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THE REPRESENTATION OF MASCULINITY IN DANIEL CRAIG'S JAMES BOND

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James Bond is a peculiar and emblematic character in popular culture. He is a multimedia fiction hero with the longest-running film series ever. Also, he is one of the few British created action and adventure heroes to be known internationally in an American-dominated genre. Charming gunslinger, infamous womaniser, daredevil driver, techno-fiend and connoisseur of all things exquisite, the character has carved a place for himself in Western popular culture. One of the most distinctive characteristics of MI6 agent 007 in cinema is that the actors that portray to the character are always changing, and such a fact is never an issue while on screen. Each actor is often considered to be representative of the tendencies and concerns of the time. Furthermore, each actor's performance changes the personality of Bond in noticeable ways, though always with common core elements between all of the iterations.

This essay will analyse the depiction of the character of secret agent James Bond as performed by actor Daniel Craig in the films *Casino Royale* (Campbell 2006) and *Skyfall* (Mendes 2012). It will not take *Quantum of Solace* (Forster 2008) into much consideration, mainly because of the lack of quality of the and because of its distance from the Bond formula¹.

In order to understand this analysis of 007 movies, it is necessary to know that they mostly follow what filmmakers and critics have called the Bond Formula. This formula is a set of components that all the films of the saga make use of, though some lack several of them. The formula includes stylistic and thematic elements, some of the former being the credit sequences, the exotic locations, the Bond Girls and the meeting with the villain, whereas thematic elements include the charismatic hero, the villain's evil plans and the triumph of right against wrong (Spicer 2003, 76). Those films that eliminate elements of the Formula have usually met with Box Office failures and negative critical appraisals, such as the lack of happy endings in *On his Majesty's Secret Service* (Hunt 1969), the techno-excess of *Die Another Day* (Tamahori 2002), the rebellion of Bond in *Licence to Kill* (Glen, 1989) and the unheroic violence of *Quantum of Solace* (Chapman 2009, 114, 115). Any reference to the Formula in this essay will mean the set of elements that are considered by filmmakers, spectators and critics alike to be vital to the saga.

This essay will pay particular attention to the comparison of this specific Bond as opposed to previous film incarnations, and will not consider the Ian Fleming novels or the presence of this character in other media. I will also analyse different aspects of the character, especially those related to depictions of "masculinity types", such as his

¹ This, admittedly, is a purely subjective opinion.

relationship with women, his identity by means of his job, his violence, his masterful use of technology and (lack of) submission to authority.

Also, the theoretical approach I will be using is the conception of the Old-Man-New Man-New Lad types of masculinity (Milestone & Meyer 2012, 113-119). This approach considers that the understanding of men in the Western World has shifted most noticeably along the second half of the Twentieth Century. It is important to remember that these are textual representations of ideal men, and people might or might not coincide with these depictions (Milestone & Meyer, 2012, 113). These representations come in three stages, as new ones appear along the years. However, these types do not entirely replace each other, but rather they mingle, and affect each other.

According to Milestone and Meyers (2012, 114-116), the initial, most traditional representation of men is the “Old Man” – an individual portrayed as the rugged and no-nonsense type, notoriously violent and misogynistic, unemotional and career-driven. His looks are likewise tough, and his attitude does not allow for the expression of feelings. He is physically powerful as he is mentally skilled and socially ambitious. His love life is centred on sexual conquest of women, on deriving pleasure on them, but hardly about having relationships with them. Promiscuity is presented as natural of men, as is homophobia. Sexual equality is disregarded, since men and women are considered to be incompatibly different in physical and psychological terms, as well as in their social functions (Milestone & Meyer 2012, 115). In order to show manliness, physical violence must be exerted, and/or women must be made love to by the Old Man.

As a result of postmodernism and the consumer culture of the 80s, the figure of the New Man developed, somewhat unsuccessfully. This type is more fashion-driven, openly sensitive and mild-mannered, usually respectful to women and caring of his physique, which is often lithe and beautiful, though muscular. This type of masculinity has two

main variants: on one hand there is the Metrosexual (or the “Narcissist”), and on the other, the Sensitive Man (also known as the “Nurturer”) (Milestone & Meyer, 116). The first is particularly aware of his own beauty, of consumer products designed for his beautification. He still is, however, a sexual conqueror by all means, a quality he requires in order not to be thought of as homosexual. The Sensitive Man, on the other hand, is somewhat more self-conscious. As a consequence of the increasing sexual equality of the 1980s, he treats women with respect and focuses on relationships rather than on sex. In both cases, the character’s profession is still important, but it is no longer the main element of his identity. Though the Sensitive New Man is (more often than not) heterosexual, he is not a womaniser, and has no need to assert his masculinity through the seduction of women.

The third type, the New Lad, combines the misogyny and “tough-guy” approach of the Old Man with the consumer culture of the New Man. The New Lad is loud and violent. He always brags about his sexual conquests and goes through life drinking, fighting and having fun. As Milestone and Meyer put it: “Like a child, the New Lad does not think or talk about profound issues but simply wants to have fun” (2012, 118). This last type will hardly be considered in this essay as neither the Bond character nor his allies or numerous foes are portrayed in this way.

As will hopefully become apparent along the essay, Bond has usually been depicted mainly as an Old Man (in the sense provided above), that is, as a tough, self-confident *macho* and a renowned womaniser. However, as I shall be arguing, he also partially belongs to the New Man profile, in that he is a consumer and a connoisseur with regards of fashion, wine and cars. Most notably during the later personifications, this aspect has gone along with an increasing disgust on his part towards his profession, suggesting greater sensibility than in previous personifications. This separates him somewhat from

the Old Man depiction, since that archetype requires him to identify with his profession and to be as unemotional as possible.

Curiously, the three latest films have taken on some elements of the New Lad attitude, though not many and not very intensely. However, it is the films, rather than the hero, that have moved in that direction. This question will be dealt with later on in the essay.

Daniel Craig's 007 is probably the most different of the filmic "Bonds". Over and above the distinct performance, the character stands out as featuring the first and (yet) only reboot in the series. Furthermore, two out of the three films lack important elements of the Bond formula, namely the routine seduction games between Monneypenny and Bond and Q's equipment briefing². Also, the character is allegedly more "realistic", though that is a very ambiguous word in action films. The same goes for his equipment. His violent deeds (usually) have a rather more believable outcome, featuring blood and extenuation in unprecedented import and thrust in comparison to previous films in the saga. Much of the cheeky humour has disappeared, with only a few one-liner residuals in *Casino Royale*. Even *Skyfall*, which deliberately tries to recapture much of the Formula (as opposed to *Quantum of Solace*), is different in its portrayal of Q and Monneypenny (as a young hacker and a field agent, respectively), in the ultimate failure of Bond's mission and in the low-profile technology he is equipped with.

Considering how different Daniel Craig's Bond is as compared to previous incarnations (even to Timothy Dalton's), his films should be analysed separately to the rest.

^{2 2} There are five main supporting characters in the 007 film saga, appearing in almost all of them: M (it refers to his/her rank and position, not to the name of the character), director of MI6, the British espionage agency where Bond works; Miss Monneypenny, M's personal secretary; Bill Tanner (M's Chief of Staff), Q (again, not the real name, but the character's rank and position), scientist of MI6, charged with equipping double-0 agents (such as 007) with cutting-edge technology, and Felix Leiter, CIA agent and frequent ally of the hero.

As a fictional adventure hero, Bond is an unusual character. In a genre that is mostly American-dominated, he has been able to maintain a British identity. Furthermore, he has been able to change along the years, and to be very different in looks and attitude to other fiction characters of the time. As a noticeable instance, Roger Moore's and Timothy Dalton's performances in the 1980s are diametrically opposite to "square-jawed, regular Joe" action actors of the same time such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone or Bruce Willis (Chapman 2009, 115). But not only the main character is different, but much of the character of the films' texts share little in common.

There is a correspondence in these films between the personality of the Bond character and the perspective of the filmic text. If the hero is somewhat humorous and self-parodic, chances are that the film will also tend to be goofy, as happened with many of the films in Roger Moore's run (notice the degree of technological absurdity of *The Spy who Loved Me*). Likewise, if the character is perceivably more self-serious, the film will have a more sinister tone. Of course, this is nothing new, as it is a very common factor in most instances of storytelling. However, it is important to note that this essay analyses both the character and the stories in which he appears, including those aspects not directly related to the character.

Given that the purpose of this essay is to analyse the representations of masculinity through the main character, it will necessarily deal with the textual standpoints *surrounding* the character. This means that, in some cases, I will analyse not only what the character does or looks like, but also the way in which he is presented.

AUTHORITY

Since Timothy Dalton 007 openly rebelled against M (Robert Brown) in *Licence to Kill*, most Bond films have shown an uneasy relation between the hero and his commanding officer. This has often been highlighted by the fact that, ever since, a woman has played the role of M³, whereas Bond is still a womaniser *par excellence*. Some events in both *Casino Royale* and *Skyfall*, are quite telling in this sense (in both of them, M is portrayed by Judi Dench).

In *Casino Royale*, 007 starts off as a rather rebellious agent (though not a rogue as in *Licence to Kill*), operating beyond his boundaries, breaking into M's house (and again in *Skyfall*) and embarking on a self-appointed solo mission in the Bahamas. Not only that, but at the end of the film, he actually resigns from his 00-status. M constantly reproaches Bond for his irresponsibility, and always seems unhappy with him. It is clear that the two have an uncomfortable relationship, but why this is so?

One possible answer is that Bond is affected by some residual misogyny. If one considers the Bond films from the 1960s and compares them to the versions of the 2000s, and even of the 1990s, one can perceive an important advance in the treatment of women. See, for instance, *Goldfinger* (Hamilton 1963), in which Bond (Sean Connery) slaps a girl on her rear for no apparent reason; or even in *Licence to Kill* (1989), where Bond (Timothy Dalton) teams up with Pam Bouvier (Carey Lowell) in order to defeat a drug lord and, as a disguise, he uses Bouvier as his "secretary". When she complains, he answers "It is a man's world". On the other hand, see *Tomorrow Never Dies* (Spottiswoode 1997), and *Skyfall*, where he uncomplainingly cooperates with female field agents Wai Lin (Michelle Yeoh) and Eve Monneypenny (Naomie Harris).

³The character was played by Bernard Lee from 1962 to 1976; by Robert Brown from 1983 to 1989; by Judi Dench from 1995 to 2012 and by Ralph Fiennes since 2012. In these cases, "M" refers to the position of rank of the character, not to his or her actual name, so different characters have actually become M throughout the saga.

However, he does attempt to seduce both of them, and even makes love to the first, so, even if there is respect for their abilities, Bond still seems to be an obsessed sexual conqueror. Consequently, despite having highly skilled women as colleagues, it seems that he is still rather more interested in women as lovers than as colleagues. Arguably, this can be considered to be, if not all-out misogyny, at least residual sexism.

Though never stated, nor even implied along either the Brosnan or Craig films, the end of *Skyfall* is quite telling respecting the reasons for Bond's mild disobedience to his commanding officer. Though 007 does actually cry when M dies (he had only previously cried with the death of his wife Tracy Bond in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, 1969), the film closes with a sequence that imitates the traditional Bond films: the hero exchanging seductive remarks with Miss Monneypenny and the mission briefing by M, who is now a man (Ralph Fiennes). Gareth Mallory, now M, asks him whether he is ready for his mission, to which the hero replies with a smirk: "Of course". Bond definitely seems happier and more comfortable in these few minutes than in the rest of the Craig movies, and it is probably not a coincidence. *Casino Royale*, *Quantum of Solace* and *Skyfall* feature a grim, bad-humoured Bond (except for some few one-liners and witty remarks), but he seems absolutely happy to be "back on track" after the climax scene in *Skyfall*. This does not mean that Bond is actually *glad* that M died, but it appears that the character is certainly more comfortable with M being a man, and he feels quite alright with that.

This comeback of the traditional Bond structure that is central to the theme of *Skyfall* is culminated with the "Bond Will Be Back" slogan, which had been missing since *The Living Daylights* (Glen 1987), and it is quite relevant: by retrieving all the original elements, culminating in the promise of the return, and especially focusing on M's being a man again, we are shown a "bright new era" for Bond. The effect is enhanced

with the fact that London, along the film, grows from a foggy setting to a sunlit enclave, particularly after the climax scene in *Skyfall*: Bond *is* back, along with the support cast that had been missing in the previous films, and the hero could not be happier. The good mood he sported in the Connery, Moore and Brosnan eras seems to have returned with a bang at the end of the film.

This begs the question: is Bond (mildly) rebellious because M is a woman? Of course, it will be hard to prove since a) the first real rebellion happened when M was a man, in *Licence to Kill*, and b) More Bond films will no doubt be produced in the future, so nobody knows to what extent 007 will respect his new M.

BODY AND SEX

Though the shortest in stature, Daniel Craig is the heftiest and most muscular Bond actor to date. His physique is striking especially when compared to Brosnan's lithe shape. Furthermore, he is erotised several times in *Casino Royale* with nude and semi-nude representations of him, as when he emerges from the sea and, more disturbingly, as he is applied impromptu medical attention in his car and later on as he is tortured by Le Chifre (Mads Mikkelsen). It seems as if the makers have taken pains to make spectators enjoy not only the beauty of "Bond Girls", but of the eponymous hero as well. Also, in *Skyfall*, we can see villain Silva (Javier Bardem) seducing Bond (whether for real or as a tease, it is unclear) in explicitly sexual ways.

The Craig Bond, thus, is featured as an object of gaze and desire, unlike previous incarnations. Even so, as a masculine figure, he is decidedly less sexualised than most Bond girls in the series.

The makers of *Skyfall* seem to have taken pains to reduce the sex-appeal of Bond by making him look older and deteriorated through the first half of the film. In these

sequences, he sports visible wrinkles, scars and, most notably, a beard with several grey hairs. It is quite deliberate: in previous films, Bond was always impeccably shaven, and marks of the aging of the actor were usually subdued, and therefore never as dramatic as in *Skyfall*. It is not until a scene that he shares with agent Eve Moneypenny (Naomie Harris) that he appears impeccably shaven and recovers the traditional “Bond” good looks. That scene, of course, has clear erotic innuendos, which serve to establish a connection between sex and good looks in a peculiar way: Whereas in *Casino Royale*, Bond’s physical beauty is on display for mainly the female spectator’s enjoyment, in *Skyfall* that enjoyment cannot really be achieved until there is a scene that caters for male viewers (Eve’s seductive game with Bond).

This suggests that there is a priority for the filmmakers; it is all very well to enjoy Bond’s body, but it is still more important to eroticise Bond Girls first.

The physicality of characters is not only related to sexuality, but to violence as well. *Casino Royale* and *Quantum of Solace* feature rather gruesome fistfights, strangling sequences and knife-stabbings. Furthermore, actual torture scenes are depicted in far more explicit ways than in, for example, *Dr. No* (Young, 1962). Even in the torture scene in *Casino Royale*, villain Le Chifre comments on how spectacular the hero’s body is, and then remarks “Such a waste”.

This differs dramatically from the techno-obsession of the Pierce Brosnan films, in which Bond always gains the upper hand through, on the one hand, his mastery of technology and, on the other, his know-how regarding violence. That is not to say that Craig’s Bond is unskilled or unaware of technology, but its visibility is far diminished, giving way to emphasis on “flesh”. In many times, Bond wins conflicts thanks to sheer brawn, speed and aim.

Another peculiar factor, not related to the character *per se* but to the films themselves, is the increasing explicitness of sex. Sexual interaction had never been visible on screen in the Bond films until the Brosnan era. Until then, partial nudity, kisses and caresses were the upmost depicted in films. However, Brosnan films such as *Goldeneye* (Campbell 1995) or *Die Another Day* feature semi-explicit sex scenes and orgasmic screaming (including Xenia Onatopp's sadomasochistic pleasure in killing, portrayed by Famke Janssen). The Craig Bond films follow on showing similar scenes. In *Casino Royale*, there are two very suggestive scenes that never featured previously: an almost fulfilled affair with Solange Dimitrios (Caterina Murino), in an extramarital relationship and a love scene with Vesper Lynd in a hospital. Later on, in *Skyfall*, there is a scene that features nudity in a shower, cloaked in smoke.

Sex has always played an important role in Bond films, but the increase of explicitness points to a change in the general public's taste. Free sex mentality has always been integral to the franchise, as the hero has many love interests and lives through plenty of romantic scenes along the films. In all of them, he has sexual relations at least once with one of the "Bond Girls", who in turn is also a sexually liberated character. Those relations are always implicit, immediately preceded by the hero hugging and kissing his companion, and sometimes followed by sequences in which both are half naked.

In stark contrast, in the Daniel Craig films, the presence of semi-explicit sex seems to indicate an infiltration of slightly New Lad attitudes. Whereas all the Bond films feature sexual exploits by the hero, it is only in the later ones that the films underscore such scenes, as if the protagonist was boasting about them. As indicated earlier, the three main representations of manhood have different attitudes to sex. According to the Old-Man/New Man/New Lad concept (Milestone & Meyer 2012, 126-132), the Old Man is meant to be a sexual conqueror, who seduces women in order to gain pleasure from

them; the New Man, on the other hand, treats women as equals, and thus takes the pleasure of his lover into consideration before his own; the New Lad, however, is also meant to be a “conqueror”, but lacks the serenity and calm of the Old Man. Instead, the New Lad is noisy and a braggart and the film seems to be slightly affected by this tendency. In other words, the Craig films tend to present the 007 character as somewhat bore brazen and boisterous. Unlike the earlier films in the saga, rather than implying that the characters have sexual intercourse and letting viewers imagine the potential situation by themselves, spectators are presented with almost explicit love-making scenes.

TECHNOLOGY

Very few items of technology are really remarkable in the Daniel Craig-Bond films, and even fewer are really state-of-the-art or technologically improbable, let alone impossible. Though relatively high-tech pieces include a fingerprint-identifying handgun (*Skyfall*), a complete first-aid kit in a car (*Casino Royale*) and an Aston Martin DB5 with enough firepower to level a villain’s army (*Skyfall*), it is actually the more mundane resources that “steal the show” in terms of gadgetry. Much of the time in the films, normal vehicles, such as cars, airplanes and boats, weapons like knives and guns and, especially, computers and mobile telephones are far more relevant. In the first half of *Casino Royale*, for instance, Bond gathers all his intelligence via mobile telephones or hacking into computers. Likewise, in *Skyfall*, the villain’s activities are discovered in the Internet (publically), or by hacking into secret codes, a feat achieved not by Bond, but by Q.

It has been argued that in the 90s, Bond’s techno-gadgetry worked as an extension of his bodily skills, allowing him to see, hear, and even strike from a distance (Willis

2009, 177). However, the more modest technological appliances of the later Craig films reveal a world in which common citizens have access to the same instruments as Bond made use in earlier films. Consequently, the availability of these technological items is no longer as significant or consequential as they were in the previous films. In other words, the superiority or advantage gained by Bond no longer depends on technology. Rather, it is his *own* skill that allows him to triumph against his enemies. Put simply, it is not what he *has*, but he can do, thanks to his personal abilities, that matters.

It is a peculiar evolution, considering that Bond has always depended on technology to gain the upper hand. This raises the question of why a technologically skilled hero in a technologically dependent era appears to eschew the advantage of high-tech accessories. A possible answer is that this notable trait might be an abatement of the technological excesses of the last Brosnan film, *Die Another Day*, which features invisible cars, orbital sunray cannons and electro-armours. All of those items really belong to the genre of Science Fiction, and are not usual components of espionage and adventure films. This excess of futuristic technology is not new, and it has usually been followed by comparatively low-key films as happened with *Diamonds are Forever* (Hamilton 1971) and *Moonraker* (Gilbert 1979), which were immediately followed by *Live and Let Die* (Hamilton 1973) and *For Your Eyes Only* (Glen 1981), respectively.

Another possible answer is that it is part of a tendency in action pictures of the first two decades of the XXI Century, that is, an attempt to be as aesthetically verisimilar as possible. Consequently, according to that fashion, only items that can actually be found in the real world should appear on screen.

CONSUMERISM, FASHION AND CLASS

Like the previous Bond films, the films starred by Craig proffer an important element of consumer culture. Characters drink Martinis (shaken, not stirred), wear suits and designer outfits, drive sport cars and bet incredibly high stakes at casinos (*Casino Royale*). All in all, Bond is still a capitalist, but with an important difference: he has lost much of the suavity that singled him out. He is occasionally gruff, is inclined to using swear words and is often moody, which are aspects that contrast sharply not only with previous Bond incarnations, but with all the look of elegance and style he still sports. Indeed, it is as if he had inherited the consumer culture of older capitalism, but without the nonchalant and phlegmatic attitude of the traditional English Gentleman. Though still charming and seductive, he has lost much of his renowned *savoir-faire*.

This is particularly interesting when talking about masculinity types. Ever since Connery's run on the character, Bond has usually been depicted as a classless character. Although affluent and well-bred, he has never had a past, a family or a life outside his mission (and the occasional love affair with a Bond Girl). By belonging to no social class in particular, British men from any background could feel close to him. As Bennett and Woollacott have put it, "...Bond provided a mythic encapsulation of classlessness and modernity" (2009, 23).

The man in *Casino Royale* and *Skyfall* is quite different and more complex. In previous film incarnations, filmmakers were reluctant to give Bond a past, presumably in order to enhance this classlessness that typifies the character. In *Casino Royale*, however, we are told that he is an orphan, and that the State recruited him for his violent temperament, like other young men of his condition. Later on, in *Skyfall*, spectators are shown the house of Bond's parents, a great Scottish mansion of the same name as the film. This clearly indicates his being of an aristocratic ascendance. However, few of the

personality traits he sports seem to fit in the profile of a traditional gentleman. Ultimately, Bond appears to be an aristocrat only in name, remaining classless, though in an space

The most outstanding element, as a New Man, is probably the fact that he is able to cry and outwardly show feelings. This had only happened once before, in the 1969's *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* in which Bond marries Tracy di Vincenzo (eventually Tracy Bond, played by Diana Rigg), but she is immediately shot dead after the wedding. He is seen shedding tears for his wife, though never in an overly sentimentalist way. This painful event, though, never stopped the character from showing his good humour in later films, even when they presented continuity, such as *Diamonds are Forever* and *For Your Eyes Only*.

As mentioned before, he is again shown to cry at the end of *Skyfall*, after the villain murders a woman that is very important to him, though in a very different way. That woman is M (Judi Dench). In the same manner as the 1969 movie, he hugs the body of M and cries in a reasonably contained manner. Likewise, later on in the film, there is still space for smiles, both for Bond and spectators. This indicates that feelings are now allowed to have more presence in the behaviour of an archetypal British man. Whereas previously men had to shrug off pain and grieve in a stoic way, now the hero is allowed to express his suffering.

PROFESSION AND IDENTITY

Like Timothy Dalton's Bond, Daniel Craig's character seems to hate his job. He is initially unaccustomed to murdering, as seen at the pre-credits scene of *Casino Royale*: Set in black and white, like a noir film, Bond, with a newly granted double-0 status, is sent out to kill a traitor. After having a conversation, Bond is revealed to have slain that

traitor's henchman. When he is asked how he died, 007 answers "Not well", and there is a flashback to a scene with a highly violent fight in a bathroom. The henchman is drowned in water. Back to the present situation, Bond shoots his quarry, and remarks "Yes. Considerably", indicating that killing people has become easier for him. He appears to be under severe stress much of the time, physically and mentally unfit occasionally (as shown in the fitness tests scene in *Skyfall*), and he even gives up on his job on one occasion, at the end of *Casino Royale*. In *Skyfall*, he enters M's house, introducing himself as "Agent 007, reporting for duty", with a tone of sarcasm that manifests his unhappiness with his work.

However, in all these films he still bases his identity on his job, despite his hating it. This feature clearly places him in the "Old Man" category of masculinity: he is who he is because he works "for Queen and country" as a double-0 agent. Elements of identity such as body and fashion are fairly secondary.

A fairly evident example of this occurs at the end of *Casino Royale*. At this point, 007 has resigned his position as a double-0 agent. Vesper (the film's main Bond Girl, played by Eva Green) has handed the money to the henchmen of a villain called Mr White (Jesper Christensen). Bond fights and kills that goon, Vesper dies drowning, Mr White escapes with the money, and the M reveals to the protagonist Vesper's double-dealing. Thereupon, we see the villain arrive at his mansion with the money-filled suitcase. The phone rings and a voice asks him whether he is Mr White. After answering "yes", he enquires "Who are you?" Then he is shot in the leg, and we discover that the caller and sniper is 007, who answers with his emblematic catchphrase, "Bond, James Bond". Simultaneously, the *Dr. No* score is intoned, enhancing the iconic status of the catchphrase. This is how we are invited to identify the hero. He is who he is because he does what his government requires him to do, including betting high sums of money

against terrorists, shooting villains and losing his loved ones. When he shoots Mr White and the *Dr. No* score starts up, viewers immediately know the shooter is Bond: his identity is his job, i.e. his fighting against “bad guys”.

To a lesser extent, other aspects also define the character beyond his being a secret agent. Several of his passions single him out. His love for sports cars, tuxedo, good drinks and women are very noticeable, and a Bond film could hardly be called thus if it were not for these elements.

Bond, consequently, is not only known for his being a British spy, but for his exquisite taste and his obsession with women. In that sense, he combines the features of the Old Man and the New Man. Seen from the “Old Man” perspective, his role in the world is the key element of his identity, whereas from a “New Man” mindset, it is more related to his tastes, hobbies and passions.

In this sense, Daniel Craig’s Bond does not seem particularly different from previous incarnations. What really marks him as different is his hatred of his job, despite his need to comply.

NATIONALITY

Nationalism appears to be less of an issue in the three 007 films starred by Craig than in most of the previous movies in the cycle. In fact, it seems that rather than nationalism, the key question now is *internationalism*. Indeed, in recent films, the immediate context - England and Britain - have been moved to a secondary position in global terms. In other words, Britain is no longer the sole target of the villain’s evil plots. Rather, worldwide peace is what is at stake. Even in *Skyfall*, in which cyberterrorist Silva uncovers secret British operatives and torments the MI6, he is shown to have

interests everywhere in the world, expressing how simple it is for him to just “press a button” and cause havoc anywhere in the planet.

Thus, “saving the world” is rather more literal in the globalised landscape of the later films than it was in the more empire-centred movies from the 1960s and 1970s. Although in some of the Connery films it was the entire Western World that was under threat, its fate seemed to depend entirely on British operations.

Related to the issue of technology discussed earlier, this indicates the increasing prominence of worldwide multimedia communications and “realistic” villains and threats. The same way that technology is meant to be believable in the Craig films, and the hero’s character is thought to be “more human”, the evil plots are likewise meant to be more realistic. In these films, it is no longer the case of Ernst Stavro Blofeld and SPECTRE⁴ trying to take over the world or Trevelyan and Janus attempting to destroy all UK electronic systems (as happened in *Goldeneye*). Plans, though still villainous and dangerous, are rather more low-key and economically oriented, such as financing African Freedom Fighters (*Casino Royale*), gaining unfair profits on water supplies (*Quantum of Solace*), or taking personal vengeance on MI6 (*Skyfall*). One particularly clear example occurs in a scene in the film *Skyfall*. In it, M, performed by Judy Dench, defends during a public enquiry the necessity of having double-0 agents for the sake of national security. Her point is reinforced in that scene by having the villain, Silva, disguised as a policeman ominously advancing with the intention of murdering her. Her speech is very illustrative:

⁴ The criminal organisation SPECTRE, directed by Blofeld, was the antagonist in all of the Bond films from 1962 to 1971, with the exception of *Goldfinger* (1963). Their plans were notoriously over-the-top and world-shattering. Blofeld appears as the antagonist in three of them: *You Only Live Twice* (Gilbert 1967), *On Her Majesty’s Secret Service* and *Diamonds are Forever*. He also is presented as a shadowy mastermind in *From Russia with Love* (Young 1963) and *Thunderball* (Young 1965). He does not feature at all in *Dr No*.

M: Chairman, ministers. Today I've repeatedly heard how irrelevant my department has become. Why do we need agents, the double o section? Isn't it all rather quaint? Well, I suppose I see a different world than you do. And the truth is that what I see frightens me. I'm frightened because our enemies are no longer known to us. They do not exist on the map, they are not nations, they are individuals. Look around you, who do you fear? Can you see a face, a uniform, a flag? No. [...] Our world is not more transparent now. It's more opaque. It's in the shadows. That's where we must do battle. So, before you declare us irrelevant, ask yourselves. How safe do you feel? [...] (Purvis, Wade, Logan & Mendes 2012)

As such, Bond's role in the world is defined in a supposedly more verisimilar way, representing the complexity of our era. However, as these films are still mainstream popular culture, that same complexity is, or has been reduced to *individual* elements: ruthless capitalism is specified in the Quantum organisation (*Casino Royale* and *Quantum of Solace*), and threats of cyberterrorism are given the face of Sylva (*Skyfall*). On a wider, more worrying level, it appears that *Skyfall* reinforces a simplistic view of what has occurred as a consequence of the 9/11 terrorist attack: how the major clash between civilizations has been "individualised", that is, reduced by the media to A face and body – Osama Bin Laden's- a terrorist who was tracked down and annihilated, with the (at the time) apparent illusion of the world having been saved from disaster.

CONCLUSION

Although the Daniel Craig Bond cycle shows a substantially different Bond from any of its previous incarnations, similarities are also to be considered. Craig's Bond is gruffer,

more heavily built and more violent than others and he allows himself to show more feelings, despite the brutishness of the character, when compared to previous incarnations of the character. Also, the films' approach to technology, nationality and terrorism are more realistic, though still fantastic.

This might indicate a shift in audience's taste and concerns, especially in male audiences. Apart from the grim and gritty approach that characterises the three Bond films I've analysed (*Casino Royale*, *Quantum of Solace* and *Skyfall*), it seems that the hero is not required to be as super-human as previously portrayed. On the contrary, he is now depicted as more relatable, with actual vulnerabilities and feelings. He is not so much concerned with a crumbling British Empire as he is with a Britain within a complicated Global world; he has charm, but no upper class snobbishness; he is shown to feel grief and remorse; his technological genius is no longer presented as his own, but his physical prowess makes him exceptional; last but not least, Bond takes part fully in the consumer culture of the Western World.

However, despite these changes, many elements have remained. One important aspect is the need to keep classic elements from earlier films from the saga, as featured in *Skyfall*. The success of the films seem to depend largely on respect for the "Bond Formula", which indicates that the general audience expects Bond films to retain the core elements (themes, rituals, structure, central characters) and peripheral features (catchphrases, aesthetic, gadgets, cars...)

In all, Bond, as a character, is never a straightforwardly simple character. He combines different attitudes from varied perspectives on how men should be, look and behave. The Old Man has never really disappeared, and many of his characteristics are still central to the character, such as his loyalty to his trade, his misogynistic approach to love and his violence. However, in order to keep up with the times, variations from the

New Man, and even New Lad, have been added to a greater or lesser extent. Particularly, in the later films in which Daniel Craig incarnates the hero, several New Man traits have become more prominent, especially with regards to vulnerability and showing feelings. Likewise, some elements of the New Lad have also taken precedence, such as a degree of gruffness and sexual bragging.

The question remains whether future 007 EON Production films will change the attitude of their insignia character even further. Will they increase the presence of more modern types of masculinity, such as the New Man or the New Lad, or will they revert to Old Man depictions of Bond?

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