Book reviews

Love, Hate and Marketing: Social Media Influencers and Advertising

Delia Cristina Balaban, Julia Szambolics (eds.), Social media influencerii *și rolul lor publicitar* (Tritonic, București, 2021)

Camelia GRADINARU[*]

We all have some influencers that we follow and love, and others influencers that we do not really like. Moreover, generally speaking, their success seems difficult to understand in some cases, while in others we could almost see a professionalization of their work. Even if we appreciate them, even if we do not, we should understand the mechanisms by which influencers became milestones in the social media realm and built their tremendous careers. Social media influencer (SMI) became a trend of our contemporary lives and, in many situations, a dream job for the young generations. SMIs imbricate many important aspects: psychological, communitarian, economical, communicational. In a world where attention span decreases, attention turns in a value that could be monetised. The advertising role of influencers can no longer be neglected and its multifarious implications are more and more discussed in a growing international literature. Nevertheless, research is very necessary in order to enlighten this subject and its impact for the modalities in which people construct trustworthy relationships, credible influence, new business and ways of living.

In this vein, the book coordinated by Delia Cristina Balaban and Julia Szambolics represents a much needed editorial event in our cultural milieu. We welcome the initiative to write a book about influencers in Romanian, although the dominant language of the domain is English. We also observed the same tendency in the case of Romanian digital specialists that have decided to write for the national public about the campaigns with influencers, for instance. It is mandatory that researchers and practitioners contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon for various audiences, from academia to business, in our mother tongue. The benefits are many: from constructing a reliable vocabulary to the wide access to information.

The book is well structured in 9 chapters that outline the premises of a comprehensive perspective on influencers. The chapters are written by several researchers from the Faculty of Political, Administrative, and Communication Sciences, Babeş-Bolyai University, known for their research in social media, influencer marketing, advertising or branding.

[*] "Al. I. Cuza" University of Iași, Institute of Interdisciplinary Research, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities

The first chapter, authored by Professor Delia Cristina Balaban, represents a relevant and in-depth presentation of social media influencers: the evolution of the phenomenon and their position in the actual advertising landscape. Significant definitions, traits and typologies of SMIs are discussed in order to grasp the complexity of their profile and functions. They are "people like us", but also experts or celebrities that build credibility, form communities and initiate consuming patterns. SMIs know to build and maintain a reputation, communicate with their publics and construct a personal online brand. They are trend setters, arousing curiosity by generating online content and using the impressive emotional architecture of social media. By indicating several nuances, complex relationships and authoritative points of view, the chapter is meaningful for the comprehension of the current role that SMIs play.

The second chapter is the necessary explanation of the basis of the entire discussed subject: social media. Dorin Spoaller clearly exposed the role of social networking sites as platforms for influencers. Their evolution, typologies, and impact are developed. The Uses and Gratifications Approach theory was chosen for the purpose of revealing the people's reasons for social media use and for the engagement with the influencers.

The co-coordinator of the volume, Julia Szambolics, wrote an indispensable part dedicated to the content-creating strategies implemented by a SMI. The influencer generated content (textual, audio, video) is analysed in its main categories and formats with suggestive examples. If every platform has its own regulations and requirements, the content itself should be created in the spirit of authenticity, quality and passion. In the end, we are reminded that the public is the key and the landmark for the right content.

Larisa Mureșan described the economical level of influencer marketing. Brands are aware of the power of influencer marketing campaigns but these also need regulations in order to avoid unethical situations and to create a more open, authentic online communication framework. The perspectives of marketing agencies, advertising agencies and specialised influencer marketing agencies are concise presented, together with the ethical and practical aspects of campaign elaboration. For many people, the economical element of SMI's activities is poorly understood, so this synthetic chapter will surely help better "visualize" this aspect.

Chapter five, authored by Mihai Chirică, is dedicated to the particularities of influencer marketing on diverse platforms: blogs, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok. The advantages and the limits of these platforms for the goals of influencer marketing are clearly stated. Also, a brief description of each platform is made. Mihai Chirică has emphasised the dominant type of compatibility between a platform and an influencer and how it can be related with the success of SMI's content.

In the sixth chapter, Meda Mucundorfeanu explained why the Friestad and Wright' Persuasion Knowledge Model (1994) constitutes an appropriate theoretical framework for evaluating the effects of the sponsored content. In this

respect, the role of the consumer in this process becomes a lot more salient, since his or her abilities to learn and adapt to the persuasive tactics of the promoters are highlighted. The knowledge about persuasion succeeds in offering some control for users and also sheds some light in a process that most of the time was generally perceived as a "black box".

Maria Mustățea developed a topic of prominent interest: what are, after all, the advertising efficiency of social media influencers and its effects? In order to respond to that double question, the author made a contrastive analysis between the advertising efficiency of SMIs and the one of the social media brand pages, by using the William McGuire's model of persuasive communication. The cognitive, emotional, and behavioural effects are also discussed in an interconnected manner, underlining relevant subcategories and examples (such as brand recall, the attitude toward the brand and influencer, or the purchase intention).

In the eighth chapter, Bianca Tămaș theoretically investigated the gold notion of authenticity, a keyword that depicts a good SMI from the point of view of consumers. The philosophically and culturally approaches on authenticity are continued with the exploration of Lee's model of authenticity in computer-mediated communication.

In the last chapter, Ioana Lepădatu presented the relationships between social media influencers and the Corporate Social Responsibility campaigns, using both Romanian and international examples. The humanization of brands represents a key element today and people appreciate those brands that have a distinctive but natural, credible voice.

By choosing these particular themes, the volume presents an overview of a truly intriguing and complex phenomenon of nowadays. The book could be very useful not only for students, researchers and practitioners, but for anyone who wants to understand this multifaceted subject. The clarity of the writing, the use of recent literature and the effort to synthesise and emphasise the most significant ideas assure a radiography of a moving reality.

Visual Tools for Communication in Digital Times

Larry Jordan, *Techniques of Visual Persuasion. Create powerful images that motivate* (New Riders - Voices that Matter, San Francisco, 2020)

Ioana GRANCEA

Visual communication has been gaining an increasing importance as digital platforms have been widely adopted in many societies. As social media diversified and multiplied their forms of communication, people's attention and patience became scarce resources. In this context, messages have to be concise, powerful, and emotionally-charged to get attention. Well-crafted and well-placed images have thus become a necessary ingredient of any act of communication that intends to touch a digital audience.

At the same time, digital tools for image production and editing have become accessible to many content creators, both professional and amateur. People's interest in their own ability to create images that would provide support for their points of view has also increased at unprecedented levels in the past few years. And this does not only cover people's passion for self-expression or personal branding in social media. With PowerPoint presentations becoming a part of almost any serious public intervention, from a business pitch to a university course, the mastery of the art of visual communication is no longer a niche subject.

In this book, Larry Jordan covers a wide variety of domains in which persuasion is done with the help of visual elements, and gives practical advice for visual eloquence in each of these domains. In spite of the impressively wide array of visual materials that the book covers, there are certain motifs that maintain the coherence of the book: the need for clarity and accessibility of any visual message, the focus on the audience's perspective, the need for careful planning before the production of a visual material. These principles are not just repeated throughout the book. They are demonstrated at each step and in each case, showing what they mean in the particular case of the visual material that is discussed in each chapter. With many examples from his own professional experience as a film editor, podcaster, and university teacher of visual persuasion, Larry Jordan is a master of a widely known (and seldom practised) principle in communication studies: *Show, don't (just) tell.* This makes the book a delight and a treasure for any student in domains connected to visual communication.

The book is divided into three major sections: *Persuasion*

Fundamentals, *Persuasive Still Images*, and *Persuasive Moving Images*. In what follows, I will briefly outline the content of each.

In spite of its title, *Persuasion Fundamentals* is not a contribution to the long-known literature on persuasion, manipulation, influence, and so on. It does not struggle with any of the controversial aspects that have had our minds on fire in the past decades of communication scholarship. Definitions of persuasion are only mentioned in the beginning, in a light-hearted manner that does not exclude slight imprecisions or self-contradictions:

> "Persuasion is a choice we present to a viewer to adopt our point of view. This point of view could be a product, an idea, social change, or something we want them to do on our behalf. Though we may be talking to large audiences, persuasion is always a one-on-one conversation between us and the viewer. In addition, persuasion today often occurs remotely. Rarely are we face-to-face with our audience" (p. 6);
> "Persuasion is a specific act designed to create change in an audience: a change in thought, behaviour, laws, and so on. Persuasion is not violent. It is not a command. It is a choice you offer to someone else to follow your suggestions" (p.10);
> "Persuasion isn't shouting. It's connecting. It's listening. It's a two-way street. As we will refer a lot in this book, being persuaded is a choice the viewer makes. This means our efforts need to be focused first on attracting the attention of the viewer, then on delivering our message in such a fashion that they want to make the decision to change […] Since persuasion is a choice the viewer needs to make voluntarily, we need to find as many ways as possible to encourage them to make that choice. The best way to do so is to appeal to both their mind and their heart. This is why there is an ongoing focus in this book on the emotional content of words, images, fonts, and colors" (pp. 11-12).
> "I define *visual persuasion* as the process of convincing someone to take a specific action based primarily, though not exclusively, on an image or video. This is generally done remotely, when the person sending the message and the person receiving the message are not in immediate contact with each other" (pp. 12-13).

However imprecise, these "definitions" of persuasion map an explanatory territory that Larry Jordan offers to his students, without intending to be conceptually accurate or scholarly relevant, but *helpful* – helping them set their feet on the ground of persuasion-oriented media. Indeed, the author mixes normative and descriptive aspects, process and purpose of the process, means by which that process is realised with recommendations about the tone and the mood that the process should be based on. But in spite of doing all this, he

nonetheless helps students get a simple idea of the core assumptions that persuasive materials are (or should be) based on.

What Larry Jordan does exceptionally well in the five chapters of this first section is outline visual composition basics, discuss at length the action of fonts and colours on the viewer's perception, explain in detail techniques that guide the viewer's eye when first coming in contact with an image.

This section is filled with well-placed and well-explained examples, many of them shot by Larry Jordan's team of photographer Janet Barnett and amateur actors (Kim Acuna and Allison Williams). The fact that each principle and each recommendation is illustrated by practical *do-s* and *don't-s* (in the form of successful or failed images under some aspect or another) makes this section very useful for anyone who wants a clear and accessible guide to image creation.

All in all, the first section covers *visual communication fundamentals* – notions that are important for both still and moving images and that are useful for the reader to make sense of the subsequent two sections of the book.

The second section of the book, *Persuasive Still Images,* starts with a chapter on persuasive presentations. It discusses software available for business and research presentations (Microsoft PowerPoint and Apple Keynote) and then proceeds to show basic steps necessary to make our presentations "less homicidal" (p. 126) – referring to our general temptation to include too much data and too many incompatible media in our slides that bore or visually irritate our audience to (cognitive) death. After a year in which digital communication has become more important both for business pitches and for university life, many of us have seen (or, worse, have created themselves) slides that did not respect the basic advice that Larry Jordan provides here on the amount of text allowed, on the relationship between text and images, on the use of charts, on the choice of backgrounds and fonts. His advice can help readers plan presentations that have more clarity, focus, elegance, harmony, and good taste. All three levels of persuasion – *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* – can be affected by the visual quality of our presentations: the visual eloquence of the presentation can support the credibility and the clarity of the speaker, well-used white space and visual harmony can create peace and enjoyment on the part of the audience, while the ability to organize and select the data that we present (without reading every word off the screen) can influence how much of our arguments is understood and taken seriously by an audience.

The other three chapters of the second section are offering details for the professional creation of photographs and other still images. Larry Jordan provides in-depth explanations regarding the processes of planning, lighting, blocking, framing, editing, repairing and creating composite images. Screenshots from image-editing software accompany the text, leaving nothing unexplained and maintaining the helpful-and-conversational ethos of the book. At every step, the simplicity and close guidance of the author give the reader the courage needed to navigate this intricate world that requires vision, patience, creativity, and technical mastery.

The last section of the book, devoted to Moving Images, is clearly Larry Jordan's comfort zone. His expertise, his charm, and his surprisingly-detailed advice regarding all phases from pre-production to post-production of a video make these pages feel like a privileged dialogue with a master in this field. Apart from six chapters who take the reader from the first steps of designing a storyboard to finalizing colour grading, transitions, or adding the soundtrack, Larry Jordan also includes a chapter on interviews. As an experienced podcaster, he explains how to make the guest feel comfortable to share their knowledge on a specific topic, how to react when the answer is not as rich as the audience would expect, how to organize and reorganize questions in an interview, what to plan and to leave for spontaneous adaptation in a live interview, how to manage the relationship between the guest and the filming crew, what to do after first after saying *Cut!*.

As a final thought on the book, its greatest merit is its practical orientation. Packed with well-explained images that operationalize every single principle and recommendation given, accompanied by anecdotes from the author's own experience or from other professionals' successes and failures, the book is a real help for students in visual communication and for professionals in any field who want to improve their visual eloquence. In a personal note, I have been impressed by the length at which the author is prepared to go in providing useful details for someone who wants to create a visual material (a few examples are on pages 40-42, 70, 134, 234). I have rarely seen an author showing such detail-orientation, care and genuine interest towards the success of the reader in applying his advice.

As the author convincingly shows in various parts of the book, most professional fields now depend on presentations that are packed with visuals, and our ability to be clear and charming in such situations may become more and more important in an age in which everyone has little time to listen carefully to long strains of intricate data. It must be said here that our universal craving for images instead of the patient reading of text does not speak well of our cognitive life. Yet, these cognitive failures will not be healed by visual kitsch, nor by visual illiteracy. Their causes are more profound, their healing will take much more. Visuals are just a balm to calm our wounds. Let this balm be a good-taste one – this is what Larry Jordan's message to us seems to be.

If Sermons Are Intentional Speeches, Are They Rhetorical?

Zoltán Literáty, *Rhetorical Preaching: Studies on Rhetoric, Homiletics & Preaching* (L'Harmattan Publishing, Budapest, Paris, 2020)

Tudorel-Constantin RUSU

It is difficult to imagine a sermon, a homiletic discourse, without an intent. All intentional speeches are rhetorical by nature. That means that the sermons are *rhetorical* speeches. This is the main argument from which Dr. Zoltán Literáty, a member of the teaching staff (Practical Theology Department) of *Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary* - Budapest, starts his book *Rhetorical Preaching: Studies on Rhetoric, Homiletics & Preaching* considering rhetoric, as the intrinsic cohesive power of speech and not a question of form, style or presentation, but a practical ability based on *common sense* that produces effective speech in the most optimal way possible.

For those theologians and preachers who consider that the rhetorical approach in Christian homiletics, in an area that must be no under the authority of man, but of the Holy Spirit, is inappropriate, the Hungarian author has some clarifications starting from the book's prologue. He quotes in this sense Rudolf Bohren, which says that the Spirit does not make the preacher obsolete when preaching - on the contrary, the Spirit involves him and makes him more active in this act. Bohren expresses this mutual cooperation of the divine Spirit and the man with the key term "theonome Reziprozität", which means *divine reciprocity*. Another argument used by Zoltán Literáty is Saint Augustine's and Melanchthon's theory, which says that it is important for God to speak to man through human language, and in a rhetorical way as evidenced by the Scripture. It is important for His creation, too, to recognize the importance of the rhetorical nature of human speech. Anyway, the author does not suggest that the ultimate secret or solution of Christian preaching is hidden solely in rhetoric and he does not propose to rehabilitate classical or modern rhetoric as formalized teachings, but every preacher must think more consciously about their way of delivering sermons.

The first chapter of *Rhetorical Preaching: Studies on Rhetoric, Homiletics & Preaching*, entitled *Antiquity*, treats the relation or better said non-relation between Apostle Paul and the rhetoric, especially the Corinthian Second Sophistic movement. The approach of the Pauline texts from a rhetorical perspective is not an original one; several important books have been published on this topic, many of them in American academia in the last years, as a result of

doctoral research. However, Dr. Zoltán Literáty says that Paul the Apostle has used rhetorics, but firmly opposed the view brought to perfection by the Second Sophistic, which stated that rhetorics is the art of life itself. Such a *l'art pour l'art* craft of speech cannot be a proper tool of God, the author believes. The Apostle Paul decided that instead of preaching the gospel, as the Sophists would do, transforming it into an overwrought speech, he will deliver it so that his audience will be able to concentrate on its content instead of its form. Paul's unadorned style is compared by the author with the humble Attican or Roman style, instead of the meandering Asian (Middle East) one. Paul seems to have followed Aristotle's advice: *the best style is the one that cannot be noticed at all*. Another interesting connection is Witherington point of view in which Paul addresses the Corinthian congregation as "ecclesia", using the word which, in ancient times, referred to the people's committee gathering at the forum. This word originally is not a Christian one: it referred to the place where speeches of advice were delivered and debates were conducted to create and defend public liberty. "It is not a coincidence then, that Paul borrowed this word to express the message of the gospel: to preach God's liberty itself. It is a fine example of the fact that in Paul's preaching concepts are always in harmony with their *intended* meaning and aims", says professor Zoltán Literáty.

The second chapter - *Middle Ages* - is dedicated exclusively to Augustine, named by the author "a bridge between preaching and rhetoric". The author comprehends Augustine's teachings and their relations to the field of rhetoric, hermeneutic and homiletic in the context of the saint's era. For example, in the 4th century, the Church, with its newly converted masses, was faced with losing the characteristic devotion of the previous centuries. For this reason, Augustine dedicated his book *De Doctrina Christiana* first and foremost to Christian teachers, mostly priests, intending to make them able to reveal the meaning of Scripture and then communicate it to the converts as well. Therefore, the role and the place of eloquence in Augustine's system was to realize faith through acts. Aware that conversion is possible through the Spirit alone, in a divine sphere where eloquence has no role at all, Augustine did not discuss the topic at length. According to Zoltán Literáty statement, that the preacher should be able to address his audience properly, no matter what, the conclusion of this chapter, also in the view of well-known classicist George Alexander Kennedy, is that "Christian rhetoric, as Augustine dealt with it, is a *popular* rhetoric". Every era possesses its own peculiar, *popular* form of communication; and this is evident from the works of Augustine who also does not make a distinction between the rhetoric of the church and that of the world. The preachers must be aware of the communication peculiarities of their time, holds the view of professor Zoltán Literáty.

The third chapter - *Humanism* - jumps from the 4th century, when Augustine combined and wedded rhetorics with homiletics, to the 16th century, when protestant preaching is seen by the author as a new rhetorical paradigm. How did the humanistic practice determine the development of the paradigm of

reformed - protestant communication? How did the re-discovery of rhetorics influence protestant homiletics? How did the rhetorical knowledge of the 16th century determine the development of reformed theological science? The answers to all these questions are found in this chapter, through the analysis of the preaching theories of Erasmus, Melanchthon, Hyperius and Calvin. As a general opinion, Dr. Zoltán Literáty claims that the Protestant homiletical paradigm was conceived in the 16th century by the combination of the humanistic and rhetorical approaches. During the era of humanism, the homiletics of the Reformation was not simply in a formation period, but it was making a regular - rhetorical - paradigm shift by putting the science of homiletics on a whole new foundation.

The following two chapters are original and important case studies. *Modernism* is dedicated to László Ravasz's Homiletics, which treated the two sciences - rhetoric and homiletics - in synthesis, as something with a common root. "Rhetorics (…) today is a real mummy. (…) The rhetoric is dead. […] But life did not change. Its nature is the same as it was two thousand years ago. Today, something much more important, interesting, and universal is something that has been the subject of formal and school rhetoric, too; that is, the power of speech. (…) rhetoric undergoes the same transformation that has happened to psychology, aesthetics, literature; indeed, to every science: by shaking off its cocoon, it finds its new and true form. (…) the central question of new science will be: how does speech work?", quote Zoltán Literáty from László Ravasz's works. László Ravasz (1882 - 1975), born in Huedin - Transylvania, was the former Bishop of the Danubian Reformed Church District. In Budapest, he served in the *Reformed congregation of Calvin Square*, until he resigned due to the pressure of the communist dictatorship, and returned to Leányfalu. The *Postmodern* chapter, show through the *metaphor of singing* how Hungarian homiletics is related to the so-called *aesthetical homiletics*, which appeared both at the beginning and the end of the 20th century in international theological discourses, the effects of which also reached Hungary, albeit to a limited extent. The fifth chapter surveys aesthetical homiletics in the Patristic Age, aesthetical homiletic in the Postmodern Age and aesthetical homiletic in the Modern Age in Hungary.

The last chapter of Zoltán Literáty book, entitled *Arguments*, present the well-known Aristotelian triad *pathos - ethos - logos,* which is significant to any oratory approach, even to the *new preaching*, to the movement called *New Homiletic*. Speaking about the *pathos* and the effect of narrative theology on *narrative homiletics*, the author noticed that in New Homiletic it is not sufficient to use topics simply illustrated by analogies, short narratives or examples. New Homiletics regarded the whole sermon as a full plot based on events, where the totality of time, characters and happenings bring a ready message to the audience. New Homiletic analogues became the vehicle of the message. They are no longer illustrations, but they are the message themselves. Regarding *ethos*, the Hungarian professor points out the *paradox of the preacher*, which involves two radically different worlds, or, more precisely, two radically

different personalities: the acts of God and the acts of man become a single, inseparable unit. According to Literáty, there are three basic pillars of the preacher's personhood: personality, office, and calling. About *logos*, the last chapter brings an interesting interpretation, which can be used for the unity, the life and work of the Christian Church. Since a divided Church, a divided body of Christ cannot exist, according to Jesus words, and because many times theologians and preachers can find fixed interpretations that can hardly be changed, an alternative can take place by finding unity by the work of exegesis. In this sense, the textual interpretation alongside the *socio-cultural interpretation* can be considered.

Certainly, Zoltán Literáty's book has strong virtues and scientific novelty, as I already mentioned. However, a prudent reader will observe the author subjectivity about Reformed preaching and preachers. For example, I would have expected in the second chapter - *Middle Ages* - to find some references at least to John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople (c.347 - 407), named due to his eloquence *Chrysostom*, which means in Greek *Golden Mouth*. John Chrysostom studied rhetoric in his youth with Libanius, a famous Hellenist and central figure of the second sophistical movement. Moreover, because of his intellectual and oratorical qualities, Libanius would have wanted John to be his successor in leading the rhetorical school in Antioch. On his death, according to Sozomen, when he was asked by some friends whom he would like to leave as his successor, Libanius was replied: "John, if the Christians had not stolen him from me". If we take into account that Zoltán Literáty is an assistant professor of *Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary*, we can assume that the target audiences of the book are the Reformed and Protestant students in Theology. Despite these confessional limitations and shortcomings, the volume *Rhetorical Preaching: Studies on Rhetoric, Homiletics & Preaching* is recommended to Christian theologians and preachers, but also experts in rhetoric and communication science.

"What has Athens got to do with Jerusalem?", is the famous question of the early Christian Church father, Tertullian, who lived in the 3rd century. At this timeless challenge and to the proverbial "neither with nor without you" relationship between rhetoric and homiletics tried Dr. Zoltán Literáty to answer and to look into the present book.

What Can Be Learned from the Digital Spectacles and Multimodal Creativity in Globalised Asia?

Sunny Sui-kwong Lam (Editor), *New Media Spectacles and Multimodal Creativity in a Globalised Asia: Art, Design and Activism in the Digital Humanities Landscape,* Digital Culture and Humanities, Volume 3 (Springer, Singapore, 2020)

Gabriela POLEAC

This edition of *Springer`s Digital Culture and Humanities* series edited by Sunny Sui-kwong Lam in 2020 contains valuable information about the current state of new media forms in Asia. Analyzing various art forms and spectacles in the digital era, the edition is a comprehensive guide for New Media scholars, having a great contribution to the Asian digital culture scientific writings.

I believe that this topic is extremely important in this day and age when New Media dictates new trends and practices advertising through unexplored tools, with pronounced effects on brands. The authors throughout the book analyze the power of digital art forms and accomplish to add relevant information to the current state of knowledge in this field. The interdisciplinary studies of the challenges that the new communication technologies brought to the globalized Asia create a basis for future research to be put together by specialists.

The works in this volume are structured in two parts: the first one consisting of 5 chapters dedicated to *New Spectacles and Multimodal Creativity in Social Media*, and the second one with 7 chapters in the name of *Art, Design, and Media Communication in the Digital Age.* Topics such as participatory culture, internet rumours, online freedom of expression, identity expression, and digital brand design are followed throughout the volume, accompanied by qualitative and quantitative studies. Each article has a clear structure, fully describing the methodologies, results, and discussions on the thesis they are proving. At the end of each chapter, one can find great bibliographies, having the possibility to be inspired by the readings of the authors. Introducing the 12 chapters, a brief explanatory presentation of the topics enlightens the main topics and the reason that they are approached in this volume. The importance of studying these problems is irrefutable and can improve the way the scientific community regards New Media.

The first chapter discusses the ethnic minority youth`s right to culture in the digital era. The authors, John Nguyet Erni and Nick Yin Zhang, carefully examine the quantitative data from a questionnaire survey on how the minority

youth groups from Hong Kong measure social capital, social distance, and cultural identity. The results should be engaging to future researchers, as this article resumes the pilot study on this subject.

The following chapter is contoured by a demonstration of a theoretical framework of how Internet rumours are spreading. Stephanie Szeto, Carom Poom, and Andrew Tang use the momentous case study *on The Umbrella Movement* from 2014 and an impressive literature review that helped to decode the Internet rumours. The novelty of this work consisted of observing novel types of rumours that appear in the digital medium and that have not been identified before in other studies. In my opinion, this chapter should make the foundation for future research for international studies, as the findings of the authors mentioned above created a framework that can be easily developed into a rule that governs the Internet.

The third chapter offers an integrative view of how the satirical news websites from Southeast Asia activate in a world where fake news is strongly punishable and the freedom of speech is controlled by the governors. The article attempts to find preliminary answers to questions related to evolving beyond boundaries and barriers of online freedom discourses. Miguel Paolo P. Reyes defines the possible legal challenges that might be faced by 5 of the satirical news websites existing in the "«illiberal» democratic states". (p. 51) The results discuss the nature of activism of the writers on these websites and express the importance of parodies for the online audience.

The next chapter focuses on an artistic protest as a new trend of transmutation and transmediation of protest art. Thus, J.C. Thejaswini and M. Shuaib Mohamed Haneef used this article to demonstrate that "aesthetics is not the only attribute used to experience art" (p. 77). They analysed how the transition from physical protest to the digital one proceeds by examining the online activities of the online users of the artivist's Facebook page: "the digital transmutation of the protest can be said to have contributed not only to the number of participants and to an expanding network, but also to have succeeded in making the protest visible before the authorities and thus less escapable for the state" (p. 85). The paper should be mandatory read by researchers that study the online forms of spectacles, as I believe that the pieces of literature covered in this article explain the main theoretical concepts with proper examples from the digitalised Asia.

The final chapter of the first paper focuses on multimodal creativity and offers a precise image of how the transfer of learning can be facilitated as a consequence of the digital creativity multimodal analysis. Locky Law, a senior research assistant in the Centre for Applied English Studies (University of Hong-Kong), uses three social media posts in order to exemplify the digital creativity multimodal analytical framework. The project consists of a thorough analysis of factors such as instructional design, transfer specificity, and the relevance of content.

The second part of the volume starts with Sunny Sui-kwong Lam`s examination of the complexity of Hong Kong`s core values. Thus, the author

offers an alternative perspective on current branding trends by showing how a TV commercial managed to unite both identities of the older generation and the digitalised youth by emphasizing the importance of localism in the actual branding campaigns. In a world where globalisation seems to be a norm, focusing on individual values and local perspectives appears to be a differentiator in the current advertising discourses. The case study used in this article can be seen as a model for future studies on this subject.

In the seventh chapter, Amic G. Ho scrutinizes the cultural recognition and the role of emotion by presenting an interactive project initiated by design students that focuses on the process of interactive design. The originality of the creative process can be enhances if factors such as emotional and cultural concerns of designers and customers are accounted for.

The following chapter aims attention at the characteristics of Korean brand design. Kyurag Lee brings to our attention three relevant case studies that demonstrate the necessity of adapting the design to the requirements of the targeted audience. As Korean brands step into the digitalised environment, the necessity for a comprehensive strategy is required. The author highlights 4 main issues that should be taken into consideration in order to achieve successful results: creating a multimedia strategy, differentiation by using local concepts, instead of global ones, moving the online brands into the offline reality by focusing on interaction in order to achieve expansion and the rethinking of the brand design concept.

In chapter 9, David Kei-man Yip illustrates new forms of expression and participatory art of creation that gamers in competitive games provide through innovative base design. Using a theoretical framework of visual styles to analyse the examples of the creative base design, the essay concentrates on the participatory culture that players create while having fun. Further studies on this matter should be considered in order to create better games that allow players the pleasure to participate in creating a world of their own.

The 10th chapter is a well-documented work on the digital materiality of the Chinese alphabet, especially the Chinese characters, in text-based interactive art. Definitions of digital art are discussed to create a clear framework in understanding the unstable nature of Chinese graphemes: "applying the concept of digital materiality to this instability helps to explain why Chinese-based digital art may provide experiences that are different from those of digital works based on alphabetic languages" (p. 197). The author, Yue-Jin Ho expounds the theories with an entertaining case study that should be of interest to art researchers.

In the following chapter, Fei Fan discusses the proper usage of social media in the communication between a brand and its virtual audience. Reporting to *WeChat*, the famous social network used in China, the author identifies the four types of content that can be met on the platform, and how an organization can use them to improve its appeal and engagement to its virtual target. Adding two marketing strategies to the table, Fan explores the messages that can enhance a brand`s effectiveness in the online environment.

Finally, the last article presented in this volume creates an image of how location-based real-time dating applications are used among the sexual minority from China. Yunbo Chen and Runze Ding use two studies (qualitative and ethnographic) in order to find out more about the motivations of the most used dating application' users and about the gratifications that those users are receiving. The results contradict the main view on why these kinds of applications are used and can be supportive for further inquiries on the matter.

From my point of view, this volume actively exhibits the modality in which new media technologies are performing in the cultural, political, and economical life of the digitalised Southeast Asia. The theoretical correlations revealed throughout the book provide pertinent insights into the field of digital culture and humanities.