conventional manner of life as well as old-fashioned style of dressing. His life seems very routine with the same activities he performs everyday. The way he greets people and neighbors is expressed by using the same phrase every morning when he goes out of the house and heads to work. In short, "his life is bound by the conventional requirements of house, marriage, car and desk job". This shows the extent to which Truman is chained up in "the routines and responsibilities" of his life. Apart from that, he lives in a constructed "stage-set" world in which everything is foreseeable and controlled indicating a great deal of restraint from freedom and individuality. This indicates "a literal means of imprisonment" of Truman's life; individuality, identity, freedom, and free will. As a result and a natural response, Truman attacks the constructed convention in which he finds himself. In other words, rebellion arises and Truman refuses to live according to the rules of the fabricated world of Christof. As things around Truman start to get strange, people's actions appear unusual, and each door he tries to open closes and Truman's urge to take action and oppose these disorders grows. Moreover, Truman's rebellion intensifies with the departure of Lauren. From then on, not only does he want to find the truth and free himself from the absurd environment but also to follow his heart that was touched by a women, Lauren, who tried to give him clues about the truth and his desire to find her. The only person who made him feel different is Lauren. It is surely not a coincidence that every time Truman gets closer to freedom, he is confronted by someone who really does not want Truman to be free

and find the truth. In this case, the curiosity and suspicion of Truman grows into anger and frustration and generates rebellion (Fazlon, 2011).



Figure 2: Truman is suspicious and is determined to find the truth

Truman decides to observe his environment. At first, it seems normal but then Truman sees a man running and he notices that the man's shoes has the initials "T. S" on them. Truman remembers that he has seen the "T. S" initials before. Suddenly Truman stands up and heads towards the building where he sees the same people he meets everyday as actors behind the scenes. Truman concludes for himself; too many things appear to be not normal and he decides no escape. Truman decides to sail out of Seahaven through the sea and although frightened of the water, he is determined to overcome his fear. As Truman overcomes his fear and survives the storm created by Christof, a huge wall stands in front of him. Truman goes up the stairs which lead to the door labeled as "exit". When Truman reaches to open the door, Christof speaks to Truman and reveals the truth; that he is the producer of the television show "which gives hope and joy and inspiration to millions", and in which Truman is "the star" (Niccol, 1998). Truman ironically leaving his final message (see Appendix E) follows his heart and walks out of the door.

## Chapter 5

### THE ILLUMINATI IN THE TRUMAN SHOW

*The Truman Show* will be studied in relation to the Illuminati which manipulates the media and provides information to impose attitudes and control audiences. The Illuminati's actions will be exposed by focusing on the concepts of control, religion, human rights and perceptions and illusions in *The Truman Show*.

#### 5.1 Control in *The Truman Show*

Although Truman is married to a nice woman, they live in different worlds and have almost no mutual beliefs or interests. In other words, they are not bound to each other, something separates them. Truman's best friend seems to be very devoted towards Truman; however, he is simple-minded and apathetic in nature, which is unlike Truman. There is a contradiction between Truman's autonomy and the opportunities that the environment offers him. He is limited in terms of what he can do: listening, reading, hearing, going to where he wants. Specifically, he can only do what is given; listen to radio which tells what is already programmed, read what is pre-written, hear what is already predetermined to be said, for example, every morning everyone greets him in a polite manner by name, and he can only go to limited places. This serves as an evident proof for the fact that Truman's life is totally controlled. Everything is pre-set, predetermined and limited. For this reason,

Truman is not able to fully follow and achieve his dreams. However, he is not yet aware of the truth, the reality that he is surrounded by lies and convictions that people around him try to prescribe to him. There is a psychological violence in *The Truman Show*. Truman is being abused psychologically.

## **5.2 Religion in *The Truman Show***

*The Truman Show* reveals issues related to God to some point highlighting beliefs, imaginations, uncertainties, choices and faith of a religious character. It is well known that the truth about current beliefs in God take the form of an idea that God is the controller of all that is around us. *The Truman Show* illustrates a stage of someone's life and behind the screens there is the controller; God in real life, and the producer of the movie in *The Truman Show*. People in *The Truman Show* are actors just as we are in real life.

Obviously, we are surrounded by a culture based on media for the most part. This is clearly observed from TV screens, advertisement, newspapers, and cinema. Not only media based culture prevails but our mind, behavior, perceptions, knowledge and practice is mainly influenced and shaped by means of media. As we live in a well technologically advanced world, everything is subjected to media-made services and products. Our understanding of reality is often fashioned by what media offers, for the most part looking for some kind of an explanation from news and stories, relaxation and encouragement from films, sensual and physical consumptions from advertisements.

Back in the days, people used to have different religious attitudes, views and beliefs that many commonly accepted and followed. However, with the emergence and development of mass media illusions, people recognized inconsistent and changing ideas with respect to religious issues. We, as humans, seek for some sort of a spiritual comfort or relief and answers for mystical questions which can be provided by a consistent source that offers rational explanations. Nowadays, these explanations and comfort are delivered through TV shows, advertisements, entertainments programs and big screens. Media-made prescriptions fashion our appreciation of life, perceptions and choices which is one of the noticeable aspects of *The Truman Show*. In *The Truman Show* fabricated settings of media confirm endurance for people, product allocation represents a better life; are actually money-making in the form of advertisements.

*The Truman Show* is best described by its control figures and obeying actors which raise questions whether in reality we are controlled or not and if we are then who controls our existence, choices, understanding and values. It can be suggested that there are two figures that have control over people. In *The Truman Show*, Cristof (Ed Harris) the producer is the controller who directs the actors and the flow of events in the way he wants. This can be interpreted in a way that he is represented as God in reality. On the other hand, in reality everything is in the hands of God who is thought to be the controller of the existence of people. Distinction that can be made between the producer of the movie and God is that the producer is only able to control the way actors exist and the flow of events in a world fabricated by him with the help of advanced technology while God is in control of the whole existence of the universe,

people and nature. In the case of Truman, Cristof is the creator and the controller of Truman's life and he believes that it is the right choice and case for Truman to live a happy life. Just as Cristof controls Truman's life, the same is done to all the actors in the movie. In order to keep the created stage-like world, Cristof does his best to keep Truman in by interrupting his escape and implanting doubts and failures to Truman's speculations. Cristof's passion to keep Truman and his world under his power and will grows to the extent that he is ready to put an end to his adopted and raised victim, Truman.

The audience in *The Truman Show* continues to watch how Truman's life develops day by day. They know that it is a show on TV and that Truman is not aware of it. The show is kept alive by the viewers. No one from the viewers is willing to let Truman know about the truth. Instead, they are all fascinated by each action, activity, experience and failure of Truman. This, in a way represents us, the audience and consumers of media content, products, and services. Knowing that it is another prescription by media, we continue to watch, consume, follow or use all the fabricated offers of the media. This suggests that people can effortlessly be handled and controlled through represented goods and services of the media.

The issue of watching and being watched as illustrated in *The Truman Show* is a matter that can be applied to real life as well. As people are greatly influenced by the ideal representations of media content through watching TV, reading magazines, listening to stories or watching films, there comes an unconscious evaluation of the self that each person does in order to polish up the flaws and tune themselves

according to the represented fashion of life, appearance and manner that the media prescribes. Therefore, people's behavior, taste and choice is altered and manipulated leaving little choice and freedom for self-autonomy (Linda A. Mercadante, 2001). It can be suggested that *The Truman Show* is an analogy of real life trying to awaken the public to see the game being played. It is difficult to understand whether such a revelation of so called truth could be in a way the acceptance of control by unseen forces. If so, then this might be regarded as an act of legitimatizing the beliefs and practices of groups such as the Illuminati.

We, as human beings seek knowledge. We learn a lot from others, we also learn from TV, magazines, films and all other sources of media kind. Although knowledge and truth are important, virtual reality and illusions serve a purpose in ways that they enable us to see and differentiate authenticity and existence from represented fake reality. This can mainly be observed and learnt through the media. Through films we can observe these patterns.

The Illuminati may have the power to use the cinema to influence and provoke people's perceptions. As knowledge decorates human states and affairs, these can be represented and expressed through fabricated works such as films, songs, images, lyrics, fiction because these are ways through which concepts of life can be deliberately conveyed. As mentioned by Geivett & Spiegel (2007), "They teach illumination- by throwing light on these contours of human existence that lurk within the shadows". These contours which can be regarded as family, beliefs and values of life, love, life and death are concealed and out of sight but are in wait for a bad



purpose. The Illuminati employ this method to control people's sub consciousness. In *The Truman Show* what Truman knows and feels is illuminated by what surrounds him in a fabricated world. He has a quite lifestyle, people are nice to him, and there is no kind of pain. The Illuminati provide painless conditions to attract people in order to manipulate their emotions, feelings, choices and ideas. Just like in *The Truman Show* everything seems so pleasant, welcoming and comfortable. However, behind the scenes everything is pre-arranged so that there is no tension, no pressure (actors are comfortable living in a nice place and living according to the rules of the controllers).

Truman gradually starts to notice oddities around him, his instincts tell him that there is something missing. The lack of excitement, and adventure and his marriage bores Truman which is simply because it is all artificial, lacking authenticity. As Truman tries to escape, he is prevented at each attempt. His motivation to escape is in the desire to meet Lauren again and to find the truth. When he tries to call and get information about ticket flights he is told that everything is booked. The creator of the world, in which Truman lives, blocks every single way out that Truman can take in order to leave the island. In reality, this indicates control over people by the Illuminati. When Truman finally finds a way to escape through the sea, his own fears do not let him accomplish the escape. He is scared of water for the reason that his father died in it; water is associated with his father's death. This fear is instilled in Truman by the creator. This shows that in reality the Illuminati manipulate people's feelings, fears, and emotions.

The Illuminati may be regarded as controlling the world in a way that it owns all media sources by creating fiction and illusions. People often look for the truth just as Truman starts to realize that he lives in an artificial world full of lies and convictions. His ambition to know the truth grows. Although Truman does not fully realize the conspiracy behind his back, he wants to reach reality by escaping from the fiction in which he lives in. It is suggested that there are two factors making Truman want to reach reality. They are social and psychological factors. That is, he is disturbed by continuous interruption from the society he lives in. This happens when he tries to book a ticket to fly away and when his wife convinces him to stay. In this case Truman is challenged and is not able to escape the fabricated world. Everything is under control and however, Truman is not able to break the bridge and release himself from his fears and the control over him. Similarly, in reality many things become out of people's control. People purchase and consume media-driven products and services convinced by eye-catching advertisements. People are no longer given a choice to make decisions; choices are made on the basis of what is presented by the media. It is very obvious (to viewers) how Truman's wife is acting to advertise products. She is controlled by cameras accentuating her tone of voice to highlight features of the product being advertised in the middle of a conversation with Truman. The Illuminati may advertise what they want by using people who would definitely have an impact and attract attention and the interest of consumers.

From the beginning of *The Truman Show* we can observe odd and unnatural actions that Truman comes along with. Extraordinary events occur on Truman's path. As he becomes aware of the fact that it is something very unusual, he feels awkward and

starts seeking answers to questions raised in his mind, however, none of his speculations are supported. At some point things get worse; unnatural events keep happening, he is interrupted and being ignored while talking, rain pours only on him- all seem to be artificially made and happening on purpose to frustrate him.

Regarding the religious concept represented in *The Truman Show*, nature is made of artificial substances used for the water, the rain, the moon and the sun. As Ganzevoort (2006) stated, “This material from religious myths is recycled in the world of mass consumption and mass media. *Everyman* is the title of a 15<sup>th</sup> century morality play, where the main character Everyman is summoned by claim and for his journey, he discovers, none of his friends want to accompany him except good deed. ‘Everyman Library’, a publishing house which prints world’s literary masterpieces with the aim of keeping human heritage alike. The reference to Everyman signifies that morality as we have known it, is replaced by a morality fabricated by the Illuminati, a capitalist, exploitative morality. Tru(e)man is Everyman, named after the city of Burbank, California, where major media companies like Disney, Warner, and NBC are based. In this picture, the religious imagery no longer refers to organized religious traditions. Instead it contributes to the analysis and critique of the world of the media. In other words, it aims at unmasking the ‘gods’ of media-religion”. The director Christof plays God in *The Truman Show* and his stage-like set world created by him is ruled by the fabricated surrounding, cameras, the viewers and the actors who are used for advertisements within the film, constant surveillance – all are reminders of media related elements. In this case, media can refer to what the religion of his world is. Everyone and everything is created by and depends on

Christof; he is the producer of the film and the creator of the world. Remarkably, Christof has made up the world for Truman; on the other hand, this world is influenced by Truman. That is, as long as Truman lives in this world, unaware of the truth, Christof and his fabricated world is blooming and he is on the safe side. However, once Truman realizes the conspiracy that has been made behind his back and finds the truth, he will turn his back to the creator and leave the falsehood he is surrounded by. Thus, the world of Christof will crash down. From this point, there is a mutual relationship between Truman and Christof which has a direct influence on the world created by Christof which in reality indicates “mutual dependence of humans and their gods” (Ganzevoort, 2006). It can also be added that in the past people were significantly dominated by church. Church was a governing body over people’s various phases of life in terms of “marriage”, “ethics”, and “beliefs” Women and men were enforced to obey the rules, pray, act according to the required religious views

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/medieval/thechurch/church.html>).

In relation to *The Truman Show*, Christof is the one who everyone obeys and they all act according to his rules. He plays the role of the governing body over Truman’s marriage, his beliefs, and he tries to prescribe moral values. Furthermore, Truman’s rights are violated in a way that he is not given a freedom to live as a normal person without being watched by millions of people. Truman himself is authentic, however, everything around him including his marriage, friends, family, the sun, the moon, the rain are fake (Ganzevoort, 2006). In addition, Truman is not given the freedom to go where he wants; the bus breaks down, there is no flight ticket, information services

are of no help. Shortly, everything is controlled, by the creator. For the most part, Truman's rights are violated. His entire life, without being edited, is under the surveillance of cameras displaying every single aspect of his life to the viewers. Making a reference to the life of celebrities in reality, there is a common point to be recognized in this respect. Every aspect of celebrities' lives is under the observance of public eye constantly. For instance, even the private and intimate aspects of a particular celebrity is exposed to the public often having a criticizing manner of sarcastically revealing secrets, events or activities without a thought in mind to censor the content and to protect the celebrity's human rights. Nevertheless, it is quite unclear whether those involved in the Illuminati organization direct and control this kind of revelation of celebrities' lives for either personal or professional purposes. On the other hand, it is reasonably possible to infer that the Illuminati could be involved in such affairs as their key goal is to gain power and money by having control over people's life.

*The Truman Show* provides essential religious points through the role of Christof portrayed as God and Truman as any human in reality. Whereas the religion is represented in the form media means by which people are prescribed to live. God and religion are implicitly presented in *The Truman Show*. What can be inferred and learnt from this is unique to each individual in real life as everyone holds distinct beliefs and perceptions. Suggesting that *The Truman Show* reflects our doubts and fears in terms of religion, existence, life and after-life issues would be wrong as no reliable evidence can be put forward. Religion entails certain obedience as a manner of commitment to spiritually and physically worshiping the creator, God. Individuals

who hold strong religious beliefs are limited in their actions, choices and way of living as a whole while those who distance themselves from any religious bounds have as much freedom as they would want to have. It can be suggested that *The Truman Show* to a certain extent illustrates God as Christof and media as religion that restricts and limits human freedom. Besides, there are few more points related to religion in *The Truman Show*. Firstly, Truman's real name is "Jim Carey", the initials of which are identical with "Jesus Christ". Secondly, the director's name in the film is Christof which is suggested to indicate "Christ-off" or "Of-Christ". Thirdly, the name of the place where Truman lives is called Seahaven which can be "As-Heaven" when the letters are re-ordered. These points may suggest some kind of reference to religion and God in a way suggesting the anti-Christ and in keeping with the direction of the Illuminati's purposes and actions (<http://occupyilluminati.com/the-truman-show-conspiracy/>).

### **5.3 Human Rights in *The Truman Show***

*The Truman Show* can be considered as a metaphor that is used to reflect American social order. The director of the film can be said to be the government of America which supplies its citizens with conditions of so called delight and security and at the same time using them to manipulate and take control of their minds. As nearly many of American figures who are involved in politics, government and commercial industry in one way or another are interconnected to the Illuminati, it is reasonable to infer that *The Truman Show* in a way illustrates the American order in which the society lives. The same can be applied not only to the American social order but to the society around the world. People who have power in government, politics, and

commercial industries around the world provide products and facilities to citizens aiming to enslave their mind, body and soul. Apart from this metaphor, there are a number of other metaphors representing reality in *The Truman Show*. A stage set world in *The Truman Show* represents a safeguarding, as the director of the film mentions, aimed at getting people to TV screens. The audience of *The Truman Show* is entirely captivated sitting in front of the TV screens and non-stop watching with passion *The Truman Show*. This indicates a total control of mind by media, however, unknown to the audience. The audience is unable to see the attachment growing to the entertainment given in TV screens. They are also unaware that as one show ends they desire for another. This is the impulse for more pleasure that controls mind eventually and conditions people to the moving image and TV entertainment. Given that Truman is represented as a real “true man” in the film, his state of mind represents fear, mistrust and suspicion of any real men whose conscious mind raises doubt about the world around him; whether what surrounds him is true. As Shakespeare said once, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players: they have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages." (in “As You Like It”, Act II, Scene VII). That is, life in reality is a movie and we are all actors in it. Thus, *The Truman Show* metaphorically represents this idea of life. However, it also represents the truth about reality, the truth of authority figures who aim to control money, to gain power and to manipulate all sources of mainstream media lies in the enslavement of human mind and body. In this way, secret societies are able to uphold their conspiracy and reach their goals.

In relation to human rights, *The Truman Show* implicitly shows how the human mind and life is abused by media, power, illusions and religion. To illustrate, the realm of *The Truman Show* is a stage-set world, a TV show being watched by millions of people. These people have nothing to do but to spend hours in front of the moving image and consume what is shown by TV shows and commercials. The land of imagination is absorbed by an endless airing on TV that raises curiosity and concentration thus ensuring non-stop watching. This serves as a clear evidence of the total brainwashing of human mind in fiction and illusions of media represented content. The life of Truman is represented as a show for the audience by using technology and storyline to keep the viewers awake and rapt in an ongoing show. This in fact embodies the manipulation of viewers attention, time and perception which is however unknown to them.

#### **5.4 Perceptions and Illusions in *The Truman Show***

The presence of products indirectly advertised in *The Truman Show* feeds the audience with delusional representation constructing lives, beliefs, feelings. However, people stay almost unconscious captured by all that fabricated illustration without realizing that actually it is a matter of prescribing what is intended by the producers not what actually is and should be in reality. (Downing, 2002). The movie shows us how attitudes can change when a person comes to the understanding of the intentions and lies behind prescribed illusions once they are disclosed. In the case of Truman, he is well engaged in the created world around him in the beginning, however, things get shaky when he starts to notice that it is not as it seems. He realizes that he is only convinced that everything around him is normal and real.



With attempts to discover the truth, Truman starts to question what seems weird to him. However, at every effort he is interrupted and taken back to the same fake world. In reality, this shows cases when we are so absorbed by media content that we follow every single step until the illusion overpowers us. On the other hand, though tempted by the media, we sometimes try to stay away from it. There is an obvious conflict between reality and an inner picture of ones self in *The Truman Show*. Although Christof tries to convince Truman by saying that everything in real life is a lie and that by staying in his world Truman will be happy, Truman truly replies that by no means one can have a camera in the head meaning that no matter how strong the control is, there is still hope for a free state of mind. Despite the comfort Christof offers in his fabricated world of illusions, Truman's departure signifies a discovery he has made for himself. This gives a moral to the fact that the media with its appealing made-up impressions invites consumers to pursue its content, products and services brainwashing human mind and prescribing its own culture. However, people fall for it and if fortunate, they find themselves being grasped in a world of meaningless, fake delusions under the control of a great unknown power (Ganzevoort, 2006).

In fact, there are always critics who express their judgment whether for or against certain occurrence or affairs. In the case of *The Truman Show*, in relation to the media, it can be suggested that in *The Truman Show* people who try to help Truman see the reality and find the truth are the critics of the media who are against illusions arranged by media agents, such as, the woman Truman falls for. She actually tells him that he is on a TV program and that everyone is watching him, opening his eyes

to the fact that he is surrounded by lies and provocation. Just as the media creates illusions and wants people to believe in them, a world is created for Truman to convince him that everything surrounding him is true.

The media entertains us and manipulates us at the same time. We are fascinated by eye-catching representations, simulations of represented events; we are psychologically absorbed in the media-made affairs. Just like Truman, we become a part of the fabricated world. The media constructs perceptions and hence, takes control of audience. *The Truman Show* is not just a movie or a sarcastic representation of , but this is the message that it tries to deliver to the audiences. The producer of the movie is in his best to keep Truman in the fabricated world is a way of telling Truman to stay and enjoy this world just as we are willing to let the media manipulate us because we agree to be interested in its reality, shows, stories and entertainment as it seems easier and more comfortable compared to real life.

## Chapter 6

### CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 Discussion

This section presents issues regarding past and present, contemporary relationship between media and the Illuminati, world and actions, and in particular, women who today have turned out to be an abusive implementation of power to distribute technology and have been corrupted by being presented as a subject of property. That is, women seem to be used in advertisements because they are believed to attract product consumption. This issue can be observed in *The Truman Show*, where Meryl constantly acts to the cameras to advertise products.

*The Truman Show*, directed by Weir in 1998, presents an impressive television show in which Truman Burbank who was adopted as a baby by a television network and becomes a victim of show business initiated by the Omnicom Corporation. From his birth up to his thirties Truman's life was broadcasted on big screens to the audiences of the whole world. Living a peaceful life Truman does not yet realize the conspiracy operating behind his back. Eventually, things start to reveal and Truman, aware of the plan, is set to break free. We, as the audience of the movie, however, are given a metaphor of how the current state of affairs whether in political, commercial or religious terms condition people and circumstances to profit-making and power-

gaining commitments. Truman is the character who duplicates anyone in real life. The scene is the media in *The Truman Show*; news presented on the posters, advertisements frequently made by Meryl, control of mind and choices made by the mass media. At first, it all seems amazingly convincing with authentic recreation and special effects. Everything seems kind but it is simply a cover-up for all the fabricated patterns of nature; the sun, the moon, the rain, the sky. Same deceptions are seen in the illusion of thought and mind of the actors which are created and controlled by Christof to instill perceptions to Truman. Yet, nothing can last forever and on the whole not always and not everyone will be willing to obey and follow ideologies of the media. As in Abraham Lincoln's words, "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time", no matter how intense Christof wanted to control his world and particularly Truman, it was simply his illusion. Above all, there is God who is the real creator and controller of people's existence, destinies, here and after sacraments. Christof should have predicted that excessive control over people and situations would bring about resistance as limitations generate frustration, create a feeling of breaking the rule because it is disturbing the self-independence of a person. Therefore, the natural impulse to rebel asserts itself (Brearley & Sabbadini, 2008). Truman's rebellion, in this case, is a natural response to resist the limitations because it gave him frustration of being over controlled. His response included a sort of behavior aiming to take over the authority he found himself being under.

### **6.1.1 Female Representation In Advertisement And Cinema**

Dating back to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a gradual shift to the role of women in advertising industry. In modern times, gender roles have fallen under “a cultural category which goes beyond the biologically based distinction between masculine and feminine, and refers to the social organization of the relationship between sexes in personal, institutional and socio-cultural terms” (Ford & LaTour, 1993; Artz & Venkatesh, 1991). The logic behind portraying women in advertising is for the purpose of creating product or service appeal. With the emergence of “Women’s Movement”, the role of women has shifted developing towards intensive involvement in the industry of marketing. Therefore, consumer behavior, producers, advertising patterns and trends in product representation are inevitably influenced in this respect. Specifically, as women have gained acceptance and power to some extent in participating in marketing as a whole and advertisement specifically, commercial techniques and concepts of product and service representation have started taking a new form (Ford & LaTour, 1993; Artz & Venkatesh, 1991).

In relation to *The Truman Show*, as it was mentioned in the earlier sections, we can observe a “product placement” by Meryl in a number of scenes (see Appendix A). It seems rational to conclude that current trend towards female portrayal in advertising was taken into consideration in *The Truman Show* as well. Although represented in a quite conservative form, Meryl is exploited as a subject to gender portrayal in advertising the products in *The Truman Show*. As it can be observed in *The Truman Show*, Meryl highlights the characteristics of the product she is holding and at the same time giving a convincing face expression for the audience by acting to the

cameras (see Appendix A). Truman positively replies to her advertisement without being aware of the acting going on around him.

### **6.1.2 Current Relationship Between The Media and The Illuminati**

*The Truman Show* was analyzed in relation to the Illuminati which refer to a secret society which has power over public by manipulating media and providing information to impose attitudes and control audience. The Illuminati is characterized by the control of both information and disinformation (corrupt information aimed to mislead) through the ownership of such sectors of mainstream media as publications (newspapers, magazines), radio, TV, and broadcasting (filming) (Dice, 2009). Similarly, the Illuminati actions can be observed in the films; various signs and symbolism are represented metaphorically and certain real life concepts are given reference to, exposing implicit interpretation in the movies, however, the contemporary inauthenticity and uncontrolled, violence-explicit broadcasting has taken place in a quite spreading manner. Few decades ago the purpose of the films was based on some kind of a lesson expressing the rules of right things. What we see today is total/absolute Impurity, vulgar exposal of behavior, concepts, religion and women. With this in mind, the Illuminati actions were discussed in this study by focusing on the concepts of control, religion, human rights and perceptions and illusions in relation to *The Truman Show*.

*The Truman Show* obviously includes a variety of references to current affairs that are taking place around the world. Our task, as the audience of the movie, is to grasp the conveyed meanings and make conclusions for ourselves. As it was mentioned

earlier, numerous signs demonstrating the Illuminati codes are implicitly represented in *The Truman Show*. The movie portrays current state of the world absorbed in commercialized culture which is directed by mainstream media and controlled by higher authorities for the purpose of money-making and power-gaining. Truman is the victim of a giant studio which in reality can be interpreted as a provider of media fabrications. He is constantly observed and controlled. In reality, people are invisibly observed too in the choices they make, the products they purchase, the places they choose to go are also observed. Just as only Truman is real and all others are simply actors, people are real too but surrounded by society in which everything is based on media commercials, and media based culture. Another important point to make, as we see in *The Truman Show*, Christof's world is mainly dependent on Truman and all the actors in it, at the same time, Truman and the actors are in the hands of Christof. Similarly, in reality people are greatly influenced and dependent on media-produced facilities and products, likewise, the media needs its consumers because without them it would not be able to operate according to its nature of selling products, services, news, ideas, choices, entertainment and illusions. Thus, there is an inescapable connection and continuous intercourse between people and media. Media sells and people buy. The audience watching *The Truman Show* in the movie is in a position to buy what media, Christof and his collaborators, sell. In reality people agree to buy what the media offers.

Regarding the impacts of the Illuminati, it controls “the sources of information” as a whole, as well as specifically spreading only that information which will be of benefit for their own existing goals. In addition, “disinformation” is often distributed

to the public aiming to mislead those who do not buy the imposed offers of media. Similarly, what Christof did is impose what he created: the place, the comfort, the choices, the products, and the services to Truman, and on the other hand, the entertainment: *The Truman Show* to the audience in order to keep them in an ongoing show that brings power to Christof.

### **6.1.3 Interpretation of Sign and Symbolism in *The Truman Show***

To begin with, signs can be clarified through verbal expressions or object representation in the films. The film demonstrates the necessity of the one conveying the meaning whether on the part of a person or in the form of an object or sign. *The Truman Show* is depicted as “real-time representation of a real event, broadcast in a medium that is capable of real-time representation of real events” (Kafalenos, 2003). The storyline of *The Truman Show* involves verbal and sign representation as a reference to infer meaning.

Signs can be observed at the very beginning of *The Truman Show* when scenes of the road, and hidden cameras are shown to the viewers of the film. This shows what has been staged is not real. Truman, his world and the world in which he is controlled are under constant observation and are not as they seem to be (Jagodzinski, 2005). The “stage-set” world that Truman lives in is surrounded by actors acting to the cameras and each of these actors are aware that they are being filmed. However, unknown to Truman, he is a victim of a profit-making agenda to keep the audience alive and captive. In this point, it can be suggested that the director of *The Truman Show* is making an ironic statement showing the audiences around the world that they are



actually Truman. Furthermore, reality is misrepresented, that is, again, there is an ironic construction of the story. In every scene of *The Truman Show* there is a representation of particular signs each having a unique reference to certain issues. These issues are related to media, the Illuminati, and religious concepts. To illustrate, Truman draws a circle on the mirror which suggests the globe of his own perception, or perhaps it suggests the “stage-set” world in which he is imprisoned. There is a continuous “product placement” in the scenes particularly performed by his wife Meryl. For example, it is very obvious when she acts to the camera showing the “Chef’s Pal” and speaks in a tone of voice trying to highlight the product. The KAISER chicken advertisement appears when Truman is on the way to work stops and talk to men, at that point the camera angles point to the poster on the wall trying to draw attention to the advertisement for KAISER chicken (see Appendix A).



Figure 3: Representation of the moon in *The Truman Show*

With regard to religious issues that are given reference to in *The Truman Show*, religious belief and faith in God are metaphorically delivered through the course of the whole show, especially emphasized in the scenes of Christof acting a role of God, being a creator of his world, and Truman being created by Christof as well as being

in an ongoing and challenging voyage of exploring reality, the truth and faith. Some religions speak of spiritual peace, faith and trust in the creator. In the case of Truman, as he grows up, his inner voice calls for explanation of his existence and his surrounding. His spirit demands enlightenment and justification for “life-and-death” ambiguity which disturbs him at times when he notices a clear disconnection from the world he lives in and mysteriousness of his father’s death in relation to sudden arrival and abrupt departure. Truman finds it difficult to explain it to himself as there are no evident clues or traces that could guide him in finding interpretation related to the mysteriousness of life. At each attempt he is faced with obstacles and limitations that block his way. One possible suggestion may be that since Truman was brought up in a very inauthentic world where everything was imposed and artificial, he certainly was not taught about religious conviction of any kind. This may serve as a possible explanation for his insecurity, self-doubt and anxiety related to his existence, mystery behind him and the world surrounding him. Truman has lived in a world filled with illusion and prescribed beliefs of Christof manipulating every possible action in the stages of Truman’s life. Given a situation in which there could be at least minimal religious structures of an authentic kind, Truman could possibly reach some understanding and wisdom for the reason that religion and worship propose truthful practices of a spiritual kind revealing knowledge and rationale interpretation for ambiguous concepts. In this way, Truman would be better able to make sense of the world which brings fear and misgivings to him. Apart from these, as we have seen, the name of the producer Christof implies “Christ” giving the essential reference to God. This is an implicit as well as explicit sign that Christof plays a role of God in *The Truman Show*. At the end of the show when Truman is

about to walk out of the fake world he was put in, Christof talks to Truman as if he is God from above and Truman's response in the form of a question is a spiritual request "who am I?" (Ganzevoort, 2006).

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Product Placement in The Truman Show



Figure 4: Meryl advertising the product



Figure 5: Truman advertising the product



Figure 6: Truman's friend Marlon advertising the product



## Appendix B: Truman and Seahaven



Figure 7: Truman is watched by the whole world



Figure 8: Seahaven

## Appendix C: Weirdness of events in The Truman Show



Figure 9: Truman meeting his father



Figure 10: Rain falls only on Truman

## Appendix D: Signs of The Illuminati

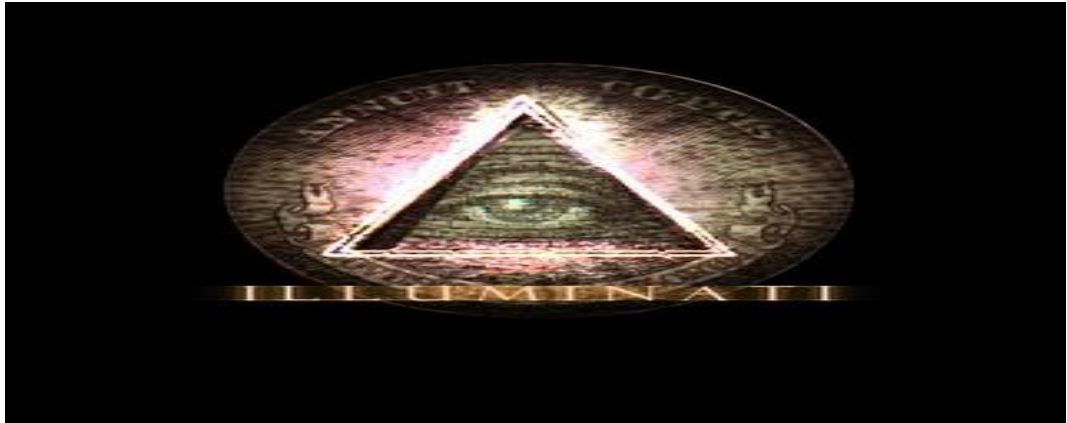


Figure 11: Symbol of the Illuminati



Figure 12: The Illuminati Sign represented in *The Truman Show*



Figure 13: Sunrise in Seahaven representing enlightenment

## Appendix E: Final scenes



Figure 14: Truman walking up the stairs to “exit”



Figure 15: Truman's final message to Christof