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“Digital Culture and New Media in the Developing and Developed Countries”

Written By: Rashid Saliji - 103916

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Abstract

The major objective of this study is to examine the relationships between the art of technological development and its social re-construction and de-construction of the society and the individual.

The thesis addresses new social constructs of both micro and macro scale to provide an overview of both *digital culture* and *new media* within the frames of developing and developed countries. Furthermore the thesis addresses to contemporary issues of the computer mediated communication, its significance and its broad areas of influence. The thesis then identifies a new paradigm within the frames of cultural patterns influenced (changed/distorted) by digital technologies and new media.

On the basis of the study in this research, it can be concluded and implied that the ever changing scenery of technology and technological advancements, being taken for granted, have had a life altering results in the way people perceive reality. And in contrast behave and understand this new world around them.

1- Digital Culture and New Media

“For the first time in history, the media make possible a mass participation in a productive process at once social and socialized, a participation whose practical means are in the hands of the masses themselves” (Enzenberger, 1970, pg.13)

It does not take Galilean perceptions in order to understand the complexity of new media and digital culture and the evermore expanding cosmos of the computer-mediated communications. But, it leads us in a vague, indefinite space of exploration of this complex state. Certainly not a utopia, if we'd say that this is an utopic state nor condition, we would be circling around the utopic vision itself, and that is not what we pursue. How to understand the digital culture, how to perceive it: as a resource of knowledge or the antagonist of knowledge. With the transformation of once military technologies such as the internet amongst many others (cell phones etc.), the new media and the computer-mediated communication has been transforming individuals and societies perception of reality from micro to the macro scale. Although computer-mediated communication is not itself new, mass access and the user friendliness are a turning point in the universe of new media and digital culture. It is not only the new communications protocols, which make possible our email and internet facilities, but browsers, message routing, and intelligent web machines that make information provision much more flexible and interactive than were the previous broadcasting and print-based media. As the information industries become more central towards new media and the society, things are changing rapidly: it is now, that the new media is allowing the audience to take these individualized tools and as the future of Saussure text has shifted through the structuralism, post-structuralism, post-colonialism, Marxism, feminism into an intertextual universe. A universe where all texts have only meaning in relation to other texts, and by this, realities, are highly affected by this occurring, and ever evolving/changing digital cultures.

With the post-1945 world and the shift towards the military communication tools, globalization, nor, militarization as Paul Virilio would often rhetorically blast, we are seeing/facing a new momentum in our micro and macro universes. A momentum comprised by a complex (to create) and prolific (to/for use) communication tools. These political, social, artistic new realities along with the communication technologies which are so powerful, show us that the world as we knew has become a glocal reality, or as the school of Jean Baudrillard would teach us, competing (challenging, colliding)

realities of what is going on in the world. Some true some fictional versions of reality, competing rhetoric's, competing for versions and simulations of reality which are designed to seduce us not in sexual sense (though that is always not the case) but in the sense of simulation where one or more versions of these competing realities become convincing for us.

A fabrication of non-communication and an abstract game of chess where digital culture and new media are playing the part of protagonists for the developing state of mind nor the antagonists of superimposed artificial realities, here at this stance the certainty of change is the epitaph itself. To the extent of understanding the following questions, what is digital culture, what is new media, how they differ in the developed and developing countries? The point of the mark here is also how we consume new media and digital cultures, what is our relation to the reality of the given complexities. First, we need to understand how new media differs from traditional media. And how digital culture differs from the state of developing countries and developed countries?

New media functions in a way that it combines computing and structuring communication at an immense speed. An example would be that in the years 12 000 B.C. to the year we have gathered 10% of information while from the years 2014 to 2015 we have gathered 90% of data which just goes to show that we are facing an immense information gathering and thus are facing an explosion of the socio-political realities and the implosion of political realities. The world as we knew has shifted a gear into the unknown, blasted into a new (dis)connected hyper-reality, with the global (g-local) content having the same global concept though within the complexities of the local context is where things get messy. Because the world is as divided as it was before the explosion of social media and smartphones smart TV's in our lives (as it was in the era of satellite TV), the problematic case of double standard of the developed countries towards the developing countries is still the factor x of a divisible world, where the software and hardware have got us closer yet the divisions have become louder. In this case, it is easy to understand how the economic and political background works in a society, but, it is of utmost importance to understand how it behaves within perception and context. The implicit here is that it differs hugely in the developed countries (the west) and in the developing countries. The fragility of the software powered entire societies and the absurdity of the traditionally powered societies, yet they both are face to face and one (software powered societies) ever more so expanding with their artificially created needs of consuming and "being" of a certain automated image that has been haunting their perceptions of the world as they knew it. Consumer societies and being a consuming society depends on welfare on the general GDP of the country,

therefore it is absurd to state that developing countries people can be called a consumerist. Becoming a consumer society, shall depend on the richness of the people. This is also the case with cultural consumerism and cultural production.

1.1. What is Digital Culture?

In the last 12 years digital culture, is a plural, in the sense that it relates to many other complex communication codes, it is an abstraction and a proliferation, a multilink of different kind of cultures that have begun to operate in a different way. The endless spin off new media (tools) based on technological achievements is growing rapidly with their information traveling at the speed of light that has created a fabric/text/intertext which is, user-friendly though its effects and affects are yet to be disclosed. This fabric/text/intertext within the digital culture is the filter through which the generation that is born with the World Wide Web, perceives and thinks about the world. The speed of technological change is rapidly faster than the speed of the cultural change. We hardly perceive what technological change is doing to us, we are in awe and as we are only starting to understand what its effects are with this in mind and in regard to the technological changes we are in, literally, in the unknown. As the metaphor of the frog being boiled to death, one takes the frog and puts it in the icy water then takes the frog puts in the slowly boiling water, so the frog doesn't really understand what is happening to it (to us). That's a somewhat a bizarre metaphor for what is happening to us and the unquestioned, all things taken for granted new communication models, zones, and excesses.

"The internet is the first thing that humanity has built that humanity doesn't understand, the largest experiment in anarchy that we have ever had."

(Schmidt, as cited by Taylor, 2010)

This quote comes from the world's biggest internet tycoon Eric Schmidt, and it showcases that even those who profit from this new moment, they themselves are questioning its momentum in the sense of truly grasping its meaning and where it goes. But, if we twist this in a different manner, we may also say that what Schmidt is relating to here is the moment of how much of humanities inability to understand to truly grasp the internet has actually helped them in their existence and revenue of billions. This capacity to perform in this empire, created by and run by those who do not dwell on questions of this sort, but only are driven by the "anarchy of money" comes from the inability from the humanity to grasp and ask certain questions.

“In an age of constant live connection, the central question of self-examination is drifting from “Who are you?” towards “What are you doing?” (Chatfield, 2012)

The momentum when we reach on what we are doing from who we are it dissolves the manner of truth, that we no longer co-relate with the world we live in inertly implicitly, but more and more in the excess of communication and explicitly. Thus this is the fabric, the ground formed by the excess in communications that keeps humanity in awe. Google and Facebook are absolutely new in our lives yet we have taken by them as an absolute in our general lives although they can suddenly disappear. And by disappearance we think it will mean a re-appearance of a new sort of software and sensor based communication zones from multilayered and multitasking towards a more minimalist approach though closer to universally layered and universal task-oriented machines and this is where the danger lurks. We are already talking about implementing chips under our skins, although it is not a new talk, but we are as close as doing this and capable as never before! The danger is the pragmatic possibility of altering reality as we know it in the excess of communication both internal and external. This would mean and even bigger trouble to humanity and human kind as we know, as we are already altered and shattered by not truly grasping and questioning these superimposed realities.

“One is no longer in front of the mirror; one is on the screen, which is entirely different. One finds himself in a problematic universe, one hides in the network, that is, one is no longer anywhere.” (Baudrillard, 1985, pg.9)

We are trying to think and understand and thus showcase some of the most dramatic and traumatic developments of digital cultures. This is a world where various technical achievements and virtual designs are creating the norms. These norms are creating in both the developed countries and in the developing countries various new cultural patterns, thus creating a foundation for various progressive and regressive perceptions of the world we live in. Here we are given a realized modernity and the hologram of postmodernity and now where everything (almost the entire history) is virtually given within the software-hardware powered media and states. The question is crucial: where does one go from there? With the lack of meaningful (tangible/concrete/truthful) information and knowledge we (the public) are face to face with a one of a kind loss in orientation. This problematic universe as Baudrillard puts it in a narrow sense, answers our question of what is a digital culture and new media.

“It is just when people are all engaged in snooping on themselves and one another that they become anesthetized to the whole process. Tranquilizers and anesthetics, private and corporate, become the largest business in the world just as the world is attempting to maximize every form of alert. Sound-light shows, as new cliché, are in effect mergers, retrievers of the tribal condition. It is a state that has already overtaken private enterprise, as individual businesses form into massive conglomerates. As information itself becomes the largest business in the world, data banks know more about individual people than the people do themselves. The more the data banks record about each one of us, the less we exist.” (McLuhan, 1970, pg.12-13)

It is of the mind that we learned to use the soil and grow food, it is of the mind that we looked upon the birds and build machines (a dream as old as the man perhaps) it is with the mind that we learn and survive as human species. It is also of the mind that we are able to change the landscape, for better and for worse it is with the mind that we need to understand, question and analyze the very nature of our existence. Now, it is of the mind that we need to convey the computer not vice versa, because otherwise we will stop thinking, and that would be the end of humanity and the beginning of an overpopulated rock and water with programmed obeying animals. The way we exists in the current climate is that we become via our technologies alienated because we choose to be alone with our smartphones and smart TV's in a manner, totally the opposite, of the generally used images in the smartphones commercials where there are almost always group of people joyfully photoshopped under and artificial light and looking happy and connected via their screens. Technologies are changing jobs; unlike previous (industrial revolution) the software revolution is putting a lot of people out of their jobs. School kids and adults are suffering from immense distraction (mostly unproductive) and the over-consumption in the developed countries is bewildering. Both in the developed world and developing world (though some of these symptoms apply to both and some like overconsumption which exclusively belongs to the developed countries) our experience with the world are so thoroughly destabilized by the new media and its superimposed digital culture. The reality of what is really going on is almost exclusively unknown. And it is out of this exclusivity that we need to face the storm of information and learn how to filter it, learn how to question and not obey it. Otherwise, “There will be so many IP addresses... so many devices, sensors, things that you are wearing, things that you are interacting with that you won't even sense it.” (Schmidt, 2015).

The understanding of digital culture through the context of information/data and its co-relation with the economy is another momentum that we should be aware of. This is also a question of privacy, a question of surveillance and freedom. The individual finds himself/herself in a rather difficult position as the memory of their own self starts to exist and be gathered in various computer-mediated data centers, which returns and exchanges a value that could mean and produce the end of privacy, the end of our historic memory about the world we live in. It is a totally new paradigm where our memories and our communication zones were our boundaries now; we happen to actively (by becoming digital in our communication zones) and passively (by taking things for granted unknowingly) participate in the creation of a new system and a new voyeuristic government.

“The first thing that the globalization of communication through the Internet threatened was the notion of boundaries—a notion as old as the human race, in fact as old as the animal kingdom.” (Eco, 2008, pg.77)

This notion of boundaries that Umberto Eco is refereeing to is not the obvious physical notion of boundaries, but the hidden dimension of things. Social anthropology has shown that cultures differ from each other, from their perceptions of the world, their unique patterns in the variety of layers and levels. But what happens when we take off those boundaries, without actually understanding or knowing how we are going to cope with the new intertextually fabricated and visual medium which is the internet. Are we going to be the backdrop or are we going to be the main event in our social existence? Relating to these questions what we perceive here is that the dangers that the developed world is facing are far more affective. In the sense that technological advancements are now not only directly affecting our lives but are becoming life itself, and even so with economy and politics behind based on alternative realities. Just like technologies that were military based now produced for the general public, where the implosion of social through these technological advancements is immense, yet it is scarcely questioned, made aware of in the general public. In the developed countries (mainly western) this can be immediately seen all around the social life, the dependence of the software is bewildering, thus explicitly the dependence of these newly founded cultural patterns is extremely dependent on the exact tool: the computer-mediated communication, a condition in excess of the reality itself. We can see the implications of this in the area of knowledge, where information has taken and has been misguided with knowledge. This widely re-starts the entire learning system as we know it.

“More real than real that is how the real is abolished.” (Baudrillard, 1994: 81)

Digital culture is a heterogeneous and a complex sphere. Its contemporary state and evolution began during and after World War II, where most of the computing machines were produced and their rapid growth of new parts, ideas, solutions, and proliferation of the internet took place. Thus the phenomenon which appears to be simple (digital) is based on a very complex set of historical background. Today, almost all of the forms of media: recorded music, film, televisions are produced and evermore expanding distributed digitally, thus transforming the world into zeros and ones. These developments of the World Wide Web based communication are the “social networking” software’s which include: YouTube, Facebook, Flickr, Weblogs (Blogs) and the biggest search engine Google (which also provides the complex and rich set of global maps, E-Mail, street view). All tools, where no longer the mass public is consuming the media products but is in a role of both consuming and producing content where he/she can share their ideas (text, image, audio, video) and get feedback from the wider public. There are two ways to look at this new media: one is that we can do great things with the internet and computer based communication or we can do bad things with it. An example of using Internet as a capacity and model for great things and truly valuable historic change came when a group of young techno-science experts led by Aaron Swartz won over the controversial bill SOPA (Stop Online Piracy Act) a new law for the internet in the USA, the majority of the text (the house bill) was basically profitable for the corporate world and those in power. Where Swartz and co. started up websites and raised high number of opposes and with the SOPA blackout day of the internet (January 18th 2012) where among Wikipedia, Twitter, and Google, 115.000 websites participated in the protests against this law and basically stopped the bill, the bill didn’t pass at all, a bill with so much money power behind it. It made a concrete difference in getting regular people's voice and vote for a positive change in the world. There is another side of this, which says that the surveillance of the masses in the developing countries and the gathering data off anyone whom has a phone and uses an e-mail is of massive concerns, secrecy helps those who are in power. Though, these technologies are not just of concern to the people of the countries such as the USA but even small countries, developed or developing.

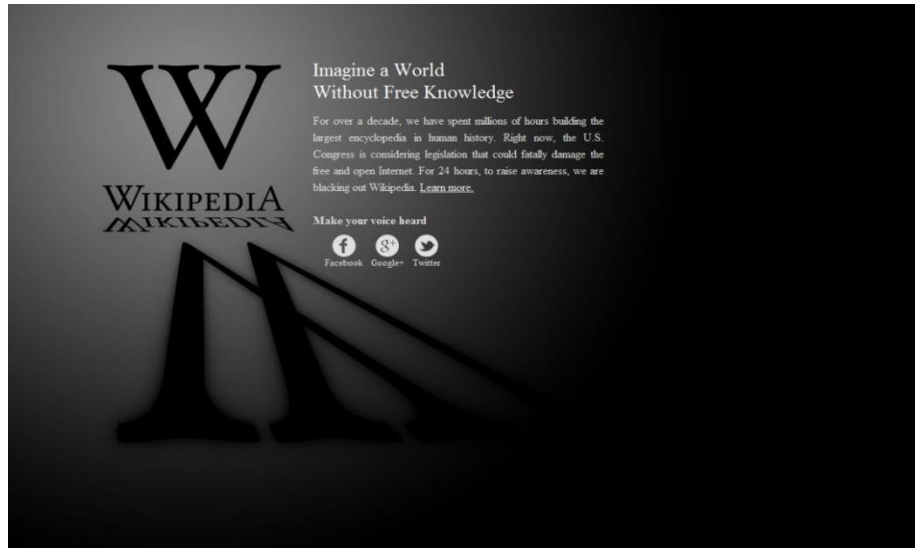


Figure 1: Wikipedia SOPA – PIPA internet black out day, (2012)

In 1989 Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web and gave it for free for the world to use. In 1994 Amazon and in 1995 eBay the biggest online shops were launched, in 1997 Amazon reaches its 1 million orders in 2000 there was the climax of the millennium bug fear, the fear of the entire infrastructures were going to collapse to the date change which some experts thought that the computers will not recognize and thus the collapse of the system was possible, a system, which urban life was based on, from the basic elevators all the way to the aero control towers. This didn't happen and it appeared that those who gained most from the fear-mongering had economic backgrounds, as it is usually the case in the context of the liberal capitalist economies.

In 2004 Facebook and in 2006 Twitter in 2007 the iPhone are launched, in 2012 Google driverless car hits the road while in 2013 Amazon gains a revenue of 74.5 billion. Today Google and the main trend in the techno-science is the minimalist yet universal software tools such as the (unsuccessful) Google Glass, yet it is an out most alarming speed that all of these changes have taken place in such a small period.

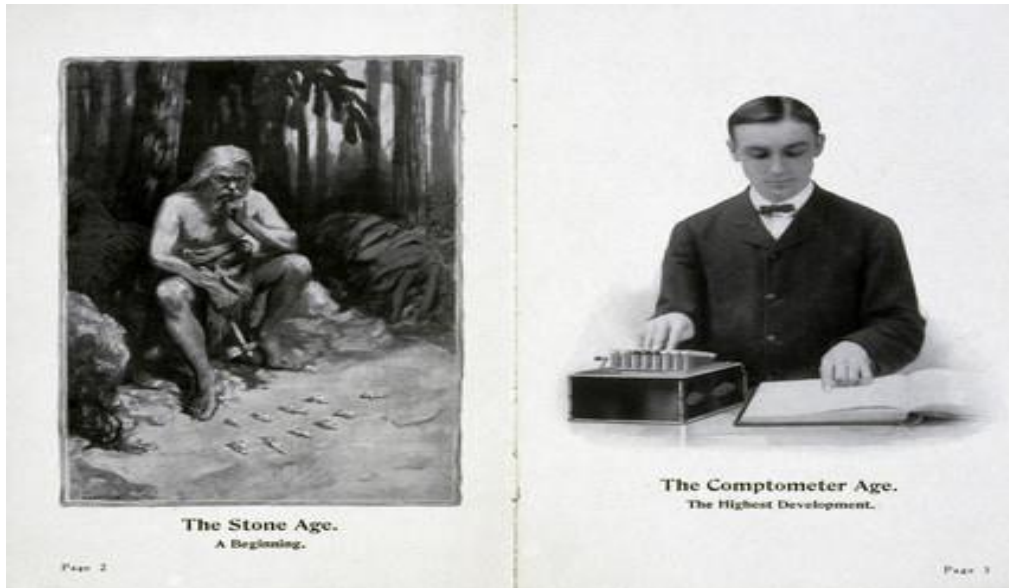


Figure 2: Advertisement for the Felt and Tarrant Comptometer, (1915)

We may say that Digital Culture has its roots and its yearnings from the beginning of history, yet for us, at this given moment the recent developments since the World Wide Web is where we dwell. Understanding these polarizing momentums, where no longer the spectator is just a consumer but at the same time a producer of his media. The effects of the social media in the Middle East and its effects on global scale, there is an apparent constant misunderstanding, collapsing and the need, yearning for a cathartic moment in the current state of computer-mediated communication. The new momentum in societies is that there are many confusing patterns and many complex questions that need be addressed. We would like to address to this with a quote by Aaron Swartz, the internet's "Che Guevara", with his explicit and implicit message which follows:

"There's sort of these two polarizing perspectives right? Everything is great; the Internet has created all this freedom and liberty and all this is fantastic. Or everything is terrible; the internet has created all these tools for cracking down and spying and controlling what we say. And the thing is both are true. The Internet has done both and both are kind of amazing and astonishing and which one will win out, in the long run, is up to us. It doesn't make sense to say, 'Oh,

one is doing better than the other.' They're both true and it's up to us which ones we emphasize and which ones we take advantage of because they're both there and they're both always going to be there." (Swartz, 2012)

In the early days of the internet we would see a very small group of connected individuals, early e-mail, early chats etc. What this meant was actually the beginning of a new type of micro-culture, and then as technology grew and developed on such a rapid scale, the micro cultures became global. But this change was more shocking to the micro cultures in the developing countries, specifically in the post-communist countries, as the masses and social background generally came from the world where information was limited. Interestingly, the scale of the change in people's perception and complexity is as wide in the developed countries as it is the case of the post-communist countries, though surely contextually and what comes out as a byproduct in the developed and developing countries varies on the sole question of the individual journey. What seems to be the emphasized momentum is the way people are able to ignore everything around them and immerse into a screen. So much that the change in perception of reality turned into a psychosis bordering results, and there have even been cases of suicides due to lack of interest (for instance lack of Facebook likes) of the others in an individual's computer-mediated communication accounts.

What we see as a result of the logic of constantly connected individual, is that in marketing, concepts/ideas and ideals such as: freedom and freedom of expression is frequently emerging. But, the concepts of freedom are used outside of their normal space and context and they are commonly used in other areas to promote consumption and this is almost always linked, associated with the new media marketing logic. These include various television programs, particularly based for consumption, journals, magazines, advertisements, billboards and so on but mainly World Wide Web based addresses. The most common thing which should be emphasized is that this has exploded along new media and digital culture as it has been allowed, used as a tool to reach an audience in a way that was not possible before. The substance matter is where this was not possible in the old world (pre computer mediated communication world) this is the case in this new world. When we look at the pre-industrial societies we see that information is of great value though it is mostly invisible. Because there is very little material value in the information itself (not in the sense of today's value), in a way, information became liberated for the sake of accumulation and that is a liberation related to the economy and ultimately to our pockets. The irony and the proof is that in order for the information to be liberated we must pay for it, and then again ironically we should talk about freedom, liberation in the true sense of the word. Since almost

everything that liberates us in the world of new media and digital culture costs, and then we should rightly so question the sincerity of these communication modes.

1.2 What is New Media?

“We must learn to see more, to hear more, to feel more!” (Sontag, 1966, pg.9)

New Media has manifested itself from the old traditional media, Newspapers, Radio and the most prominent one Television. The term “New Media” manifests itself as an intertextual phrase showcasing the interconnected images and sound with the use of internet and technology. This interplay is evolving at the speed of light and it is morphing into virtually all areas of our lives, therefore it is almost imaginary to know where and to what it will evolve. One thing looks certain: it will continue to evolve at a rapid speed. These technologies which new media is based on are mainly digital, they are easy to use (user-friendly) they are interactive networks and one of their main characteristics is that they are easy to exploit, maneuver, play and finesse with. Its content is everywhere and anytime available. Everything from the beginning of human history to the contemporary momentum is being digitized in the formats of new media. The internet as web links, digital texts (inter-text), image, sound, video, is an all access party for its global audiences. In its universe, everything is virtually given.

This virtually given new media has its roots within the satellite revolution that changed old media drastically and paved the way for new media.

“Satellites were one spectacular spinoff from cold war big science. Since the 1960’s, they have transformed national and international communications in conjunction with related innovations such as coaxial and fiber-optic cables. Equally important for telecommunications has been the opening up of national TV and phone systems, which for much of their history were monopolies under government control.”(Reynolds, 2000, pg.498)

Humanity has always shaped the world with its will to technology, and with our basic need to transcend words (and worlds), and to ascend something greater, to leave a mark, this has been an ongoing technological, yet up till now a very human process. Art is a product of this process, the use of technology (tools) is what has shaped both out physical and spiritual experiences as human beings so far. From the Caveman and their cave “paintings” to the Egyptian civilization their hieroglyph’s and architecture is how we learned about them and have been learning about us as well. This unique human

need of expression of its surroundings and communication with the masses is an ever evolving and ongoing phenomenon that has led to a particular result.

In the contemporary social reality, we are in a state of a continuous crash. Technologies based on simulation and speed has brought to us a never before seen virtual reality, view, and experience of the world.

“It is creation. It is crash. It is consolidation. It is erasure. It is software. It is wetware. It is a moving forward. It is regression. It is a (mathematical) binary. It is (human) poetry. Both hypermodern and primitive it can speak the language of cyberwear and viral terrorism.” (Kroker, 2004, pg.8)

We see that the will to technology is no longer based on the need to communicate but on the need of consumerism (in the developed countries) and the yearning to be part of the consumerist societies (the developing countries). Our communication is marketing based and thus a marketing based on military inventions; everyone is after the communication ecstasy if we shift our focus on the largely unexamined significance of new media (internet) both as symbolic and if not totemic object. The literal condition of the cultural patterns with the rise of various media devices: culture is no longer something that evolves in the focus of what is human but rather to something which is more cyber human. Since the cultural patterns, perspectives and perceptions are bound to a virtually given state. Therefore we are lost in this jungle of information, or rather, we find ourselves in a very unknown and new primitive state, something like the famous series *Lost*, where the modern man with civilized minds in time, become these hypermodern primitives.

The immediacy of new media and the spiraling contents of the world wide web (nor web 2:0) with a system deeply rooted in mash-up of the liberal capitalism and the communist “repression” system, yet, we cannot talk about any concrete systems of value, rather to an un-concrete and confusing system of symbols and communication ecstasy. All that is altered here is the natural existence of communication into an ever-expanding complex of virtual experiences.

“Man is used to the fact that there are languages which he does not at first understand and which must be learned, but because art is primarily visual he expects that he should get the message immediately and is apt to be affronted if he doesn’t.” (Hall, 1966, pg.80)

From a more diverse communication zones, new media is a new kind of a human situation, the specificity of language, cultures, and cultural contexts are being altered to

another level. To the level of obedience of the information, and we say obedience due to the fact that there is an illusion of freedom. Slavoj Zizek in an interview at the Empire (aired October 24th 2014) show in Al Jazeera said: "In China at least they don't get the illusion that they are free, the horror of United States is that you can experience yourself as free and yet you are still totally controlled, that you don't even experience your unfreedom" (Zizek, 2014). The dystopian novel by George Orwell: 1984, where the "Ministry of Peace" actually deals with war and the "Ministry of Love" actually deals with torturing people, hence in the context of our problematic, the fascist no longer wear boots and march on the streets with the symbols but they, have their new media tools, the machinery of computer power and they are far even more dangerous than the times and surroundings of World War-2.

The metamorphosis of the camera and its information traveling at the speed of light with the variety of new media they are quite able to conjure up the new Reichstag and the new SS. The SS men never supposed to think about the things they were doing or thrown to do (some willingly and in some cases unwillingly), but the problematic of new media is that we willingly and unwillingly and hardly questioning are being shaped by the info war yet with new media we also take part in shaping and re-shaping a variety of channeled information and knowledge. It is almost as if the globalized info world is our new skin and this new (cyber) skin includes our new veins, the entire planet's hemisphere.

"The camera makes everyone a tourist in other people's reality, and eventually in one's own." (Sontag, 1974, pg.44)

The over excess in the globalized info world, the intertextual context of information is presented to us in a manner where all meaning can be lost. When a hypertext is turned on (hypertexts exist through a computerized world wide web) currently we get an immense flow of information, beginning from a local to a global level. It is this space where the loss of meaning appears due to the fact that none of the information makes sense when put in the flow they come to existence. For example, in an online newspaper there is news about innocent deaths and next to it there are commercials (banners) for cheap flights to Dubai?! This momentum of hypertext that it is regulated in a such a manner which is chaotic and at the same time the immense flow of information causes for the meaning itself to suffer out of the context. Though for this is neither the World Wide Web nor the technology itself to be blamed for. But the designers, content regulators, the capital oriented system and government systems and a variety of other social factors who are part of this suspicious liberal appearance. This unexamined life based on the HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) regulated in such a manner that

produces a quasi-interaction is new media's driving power of user friendliness and mass consumption from a variety of cultural forms and products. The world of new media functions in a way that its habitat has more of reality to offer than the real world where life unfolds, and not just wants to but also sells us that the world in which we live no longer has any reality.

This is the world where variety of technical achievements and virtual designs are creating the norms. Bound to diverse interpretations, the significance of this chaotic yet user-friendly cosmos of new media and its productions are teetering the balance between the machine and the human being. The bordering distinctions between what is real and what is constructive are the epitaph of this unexamined life, via the new virtual social structures given life by the large media productions and IT technologies (contemporary business elites) we are yet to consider how are we to divide the globalized info world and the real. This is a different world of endless possibilities that is overwhelming and capturing our attentions and senses. New media creates and allows new cultural patterns, perceptions identity swapping and also it has created an immensely visually and hypertextually illiterate huge number of people. Internauts as Paul Virilio in *Information Bomb* refers to its massive users and cites Junger: "Growing haste is a symptom of a world turned into figures." (Junger, 1980: 402), this gives way to convincing the masses into a limbo or as would Victor Hugo say, perhaps and for some mostly so, an "exile is a long insomnia" (Pierres, 62). Coming out of this state of limbo we would need to understand the velocity we are facing as we would here correct Marshall McLuhan that it is not the medium which is the message, but the speed of the medium. And the speed of the computer mediated communication with its entire techno-science and hypertextual universe is in an immense spinning cycle where it is day by day getting harder (as the states themselves accept this for granted without neither questioning nor educating) for the masses to get out of the state of limbo and begin understanding their new virtual communities.

"Making information resonate globally, which is necessary in the age of the great planetary market, is in many ways going to resemble the practices and uses of military intelligence, and also political propaganda and its excesses. 'He who knows everything fears nothing', claimed Joseph Paul Goebbels not so long ago. From now on, with the putting into orbit of a new type of panoptical control, he who sees everything - or almost everything - will have nothing more to fear from his immediate competitors." (Virilio, 2000, pg.62)

We have to understand here that control does not produce intellectual ideas, it just produces a system not of values but a system of oppression and imposing such technologies only produces a chaotic world and certainly not a world of freedom and justice. As the general public remains in the dark and is kept in the dark with the by-products of mass entertainment is that this “panoptical control” to which Virilio is referring to is not just a rhetoric which sounds awesome but a very direct and skeptical view of the surroundings and existence of new media, as it is everywhere but this everywhere and nowhere state is a prolific state for whom, the single point is that new media is a condition full of paradoxes and it will remain so as there are too many military and economy (business) based info wars going on at a very different scale that it is hardly on the news. As we said above, the general public is being kept in the dark with the entertainment industry, and the reflection of the other side of the coin can hardly be seen through the channels of global media.

Visual and semantic bombardment in the new media is extremely fast and chaotic. Therefore, to expect it to give us something truly contextual, it is almost impossible. In this context, more channels mean that none of them are really watched, there is almost no difference between a local and a global TV they are all in one package. The proliferation of channels and the explosion of new media and thus the implosion of the social leaves behind a chaotic being. Today, for example in a truly developing country such as Turkey people are able to watch 50-60 (or more as the numbers are constantly growing) channels via cable television, and I am sure this is the case in Macedonia and many other developed or developing countries. In this case, we can only set aside few minutes for each channel, although what we are actually doing is that we are indeed zapping channels over and over again. In the time we spend zapping we are learning nothing but confusing ourselves.



Figure 3: Aristarkh Chernyshev - Led Art Trash New Media Sculptures, (2012)

New media generally is experienced in over excessive manner. One of the reasons being is the availability of the information flow from anyplace and anytime (as long as there's connection), its design is functioning with the illusion that this system aesthetically creates. The system functions and feeds from our assumption, delusion that this is the way we need to experience these new mediums, in a continuous infinitely flowing, growing and bombarding way. Though, one thing that new media is scarce with is its ability through its ecstasy of communication, not to give any warning signs. Unlike our roads that we drive around the globe that are filled with signs, symbols that convey meaning and information on the next twisty roads and warning signs like red, yellow and green, in the universe of new media in the global village, in the superhighway that works in the speed of light there are no warning signs, no red, yellow and green lights, its either the person is capable with a prior awareness to manage the information that flows to him/her or the new media finds its way to shape realities, hence we are now discussing, fake news and post-truth, and even alternative, new media news are an endless continuum of accidents and alternative facts.

As we know, by the Herbert Marcuse book "One Dimensional Man" (1964) there is two kinds of power. First, a repressive and second is liberating. In our opinion, every power in both cases uses oppression, repression etc. In the repressive version oppression is in a concrete way in the second it is done is a soft way and it is more likely for a liberal

capitalist style of order. In this order and in its scheme the concept of freedom is not definite from beginning to end. Neil Postman in his book mentioned that there are two types of power: George Orwell and Aldous Huxley wrote their works on the future. Orwell in his "Nineteen Eighty Four -1984" (1949) saw the regimes of the future as oppressive and repressive governments. Huxley on the other hand in his "Brave New World" (1932) novel, does not see the future regimes as repressive. Therefore, in this context, when we look at the world we can say that Aldous Huxley was right. Mainly in the western world, we see the masses are offered a freedom without limit and restrictions in the most classical sense but a world where they can obtain everything they want.

In our contemporary world, the concept of freedom is seen in a political, social, legal and expression contexts. But the concept of freedom can be seen in other areas and in co-relation to consumer societies. Especially oriented towards consumerism are various TV shows, TV ads, internet ads, magazines (print and online) commercials, billboards etc. where the emphasized element is the freedom of the human body. Although all the efforts for the freedom in a material world, and the system of turbo-capitalism, human beings cannot be free. If something is free then it is not seen, but in a world where material wealth is predominant, this is not possible. When we look at the societies before the industrial revolution and even the primitive societies then we can see that a certain type of freedom existed unlike the illusion of freedom which is predominant within world of new media. During the industrial age there's no material world (billions and billions of products) or its material, financial value. We think that freedom is in complex place in regard to new media. With new media and digital culture, it seems we can only be free as long as our pockets are freed and this in the true sense of freedom has not a single tangible aspect with the liberating and elevating power of freedom. Within the framework of the system we can be free and live our freedom as long as we have money to spend, now, what is necessary is to question the sincerity of these concepts itself.

2. Digital Culture and New Media in the Developing and Developed Countries.

2.1 The New Media Order: From Local Monopolies to Global Audiences

“...technological change is always a Faustian bargain: Technology giveth and technology taketh away, and not always in equal measure. A new technology sometimes creates more than it destroys. Sometimes, it destroys more than it creates. But it is never one-sided.” (Postman, 1990, pg. 2)

When it comes to human creations and the technological evolution we can see that a variety of factors from psychological, socio-economic, cultural, military and social, environmental occur before us. People for thousands of years have been finding similar solutions for similar problems. No wonder in archeology an axe can be found on all continents. Yes, there is always someone who did it first, but even during the times when people couldn't travel for thousands and thousands of kilometers we see the basic human need to solve problems in order to survive, to exist and the need to create, express. Within the logic of technological evolution of the post-World War-2 lay two approaches, one is the Communist and closed approach and the other the Capital driven approach and logical which is more open and flexible, but surely in any case both were, are not necessarily ideal.

As the developing world in the aftermath of the World War-II and during the 1980's was changing from an agrarian society to industrialization and mainly motivated and driven by the industries of coal and steel, the newly urban environments and later on with production/usage of cars. The advanced states and mainly the U.S.A. have been entering what is known as the information age. The information age came to life with the huge amount of government support in especially the U.S.A. Where both military and civilian researchers worked together on variety of technologies that led to the first computer which was firstly used for military than for the banking systems (one of the first banks to use these new technologies of communications was the Citicorp - Citigroup). While in the Soviet Union the logic of government support was scarce. One of the reasons there were cities build that did not exist in the maps was that the regime did not want anyone else to know what they were doing, and especially they wanted to have the control over any scientific progress, and there were way too many, from the first launch in space, satellites, and many other technological achievements. But it was not the same headspace as it was with the United States because the approach in the United States was more open, and civilians, academics, universities worked together in perhaps what in the post-World War - 2 a half a century later, this open approach

resulted in what we all know as the “Silicon Valley”. Therefore we can easily say that the information age did not begin exclusively within the frames of Capitalist states but its products and the information revolution and its by-products are.

The era of the Cold War had played its role in triggering the “space race” and the technological rivalry between the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R the foundations were laid stone by stone, and the intensity of the World War 2, the cold war and even before that with the Industrial Revolution, if we look at things in a more linear sense. These events produced a massive technological spectrum of inventions which laid the foundations what would become the satellite revolutions that took place in the 1960’s and were a byproduct of the Cold War era. The first satellite to orbit our planet was the Russian made Sputnik in 1957. This technology immensely changed telecommunications in both the national and international arena, especially in the countries that were not ruled by communism, it gave the space and reason for the opening of new TV channels and phone companies which up until the late 1970’s were mainly government monopolies. The journey of the Personal Computer (PC) is also a journey of stone by stone, step by step since the first programmable electronic computer in 1945, all the way to the IBM’s personal computer. The entire scene was set perhaps ever since the prehistoric humans cave paintings to the World Wide Web invented by Tim Berners - Lee while working on a government supported projects at the CERN in Switzerland in the early 1980’s and its commercialization in the 1990’s.

In the case of Yugoslavia, TV entered in the late 1950’s starting in Zagreb in 1956, then two years later in Belgrade and Ljubljana and in Skopje in 1964. These were state owned one channel TV stations which were sometimes sharing content and sometimes producing their own, and the produced material was mainly a generator of what suited best for the state. And this was mainly due to the region and peculiar period that Yugoslavia was at that period and by all means, the Yugoslavian TV professionals in contrast to the Soviet bloc had enjoyed a significant amount of freedom. Even today the post-Yugoslavian countries are still using the same buildings and some even the same equipment from the era of Yugoslavia.

In the very early 1990’s the world begun entering the New Media Order. What this meant for Television is that it could be global, in the early 1990’s we see CNN entering the global market, and we see cable television spreading from local to global markets. No longer households in many western countries had only a few channels, but now in their living rooms, they were reached by a new kind of media, the global media. This was not only an economy based venture but also a political, ideological, sociological you name it. What these new global markets meant for the beginning of a new era of

global Television, and we have to point here that after the fall of the Berlin wall, the division of Yugoslavia, literally the fall of communism, the stage was set for the satellite and cable TV revolution to enter the economy of lives of all nations whom they were able to reach. And now with the technologies at their disposal, they were able to reach a global audience.

Cable News Network - CNN started in 1980 and Music Television - MTV in 1981. They were the product of half a century technological innovations in both telecommunications and the satellite revolution. But besides the technological revolutions that paved the way for them to become global, it was the system the capitalist system that started to shape everything from cinema, arts, music and the byproduct of this is called pop culture. There was always a case of the establishment paving the way for a certain idea, sound, image on what they thought would suit the logic of the capital, and hence the bias and double standard that everyone who's into a certain type of social existence: politics, arts etc. can be aware off. But mainly what the system did and does is a global transformation of the consciousness.

When we look at the speed that technology of the another revolution and that is the software revolution, which transforms human thinking into machines with artificial intelligence, we see that the lack of attention span, awareness, meaning, and reaction towards the similar things amongst people is less and less in both its volume and sense. This is sedation; this is a sedated state of mind. The diversity and the amount of internet based Live events, blogs, and everything we can think and not think of is literally in millions, by all subject matters and levels, What the software based technology does is that it enters one's life as a liberating stream and then by the nature of the system where it exists, by using all of its capabilities of semiotic bombardment and excess it turns into more than a habit, more than social, more than just a tool it basically turns the insides out and gains an power which can only be explained as extremely addictive and less and less cognitively productive.

2.2. Value and Critique of New Media Spaces: The Social and the Cultural in Technology

“Every tool is a weapon if you hold it right.”(DiFranco, 1993)

A social, humanistic nor what would be often in a techno-scientific society called “naive” or perhaps not named as such if it was used in terms and context of marketing; the philanthropic element and headspace is of a very valuable concern for any society which wants to sustain a certain level of the quality of the human life and thus the planet it inhabits. We are no doubt in need of each other, everyone is as important as the other, and we do not mean this in a romanticized manner but rather in the context of technological determinism and communication within any cultural context. The problem is always in what Edward T. Hall in his “Beyond the Culture” (1976) book is addressing to us: that there are cultures of higher and lower contexts nor rather shall we say individuals and groups (collectives) of high and low context. The tricky part begins here, the phantom momentum when a shadow meets light, basically through our analyses we’ve seen that there’s very little concern nor a case where the technologically determined societies are concerned with understanding (a prolific understanding) of the cultural patterns nor the process of communication between and in-between various different cultural patterns. This, in return, sends us to a place where a new model of human communication comes to life and this is the virtual one. We’ve seen a world of post-industrial revolution a world of post-communism and while all that has happened the technological advancements have had a mind and an existence of their own. From here we reach to a starting point where while we are navigating through the spheres of life we are becoming dependent more and more on a technological condition and less and less on the human condition. And this is very new to us, very new in the sense that it is so powerful that it shapes the very nature of our existence and that we are not robots and that we most definitely do not exist so we can consume and be consumed. It is a very big question if we will reach to a healthy and globally perceived culture and atmosphere of a diverse organism, and all of this to be based on technological advancements. At the same time, one of the pillars that marketing communication is based on is growth and success increasingly dependent on a diverse workforce. It is a very ironic state of being because if the purpose is always to achieve certain objectives then in a symbolic, ideological, visual and value level this act is and can be perceived as a truly virtual one. With the militarization of the world and the excess of communication, we are seeing the results of a new kind of human existence. Thus we see, day by day, where no longer the middle ages western philosophy of the micro and macro cosmos is lingering on the backs of shall we say Cosmopolitical subjects, but, it is

exactly the paradoxes of this view that the social realities (also conflicts) are creating these “world citizens”. Having said this we believe that this is not at all a question of are we heading towards a utopia and utopic state of our existence, no, not at all, we believe that if we are staying in the same place is an utopic vision. What we learn from our research is that there is a very big shift in the area of communications from political, social, artistic to the very basic level which are so powerful, questionable and dangerous that in a social scientific sense the world is facing a fabrication of non-communication and that both the social and cultural are becoming just a false game of chess, where not only the winner but the loser is always fixed.

“Those reluctant to join are taught (usually the hard way) that the updated version of Descartes’s Cogito is ‘I am seen, therefore I am’ - and that the more people who see me, the more I am...” (Bauman, 2013, pg. 28)

Since the internet has entered in every household of the developed world and it has become a vital part of the adolescent’s life. What also has entered the lives of the households is the individual alienation, we are alone with our mobile devices and they are many things. They are good for almost everything else except for being a simple telephone but simply would never work under the flag of the liberal capital economy where a certain idea and need (and by the need they can also be created and re-created as well shaped and re-shaped by PR, Marketing and media tactics). These devices are small TV sets, music players, the number of applications than one can install delete and install another one is endless. This computer-mediated communication is not in itself new, mass access and its user friendliness are, and this is one of the determining points in the enigma of new media’s disturbance of our human existence. This existence consisted of information industries which are more central towards new media, is now that the societies that the new media technologies (or computer mediated communications) are taking the past Saussure text and shifting through structuralism, post-structuralism, post-colonialism, Marxism, feminism into an intertextual universe where all texts have only meaning in relation to other texts. And it is exactly here that realities are in the highest degree affected by this, our experiences of the world are destabilized/ disturbed by this art of technology. The reality of what’s really going on is almost exclusively unknown. Within these frames, there are competing realities of what is going on in the world, some true, some fictional versions of reality where there are competing versions of the same or diverse rhetoric’s. In the Baudrillardian sense, simulations of reality are designed to seduce us, and not in a sexual context but in the manner of conviction, nor convincing its s

“Computers, we are told, will not know the difference between the year 2000 and the year 1900 – but do we?” (Huysen, 2003, pg. 21)

The biggest “cinematic” narrative and probably the most prolific ones were used by Hitler and co. But cyberspace alone is in itself a mode towards a global info world and the question is in its notion of memory which is constantly misleading. While lived memory is active, alive and embodied in the social; individuals, families, groups, nations and regions, are the memories needed to construct shall we say, differential local features, within the frame of modern societies. But within a post-modern (or after modern) societies there is no doubt that in long run all such memories will be shaped (re-shaped and some erased) to a significant degree by the new digital technologies. The always lurking question is that: is it possible that everything can be reduced to the art of technology. If we look at the Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* and how much of that book is actually a reality then we can at least assume (we allow ourselves the freedom of assumption here) that it is quite possible because it’s not something that hasn’t been done. In our research we’ve seen that to insist on a radical separation between the real and virtual memory seems very quixotic (impractical, impulsive).

“New technologies and of transportation and communication have always transformed the human perception of time and space in modernity. This was as true for the railroad and the telephone, the radio, and the airplane, as it will be true for cyberspace and cyber time. New technologies and new media are also always met by anxieties and fear that later prove to have been unwarranted or even ridiculous. Our age will be no exception.” (Huysen, 2003, pg. 24)

Cyberspace alone is not the appropriate model to imagine the global future – because it's very notion of memory is misleading, a false promise. Lived memory is active, alive, embodied in the social, that is, to individuals, families, groups, nations and regions. There is no doubt that in the long run all such memories will be shaped to a significant degree by the new digital technologies, digital cultures and their effects, but they will not be reduced only and exclusively to them. Memory and culture are always transitory, not always reliable and almost exclusively forgettable, in very short terms these are human and social conditions. Memory and culture cannot be exclusively stored forever because the changes in societies are from political to generational and very importantly individual. These things cannot be even secured by monuments; nor for that matter, we can rely on digital systems to guarantee a sense of practical coherence and continuity and this applies to all the countries that rely heavily on such systems. Time and lived time is literally renegotiated in the contemporary cultural spheres, we should not forget that time is not only the past; it is at the same time

preservation and transmission. If we are indeed questioning (and suffering) the excess of memory provided by the technological achievements, our goal and warning sign would be that we then need to work on to distinguish usable pasts from disposable pasts. And this in return will allow cultures to evaluate their goals and the spectra of mass media in a more open, prolific and useful way. Amnesia is one of the byproducts of new media and computer-mediated communications. The digital culture has its purpose within these amnesiac frames. In a certain literary way, it is time to remember the future, rather than only to worry about.

Absorbing our skyline with information, where we get lost in an ever so expanding universe of the same, reproduction and simulation of reality where some are ideologically connected, some culturally, some religiously, some economically etc. What has been changing the atmosphere is the way all of these micro and macro cultural identities are being affected and manipulated by the tools that create message with a purpose and intention for all to be absorbed by the consumer, this obesity of information citizenship is causing a lot of stir and circular feedback and especially higher degree of confusion or nativity within any culture that is existing in a lower context. This, shall we say, anger can be a healthy mode when its energy is transmitted through the muted channels of creation and prolific expression. That is also due to the notion of the global media monopolies, where the industry logic/system creates norms that suit them best. With new media it is hard to decide on opinion polls and public opinion as we are already headed towards an individual yet global stardom of its users, thus very expensive thoughts come cheap and those who care are left in a state of numbness, as they're left to constantly finding hope and joy through the wires of computer-mediated communication. This is not an imaginary world where almost every individual is hooked to its personal computer; a tool firstly designed for military needs, into a web of endless virtual communication zones/spaces. Where he/she with be it lower of higher cultural context has the power to use these tools for neither a public communication, political activism nor to its ultimate goal political change in the scenery. It is a very chaotic and culturally shocking space to live through these machines, for those who are aware and willing to learn change and perhaps adapt. Is the world shifting a gear into a chaotic universe of cyber individualism, or is the art of technology that will have to adapt to the new realities which it has created is the question yet to be addressed by the field of communication sciences.

"We are already cyborgs. Just try turning off your phone for a while - you will understand phantom-limb syndrome." (Musk, 2016)

The art of technology is bound on critique and moral philosophy and I also think that this notion should be less and less romanticized as an knowledge expending invention, especially the ideas and the notions of “instant communication” modes, where the user of a mobile phone is in a state of illusion that he or she is liberated, simply bound on the fact that they can access the internet from anywhere anytime, while what this excess does is that indulges the seeing before thinking and perceiving before reasoning, so this way we are not liberated we are at the same time having an illusion of liberation and we are slaves to it. There’s really no need for numbers to showcase us our dependence of the screen, as anywhere we go we can see humans staring at their screens and not the person standing next to them. We can talk about the benefits of new media, one of the valuable ones is that we can stay in touch with our loved ones who live far from our own habitat. But the question here is the design of the entire system new media and its creation (and constant re-creation) of new digital cultures. The human kind has strived for liberty, all of us, the exceptions who do not, have reasons behind them, such as: social, political, psychological, historical etc. But if we whom strive for liberty in our lands/habitats the first thing we need to do is to liberate the internet because, by all means, we think that the internet is free but that is only another illusion. The true sense of communication on our daily basis lays not in being a tourist in an intertextual reality but in a practical and meaningful reality, there must be a division between the literary intertext and the new media one, which here is quite problematic for anyone to divide. There are certain websites such as www.parlio.com where a person can indulge in an insightful debate share their opinions, ideas and expect a valuable feedback. More and more we need honest valuable approach towards the internet, and the danger is that we do not follow the path of value-oriented against the shallow web of new media than it is not hard to say that we will conclude that humanity once again will be heading down the road of abuse. Just as Marie Curie’s research on radioactivity in time turned into an atomic bomb, every technological achievement post-industrial revolution has been used and abused by the powerful actors in politics, and here let us not forget that the new media tools origins are in military based technologies. The 21’st century and its habitat: the city is the place where life is evolving around, this place, ironically is more dangerous to the human being than the Amazon is for the Ape. The real wildlife is happening in our cities, in our over populated, chaotically alienated, not by lack of communication but the excess of one (in all means of communication) this is a remorseless/inhumane urban smack down. And the new (social) media is bewildering in its immense number of useless projections (posts). This is what Wael Ghonim, the person who created a Facebook page that helped start a revolution in Egypt (Cairo),

says, in an obviously disappointed manner about the illusion of the social in new media:

“Today, our social media experiences are designed in a way that favors broadcasting over engagements, posts over discussions, shallow comments over deep conversations. ...It’s as if we agreed that we are here to talk to each other instead of talking with each other.” (Ghoniem, 2016)

What the developing world always looks up to are the developed countries, they look up to their cities, their infrastructure and by all means a lot of the time the image and very little of the substance. But should they look up to the substance, because what we see here is quite disturbing, because liberal capitalism products and by-products do not contain nor indulge into substance, that is even when they do they do this out of the need for marketing and PR. This is an immune system as it is planned and executed in the manner of capital. The problem of the developing countries is that in most of the cases as I’ve seen in the Balkans and more specifically in Dubai. Is that progress can be a false address, and to take a journey into the unknown, as it is within our context the immediacy of the web of spiraling contexts without a question is based due to the basic human psychological state of waste, this is a tricky system and a manipulative one and it is deeply rooted in the liberal capitals artificial value systems and in the communist repressive system. Both are not liberating in the true sense of the word. So a developing country can take the shape and the goods of liberal capitalism but not necessarily it can fill it with substance, and this can be said for the developed countries with the exception that due to the industrial revolution taking place in the developed countries the urban cityscape is less of a problem while the developing countries, for example, the Balkans have an infrastructure which is half a century old, and we are talking about from the simplest of things: from water pipes to a basic urban infrastructure.

In all manner substance is not something one can cheat on, it is a process of learning and re-thinking oneself and it is a thing that every society should be doing as long as they are looking for a progress, as long as they are open for new contexts. A well-known commentator in the UK prepared a newsreel, one truthful/real and one falsified in an extreme form and the other two versions appeared in the Daily Telegraph, and then he gave these to a radio and television. And then he asked a group of 40.000 people consisted of viewers, listeners, readers, to tell which of the two films are telling the truth. The most successful ones in discovering the lies were the radio listeners (73% of more). Whereas the success rate of TV viewers had stayed at 52%. (Giovanni Sartori "Homo Videns: Seeing Human")

“Today what we are experiencing is the absorption of all virtual modes of expression into that of advertising. All original cultural forms, all determined languages are absorbed in advertising because it has no depth, it is instantaneous and instantaneously forgotten. Triumph of superficial form, of the smallest common denominator of all significations, degree zero of meaning, triumph of entropy over all possible tropes. The lowest form of energy of the sign, this unarticulated, instantaneous form, without a past, without a future, without the possibility of metamorphosis, has power over all the others.” (Baudrillard, 1987, pg. 61)



Figure 4: Zak Noyle – Over Population Over Consumption [Photograph], (2015)

In these times, it is impossible to decipher all the information that we are face to face that we come across in our daily lives. There are an ongoing 24/7 365 days of negativity in the news, it is because of this that we feel that understanding this and educating oneself gaining a certain perspective a filter that we can shield the mind and the body (and the soul if you like) from this immensely powerful vertigo. There are many empires within empires that exist in our times. There are the economic empires and their industry based empires, there are the pharmaceutical empires etc. It is endless, and what this illusion of liberty allows these empires to exploit every continent of our fragile planet, and also they are able to exploit the human condition. We think that these multinationals are not solely to be blamed; the very system allows them to exploit everything. By all means, during the postindustrial world of satellites revolutions with

first the global media and now with new media, and likely within a frame of few years after these thesis are written what we call now “new” will be “old”, it is a medium/tool that helped feed the system in a very gore and graphic ways that we would even start describing here. There’s production of realities within realities, while we have to know a fact that right now we have more plastic/garbage in the Oceans than fish, and by all means this is a byproduct of the developed over-production, never ending product mentality of industries and the system which produces more mythological matter than it is considering substance nor meaning.

2.3. Digital Culture and New Media in the Developing Countries

“Three physical barriers are given to us: sound, heat and light. The first two are already been felled. The sound barrier has been cut across by the super hypersonic aircraft, while the heat barrier is penetrated by the rocket taking human beings outside the Earth’s orbit in order to land them on the moon. But the third barrier that of light is not something one can cross: you crash into it.” (Virilio, 1995, pg. 28)

The western societies, that have a good educational background for materializing things, the eastern societies still (even though in architectural sense and not in contextual with the techno-science and globalization some societies are more and more like west, a good example of this is Dubai) still hold that feel of infinity, ideas that are missed in the western societies. With the computer mediated communication, humanity is more and more interconnected, externally, in a material sense, we are civilized animals whom know how to turn complex ideas into life. However, what remains as a big question mark is the notion of the quality of our internal worlds; it is obvious that we (humanity) still do not know how to regulate our own peace and to regulate it in the manner with everything that surrounds us, first as beings and within our earthly existence. Throughout our observations and research, we can easily say that new media has turned physical objects into signs or rather mobile signs. This advanced stage of contemporary mobile signs exists in the speed of light and the new media objects with their hierarchy of interface, content, operating system as the application, web pages in HTML code; programming and machine language. As would John Culkin a friend and connoisseur of McLuhan refer in 1967 that: “We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us.” (Culkin, 1967, pg. 51) but, now the bigger questions are: how much are

we shaping our tools and on how many levels do we still shape our tools nor have the tools begun shaping and are re-shaping our lives in a very prolific way. This is a multilayered condition, where communication is in excess by the momentum of physical objects turned into signs, this communication mode is relatively new yet its paradoxes are ever more expanding. Within this context, globalization, the production of information, the economic and cultural change and shift, has been creating new realities in which, especially in the east, change is being seen rapidly, this change and its contents somewhat unique and some clones of the west, are making the world denser and thus the closer the world gets the bigger the gap between the poor in the societies and the closer the capital gets there the clashes are also getting bigger. Thus, it is because of reasons such as these, that new media and digital culture plays a complex role in the perception of the cultural spectrum of the everyday lives of its globalized audience. Now everyone can have a voice but that does not necessarily mean that everyone's voice will be heard. Developing landscapes, they too have the tools (provided by the ever so expanding techno advancement that is turned/ capitalized into products mainly by the developed countries) of the new media apparatus to both raise their voice and to organize in masses, like never before.

Creativity should be the leading idea of finding new approaches to the all human issues/conditions, understanding the nature of the human kind through newly findings and thus implementing these ideas towards a world of equal chances and cultures that are grasping diverse human conditions. In the developing countries, these aspects are confusing so far so that for instance Twitter can be banned and for comments, people can be jailed. These are symptoms, just as there are varieties of symptoms of diverse problematic questions in the developed countries. Though, within this context, communication sadly is left out to play a role of masquerade in ending neither conflicts nor disputes. We believe that communication as science and as a human condition should be given a very important role in the education and upbringing of the next generation because we might end up full circle back in literacy, in understating and questioning. Communication should and it can be in much higher degree than what it is today, communication sciences with all its sociological, anthropological, humanistic and creative sides needs to enter schools, it can pave the way for generations more aware of their surroundings and it is beyond doubt that media literacy is a must in order to safe keep, with all its aspects, the value of literacy. As long as the culture of literacy, culture of creativity, culture of thinking and thus value and meaning of knowledge are respected, communication is a cure.

When we take a look at cultural changes in the developing countries we see a world choked in conflicts, some end with physical death of thousands and some with psychological disorders, but through the perspective of new media we are all in this together, as things, news, information is moving in massive scales and at the speed of light there we see a problematic human condition as complex as ever, and it is within these frames that we are perceiving micro and macro cultural changes in the developing world. The World Wide Web is spinning across the lives as a giant of significant, virtual, yet in its effects real power, consisted of information systems which in turn are simulated and manipulated across the World Wide Web. We can argue that the entire planet earth has no background or base for such a condition/ universe. From ancient Greece where they carved stone into masterpieces to our times where our pixel is driven visuals are having an enormous effect towards our daily programs and lives, which in turn are a part of the cycle and in our context, production of macro and micro digital cultures.

In the era of information traveling at the speed of light, the amount of information that enters carelessly into our lives each new day with the exception of the tribes in Africa and Amazon, there's no living being that is unaffected by digital cultures and new media. As a result of this, for example, China is increasingly becoming less communistic and more leaning towards the production of a diverse variety of products. It is the world where the local becomes global and to have a clear definition, understanding of a world that moves in extreme points, we should be allowed to be terrorizing ideas which in return is a harmless space and surely an intellectually creative one. The momentum is that a human being is able to communicate in accordance to his/hers own culture while he/she transmits messages to the other side of the globe. Now the problem the subject within the frame of our thesis lays exactly here: the perceived communication is everywhere, but, the effect, the way the reasoning is being perceived is nowhere. Basically, from the micro to the macro cultural patterns communication is being re-shaped by the new media and its by-products. It is a case of loss in orientation. Since we are all getting closer each new day then naturally our perception of the local change and we want to become the other. We often ask ourselves the question of the end of language, because in vertigo such as this we may easily lose our very human yet very complex skill of communication from its most basic, literally nor artistic sense, a loss of language. Is this possible? When we look at the scale of the changes in the post-industrial world, and the world of new media where changes are occurring in its most raw, "speed of light" type of character then we must understand that the world of new media is filled with imposing and exposing ideas onto our entire existence.

The internet is designed to be a messaging system, not an archive nor a library, for example, we know that the library of Alexandria, for seven centuries was the brain and heart of the ancient world. It was the place for hundreds of thousands of books; works of philosophy, literature, technology, medicine, math. So vast were the collections that it took hundreds of years for their destruction. In contrast to this the internet is a vanishing point and what this means to any developing country is that if Pulitzer articles can disappear from the web than what truly valuable items are out there as an open source and if so, a person needs to be interested in reaching for them through the immense clouds and thunder of digital marketing. This may be the internet's dark ages, we are hopeful for more of the value stream, than the massive product oriented World Wide Web stream.

Distraction in the digital world is showcasing as a syndrome of less and less creativity and more and more of a depressive kind. The conflict between the mind and the machine, distortion of personalities:

“Motion sickness-known technically as ‘kinetosis’, a condition which makes us part time members of the disabled community, traveler-voyeurs-war the logical forerunner of instant transmission sickness, with the rapid emergence of the ‘Net junkies’, ‘Webaholics’ and other forms of cyberpunk struck down with IAD (Internet Addiction Disorder), their memories turned into junk shops- great dumps of images of all kinds and origins, used and shop-soiled symbols, piled up any old how.” (Virilio, 2000, pg. 38)

The internet and society are changing each other. There's always a connection between the produced, reproduced, recycled cultural material and its cultural context (background) within the frames of what comes out of the new cultural pattern and in this case new digital cultures. There's a proliferation of different cultures, they operate in different ways and produce different pretexts, texts, intertexts, that is to say that the generation that is born after the world wide web for them to call it digital is meaningless because they do not differentiate it as “digital culture” because the technology has become the fabric, the producer of text for their lives. On the other hand what is going on in the areas that are outside of West we can see that even though the technology is more or less the same, as the producers from the so-called smart phones to smart TV's, PC's, Tablets etc. are global companies whom are providing these devices to almost every place where human beings are inhabiting. In a very for example simplistic sense, all this technology is so young, that it is truly hard to say what will happen. The sense of not truly being able to grasp the speed discourse within technology and the way it has, and in the future the way it will or it can change our

perceptions is a subject we are considering truly worthy. We think, that this perfection, user friendliness and simplicity (as the technology is getting easier and easier to use by anyone) that what these machines are producing is a wave of human beings whom do not need to think, as the machines become smarter we become more dependent on a technology which is doing everything for (us) you. New media may be more democratic in the sense that one can choose what to do with it. But in reality, our needs within the context of new media are also shaped and re-shaped by manufactured realities, manufactured fictions that hardly anyone can be immune to. Digital culture and new media are satisfying our needs by not involving our thinking capacities, by satisfying our needs of fiction and they are doing this by the hands of the global media, for the global social media. When we look at our own homes for example, in the developing countries we see that the homes, the places of living are like advertising agencies in the sense that there is very little that is not advertised that people buy these days. It is as if people are living inside the advertisements they are bombarded with and by the way that is exactly the point of this newly digitized culture. The reason we've seen so many fiction movies being produced in the last 20 years is that people are desperate to get out of an another fictional reality. We have become the audience of our own realities, and in the Kafkaesque sense, we are merely circling around the void.

2.4 The New Paradigm: Digital Quantized Culture

We are about to ask questions that not only the technophobes ask. What is the meaning and value of process versus product? In contrast the word "Quantize" (we are using this word in the context of a force that eliminates human imprecision), this is the procedure of constraining something from a continuous set of values. We believe that the use of this word within the context of our thesis and digital culture can help us showcase the subject of process versus product and in the socio-behavioral background. What creative musicians often struggle with is the question of perfection or not, because the amount of what one can do with the software based studios is almost limitless, but does the music sound better than the analog 4 track recording of for example amongst many others The Beatles records. This train of thought can be applied to contemporary literature, cinema, poetry etc.

Through software we can now quantize everything; we can make the imperfect and human, sound and look perfect, even the words that we are typing can be quantized by the ever so artificially intelligent software. If we use any language on the planet earth (maybe not the Hopi language - at least not yet!) the moment we type, and if we type

with a mistake we are able to immediately fix this, we can endlessly do and undo, texts, images, audio files, video files and everything else one can dream about. But nothing gets truly better by this because the excess and the culture that it so violently shapes is a culture of a different mindset towards writing, creating and so on and so forth. Losing the feeling of vulnerability and the sense of an organic truth, the tension of a mind that is set to take a pen and write is why we set to question the role of technology and the culture it provides for. It is the availability, immediacy, and quantized mindset; basically to sit to write, create, play an instrument, literally to communicate in front of the screen it means that you do not have to start thinking before you write, not in the literal sense, which is totally the opposite when we take a piece of paper and sit down with the sole purpose of writing. We must say that it is not a question to go back to the piece of paper, nor that that should be the only way to write, create, no, by no means we are romanticizing anything of that, but as researchers we have to be aware of its excess and the byproducts, the new production of a new mindset, of a completely new way of approach and criticize, analyses and ultimately understand these new forms of communication, because if we do not do this, it is quite easy to lose our imperfect humanity. Just as we are aware of the tools and what they are technically capable (and are getting ever more intelligent) and we are aware of that digital technology is not going to disappear. We also know that human approach should never stop questioning, surrendering nor being aware of its own human elements. There is a room/space for the marriage between more human (analogue) and a digital aesthetic. And it is exactly this space that needs to be explored by any user of technology. That is to say, one first and foremost needs to be aware of his humanity, of himself/herself before the use of technology. This should be a process of meaning and not only a production design. In the other hand, we have multitasking, which is also a byproduct of the art of technology, within the frames of multitasking lays a momentum of the product, and less and less the process. That is to say artifact versus authenticity.

"We live in the age of objects: I mean, we live in the rhythm of the objects and their uninterrupted developed." (Baudrillard, 1998, pg.81)

What Baudrillard says is that throughout the ages human beings have lived with objects that have had a longer life than of the people who used them, while today there are hundreds of thousand objects that we witness to their birth, development/growth and their death in a short time. Scott Lash in his "Technological Forms of Life" article says that our lifestyles or in his expression "style", the moment we become intertwined with technology we start creating, re-creating, building the world with various technological devices. In this case, people are starting to produce meanings as allies of the technology

even though we do not call/name them with words such as cyborgs. As a result of this, people believe that they cannot function without their mobile devices, PC's, the internet, cars, nor at least they are sure that they cannot function without these apparatus.

2.4.1 The Distorted New Media Information Model

"...computer technology functions more as a new mode of transportation than as a new means of substantive communication. It moves information - lots of it, fast, and mostly in a calculating mode. The computer, in fact, makes possible the fulfillment of Descartes' dream of the mathematization of the world. Computers make it easy to convert facts into statistics and to translate problems into equations. And whereas this can be useful (as when the process reveals a pattern that would otherwise go unnoticed), it is diversionary and dangerous when applied indiscriminately to human affairs." (Postman, 1993, pg. 118-119)

We quite often have a linear, graphic, schematic approach when it comes to showcasing (gathering and cataloging) information and this is especially the case nowadays when we have an immense amount of data that needs to be catalogued in a way that a very complex information has to be put together in a pragmatic and approachable way. This allows people from different areas of science and for people with diverse curiosities to reach out for this big data. We think that this is helpful especially in triggering and opening new discussions regarding certain complex realities. A complex reality in the context of new media is the absurd and meaningless state of the mind where posting, again, meaningless images of oneself, food or whatever comes to mind without any prior context. A complex reality is a state of the mind a process that devalues cognition, it is not an material resource but an process of an behavior, a relationship between people that devalues all prior known norms, and emphasizes on devaluing meaning, reason and context.

With the distorted new media information model what we are trying to communicate is the sense of change and scale of that change of the contemporary human condition. The sense of information and life (existence), the scale of it in a very minimalistic though not less complex graphical schemes, the minimalistic logic is in terms of visual representation (graphical) yet rich with context it represents.

As we took the most pragmatic approach, towards dealing with a vast historical background and complexity of the subject we've narrowed the distorted new media model down to these three parts:

1. The Beginning Model
2. The Exploring Model
3. The Distorted Model

We think, in order to grasp and represent correctly the sense and the scale of this model it is worth noting the following: When we look at the history of civilization process of a particular era, for example, forks and knives, dishes emerge as a part of an eating culture which is not the case with the earlier periods where we do not see those two objects, and when we take a look one hundred fifty years back from now, we could not see images in motion in the ordinary and daily life's of people. It is also important to note, that neither the knife nor the fork did not have the hyper-process features that our contemporary new media has. Furthermore, capitalism experienced a severe economic crisis in the first quarter of the last century, from producing the logic for production and from production to consuming all the way to the real shift of hyper-production exclusively for consumerism. In particular, a consequence of this new logic was the newly founded film industry in America. We think that Hollywood after this economic crisis, entered the era of *new production* as this was one of the important areas where this new logic was implemented. When we recall the '30s and '40s and the American cinema of the 50s, valuable part of the films were about the American dream and the American way of life. Many of them have in common the belief in God, possession of a house, a family and being bound tightly to this. In most of these films we are presented with families, persons who have a certain level of prosperity. Especially if you look at the films by Frank Capra he is wandering around these issues almost constantly. Our point here is that cinema consciously or unconsciously is working its way towards creating the subconscious of a consumer society. In order for people to reach this level, it was required that their economic standards were higher and thus that they could not exist without this medium (cinema). Because only after this, the visual world would make sense, gain in significance and its language understood. In this way, we can find the parallel between any media and consumption and consumption-based society and mass production can be established. Perhaps at the beginning, there was not, a conscious decision, or a desirable goal towards a consumer society. But undoubtedly this newly formed visual universe and the understanding and significance of its language resulted in a new perception and this is exactly the type of human species the system desired to

have. This new mode of production is indexed towards consumption, and it is because of this that images, video - audio are filled with texts and intertexts that can spread its meanings and messages with the purpose and ultimately its goal being to raise consumerism and to keep consumption in the flow. This is actually the reason the system started flirting with the image and this is still true of various media today, only the magnitude has changed, thus the new media audience reach to the global sphere. This way cultural (and all the other areas) products could not only remain in the market, but it needed to reach the consumers in one way or another. And the best way to do this was to provide the space, the living bedroom area, homes, with images that would spread like a virus. And this happened when the circuit of televisions spread around, now the logic of the system was able to enter the homes. In recent years, through the spread of the internet and the terrific way the system merged and adapted with the Internet, we can say that now the place where it exists is not only our homes but our capillaries too. Beyond this, it could be a scenario that can only be reminiscent of science fiction films: perhaps in an abstract merit, a place where people have disappeared and their place is taken by millions of different products. And what they do? They are trying hard to destroy the remaining humans!

1. The Beginning Model

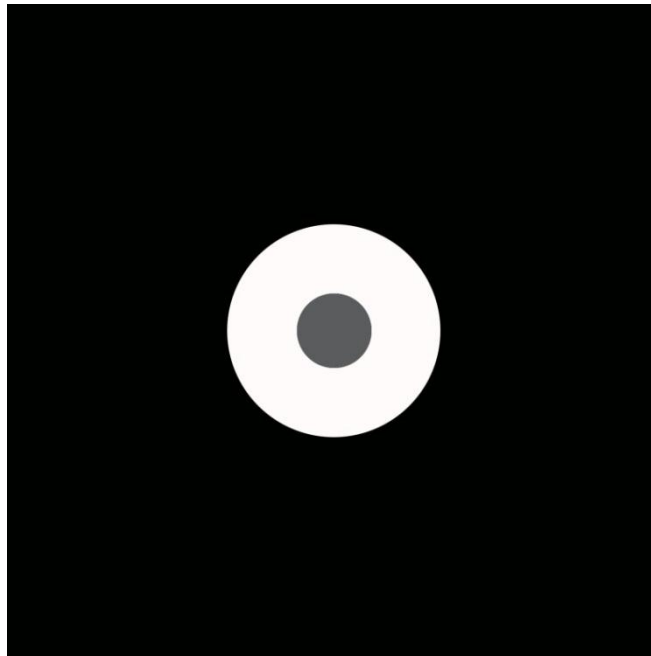


Figure 5: The Beginning Model [Graph]

Human beings have always looked after similar solutions for similar problems, they have always looked for an explanation for certain events that they could not explain nor at the beginning of our cognitive processing understand. From archeological findings, evolution, and anthropology we know that human beings have been doing this for thousands of years... and we are still doing the exact same thing. For instance, the human being during the prehistoric cave paintings around 25.000 B.C. we see the need of expression and need of communicating a certain event which had been prevailing the daily routines/lives of the prehistoric man.

Within our context, what we are communicating with this simple white dot in a black square is the following: the white dot is symbolizing the prehistoric man, with his existence in a very primitive world, where he/she survives by hunting and gathering. This notion triggers a point where they slowly built their tools (media) such as axes and knives with the purposes of solving their main problems as cutting the meat and even protecting nor attacking. What this shows to us is that their activities were survival oriented, and we may say that this has not changed even today; nevertheless, they did

not have the need or perhaps the capacity to communicate complex ideas. So this was a very linear world directed by the elements of nature.

2. The Exploring Model

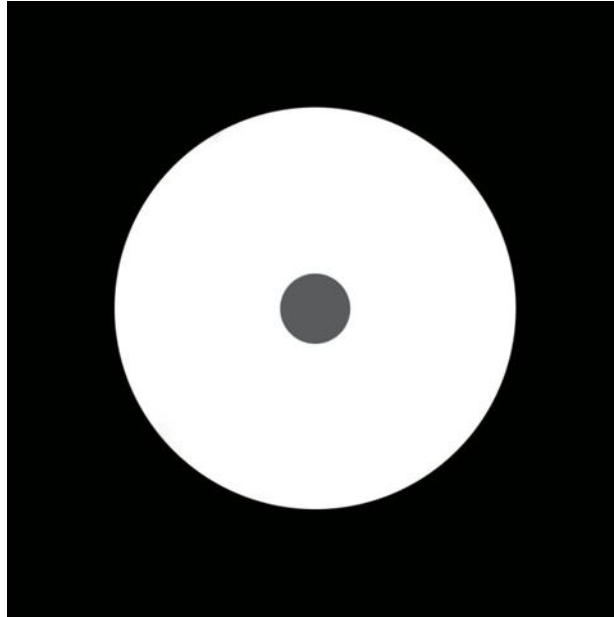


Figure 6: The Exploring Model [Graph]

The tools we create, build and ultimately use define us as human species, yet this behavior of ours is not neither unique nor exclusive to us. Majority of our behavior we've inherited from a vast area of previously existing species, when we look at the ants for example, the bees and many other species that we share this planet they have adapted and changed their surroundings in ways that is making their life easier and livable and endurable throughout thousands of years before humankind was altering its own habitat. Today we know that even before human beings invented the wheel we were changing and transforming our habitat, our history is filled with the fact that humankind has been a part of nature and also as the tools and technologies evolved the humankind has slowly reached to a point of having nuclear bombs and becoming more and more active in the role of not just existing and being part of the nature and thus

directly dictated by the nature but being outside nature and playing a part outside nature. We've become, at the same time both creators and destroyers.

In this sense, curiosity, exploration and the human ability to copy-nature (with sometimes positive and sometimes negative effects) is one of the driving human instincts for survival, as primitive as it is within the frames of our context it helps us develop an new perception and understanding of the notions of where we were, and hopefully enlighten us on where we are going to. If we look at the Middle Ages and characters like Leonardo Da Vinci are a perfect example for our exploring model. Leonardo had an unquenchable thirst and curiosity hardly seen before him, he wanted to know everything and feel everything and he would quite often try to copy nor build something he saw within the realm of the nature, and we easily see this within his work. What humanity began learning some thousand years ago is on a macro scale, for example just a hundred years ago we didn't know how exactly our kidney worked, fast forward today we still do not know how our brains actually work. We began exploring our surroundings with the pure human curiosity and of a need for a cure or a new solution for our daily problems. But also we got and still get majority of our ideas from nature, during our exploration days we tried to understand it and as much as we did in the macro scale we, as human species after this period of exploration during the industrial revolution slowly entered a new era of micro exploration where developed tools (media) that allowed us to get a grasp and see deeper into not just our surroundings but also this paved the way for the outer space exploration. The bigger white circle here showcases or rather represents a human condition with more tools and a greater dynamic, an dynamic which allowed more space for developing of the curious minds (Ibn Sina - Ave Cena, Galileo, Newton etc.) even though the compression and control thus center of the power laid in the clergy. And here we must divide the Muslim world clergy and the Christian (Catholic) as the Muslim world clergy was never as institutionalized and powerful on controlling its subjects as the Catholic Church was. In this sense we must divide the state of those who were able to ask questions and got some remarkable answers (like Newton and Gravity) and the masses that did and had very little chance to know more about the world outside of what the almighty Catholic Church allowed them to. In this context the human condition within the frames of the exploring model, was a far less of a linear world, a world which for the first time human species pioneered exciting ideas about the world we live in.

3. The Distorted Model

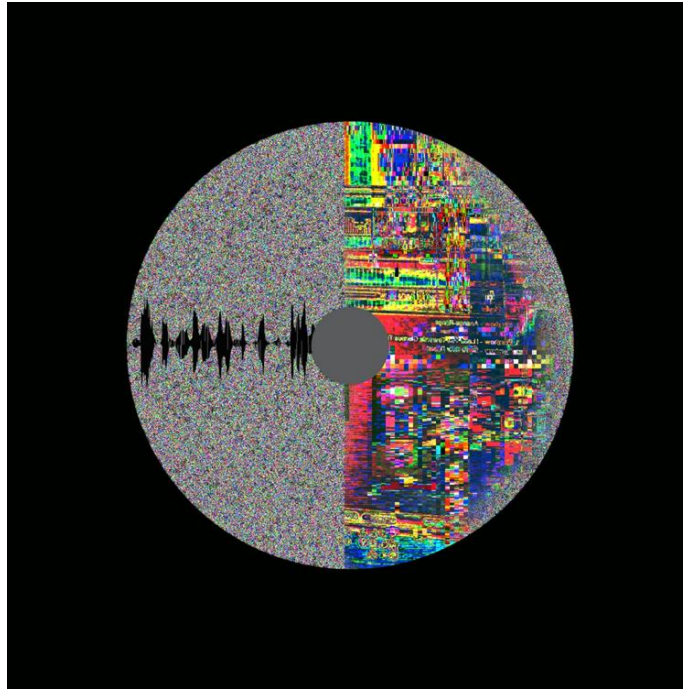


Figure 7: The Distorted Model [Graph]

Electric circuitry has overthrown the regime of 'time' and 'space' and pours upon us instantly and continuously the concerns of all other men. It has reconstituted dialogue on a global scale. Its message is Total Change, ending psychic, social, economic and political parochialism. The old civic, state and national groupings have become unworkable. Nothing can be further from the spirit of the new technology than 'a place for everything and everything in its place. You can't go home again.'" (McLuhan and Fiore, 1967, pg. 18)

The experience of the everyday life with the satellite revolution and global media is marked by the variety of commodities and ideas which with the so-called globalization process has been creating/forming the ongoing standardization of cultural expressions around the world. What this means is, for example, we see people staying in the same Hilton hotel, eating the same food for lunch, or if they prefer eating Turkish or Chinese food in Paris and French food in Tokyo. Using

the similar or same types of cell phones, PC's and with the global distribution of cinema, watching the same blockbuster movies, and thus discussing the same kind of issues. This relationship between trends, practices, cultures is also being translated/adapted in the culture and relations between the institutionalized/corporate life as part of the homogenized global media systems. Thus we see that our contemporary (or rather new and distorted) relationship with the world, and our practices in it, our relationship with our own systems and political and social institutions, global media systems around the world are getting more and more to sound and look alike. And it is the global media that is holding the hegemony not the local as the local, same as the individual is looking after the global media in terms of both outer and inner influences.

These changes take place in different ways sometimes it is the system (directed by the capital economy) which profoundly affects the policies nor the policy makers, and also the social aspects, from the simplest form to the most complex forms of our lives.

By our research, we know by now those questions such as Americanization and Globalization occurred in the 1960's and 70's. But also with the revolutions in the technologies and the proliferation of the art of technology, homogenization, cultural imperialism and thus their byproduct the global expansion of media and in the late 1990's new media. Have all contributed in destroying local cultures and their exchange with a more standardized cultural form. This also brought up a new type of quasi-hermetic individuals, groups, societies that are becoming culturally confused as they are trying to hold onto their traditions and at the same time adapting them to the "modern" ways of life. This is a delusional concept that what only does is recycling the past in a very not so serious and very unproductive way. Here we will try to understand modernization and secularization within the context of new media and digital culture. In the developed countries, especially within the European countries people's lives were once organized and based on social institutions such as political parties, syndicates and surely as always the ever so powerful aspect, and as we showcased/explored, in the exploring model, feudal system and the church the two modes dominant in the medieval Europe. Therefore we see that these connections between individuals were of core importance for their identity and material condition that were literally organizing, their daily lives and the public sphere.

The change happened with a linear modernization and secularization which brought a new model of a more divided-individual(ist) oriented society. For example, with secularization the church had no longer control over the social life, socialization or behavior of the masses (populations), whom are attracted by values and institutions which passes the domain of religion, that's how the parties, syndicates and other institutions which structured the political order, now no longer could hegemonies the social life of the citizens. And in time we see that political organizations and groups seemed to degrade meanwhile, the media and advertising/marketing had shown significant growth. Therefore, creating the space, the atmosphere for the leaders to become more significant, than ideologies themselves. There's the reality and the spectrum of our contemporary state, and that is that we can see the return of the radical right ideologies, we can see religious leaders making the headlines (for all sorts of PR purposes) we can see that the marriage between the capitalist economy/mentality and democracy being over. Thus a new hegemony has taken place and that is to say, a "new religion" which has been filling the space and the area of religion with the temple of new media and its cultural patterns as byproducts of the art of technology. People hardly have the space to differentiate now between fiction and reality, because the reality they perceive is produced, dreamed up and cooked in some media production house and sent off through around the globe. In the McLuhanian sense, where is home? The question is not related to geographical terms but to the need of existence in the natural form and a balance. It is exactly, the excess of communications the excess of all modes and models of the human existence that has created this bubble of compression within our contemporary perception of our reality thus our lives, institutions, and politics.

The distorted new media model tries to express visually this seductive yet very compressive sense of our existence within new media. Just as before secularization of the states there was the oppression of the human mind and spirit by the ever so manipulative religious clergy and this is true for all religions and sects. What the art of technology has done is another kind of compression by allowing everything and making everything available at once, this is an illusion of liberation. We understand that we need to set a distance between the worlds of technological thinking, and thus this will allow us to criticize and debate and thus changing the world of technological thinking. As we know by now, the internet is the product of a collective human approach to solving problems easier and making life easier. With the internet and proliferation of technology, the

developed and developing countries got to a point where their pragmatic issue solving mentality has advanced but meanwhile social structures are deteriorating and have become more complex. The individual is no longer in the position to consume the new media but it is consumed by it. Imposing the same economic system and the same mental spectrum within the frames of education and embracing this system has put out the individual in a much-distorted existence. As the over excess and endless possibilities that the art of technology and its byproducts: software and new media does is that illusion, almost perfect illusion of freedom, but as we've seen with our model by now it is only when people have limited access to tools that do not do everything for them nor are designed, advertised in the manner of "smart phones" that people throughout time have been able to solve their problems in more profound original ways. It is not the same as one would say that a knife can be used for cutting meat nor it can be used to harm someone, in this case, the knife does not make any difference between cutting meat or harming someone. But with technology and our ever so growing dependence and growing dependency on not engaging your mind but let the machine do it for you, shall we know the difference between reality and fiction.

Distortion in our context is an action of a misleading state of the being, or of perception that the distorted new media model showcases as the state of the new metabolism of the individual. Communication is drained, fatigued or worn out by the excess of functionality and the art of technologies logic of "user friendliness", thus we see the content, value, and meaning withdrawn by the network, and thus the priority of the network universe is the network itself not the user and not content, value, meaning and least context. Basically what we are trying to showcase with our research is the following, there is very little or none reference to the value system within the internet.

2.4.5 New Media and Insensitivity

According to a research conducted by the Stanford Universities Sam Wineburg and the team at Stanford History Education Group titled as "Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning" (2016) 82% of the 7,804 students that were attending middle school all the way to college students could not divide between fake and real news.

Another mind bending figure comes from the simple fact with the amount of time people are spending online and specifically on social media with this time we could read more than 100 books a year! All this just showcases how thin and fragile our responsiveness towards the outward world has become and how devalued is the world of the culture of inwardness.

Automatization of consciousness that is altering thinking and cultural patterns, addictive behavior such as, IAD (Internet Addiction Disorders) is a result of a human being whom has been thrust into a new world unprepared, un informed and without any natural defenses. By natural defenses, we mean that human beings by now have regulated certain technological aspects and their daily use, such as to get a driver's license one must be at certain age, but there is no or very few and scarce regulations and very little education regarding the way we should and could use the internet. A research that was conducted in 2012 by seven Chinese scientist titled as: "Abnormal White Matter Integrity in Adolescents with Internet Addiction Disorder: A Tract-Based Spatial Statistics Study" (Lin, Zhou, Du, Qin, Zhao, Xu, Lei, 2012) showcased that people with internet addiction have abnormal white matter integrity which in general is only seen in the elderly people. This results in deteriorating mental health, cognitive problems and psychological issues such as depression, literally, with IAD the brains subways (white matter) get fried by information. Also heavy use of social media and internet has been associated with the rise of dopamine levels which is a neurotransmitter, a chemical that transfers signals between neurons of the brain. People with drug addiction have higher dopamine levels, hence the given name: the pleasure chemical. According to another research "Cognitive Control in Media Multitaskers" where the study showcased that "...the surprising result that heavy media multitaskers performed worse on a test of task-switching ability, likely due to reduced ability to filter out interference from the irrelevant task set. These results demonstrate that media multitasking, a rapidly growing societal trend is associated with a distinct approach to fundamental information processing." (Ophir, Nass, Wagner, 2009)

What affects our bodies, profoundly affects our societies too. Perhaps the next big idea lays in what would be called a culture of digital detox. Societies becoming more aware of the dangers that progress cannot be made by alternative facts and fake information, as this would mean and create very bad habits and very easily manipulated individuals, if there ever was a question on what is worse illiteracy or meaningless literacy we would all agree that meaningless literacy, the hyperreal would be the mother of all bad and unproductive, an organism of lifelessness a detached body from not just reality but life itself.

3. Conclusion

3.1 The Absorption of Reality

“There is no longer a stage, not even the minimal illusion that makes events capable of adopting the force of reality - no more stage either of mental or political solidarity: what do Chile, Biafra, the board people, Bologna, or Poland matter? All of that comes to be annihilated on the television screen. We are in the era of events without consequences (and theories without consequences).” (Baudrillard, 1994, pg. 157)

The internet is not a life-form, it is not an organism, neither are its by-products such as virtuality, the internet is rather a state of the endless modes of the art of technology. Meanwhile, what creates a breathing space, atmosphere and allows for meaning to evolve, to grow is what Wittgenstein in his “Philosophical Investigations” calls “form of life”: ‘So you are saying that human agreement decides what is false and what is true?’ - It is what human beings say that is false and true; and they agree in the language they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life. (Wittgenstein, 1953, pg.88). Here we are facing a double edged sword, a world that is entered our lives and a world we have been taken by for granted and a whole universe of living breathing and complex forms of existence, meaning re-shaped into neither a life-form nor a form of life, a demolition (or extinction) of reality.

We quite as well can argue about the subject of Technological Singularity, where machines can/could self-improve, this is the hypothetical question of

technological singularity which as logic exists in the system of representation. As the representation is virtualized the real issue is the theme of the persona existing in a virtually perfect ionized representation, thus fulfilling the circle of modernity and the promise of the satellite revolution. So far through our analyses and research we see that there are two positions regarding digital culture and new media, one is from the point of view of Marshal McLuhan, even though new media is a sphere which we are facing in the past decade more or less, this view is more optimistic in the sense that McLuhan argues about media as a planetary communication (global village). In a sense, he also talks about how media achieved a sort of a transparent version of the information. Another one more pessimistic is the Baudrillardian one, he describes media as a speech without response and writes about how media produces (in his words: fabricates) non-communication. We may say that there's a technological view within the McLuhan's point and an ideological of the analyses and approach towards media in general. One thing is for sure that they have inspired the whole sphere of media research in a global scale.

What laid ahead within our research and what we faced as socially shocking was the question of insecurity, uncertainty, solitude and depression which we saw was a by-product of not the limited amount of information but the immense amount of information and sometimes from the information itself, as we think that information today is a currency that unlike in the traditional sense information existed in more or less on a local scale, with new media and the apparatus (the art of technology) it became currency for the system itself. It is very rare to come face to face with a sort of an alternative adventure in the virtual lands of new media. It is almost perfectly clear that we are standing at the point of time where everything is virtually given to us, but in return, we have truthfully given up to the illusion and myth of cyber-capitalism. What is less and less, and this is apparent is the resistance towards the excess of communication, the resistance towards boredom that it creates. Everything regarding the technology of new media could be transformed for a toxic free approach. But in order for this to happen the entire system of cyber-capitalism needs to be re-visited. Because the practices have shown us that as long as we, from the individual scale to national all the way to a global scale celebrate technology as a totem, almost in the sense of a myth that runs in circles, we will hardly be able to taste the true value and the immense greatness and good that it can bring to us and the world we live in. But the exact thing we are facing is that no one can control this because its practices have become the laws of capitalism and these

laws are created/founded, written by a global monopoly of the developed countries. The subjects are at the same time told what to buy and what we think is in the heart of the entire marketing system (which is another grand branch of cyber-capitalism) is that it says: if you buy this you'll be happy! This logic has created a certain logic of unconscious submission a certain compliance. Therefore when we look through this perspective there are no surprises, for example at the moment it is estimated that most of the U.S.A citizens spend the equivalent of two full workdays each month on Facebook, and Zuckerberg is surely hoping to get not just the Americans but to its current 1 billion users spend even more time on this platform. And they will do this by making Facebook a place where you can do it all from. For instance, if you want to buy something you'll be able to do so via Facebook. Making everything more addictive is the path that the new media mongers are craving on. This is all a world based on Data, although Data by itself does not become information it is the interpretation that is determined by the people behind it. Therefore in the core of the new media world there's a constant agenda that is being created, re-created, deleted, added etc. that maintains the system, and in our terms the logic of the cyber-capitalist spheres. The dependence of this logic has gained space so much into the lives of its users that the understanding, perception including privacy, security is shaped by and our position as human beings in this world is fetishized by a conceptual and literal understanding of new media. For example, the "selfies" are nothing but a result of this "new logic" and they at the end of the day are about people trying to re-imagine, simulate themselves via digital media.

The implosion of social media in the everyday lives is a relationship which has developed over the past 15 years. From Mirc, MySpace to Hi5 al the way to Facebook and Twitter, this relationship with these websites that started as chatting with family, friends and strangers that lived far away, we used these platforms to connect with the globe and in a sense communicate, these websites that we used as tools for narcissism and "noise" making as it happened have become much more than this. Facebook generates around 1.1 billion individual monthly visitors, Twitter is around 310 million and these numbers are growing. When Facebook started one could not get an account without a university e-mail. Basically, Facebook went from a private club to an active newsfeed and a platform that simulates communication and an immense distraction of the present.

I would like here to consider, in our context, Jean Baudrillard's ideas of the Simulacra (superficial representation) and what actually the replacement of Reality, the Simulacra in my view:

1. Contemporary Media: obscuring nor blurring the line between products that are needed and products for which there's an artificially created need by the commercialist imagery.
2. Exchange Value: This is the momentum and the mode where the value of the product is based on monetary consent/consensus rather than the products usefulness.
3. Multinational Capitalism: This is a created system that separates its products from the natural goods such as minerals, plants and other material that originate from the nature in the process of creating them.
4. Urbanization: Alienation of the human being from the natural habitat.
5. Language and Ideology: When used by a leading political and commercially powerful, language plays, takes the role for to blur, obscure rather than to acknowledge/reveal reality.

Baudrillard in his "Simulacra and Simulation" book (1981) argues that reality is prepared organized and re-organized, reproduced by the system. Therefore in this sense, there is no division between reality and simulation. With Television, we see a world re-created by a selection of visuals from diverse parts of the world and these parts are edited, therefore a Television news show is a kind of re-creation and constructed news made by the producers and the usual team that is behind every visual story. Therefore the process itself is always in a blurred condition where hardly there can be made any distinction between reality and the simulacra, which in return is the illusion of reality and not the reality itself. One can argue on why is the public open for this, but what we think and what we've seen throughout our research is that the public views Television as a show, and then there is the once again E.T.Hall momentum when we have to consider the cultural context of this public (high and low cultural contexts) therefore we can say that it seems that it is again the simulation and modes of superficial representation that creates a certain fictionalized condition. Surely another question from the universe of questions arises here and that is: what kind of society can exist in an extremely unfiltered and media wise uneducated and ignorant public. It is exactly because of the danger that Television and Internet, the way these two planets are currently used by and used for operating it is very obvious that they do not truly educate the individual. Therefore in both the developing and developed world there should be seriously considered programs

for media education, and by media we mean the entire system that postulates it and this surely would not be a detachment of the users (especially the youth) from the media but it would mean a more questioning and a more qualitative understanding of information and the ability to divide and broader understanding of how the system works. Usually the education is based on the technical side of things, for example, there are "Information Technology" programs from early graders to university levels, and this is because as we've seen from Baudrillard's Simulacra it is because the system has dictated so. But in truth, if the world applied to media education and this would spread all across, then we can easily say in order for this to happen the entire system would be entering a no turning back point. And the argument is that it because of this that the logic of "keep them in the dark" still prevails. Our technologies are complex yet our social existence and co-existence is getting stagnate; the world where we co-exist is a superior world than the world where we all are programmed to live the same.

Technology is made for man by man, but technology mixed with capitalism changes this idea onto a logic which is: that man is made for to be used for and by technology. The internet used within the current frames by the system at its best is a junkyard, but this is an extremely visual and entertaining, and hardly serious. Therefore we see Kardashians on all the time because the substance is not important and even when it is it's for the obvious purpose of simulation and simulacra. Images are always on a hypertextual and intertextual context and conceptualized and conditioned for the ultimate goal of a blurred communication with a commercial background, that is one of the purposes of the image within these frames. And these images used as a tool for information truly differ from the knowledge that one needs to in order to grasp and give a meaning of the world. Therefore in order to grasp a context on certain information the internet as it is shaped at the moment is not truly helping the everyday user, yes the user can decide on what to read, what not to read, from where to get the news etc. But in reality people hardly do so and are lazy in this sense, and this is not due only to their laziness but it has to do yet again the way the new media world is shaped, and it is shaped exactly in this sense that one is not allowed to explore but one is lost in this superficial world.

Human capacity of knowledge is one of the most fragile things in the natural world. For example, we can say that the planet earth is fragile, though the planet earth has survived in its own for four and a half billion years on the other hand human intelligence is about 2 million years old and evolving. Within the frames

of our thesis, it is apparent that human intelligence and the experience of intellect is something that can stagnate, something that can be annihilated by information (distractions). The entire system is not of yesterday, as we've showcased, today is the continuum of yesterday, the evolution of the understanding of the art of technology is what we consider is lacking a genuine process of thought about what and how the new technologies have done (yesterday) and undone (today) in order to shine a light for tomorrow (the future). We all get excited (some fanatical!) about technology. But we hardly this excitement is driven by what the new technology can do, rather to what will they undo. It is exactly because this question that the youth should educate on, it is very important to post the question on what one loses when he/she accepts a certain technology, we also believe that these questions can lead to a more creative usage of the art of technology instead of just existing for it, being an exclusive part of its accommodate. We think, and through our research we've seen that there's no confusion on the concept that we actually gain from technology. But it is the way these human advancements are used for, and this is the problem, the way the system (simulation and simulacra) uses and profits and capitalizes technology is that we lose more important and more interesting aspects of our humanity. The logic of speed, of user-friendliness, access and excess of all communication modes takes away the time to think, to understand, to question we are disarmed of our ideas, and quite often not even getting to that point of having a one's idea, we are stripped of our human condition by the logic of the superficiality. One of the sides of these thesis is that we think that we are more concerned with what technology in the context that is being used today takes away, therefore we are face to face with a rapid disintegration, erosion of the human intelligence and especially, specifically in the area of culture.

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