

1 Abstract

This thesis revolves around the question of whether spam and advertising are one and the same thing, or actually distinct forms consumer persuasion. The thesis begins by describing Gilles Deleuze's and Felix Guattari's concept of a minor literature, in reference to Franz Kafka's work. The features that bring Kafka's literary production to be considered minor are used to ask whether spam also constitutes a minor language. And if spam can found to be a minor, the question left to ask is within what major language is spam constructing its own language. My answer is advertisement, spam constitutes a minor advertisement. In order to sustain that position I will place the two languages side-by-side and describe the affinities between the two. Despite there similarities a great distinction exists between the way society looks at spam and at advertising. It is my intention to provide an explanation for such differentiated treatment.

2 Introduction

...NEEDS TO BE WRITTEN ...

The handle "419" derives from the Nigerian code law that persecutes these sort of crimes. The fraud consists of a game of appearances that leads to a confident trick. Initially the victims, normally foreigners, received letters or faxes from a Nigerian businessman proposing a highly profitable deal; later on email became the common medium through which the victims were approached. When faced with such a lucrative proposition the foreign partner only has to advance a small amount, in order to pay fees or lawyers, and the profit is guaranteed. In reality he falls pray of his own greed, giving out the requested *small amount* and never receiving the promised fortune.

3 What is a Minor Literature?

In *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* (1986) Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari delve into a reading of Kafka's work, which puts forward an interpretation of the Czech author's production as a subversion that takes place within the confines of a major language. The chapter *What is a Minor Literature* expands on the notion of minor literature. Deleuze and Guattari describe minor literature not as a development of minor language, but rather 'rather that which a minority constructs within a major language'(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.16). Deleuze and Guattari describe Kafka's work as a minor literature for two reasons. His birth within a German-speaking Jewish family, a German education, and his life in mainly Czech-speaking Prague positions him both within a linguistic and an ethnic minority. Although writing and speaking a major language - German - Kafka is part of the deterritorialized German population; Not unlike emigrants in their new country of residence, Kafka's was a foreign in his own hometown, Prague. But he also became a foreigner to the "correct" high German. Kafka decides to bring to his writing the peculiarities and deformations of the German spoke in Prague, 'a deterritorialized language appropriate for strange and minor uses'(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.17).

Deleuze and Guattari resource to the tetra-linguistic model proposed by Henri Gobard to explain Kafka's linguistic entanglement. The model is constituted by four languages types: vernacular, vehicular, referential, and mythical. Vernacular refers to a territorial language, spoken mainly by rural communities; vehicular to the language used in everyday practical and transnational exchanges; referential to the language of culture; and mythical to a religious or spiritual language. The authors ask what is the relation of Prague Jews, and specifically Kafka, to those four language types. Czech and Yiddish were vernacular languages, disregarded in an urban scenario, yet Kafka, unlike most Jews, was able to understand and write in Czech, which became important in his relation with Milena Jesenská. German filled both the vehicular and referential language, occupying the same role in the Austro-Hungarian Empire as English occupies in today's world. And Hebrew, was the mythical language, associated with the foundation of Zionism and the state of Israel. Whereas 'vernacular language is *here*, vehicular language is *everywhere*, referential language is *over there*, and mythical language is *beyond*'(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.23).

The dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire 'increases the crisis, accentuates everywhere the movements deterritorialization and invites all sorts of complex reterritorializations'(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.24). In this movement Kafka does not opt for a 'reterritorialization through the Czech. Nor towards a hypercultural usage of the German... Nor toward an oral popular Yiddish'(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.25). Instead he chooses an intermediate route, by bringing the Prague's German into his writing, and exploring it beyond its previous boundaries. '[H]e will tear out of Prague German all the qualities of underdevelopment that it has tried to hide ... He will turn the syntax into a cry that will embrace the rigid syntax of the dried-up German. He will push towards a deterritorialization that will no longer be saved by culture or by myth'(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.26). In other words Kafka places the *here* of the vernacular language into *everywhere* of the vehicular language. He casts a language that despite having its roots encompasses many places, and is not rooted nowhere particularly.

Deleuze and Guattari situate the revolutionary intensity of Kafka's writing in the minor and undefined language Kafka chose to write in. To write in a minor language is a deliberate choice, which implies that one is willing to allow his work to be disregarded. He will be, like Kafka was, writing in a language marked by its poverty, with no single define identity; a language without masters, within which even the author is a stranger. This is the language Kafka explores. It is in it that he 'find[s] points of nonculture or underdevelopment, linguistic Third World zones by which language can escape'(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.27). A linguistic territory has no single center of power neither clear boundaries toward what can and cannot be said(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.26).

In the beginning of the chapter Deleuze and Guattari describe the features of minor literature as being the deterritorialization of language, the political nature of every element, and the collective enunciation. I believe to be in position to better understand what the authors meant with these three features. In the first place, the already mentioned deterritorialized nature of Prague's German, which Kafka adopts and explores as his written language; While being the language of Prague's Jews, it derives from an international vehicular language, yet it is distant from the Czech territoriality. Secondly, the authors defend that within a minor literature 'everything takes on a collective value'(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.17). The lack of talent and the impossibility of virtuosity that results from writing in a new, uncharted language, prevents enunciations from being inscribed within the work of a given "master". Such lack of ancestry allows for a minor literature to gain a collective meaning. Thirdly, the authors state that while in a major literature individual intrigues join to form a whole, in minor literature every intrigue stands-out on its own, and is political. In this scenario each 'the individual concern thus becomes all the more necessary, indispensable, magnified, because a whole other story is vibrating within it'(Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.17).

4 Spam

The decision to become minor, and the consequences that result from such choice, is not confined to literature. Other major discursive practices have their own minor languages. Marcel Swiboda describe how African-America and Afro-Caribbean musical manifestations constitute instances of a minor culture. Swiboda locates the first minor aspects of these musical genres in their deterritorialization of English language. Since the mentioned genres employ a language usually responsible for uttering a dominant culture, minor culture formations need to find ways of appropriating that language and make it utter non-dominant discourse, or in Swiboda's words 'to render them sonorous'. As an example Swiboda mentions the politicization of the English language performed by Jamaican-British poet, Linton Kwesi Johnson. Kwesi Johnson inscribes the Jamaican Creole on to the English of his poems, as a way of challenging the oppression of the dominant major language. The second minor aspect is present in transformation of the personal and singular on to a collective perspective. As an example of this collective addressing Swiboda mentions the figure of a Hip Hop MC, whom despite being an individual voice with a personal style, it is part of the Hip Hop collective entity, without which it could not exist(Swiboda, 2005).

Another contemporary popular discourse that I believe qualifies as a minor language is spam. Spam is a synonym to unsolicited emails, sent to large number of addresses, with the underlying intention of selling products such as Rolex replicas or Viagra pills, or even extort money from its recipients through a convincing narrative. Despite being an ostensibly marginal and often deceptive practice, does it hold up to Deleuze and Guattari's definition of minor? The philosophers recognize the deterritorialization of language, the collective enunciation, and a latent political meaning, as the main features of minor literature. In order to assess the minor character of spam I will begin to look for these minor characteristics in spam.

4.1 Spam's deterritorialization

Firstly and most visibly the common employment of far-from-perfect versions of English make apparent the deterritorialization of the language of spam. It is common for spam emails to be filled with typos, unconventional grammar, expressions, and punctuation. Such is the case of the following email:

From: Fatima Kone
Subject: Hello My Dearest,

Hello My Dearest,

My name is Miss. Fatima Kones, 23 years old originated from Nairobi-Kenya, East Africa, Female, tall, slim, fair and a very good looking girl that loves traveling and dancing, a student, that loves to be loved, I want you to also understand that your Age, distance, Religions does not matter to me, kindly permit me to contact you through this medium, I am compelled to contact you via this medium for obvious reasons which you will understand when we discuss details of my proposition.

My father was the former Assistant Minister of Home Affairs and the Kenya road Minister Mr. Kipkalya Kones had been on board the Cessna 210, which was headed to Kericho and crashed in a remote area called Kajong'a, in western Kenya.

After the burial of my father, my step-mother has threatened to kill me because of the money my father

deposited in one of the banks in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in my name as the next of kin before his dead which amount is (\$10.7USD) Million United State Dollars. I travelled down to Burkina Faso to withdraw the money so that I can start a better life and take care of myself.

Fatima Kones

http://pzwart3.wdka.hro.nl/django/acastro/collect_spam/spam/88

In this example it still possible to read the echos of a correct English, but the text is far from being in there. The correct English appears as a horizon against which these phrases are set. These two different versions of English illustrate the crossroad inhabited by spammers in relation to language of their craft. If on-the-one-hand English - world's current vehicular language - needs to be used in order to reach as many readers as possible, on-the-other-hand its imperfections expose the deceptive nature of spam. It is a situation akin to the experienced by Kafka: unable to write in another language than German his writing became removed from the Czech and Jewish territory which he inhabited (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986). And like the possibilities for invention that the deterritorialized German offered Kafka, so does the deterritorialized English offer spammers, whom invent characters that are often as foreign to a perfect English as the authors themselves, as is Fatima Kones in the example above. In that same line of thought Harvey Glickman (2005) proposes an explanation for these linguistic distortions, arguing specifically in reference to "419" messages, that such anomalies constitute a conscious choice from the authors. By adopting a broken English the authors exploit the racist stereotype of Africans being naive, corrupt, and illiterate, which will hopefully trigger the readers into believing that nothing harmful will come out of this deal with someone so innocent.

Secondly, the language appears to be deterritorize by **mode of address** in which these emails are written. Although sent in bulk to millions of addresses they address the reader intimately and directly. Spam authors are clueless about their reader's gender, nationality, social strata, occupation, etc; essentially they know nothing expect one's email address. Yet, despite that shortcoming they try to make each recipient feel as the single lucky receiver of their emails. A similar disjunction can be witnessed in messages that employ big world events to justify the described narrative. That is the case with the following email in which the assassination of Osama bin Laden, reported by a soldier who took part in it, serves as the explanation for appearance of large sum of money, and the following business proposal.

From: Sgt. John Samuel

Subject: Hi

Hi ,

My name is Sgt. John Samuel US ARMY serving the World and my country in the most honourable way I know I can, in AFGHANISTAN right now, in a nutshell, I am an American soldier serving in the Military with the Army 3rd infantry division. With a very desperate need for assistance,I found your contact particulars during my email search and picked up courage to contact you for your assistance.

Some money in various currencies were discovered in a room at a farm house near one of Osama Bin Laden's old house in Kabul-Afghanistan during a rescue operation, I happened to be one of the soldiers that led that operation that day, so it was agreed by Col. William E. Cole the head of our battalion that some part of this money will be shared among both of us before informing anybody about it since both of us saw the money first. This was quite an illegal thing to do, but I tell you what? No compensation can make up for the risk we have taken with our lives in this hell hole, my brother in-law was killed by a road side bomb just few months ago, and I cannot count how many times GOD has saved my life down here.

Now i found a very reliable way of sending a trunk metallic box containing the amount of United States Dollars worth Twelve Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars(US\$ 12.5 Million) as you must agree with me it has been hell on earth trying to keep this money safe from people's eyes for all these while and with this opportunity all I need is just someone capable I can trust 100% I can send the box to. So if you can assure me of your honesty I will go ahead and send the box to you for safe keeping till I am back home and I will gladly give you 40% of the money.

If this okay with you please get back to me with the following so i can get the box across to you.

1. Your full name
2. Contact address
3. Telephone number
4. Occupation.

Waiting to hear from you.

Yours in Service.

Sgt. John Samueln

US ARMY

<http://www.army.mil/>

http://pzwart3.wdka.hro.nl/django/acastro/collect_spam/spam/94

In this example we are given a personal perspective on the mediatized event of Osama bin Laden assassination, over which we only had a birds'-eyes view provided by the media. The fact that these two perspectives are superimposed, as are fiction and reality, and the intimate voice through which millions of readers are addressed, brings spam into an unstable and undefined territory, which I see as a significant contribution for **spam's deterritorialization**.

The deterritorialization of spam becomes even more striking if one considers the technological context of its production. As already mentioned, spam, particularly its "419" genre, was first developed and perfected in Nigeria during the 1980s and 1990s, and is in great part still associated with this country, although statistics reveal Nigeria by no means to be the center worlds spam production(Shue et al., 2009). As mentioned by Lois Chude-Sokei (2010) is somehow surprising that this form of cyber-crime comes from a country like Nigeria. If commodities such as electricity, running water, and roads are scarce, one can only imagine what the access to a computer and an Internet connection will be like. Yet, it was this lack of resources that propelled Nigerians to perfection a form of cyber-crime that did not required high levels of technical expertise, permanent access to online machines, or fast Internet connections. It simply required the creative ability to tell a convincing story, that would appeal to the victims' greed and trust. Chude-Sokei sees "419" as being in a similar position to one occupied by Jamaican reggae and dub. Both criminal and musical productions originated and perfected their forms in the backwaters of the industrialized world, yet they reached world-wide fame, and became replicated outside their birth-nations.

4.2 Spam's political dimension

I have previous made reference to spammers use of stereotypical images of Africans, through the employment of a grammatically incorrect English. Such tactic inevitably feeds into the political dimensions of "419" spam. The effectiveness of "419" scam relies in great part on the way Africa and Africans are seen by the developed world. Only by believing in image of Africans as naïve and corrupt do the victims allow themselves to fall for this fraud narratives(Chude-Sokei, 2010). However it is no less stereotypical the image that spammers, and perhaps the majority of the African continent, has of Westerns: rich, opulent, and blinded by greed. It is this image that allows Nigerian spammers to go forward with their acts of cyber-crime with a clean moral consciousness. They believe to be stealing only from greedy Westerns, who look-down on Africans, and are stupid enough to fall for the scam. Andrew Apter finds a certain level of 'righteous third world banditry to the Nigerian "419" '(Apter, 1999, p.274) and points out Nigerians' awareness of the West's complicity in the fraud, in its unmeasured hunger for money. Given the low living conditions of the majority Nigerian's population, both under the colonial and the pos-colonial regimes, and the large sums of money that flew out of the country or slipped into the elite's pockets, during Nigeria's oil-boom, it is only natural that spammers, and Nigerians at large, want their share in this fortune. The song *I Go Shop Your Dollar* by the Nigeria actor Nkem Owoh provides a vivid portrait to the sentiment felt by those who commit "419" towards their victims.

I don suffer, no be small
Upon say I get sense
Poverty no good at all, no
Na him make I join this business

419 no be thief, it's just a game
Everybody dey play am
If anybody fall mugu,
Ha, my brother I go chop am

National Airport na me get am
National Stadium na me build am
President na my sister brother
You be the mugu, I be the master

Oyinbo man I go chop your dollar
I go take your money and disappear
419 is just a game
You are the loser, I am the winner

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f1nKR3gYRY8>

However Chude-Sokei (2010) argues against this image of an African cyber-Robin Hood, by reminding us that the

victims often belong to the same community as the perpetrators. And if the spammers happen to succeed, non of the sake will be invested into the public good, but rather pave their way into becoming part of the elite and perpetuate its greedy behavior. Like “I Go Chop Your Dollar” provided a view into moral justification of “419”, the song “Yahoozee” - a clear reference to “yahoo boys”, the pseudonym attributed to young Nigerian scammers -, glorifies of the life-style that follows a successful “419” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBP2RkKsryg>. It seems hard to imagine that the ostentation of wealth that we see in “Yahoozee’s” video-clip stems from low-profile criminals, in crowded cyber-cafes powered by a generator, situated in one of Lagos’ computer villages, where the detritus of West’s digital revolution end-up. Andrew Apter’s essay *IBB = 419: Nigerian Democracy and the Politics of Illusion* (1999) traces the genes of “419” to Nigeria’s 1980s and 1990s political establishment. The essay revolves around the comparison of General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, commonly known as IBB, who governed Nigeria from 1985 to 1993, and “419” financial fraud. In it Apter describes the political dance, comprised of democracy’s false starts and stops, which allowed the IBB to remain in power 8 years. In a nutshell BBI’s political ballet consisted of the following moves: the first elections under his rule held in 12 December 1987 were annulled by the National Electoral Commission due to a shortage of ballot boxes and irregularities; On May 1989 the six-year ban on political parties is lifted and new parties can be formed, yet IBB’s claim that none of the applying associations broke with tribal and religious divisions suspended the process; To replace them two new parties come into being: the Social Democratic Party and the National Republican Convention; Both parties were IBB’s fabrication, which warranted him control over the political *democratic* process; Between 1991 and 1993 IBB annulled, disqualified, and rescheduled several elections, until the population revolted in June 23rd, 1993, which resulted in IBB’s resignation. During those demonstrations Apter mentions seeing one protester holding a placard with the words “IBB = 499”. Apter argues that such analogy between the General and the art of con is not metaphorical but real (Apter, 1999, p.287). IBB’s fabrication of a fictitious democracy, with all its external signs, but no real democratic processes was in itself a “419”, in which the entire external appearance was crafted in order to look believable and appealing, whereas in fact none of it existed below the surface that served as a cover for the real deal. Furthermore, it was that pristine appearance that allowed IBB to build a fortune for himself while being the head of state.

4.3 Spam’s collective nature

Spam also appears to form a **collective enunciation**, since it is no longer inscribed in a lineage of given a “master”, or does possess a clear authorship. Its production is not the result of the work of a single identifiable individual, but a collective or authorless enunciation. Several factors contribute this collective nature of spam. Firstly no single author can be identified in most spam messages. Even in the cases of fraud emails like a “419”, where writer-narrator draws the reader into an enticing money-gaining narrative, this character is essentially a fabrication from the real author, whose true identity is nowhere to be found. Secondly, and partly a result from the authorless nature of spam texts, spam turns into a material, prone to appropriation, which happens not only within the circles of spam production, but also in the art-world, where spam appears to be an endless and rich sandbox, pregnant with material ready to be appropriated. Within the spam production realm we can testify the intense borrowing of materials from one email to email. Spam emails are essentially assemblages of previously specimens, which are borrowed on to the composition on new emails. This process of appropriation becomes visible if one follows a given writing character across the cluster of emails written under that name. At a certain point of my research I came across the previously quoted email by Fatima Kones, the daughter of Kipkalya Kiprono Kones, Kenyan’s former roads’ minister who died in plane accident. Miss Kones asks the reader to help her keep her father’s fortune, before her stepmother gets hold of it. On searching for more emails written by Fatima Kones I was confronted by the same story, told by the same character, but under a different first name. I found emails from Aminali, Cindy, Nora, Samira, Susan, Amina, Fatima, Dalila, Esther, Joy, and Mercy - quite a few daughters even for wealthy man. Although the story each incarnation of Miss Kones told was essentially the same, there were many variations among the found emails. I was witnessing a process of appropriation, that was spreading the little traces of authorship of these texts could have had through a collective network of authors. Moving outside the realm of spam production on the sphere of contemporary art, we see spam collective utterance spreading on to many appropriations by artists. One example is the piece *More Songs of Innocence and of Experience* by Thompson & Craighead <http://www.thomson-craighead.net/docs/songs.html>. The work emerged as a response to a commission for the online exhibition *Our Mutual Friends*, which revolved around Charles Dickens’ novel *Our Mutual Friend*. The artists decided to explore the resemblances between Dicken’s romanticism and realism, and the language of contemporary spam messages. The end result became a series of karaoke videos, with spam email’s texts as their lyrics. The songs are accompanied by MIDI version of light music that make you want to reach the mute button as quick as possible. **ADD More examples**

Based on the outlined marks of a minor language on to the language of spam, I believe to be possible to affirm that spam constitutes a minor language. However one question remains unanswered: Within what major language is spam building its body? My intuitive answer is advertisement. Spam appears essentially as advertisement, with very similar persuasion tactics. Similarly to advertisement, spam aims to persuade the reader to buy the product or service it announces. Some times the claims on the product in question are legitimate, other times they are not. Yet, despite those facts there seems to be a significant difference in the way spam and advertisement are perceived. One is seen

legitimate and has *carte blanche* to take-over our visual and aural surrounding, at every occasion and in every context, whereas spam, just as the handle indicates is seen as distasteful, unsolicited, and deceptive junk, which must be kept away from our vulnerable selves. Why is there such a distinct treatment concerning these two forms of marketing? **Where does the difference between the two reside?**

5 Ads = spam?

In his book *The Discourse of Advertising* Guy Cook introduces advertisement by stating that:

Ads use fictions, word play, compressed story-telling, stylized acting, photography, cartoons, puns and rhythms in ways which are often memorable, enjoying and amusing . . . The words and details of ads often come to people's minds more readily than those of novels and poems and plays, and they are often recalled with more laughter and enthusiasm. Yet it is often a love-hate relationship: one which frequently causes unease, and in which the love is often denied. It seems that with many ads, we suffer a split, contradictory reaction: involuntary spontaneous enjoyment, conscious reflective rejection(Cook, 1992, p.3).

Such definition seems applicable not be only to ads, but also to spam. We could replace every occurrence of the term "ads" for "spam" and infer that this description still maintain in great part its truth. But what is actually advertising, and in what ways is it similar to spam?

5.1 A short history of advertising

Gilliam Dyer (1982) succinctly describes advertising as an intermediary between the production and consumption of manufactured goods. By generating a steady amount demand for products or services advertising ensures products will be consumed. Dyer traces the history of advertising as we know it today, beginning with its first appearance in the newspapers, which began to flourish during the seventeenth century. The ads from that period weren't much different from the classified ads present in today's papers. The ads of the period were mainly directed at a wealthy audiences, advertising mostly luxury products such as tee, coffee, wine, cosmetics, lottery and theatre tickets. In general ads provided direct information on the announced products, through a formal language. In the two centuries that followed not many changes were introduced into this form of advertising. It was the nineteenth century that ads became increasing disseminated, with posters and leaflets hitting the city streets, and advertisers trying new strategies to better communicate the benefits of their products, however ads were still confined to communicate inform the public about the newly introduced products.

After the Long Depression that took place during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, small industrial enterprises joined together in order to be in better position to face another crisis. They also understood the necessity to ensure the existence of a market that would consume their products. These combined efforts resulted in a small amount of large manufacturing companies controlling large sections of the market, through large and expensive marketing campaigns, against which smaller manufactures simply couldn't compete. It was also in these period that household products made there ways into the ads. Whereas until then one would simply ask for a bar of soap at the local drug store, now advertisers had to make sure consumers asked for Pears Soap, through new advertising methods such as the use of catch-phrases.

As the world entered the twentieth century advertising gained a more prominent and vital role the both American and British economy. With the end of World War I the market was flooded with durable consumer goods such as refrigerators, radios, washing-machines and cars, and advertisers had to maker sure that consumers bought the latest model of these product, despite their lack of need for them. And given the success in such task, by the 1930s advertising was an established field and an essential part of the capitalist economy. The end of World War II brought another invasion of consumer goods, joint with an invasion of ads designed to ensure products were met with a similar amounts of consumer demand. Since then advertising hasn't stopped increasing its presence and the amounts of money spent on it. The total overall ad expenditure in the USA has increased from \$50 billions in 1979 to \$200 billion in 1998(Klein, 2001).

5.2 Persuasion

Alongside this historical description Dyer mentions to the development in the methods of consumer persuasion. The simple recommending tone from the ads of the mid-seventieth century started to shift to a more rhetoric discourse, calling on the authoritative voice of *physicians* to enumerate the advantages of the product in question, such as "most excellent and approved". Dyer also makes a curious remark in relation the forms of persuasion of the period:

It is worth remembering that the eighteenth century was an age of quacks, 'empirics' and tricksters. These were men who enjoyed a considerable influence and social standing. They both made and peddled an alarming variety of pills, purges, solvents and elixirs for which extravagant claims were made. The quacks

attracted attention to their wares by indulging in the most repulsive details of the diseases and scourges they claimed to be able to cure. Their promises were matched by spurious testimonials elicited from miraculously cured sufferers, who were preferably 'dukes and other noble personages of this kingdom'(Dyer, 1982, p.24).

The concept of advertisement based on unproven facts, and on someone who claims to have professional knowledge seems to resonates strongly with the contemporary fraud spam emails, like the ones described in the previous section. In both cases the consumer is led to believe that the announced product or service does more than what is able to. This strategy requires a "voice", usually of a constructed identity, into which the consumer is bound to listen and believe in.

At the dawn of the Twentieth century advertising was beginning to explore new forms of consumer persuasion. The new discipline of psychology began to be applied to advertising. Ads started to appear associated with positive images that would engage the reader, such health, prosperity and attractiveness. On the opposite end of the spectrum advertisers also found guilt to be particular powerful feeling. Ads were not only promising happiness to those bought the product, but also guilt for having not bought the product or taken on the action the ad intended them to. Guild would lead consumers to act, to buy, to engage with(Dyer, 1982, pp.35-36). Both strategies, often at the same time, are employed in spam fraud emails. The emails are often wrapped in a aura of positiveness, from the kindness and proximity the reader gets from the writer's words, to the grand fortunes and rewards announced, to the sensation of well being the reader be left with if he gives a helping hand to someone in need. But also a sense of guilt is likely to take hold of the reader for not having grabbed this chance to become rich, or for not having helped someone in need.

With the end of World War I and rates of production rising so did the need for consumption. One of the tactics that began to be used by the industry was distrust. As it was noticed that satisfied costumers weren't buying as much as dissatisfied ones, ads began inducing sentiments of self-criticism, discontentment and insecurity on to consumers, and the product appears as the antidote for all the problems, both real ones or fabricated ones(Dyer, 1982, pp38). Carrying on with the analogy to spam the same kind of tactic can be witnessed most prominently on weight lost programs, sexual enhancers, cosmetic surgery spam. Hito Steyerl (2012) interprets the pictures present in these forms of spam as those of perfect humans whom constitute a negative image of humanity. The images reveal an army of photoshopped, sexy, skinny, smiling, horny, and rich humans, who are there to address all of us who do not look like that, and seduce us into becoming as perfect as them. By being shown perfect bodies and perfect lives of these super-humans we become discontent with other and want that magical pill, that magical diet, that magical deal, that will warrant us a happy and perfect life. I will argue that these images generate the same sort of discontentment that advertisers began to explore in the beginning of the Twentieth century. [ADD EXAMPLES OF IMG SPAM]

5.3 Adapting to the media

I am trying to say the constant adaptation to the limitations imposed by the hosting media is common both to spam and ads. NEED TO DEVELOP

The parallels between spam and ads do not themselves to the persuasion methods employed. There also Quite a few common aspects seems to be present in the processes of adaptation both undertaken in order to arrive to, and have an affect on consumers. I would like to begin by mentioning one historical anecdote. By the mid-nineteenth century newspapers were still a major medium for ads. However the newspapers imposed various restrictions to the content and dimensions of ads. An ad wasn't allowed to extend beyond the width of a newspaper column, or employ display layouts. Faced with these limitations advertisers began exploring ways to circumvent them. One of these tactics was the repetition of the product's name endlessly throughout the newspaper column, or the use of small letters to draw the product's *in small* font-size(Dyer, 1982, pp.25-26). More then one century later, and under a very different context, that of BBSs, computer clubs, and hackers, the same technique was becoming popular under the name of ASCII art. Faced with the limitations of computers of 1970s and 1980s, ASCII art became a solution for creating images or large font-size text, which could be exchanged among users (Wikipedia, 2013a), as in the example bellow.

```

..'''. . .
.,:ldxkkkkkkkkkkxol:'.
'cdkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkko:.
.;dkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkko,
'okkkkkkkkkdc;'.      ..';cdkkkkkkkkkc.
'dkkkkkkkkd:.          .:xkkkkkkko.
.dkkkkkkkx;.          .:xkkkkkko.
ckkkkkkkd'           ,xkkkkkk,
dkkkkkkx,           ;kkkkkk1
.xkkkkkkko           .dkkkkkko
dkkkkkkc             okkkkk1
ckkkkkk1 . . . . .   dkkkkk,
.kkkkkkx ;MMMMMMNd WMMMMMMK: .MMMMMM, OMMMMN ;MMMMM, .kkkkkx
ckkkkkk; WMMW.OMMM' WMMMcMMM cMMMMMMd OMMMMM.dMMMMM, ckkkkk,

```



```

xkkkkkk NMMMo:,,, WMMM.cMMM.OMMWkMMN OMMMMMoXMWMMM, .kkkkkl
kkkkkkx 'OMMMXl. WMMONMMW.WMMOlMMM. OMMWOMNMOMMM, .kkkkkd
kkkkkkx .lOMMMW' WMMMOxdc.,MMMl,MMMl OMMWlMMMMlMMM, .kkkkkd
xkkkkkk XMM oMMMd WMMM. oMMMMMMMK OMMW.MMMo:MM, .kkkkkl
ckkkkkk, kMMMcOMMl WMMM. KMMX:WMM.OMMW XMMo:MM, ckkkkk,
.kkkkkkx lONWwXOc 0000. 0000. k000,d000 100.,000' .kkkkkx
lkkkkkl ,kkk. ;kkkx:. okkkk,
dkkkkkc NMNMx oMMoclOMMo okkkkl
.xkkkkkl OMK.NMd oMM. oMM, .dkkkko
.dkkkkkx' :MM; cMM' oMM. :MM: ,xkkkkkl
ckkkkkko. .WMMWWMMN oMM' .cNMK 'dkkkkk;
.xkkkkkkd, OMX .Wmx oMMMWNOc .;xkkkkko.
,xkkkkkkko,. .;dkkkkkkd'
'okkkkkkkkx:'.. ..:okkkkkkkkl.
.:dkkkkkkkkkkkkxdddxxkkkkkkkkkkkkko,
.,lxkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkdc'
.;codkkkkkkkkkkkkl:,.
..';;;,'.

```

It is curious that this same technique had a rebirth in the 2000s as way of sending typical in-your-face spam messages without actually writing terms such as "discount", "Viagra", or "promotion", which allow spam-filters to easily classify the message as spam (Shankland, 2008).

This example illustrates one of the current tactics employed by spammers to circumvent the limitations imposed by spam filters, had already been employed by advertisers to have it their way, despite obeying to the newspaper regulations on ads. In fact I believe these camouflaging tactics are common to spam and ads. Advertising is notorious for its prominence in our lives. Its hard to avoid and its presence can be witnessed, among other places, on newspapers, magazines, billboards, hand delivered fliers, radio and TV commercials, direct marketing campaigns, and web-pages. Within the digital realm spam is no less pervasive, appearing not only in our email accounts, but also on blog comments, wikipedia articles, or instant messages.

On each one of its hosting media spam tries to camouflage itself as a common communication for each of these media. On emails we might read a message that might seem sent by a close friend or by our bank; On a blog spam, we might read something that sound like a comment, such as

This post is so help to me! Thanks for share.ugg boots for cheapdiscount ugg bootsugg boots cheap-
cheap ugg bootsugg boots on salediscount ugg bootsugg boots for menugg boots outletugg boots for
kidshttp://bestdiscountuggboots.webs.com/http://bigdiscountuggboots.blinkweb.com

On a wikipedia spam might disguise itself as an article, or might insert promotional links to existing articles(Wikipedia, 2013b). But a similar form of camouflaging is also present in advertising. Advertising must not disrupt or the content of its hosting medium, but flow with it. REFERENCE: ADS AND THEIR CONTEXT. In Dalas Smythe's view of audiences as a commodity sold by the mass-media to advertisers, the contents provided by the media are essentially a mood generator that facilitates the digestion of ads by its audiences.red ADD REFERENCE

5.4 Direct marketing and online ads

Besides all the mentioned parallels advertising seems to come closer to spam in the form of direct marketing and online ads. Direct marketing approaches consumers directly, communicating its message by surreptitiously entering their private lives. Generally direct marketing arrives by post - direct mail - , or telephone - telemarketing. In both cases advertising uses the same channels as we use to receive important mail or phone calls, from friends, family, or our bank. GIVE LONGER DESCRIPTION, references, and COMPARISON TO SPAM Spam tries the same strategy to get our attention, by appearing side-by-side to legitimate electronic communications, and taking on the same type of language as the legitimate ones. However a fundamental difference exists: direct marketing functions still mainly in a physical world. When we receive a letter from our bank, before opening it, we don't know if it contains an ad for its latest savings program, or an important message about our account. Neither we nor the postman know this, so he delivers the message on to our mailbox, and we go on and open it. If this had happen in the digital realm, spam filters would have sieved the content or our message and assessed the probability of it being junk mail. How spam filters work. Look at Spamassin The digital nature of spam allows us machines to analyze, quantified, and define binarily as either spam or legitimate communication. So the possibility of classifying something as spam is exclusive to digital realm.

If I follow this line of thought all kinds of online advertising would be considered as spam, and therefore filtered away, but that isn't case. Surely one can resort to the use of ad-blocking plugins, but that is not the norm, and online ads seem not to contain any of the dangers, and disruptive potential attributed to spam. **EXPAND**

5.5 Where is the difference?

Since spam and online ads are both unsolicited forms of advertising why isn't the same treatment given to both of them? Why is spam fought with spam filters, to which quite a lot of research goes on to, while online ads are free to appear next to our emails, or on the Youtube videos we want to watch? First of all online advertising, unlike spam, does not originate on the fringes of the capitalist economy, but at its very center. With a company like Google, as the source of many of the online advertising, it is only logical that online ads will continue to be present in our online life. Secondly, spam, as I have previously argued, constitutes a minor language, which a minority constructs within the major's body of advertising. This situation positions spam as a threat to advertising, like a virus that lives from its host, but also threatens it. According to Deleuze and Guattari's:

Minorities, of course, are objectively definable states, states of language, ethnicity or sex with their own ghetto territorialities, but they must also be thought as seeds, crystals of becoming whose value is to trigger uncontrollable movements and deterritorializations of the mean or majority (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.106).

If a minority has the potential to deterritorialize to majority, it poses a threat to the majority by threatening the majority's dominant and established position. If spam would grow to become as prominent, accepted, and popular as advertising it would bring advertising into a marginal territoriality, similar to the one inhabited by spam. And if this were to happen consumers would begin to look at ads with the same kind distrust and obliviousness with which they look at spam. Not only this would be disastrous to the advertising industry, which has been built on the premise that ads are a reliable way of making costumers buy products, but also to the whole capitalist economy that relies on advertising to keep functioning.

If one adds to this threat of becoming minority, the fact that spam is in great part deceptive, and therefore consumers must be protect against it, it is only natural that forces in the capitalist economy try to push spam aside. However I am convinced spam entails a stronger threat to advertising, by being ahead and presenting a perfected and evolved version of ads. My argument is based on Raymond William (1980) claim that advertising constitutes a magic system. William argues that our society is often criticized for being too materialistic, but in fact it doesn't seem truly materialist. If that were the case, Williams argues, an ad would have only to announce the product qualities, and no extra claims would be needed. But evidence suggest that ads which make extra promises, such as "beer X will make manly, young and friendly", are more successful than the ones than don't. Why does that happen? Raymond Williams sees this demands for the validation of a product, beyond its possibilities as magic - an organized and professional system of magic, not unlike those practiced in some societies, but functioning within our high-tech and rational society. When we respond to this extra magical claims made in ads, and buy the announced product, we essentially are buying the fantasy of how we would like to be. The product is simply a pretext for the fantasy we are paying for. Isn't it expected that in a future incarnation of advertising the product will entirely disappearance, and costumers will simply be buying a dream, the fantasy brought by the ad? And isn't that what the fraud spam like the "419" is doing, but in a more honest a perceptible way? When we reply to one of these emails we are buying the dream of becoming rich through the involvement in a dubious business with an America soldier whom took part in Osama bin Laden's capturing. We are free to choose the fantasy we want to live, which will provide us with an escape from our uneventful lives.

5.6 Spam: the future of advertising

I would like to further explore the possibility of this argument. I wish to know if this development can possibly happen. If at some point in the future spam and advertising will become one and the same thing. If advertising will recognize in spam its future image and the next logic step for it to take. In a effort to push things into this direction, and taking inspiration from the popular best ad competitions, I would like to launch the Spam Awards. The awards will be both a source of awareness to the great wealth creativity that circulates often unnoticed to eyes of the public, as well as a stimulus to innovative strategies to the thriving sector of the 21st Century creative industries which is spam.

6 Conclusion

...
...

References

Apter, Andrew. *Civil Society and the Political Imagination in Africa*, chapter IBB = 419: Nigerian Democracy and the Politics of Illusion, pages 267–307. The Universit of Chicado Press, London, 1999.

- Chude-Sokei, Louis. Invisible missive magnetic juju: On african cyber-crime. *The Fanzine*, 2010. URL <http://thefanzine.com/invisible-missive-magnetic-juju-on-african-cyber-crime/>. Accessed: 27-04-2013.
- Cook, Guy. *The Discourse of Advertising*. Routledge, London, 1992.
- Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Félix. *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*. University of Minnesota Press, London, 1986.
- Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Félix. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. University of Minnesota Press, London, 1987.
- Dyer, Gilliam. *Advertising as communication*. Routledge, London, 1982.
- Glickman, Harvey. The nigerian "419" advance fee fraud. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 39(3):406 – 489, 2005.
- Klein, Naomi. *No Logo*. Flamingo, London, 2001.
- Shankland, Stephen. Ascii: An artful way around spam filters. *CNET*, 2008. URL http://news.cnet.com/8301-1023_3-10025917-93.html. Accessed: 03.05.2013.
- Shue, Craig A.; Gupta, Minaxi; Hua Kong, Chin; Lubia, John T., and Yuksel, Asim S. Spamology: A study of spam orgins. California, 2009. URL <http://web.cs.wpi.edu/~cshue/research/ceas09.pdf>. Accessed: 27-04-2013.
- Steyerl, Hito. The spam of the earth: Withdrawal from representation. *E-flux*, 2012. URL [TheSpamoftheEarth: WithdrawalfromRepresentation](http://www.e-flux.com/2012/04/27/the-spam-of-the-earth-withdrawal-from-representation/).
- Swiboda, Marcel. *The Deleuze Dictionary*, chapter Becoming + Music. The Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2005.
- Wikipedia, . Ascii art, 2013a. URL http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ASCII_art. Accessed: 03.05.2013.
- Wikipedia, . Wikipedia:spam, 2013b. URL <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Spam>. Accessed: 03.05.2013.
- Williams, Raymond. *Culture and Materialis*. Verso, London, 1980.