



‘MANCHESTER HAS NO TEARS LEFT TO CRY’: MUSIC VIDEO AS A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION

‘MANCHESTER’İN AĞLAYACAK GÖZ YAŞI KALMADI’: BİR İLETİŞİM ARACI OLARAK MÜZİK KLİBİ

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ÖZ

Müzik klipi genellikle bir müzisyenin yeni teklisine eşlik edecek bir görsel metin olmakla beraber, söz konusu teklinin tanıtımını yapmak adına kullanılan bir metin türüdür. Sanatsal açıdan bir dışavurum sayılabilecek bu metin türü, aynı zamanda estetik açıdan söz konusu müziğin sözlerini ve hissettirdiği duyguyu yansıtmak amacıyla kullanılabilir. Bu metin günümüzde gelinen hali ile beraber içeriğinde politik ve gündelik olaylardan izler de taşıyabilir. Söz konusu duruma örnek olarak; Ariana Grande, üçüncü stüdyo albümü ‘Dangerous Woman’ albümünün tanıtımı için turneye çıkmıştır. Turnenin Manchester ayağında konser bitiminde bir “terör saldırısı” olarak nitelendirilen bir canlı bomba saldırısına uğramıştır. Karşılaştığı terör saldırısı sonucu oldukça etkilenen Grande, daha sonra üzerinden çok geçmeden Manchester’a geri dönerek ‘One Love Manchester’ isimli bir bağış konseri düzenlemiştir. Konserden toplanan bütün gelir saldırı sonucu etkilenen saldırı kurbanlarının ailelerine verilmiştir. Bir sonraki sene de, içeriğinde yine saldırıya referanslar bulunduran, ‘Sweetener’ adıyla dördüncü stüdyo albümünü piyasaya sürmüştür. Saldırı sonrasında müzik endüstrisine geri dönen Grande, bu albümden ‘no tears left to cry’ isimli yeni teklisini yayınlamıştır. Bu çalışmada ise ön planda olan konu, Grande’nin piyasaya sürdüğü ‘no tears left to cry’ teklisi için çektiği müzik klbidir. Söz konusu klip içeriğinde; saldırının kendisine, Grande’nin saldırıdan nasıl etkilendiğine ve bunu müziğine nasıl yansıttığına dair referansları içerir. Bu çalışmada söz konusu klbin içeriğindeki göndermeler, göstergebilimsel çözümler yaparak incelenmiştir. Bulguların tartışılması ve verilerden elde edilen fikirler sonucu bu çalışma, müzik klbinin bir iletişim aracı olarak kullanılabilirliğini ortaya koymak amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müzik klipi, Göstergebilim, Ariana Grande, Manchester, İletişim



ABSTRACT

A music clip is usually a visual text to accompany a musician's new singles, but is a type of text can be used to promote the singles. This type of text, which can be regarded as an artistic expression, can also be used aesthetically to reflect the lyrics of the song in question and the emotion it expresses. This text may contain traces of political and daily events. As an example; Ariana Grande toured for her third studio album, 'Dangerous Woman'. At the end of the concert, the Manchester leg of the tour was subjected to a live bomb attack, which was described as a "terrorist attack". Grande, who was deeply affected with the terrorist attack she faced, soon returned to Manchester and organized a charity concert called 'One Love Manchester'. All proceeds from the concert were given to the families of the victims affected by the attack. The following year, she released her fourth studio album 'Sweetener', which was also shown references of the attack. Grande returned to the music industry after the attack, with releasing a new single called 'no tears left to cry' from this album. In this research, the main focus is the music clip for the single 'no tears left to cry' released by Grande. The clip contains references to the attack itself, how Grande was affected by the attack and how it reflected it on her music. In this research, the references in the content of this clip have been examined by making semiotic analyses. As a result of the discussion of the findings and the ideas obtained from the data, this research was conducted to reveal that the music clip can be used as a communication tool.

Keywords: Music video, Semiotics, Ariana Grande, Manchester, Communication

1. INTRODUCTION

Ariana Grande-Butera, born June 26, 1993, is an American singer, songwriter and actress. After her acting career, she entered the music industry and released her debut album 'Yours Truly' (2013) and her sophomore 'My Everything' (2014). In 2017, Grande toured for her third studio album, 'Dangerous Woman' (Lakshmin, 2017). On May 5, 2017, a live bomb on the Manchester leg of the tour, considered a post-concert terrorist attack, killed 22 people and injured more than 800 people (BBC News, 2018).

After the attack, on May 22, 2017, Grande made a statement about how "broken" she was from her Twitter social media account and how sad she was in a sincere manner (Kennedy, 2017). Then from the Instagram social media platform Grande; On 30 May 2017, she announced the 'One Love Manchester' donation concert to be held on June 4, 2017 and



stated that all of the concert revenue would be donated to the families of those affected (Gibson, 2017).

After staying away from the music industry for a while, on April 18, 2018, Grande announced on Instagram (Kitchener, 2018) the release date for her new single 'no tears left to cry'. Grande's 'no tears left to cry' single was released on April 19, 2018, accompanied by a music video (Republic Records, 2018). The clip is based on the theme of the dilemma of finding the ground from an angle or deciding what the ground is (Roth, 2018).

Music video; is a form produced by the music industry for the purpose of introducing popular songs and visualizing the musical elements of a song, including lyrics (Çelikcan, 1996; p. 1).

In the music video she released for 'no tears left to cry', Grande, as well as having elements that supporting the lyrics of the song; she gives certain references to terrorist attack occurred in Manchester, how the attack affected her, the donation concert 'One Love Manchester' took place after the attack and the information about her fourth studio album 'Sweetener' (2018).

2. OBJECTIVE

The aim of this study is to present Ariana Grande's 'no tears left to cry' music video as an example and to show that music video, which is a genre of video art, can also be used as a communication tool.

3. SAMPLING

As a sample, Ariana Grande's music clip for 'no tears left to cry' was taken.

4. METHOD

Semiotics, which provided a basis in the social sciences, was defined by Ferdinand de Saussure, one of its founders, as a study of "the life of symbols in society" (Gaur, 2017). In this research, the situation is to examine the indicator in terms of its connotative and



denotative meanings, which are connected with Peirce's triple sign theory and Barthes' linguistic theory.

Accordingly, an icon is a sign that refers to the object and reflects its meaning, indicating the object even if it does not exist; an index is an indication of an object that is associated with it, indicating a state of being affected by it (such as when we understand that the object that is torn by tearing a paper is a paper); finally, a symbol is a sign that evokes a general idea of the object in question but has nothing to do with the object itself (Peirce, 1895).

The situation in Barthes' theory is similar to Peirce but differs in terms of evaluating the object in question. According to this; In cases used to describe an object in terms of semantics, it contains more than one complex system according to the language of the object and the denotative meaning of the object (Barthes, 1986: 90). Connotative and denotative meaning, can define another language (a metalanguage) in the name of defining the object (Barthes, 1986: 92).

The reason why semiotic analyzes are preferred in the research is, to examine the elements referring to the said event in relation to each other within the clip.

5. DISCUSSION

In the first seconds of the clip, we see the city intertwined in the sky, right and left of the frame, independent of the rules of gravity or physics. After the clip's title and Grande's name appears, we find herself leaning against the glass in a building.



Images 1 and 2: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'00'11 – 00'00'39)

But with the camera changing angle and approaching the Grande, we understand that she is actually on the glass rather than leaning on the glass. When she begins singing, we



understand that Grande is involved in a world that has been turned upside down. Basically, this can be said for any situation that has deeply affected us in life. But in the foreground, and in the semantic sense, this mentions that Grande was affected by a traumatic event, the first reference to how the Manchester bombing affected her.

In the next scene, we see Grande fall into a corridor filled with “stars” and her body is trapped in this structure. In this sense, we understand that in its denotative meaning, “the eyes are always on herself”, that the “famous” personality that she possesses does not leave herself and as a result she gets stuck in a kind of deeply connected network.



Images 3 and 4: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'00'58 – 00'00'55)

In terms of its connotative meaning, this is the case after Grande's terrorist attack, “...When something very opposite and very poisonous happens in your own world, it is shocking and heartbreaking that seems impossible to heal...” (SkyNews, 2018). With these words she clearly shows how she is trapped in a state of emotion.

As we approach the chorus section of the song, we find Grande on a fire escape between two buildings in the city passing through the introduction part of the clip.



Images 5 and 6: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'01'29 – 00'01'35)



In this episode, Grande tries to explain that she is preparing to put forward an idea with the lyrics mentioned in the song “Comin’ out / Even when it’s raining down / Can’t stop now / Can’t stop so shut your mouth / Shut your mouth / And if you dunno and then now you know it babe / Know it babe, yeah” and in the words of chorus “Right now I’m in a state of mind / I wanna be in like all the time / Ain’t got no tears left to cry” an expression of herself and the pain she has experienced so far cannot be upset by putting her into a kind of “state of mind”.

These words, in their denotative meaning, can be used as a discourse in order to express the emotional state in question or when we have reached the point where we cannot bear the pain of the events that deeply wear us in our daily lives.

But with the connotative side of these lyrics, with the words “...When I started to take care of myself, first came the peace, then freedom, and joy” (Lansky, 2018) of Grande, we understand that she starts recovering after the Manchester attack and after the end of the chorus, as we see world being its upside-down self, we see Grande trying to manage her balance in this place.

In the next sequence, we find Grande in the part where she starts singing at the beginning of the clip. But this time, set and shooting develop quite differently. The lyrics “I just want you to come with me / We’re on another mentality / Ain’t got no tears left to cry” passing by on the second part and end of the chorus, we see her this time she gets off the wall and “hits the ground”, creating a kind of foundation and “finding her place”.



Images 7 and 8: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'01'38 – 00'01'59)



We can interpret this situation as a kind of plea for any romantic, friendship relationship and as a result of being able to continue daily life with the self-confidence brought by the togetherness. In its connotative way, it can be interpreted as that Grande organizes a ‘One Love Manchester’ donation concert after the attack in Manchester, and provides a kind of assurance and continuation to the families by creating a charity fund for the wounded and the tragically affected victims of the attack.

In this sequence, Grande left the regions where she was “imprisoned” and started to “land” in the city. With her lyrics “We're way too fly to partake in all this hate / We out here vibin' / We vibin', we vibin'” we can see that she is slowly moving away from what upset her and that she is able to dance and be happy even though the “city” in which she is located has turned upside down. In this section, in addition to the happiness and enthusiasm that she has started to be experienced in the denotative sense, in its connotative meaning it also refers to the early stages of Grande's career.



Images 9 and 10: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'02'11 – 00'02'27)



Image 11: Image from 'Put Your Hearts Up' music clip (00'02'22)



It was the beginning of her career that Grande released a music video for the first single ‘Put Your Hearts Up’ at the time she entered the music industry. In her ‘no tears left to cry’ music video, the figures and umbrella movements she uses to give the feeling that she is dancing under the rain in question provide a visual harmony with the words of the song. In its connotative words, Grande's reference to the beginning of her career tells that, in a way, she began to follow a different path in terms of her music.

Just before entering the second chorus, while supporting the sarcasm in her words “Can’t stop so shut your mouth” with choreography, Grande makes references for her track named ‘Be A right’ which is a song that has “...Reminders of supporting each other in difficult times of any relationship...” (Cardoso, 2016). This movement can be considered a behavior to support the “recovery” situation from the song.



Image 12: Image from ‘no tears left to cry’ music clip (00’02’25)



Image 13: Image from ‘Be Alright’ live performance (00’03’05)

As we came into chorus part, this time Grande experiences another “fall”. This situation experienced while the “healing” mood she was in where the song came, can be explained with her words “I was usually in a good and happy mood, and these feelings



suddenly hit me from somewhere. I've always been worried, but I've never experienced that psychically before. There has been a few months I've been quite upset.” (Connor, 2018).



Images 14 and 15: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'02'36 – 00'02'40)

But in the end of the first part of chorus with the words “Ain't got no tears left to cry” we find Grande on the fire escape stairs where she found the place she can “find her balance” again.

This, in its denotative way, can support the idea what first chorus gave us and its connotative way can give out the reference to the aftermath of Manchester attack and how she “picks herself up” again.



Images 16 and 17: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'02'46 – 00'02'47)

As she finishes the chorus part, she emphasizes that she has many supporting faces, that is, voice in this context. This is essentially the case, but on connotative side, on her fourth studio album Sweetener (2018) the track ‘get well soon’ with the lyrics “I'm too much in my head did you notice?” and response she gave to situation with words “It's like I'm talking to every single thought in my head ... and they come back singing to me..” (Lansky, 2018) supports the idea of Grande having personality disorders.



Images 18 and 19: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'02'51 – 00'02'58)

In the intermediate section that connects the song with the last chorus, we find Grande in her upside-down world and sitting on the ceiling.



Images 20 and 21: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'03'03 – 00'03'08)

The first thing that catches our attention in these stage passages is the mask that Grande has on her face and the face she puts alongside the others. In its denotative way, this may mean "masks" or behavior that we have to “wear” in everyday life. This, in terms of its meaning in this scene in the music video, supports Grande's personality disorders after the Manchester attack.



Images 22 and 23: Images from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'03'09 – 00'03'17)

The hairband accessory, which looks like the ears of the long black rabbit in the lower left corner of the stage, is similar to Grande's accessory she putted up on her hair on the cover of the 'Dangerous Woman' album.



Image 24: Image from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'03'17)



Image 25: 'Dangerous Woman' album cover image



<http://1t8r984d8wic2jedckksuin1.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Ariana-Grande-Dangerous-Woman-Deluxe-2016.jpg> (Retrieving date: May 2 2019, 16:40)

In the sense of similarity, we can understand that Grande left behind this “state of mind”, that is, in a way or overthrown the idea of “Dangerous Woman” from her head.

The elements in the middle of the stage accompany the preparation phase of the album as a process of creating a concept in terms of a “maze” and “sketch drawings”.

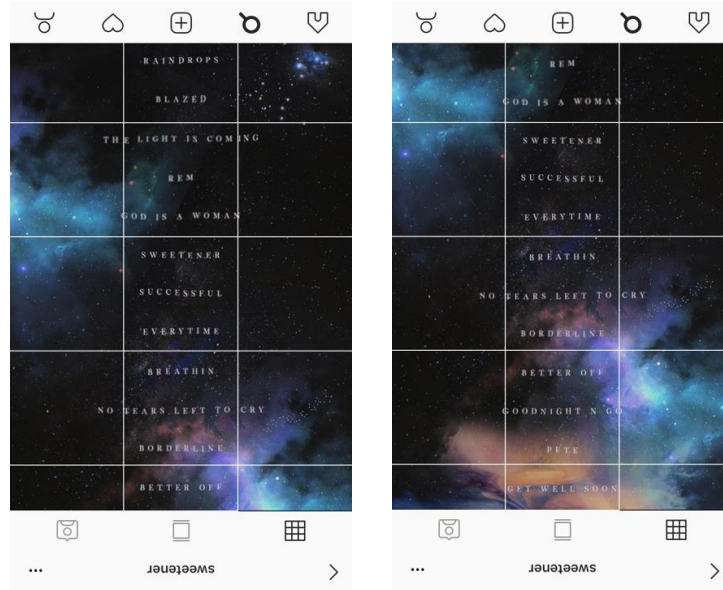


Image 26: Image from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'03'17)

There are several papers written in the middle bottom of the stage. These include a reference to the track list for Grande's album “Sweetener”. The track list in the image taken from the ‘sweetener’ page, which was introduced via social media service Instagram, is similar to the list in the clip image.



Image 27: Image from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'03'17)



Images 28 and 29: Profile page screenshots of user ‘sweetener’ on Instagram
<https://www.instagram.com/sweetener/> (Retrieving date: May 2 2019, 17:38)

With the end of the scene, we go back to Grande's “polyhedral”. Basically, this supports the insertion sounds within the song and the echo effect of the song.



Image 30: Image from 'no tears left to cry' music clip (00'03'20)

On the other hand, this stage can reveal some kind of “integration” idea. Because the fragmentary and multiple sounds in the first of this scene are similar; more diminished and whole.



In the dance transition in the previous episode from the last stage, the sun rises and begins to find the Grande balance on this state of the Earth.



Images 31 and 32: Images from ‘no tears left to cry’ music clip (00’03’23 – 00’03’31)

In addition to the denotative meaning in question, this scene connotatively is a reference to Grande's ability to see “light” at the end of her troubles.

In the last scene we see Grande watching the sun rise. In essence, Grande has set foot in what the Earth has come from, and we no longer see her trying to find her balance.

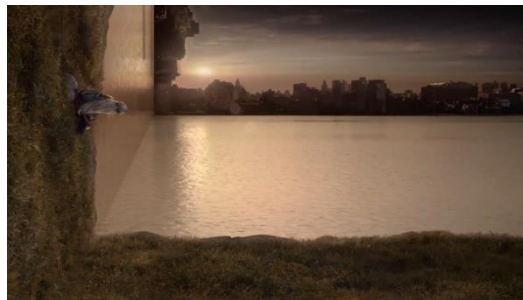


Image 33: Image from ‘no tears left to cry’ music clip (00’03’48)

With the words “I’m happy...I’m crying...But I’m happy.” (Lansky, 2018) she expresses herself. In its connotative way, this means that Grande have find the ground finally.



When the clip ends, a honey bee flies to the right and leaves the screen. This is a direct reference to Manchester's symbol of working honey bee (Cooper, 2019) and can be regarded as a kind of “reverence” to those who lost their lives during the attack.



Image 34: Image from ‘no tears left to cry’ music clip (00’03’46)



Image 35: Image of honey bee, symbol of Manchester city

<http://www.salfordstar.com/images/l/bees3.jpg> (Retrieving date: May 2 2019, 13:20)

CONCLUSION

As can be seen, Grande used various indicators in her clip and gave space to the audience to give meaning to each one and in a way to tell her “story”.

When we examine this situation according to the elements;

1. Ariana's world has been “turned upside down” after the Manchester bombing.
2. She tried to find her “balance” to correct it. Her new album ‘Sweetener’ and ‘One Love Manchester’ are a way of expression for her on this subject.
3. After the attack, Grande had moments of unbalance in her work process, and suffered from personality disorders and anxiety attacks.



4. Finally, Grande has not forgotten Manchester. Grande and Manchester's bee are in harmony with the course of the clip and the sunrise. In a way, this "story" has finally a happy ending.

These elements and references that occur in Grande's clip can generally be applied to music clips. If continuity is ensured in this field, artists may have the opportunity to exhibit music clips as a kind of historical recording tool and sub-text works of art.

In the future, it can be predicted that tools such as music clips will be played together more in the field of effects and motion graphics, as seen in Grande's clip. At the same time, these developments can take place in areas such as virtual reality and augmented reality, and just like Grande's ability to tell a "story", products that can be considered as "commodities" in cultural studies and cannot be considered as works of "art" can be consumed interactively by their text readers.



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