

The Relationship Between Music Elements and Emotional Symptom Throughout the Movie, 『The Hours』

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I. Introduction

This paper analyzed the relationship depression symptom of the three women characters in 『The Hours』 as below by expanding the point of view which is from the point of view of ‘Self’ to its surrounding characters and circumstances. First, the analysis starts over the changes in the emotional states depending on depression of the three major characters as ‘Selves’. Second, the next stage moved over to the emotional states depending on the relationship of the three women with their each husband as ‘Others’. Third, the last step presents the relationship ‘Selves’ depending on the ‘surrounding characters and object relation’.

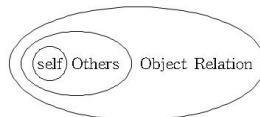
1. Introduction of the Movie, 『The Hours』

[Table 1] Basic Information and Introduction of the 『The Hours』

Characters	Virginia	Laura	Clarissa
Actresses	Nicole Kidman	Julianne Moore	Meryl Streep
Years	1923	1951	2001
Settings	Richmond	L.A.	New York
Common point	The novel, 『Mrs. Dalloway』		

This movie was directed by Stephen Daldry, based on the novel, 『The Hours』 written by Michael Cunningham, and as Philip Glass's latest work, the film music was composed, based on minimal music. The main characters of the movie are named Virginia Woolf in 1923, Laura Brown in 1951, and Clarissa Vaughan in 2001, and they are connected to the Virginia Woolf's novel, 『Mrs. Dalloway』.

2. The Expanded Relationship from ‘The Self’



Pic 1. Diagram of Expanded Relationship from ‘Self’

Here, the expanded relationship which is centered from ‘Self,’ in the core which is set to 1:1 relationship. And the next expands to ‘Others’ which sets 1:2 that the most close relationship, husband or partner in this film. The last, ‘Object Relation’ sets 1:3 that mostly about surrounding objects and others.

3. 1st Stage: Identification of Main Characters as ‘Self’

[Table 3] Common Point, the Role of the Three Characters and Type of Depression

Characters	Virginia	Laura	Clarissa
Common point	The Novel 『Mrs. Dalloway』, Richard		
Roles	Writer	Reader	Doer
Depression	Major Depression	Double Depression	Masked Depression

Virginia Woolf, as a writer in 1923, Laura Brown, as a reader in 1951, and also Clarissa, as a doer in 2001 are the main characters of the movie, and they are connected to the novel, 『Mrs. Dalloway』. Also, Virginia and Richard are both novelists, and Richard has something in common with the three women, as a son of Laura and an ex-boyfriend of Clarissa. Here, ‘Cross Cutting’¹ was used as one of filming techniques to link each time and space with one another through narrative. They all suffer from depression. This symptom moves to Virginia-Laura-Clarissa, and

¹ Jeong-Hee Seong, “Character Transformation and Mrs. Dalloway's Depression Settlement Process in 『The Hours』” (Ph.D., Konkuk University, 2010), 263.

the death of Richard makes their depression disappear. The appearance of the surrounding characters causes problems related to psychology regarding life and death, human relationship, and the psychological changes for identity recovery are revealed.

4. 2nd Stage: Relationship between 'Self' and Partners as 'Others'.

[Table 4] Relationship between 'Self' and 'Others'

Characters	Virginia	Laura	Clarissa	
Others: Partner	Leonard (husband)	Dan (husband)	Sally (partner)	Richard (ex-boyfriend)

In the movie, Virginia is oppressed by her husband, Laura isn't satisfied with her husband, and Clarissa lives with her partner, Sally, but always takes care of her ex-boyfriend, Richard.

5. 3rd Stage: Relationship between 'Self' and Surrounding Objects and Guests as 'Object Relation'




[Table 4] Surrounding Objects and Others

Characters	Virginia	Laura	Clarissa
Common point	Doctor, Food, Floral One-Piece		
Guests	Vanessa	Kitty	Louis
Colors of flowers	Blue	Yellow	Red

Here, flower, food and doctor are common materials in the three different periods. These colors in each period indirectly express their psychological conditions. All the three women wear floral one-pieces and the frequent appearance of flowers is not to make the audience feel a sense of difference about each space. Moreover, the guests promote the exposure of the psychological states of the three women. The film music definitely expresses their psychological oppressions from the surrounding characters.

6. Three Major Characters and Musical Characteristics

[Table 6] Musical patterns of the three major women

Characters	Virginia	Laura	Clarissa
Patterns			

For 『The Hours』, Philip Glass used four types of rhythms; eighth-note on-beat-rhythm of the 3rd and 4th intervals, triplet rhythm, hemiola rhythm using 3:2 polyrhythm, the gradual decrease in crotchet by the use of 16th note, and these types of rhythms are associated with depression of the three women. They all suffer from the different type of depressions (Table 3). The each depression formed the narrative of the film and is symbolically revealed by musical pattern. The seemingly intact psychology of Virginia is shown by the regularly repeated patterns of the 8th note, and for expressing the inner conflict, two unites of the song with 3/4 beat are performed, and here, a bar consists of 3:2 hemiola. For expressing the up and down of her psychological state caused by conflict and confusion, the ascending and descending patterns of the triplet rhythm are applied. Outwardly, Clarissa doesn't look depressed at all, but she is suffering from masked depression. One day, she finds herself suppressing her feelings and then tries to find her identity. On the basis of the characteristics of the busy life in modern society of 2001, her psychological state is expressed using the consistent ascending and descending patterns of the 16th note arpeggio passage.

7. Conclusion

The three types of depression of the three major characters in the film display the following features regularly and repeatedly, depending on musical rhythms and directivity. Major depression: 3:2 vertical polyrhythm-type hemiola focused on the 8th note. Double depression: Continued ascending and descending patterns of triplets. Masked depression: A parallel motion of arpeggio chord in one direction. These musical elements depending on the psychological conditions prove that the minute differences of each depression symptom could be expressed using symbolic methods of musical elements. Therefore, the reconstitution and use of musical elements helps to guess the flow of the scenario or character's personality only by hearing sense without the need to visualize the scenes. It is expected that if these musical elements are applied to film music for expressing the psychological state, they would maximize the artistic effect of movie by forming in-depth film music.

8. References

[1] Jeong-Hee Seong, 'Character Transformation and Mrs. Dalloway's Depression Settlement Process in <The Hours>'. Ph.D, Konkuk University, 2010.
 [2] Soo-Il Lee, 'A Study on Minimal Music Through Analysis of 『The Hours』 Film Music of Philip Glass'. **Music Education Technology** No. 7 (2008. 8. 16): 147-72.