

FOREWORD

Neolithic brought farming.

We've got the Internet.

Naming an age. Spotlighting that crucial fact represents the whole context. The visual, the representative. The pleasure of discovering yourself in communion with that word, your time. Feeling alive. We may say hashtags have made this identification popular but... wasn't it popular before? Well, life's made of these little things, specially when they have worldwide impact.

An impact, shock in Physics terminology, has the potential to damage. It can fracture, bend; it can repeat, a single shock may not be critical but accumulation is. It can unbalance and it's certainly a transferral of energy. An impact can kill you or provide your dinner (by hitting keys to order pizza).

Dealing with this potential damage or benefit is part of living in a whole, both literally and figuratively. As though it were a living structure, society does so too.

There is no *#Post-IndustrialSociety*.



CONTEXT

1. Marcuse, Herbert. "One-dimensional man". 1964 (Spanish edition. Planeta-Agostini, 1985. Pg.26)
2. Ortega y Gasset, José. "The rebellion of the masses". 1930 (Spanish edition. Espasa-Calpe, 1980. Pg.17)

Leaving poetry behind, society is consensus. It is so at least in a high percentage. The place to meet your friends is as agreed as the budget for medical research, and you can find both, laboratories and cafés, written in History.

The way society organizes its individual members and relates with a priori minor structures or entities, is similar to strategy in game. Strategies are conceived to achieve goals. Let's flip it. Achieving goals by planning means: strategy, technic, forethought and control. It seems any football coach's speech but there's no board to play on.

This is not a delimited space with simplified rules where random is the pitch invader's clothing or how the referee applies the code. It's reality in its whole where this takes place non-stop. Herbert Marcuse said initial choice is the way society organizes itself, and that it is taken according to dominant interests and determined by material and intellectual cultural heritage¹. It's something like saying every moment is relatively undetermined by its predecessor². Finally, my friends and I can choose the bar but is society who allows us to do so, the same than going to bars is a social habit.

The act of planning the direction where social effort pushes to is a historical decision. As soon as you take one choice it determines what to do to get there.

Society weakens too, and it's then when it says to itself the words we all want to hear when so: "Keep on cause you're doing the right thing".

This support or complicity is ideological, but the conviction, a constraint, is discipline and it can mean the success or failure in the achievement of the goal.



The goal is to survive, to survive and to leave a legacy. Things that express our lives worth living them are as important to us as living itself. Systems too often lack of self criticism and run in a conservationist mode assuring its continuity (totalitarianism). Systems tend to stability in balance between their development and needs. In our society, development is industrial production chain and the need required to keep it going is consumerism. Industrial contemporary global civilization may no longer be defined by traditional terms of economical, political or intellectual freedom, terms coined as “the free society” basis in the dawn of industrial societies and Rule of Law governments; nevertheless, what can positively define our society is normalized over-consumption. It doesn’t really matter how high your status is nor the reason to consume, over-consumption is (a) right. You may want to buy books to know things, despite this knowledge is an over-determined product as much as any other thing. Patrick Rainsborough asserts consumerism doesn’t only drive production but also “epitomizes [...] the commodification of life’s staples and the human cultural systems that have been created to sustain collective life”³. This migration of social values from political to economical blurs the distinction between citizen and consumer due to corporate capitalism intrusive dynamics.

Having in mind that commodification of values is the root of our collective organization, then we could oppose Human Rights and The Right to Consume to stress the differences between the processes. Both are highborns, but The Right to Consume is created to serve corporate interests instead of just making a better world. To justify over-consumption is ideology. To promote over-consumption requires a mythification of the culture of buying more than you need. What it takes for this promotion, more even when this habit is ostensibly inefficient to satisfy human emotional needs plus generates poverty and resource depletion, is what Rainsborough names The Control Mythology⁴. Simon says you deserve those shoes.

Ideology has always used culture as an extension kit. Changes in geopolitics can be spot in cultural products separated in time. For instance, we could question the evolution of both sides roles in between Rambo III and Homeland. More than a single product of the cultural industry, the control mythology is a block of minimal units of culture (cultural memes: behaviours, cannons, models, tools,...) spreading worldwide through new and old mass media, and propagating a “global mono culture which fetishizes over-consumption, self-gratification and narcissism”⁵. In elder terms of communication media and social roles but similar in meaning, we could quote Malcolm X when he said “If you’re not careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed, and loving the people who are doing the oppressing” long time ago.



So on, we find culture involved with distribution, production and consumption as it is any other industrial product. Dominant culture is produced in and exported from developed capitalist countries to undeveloped ones trying to update to the free global market. Cultural industry exerts control mythology by imposing an aesthetic and cultural hegemony and controlling access to culture production tools and their use to maintain this flux. In spite of this, human beings are cultural; our cultural living is both acquiring and constructing culture. We find here two opposite tendencies, the passive and the dynamic participation in culture.

But what is passive participation in culture? How can it be possible in a globalized world where difference roams freely across new and old, cheap and expensive, 1st and 3rd world? What's that thing dictating the rules at the time that may be the most folded, collapsed and unquantifiable in Human History?

It's a blob. A blob that homogenizes anything right after swallowing it. It is what makes people go beyond tattoo to keep out of it or what forces celebrities further botox to remain inside. Is the blob who has to blame for Che Guevara's⁶ logo printed on T-shirts produced under modern slavery conditions. As if we were talking about TV broadcasting, every unit loses its singular meaning as soon as its scheduled end arrives and the heterogeneous speech continues⁷.

Whether the cultural unit is scandalous or subversive, it's just time what the blob needs to make it match the rest. The same the people condemned Elvis' swiveling hips in the 50's, they banned punk in the 80's and we can find both, hips and thumbtacks made symbols in the system of meaning and value global creative industry currently spreads through advertisement, videoclip, fashion,... Ads are the oil preventing industrial production system from squealing. They sell goods. Nevertheless, considering wearing goods we can assert that t-shirts worn by canonized models get higher selling rates than just t-shirts. Goods aren't sold alone, they come along with symbolic goods.

We live in times when emotional rewards have been bound to the acquisition of material things. As it happens in other affairs mainly economic (such as employment), system's needs are camouflaged as ours through advertisement and culture industry aesthetics. These industrial aesthetic's forms and practices repeatedly reproduced on the media are inherent to consumerism, have their origin in the hegemonic cultural industries and thus, they serve commercial profit motives. Agreeing that there is an interconnection in between consumerist aesthetics and cultural hegemony, makes unavoidable to start considering them as "representative of power structures, normative moral systems and unequal distribution of resources"⁸ and chances for succeeding; in accordance with Williams definition of hegemony as "the central, effective, dominant system of meaning and values, which are not merely abstract but which are organized and lived"⁹. Connections with Rainsborough's Control Mythology can be spotted here, as well as the hegemonic cultural discourse is tagged as a symbolic system.

6. "I know you are here to kill me. Shoot, coward, you are only going to kill a man." In this quote we can spotlight Che's self-conception which matches the leader more than the icon of leadership. Z. Zuzunegui, Santos. "Pensar la imagen", 1989. (Cátedra, 1989. Pg.232) & Eagleton, T. "The ideology of the aesthetic", 1990. (Basil Blackwell.)

7. Williams, R. "Base and superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory". (In "Culture and materialism: Selected Essays", Verso, 1980. Pg.36.)



Symbolic goods mass production and media saturation are root to industrial cultural production thus, "an acknowledgment of the political-economy of symbol creation and the role aesthetics can play"¹⁰ in the cultural shift from subjectivity to objectification and so, homogenization; is premised. This industrial production system's direct intrusion in a field which has been place for individual human creativity, even geniality, for centuries is present in the spread of "inequalities may be based on representations of gender, class or ethnicity; or manifest in creative labour which tends to exploit young people hoping to break into cultural careers"¹¹. We could also list control on culture production technologies, censorship on meaning and form, endogamic cultural goods media saturation, negation of the past (made a set of vintage outfit accessories),... All these determinants are more than mere guidelines. They seem disciplinary standards to me. Summing up, "there are great pressures to produce certain kinds of texts, rather than others"¹²

Backing up to Marcuse, the way cultural industry hegemony affects individual and collective living may be related with control ability of corporate capitalism. What hands hegemony magnifies the control that society's decision makers exert on the achievement of the selected alternatives among all the possible real ones thus, they become historical determinations projected and developed being aware that it provokes a ligament connecting freedom and responsibility, autonomy and contingency¹³. In addition, cultural and historical heritage comprehends the need of preserving Right of Law governments. Such imperatives coming from the very essence of the modern state make the methodologies society can use or not for the legislation of any establishment or procedure conditional on them. We have been sadly given example of the presence of root rights, as it is freedom, in the speech of a G8 country member, as it is France, recently; due to Charlie Hebdo office assault. Assuming historic acquired conditions have allowing or restrictive consequences on Society's self-organization, we must question the nature of such baggage. Nevertheless, it becomes necessary to spotlight that they "open way for a pretended control or better saying, they set a direction but just that isn't enough for the materialization of these possibilities without a process of imposition, legislation or dialogue"¹⁴.

This autonomy or free will inside the control aparat leaves room for unbalancing tendencies and actions. Random occurs when cultural workers practice escapes from normative cultural mainstream. To generate an alter-text to the main-text makes qualitative the difference in production, although there are countable nuances respect to the position alter-text takes from main-text. The alternative can be opposite, subversive, additive, subtractive,...; whatever it is, positioning a specific text as alternative to mainstream is a way of resisting the hegemonic control of the cultural industry. Concerning the aesthetic we could be more specific by talking about creative labour in culture, these alternatives relate to "the autonomy or independence of creative workers from commercial [...] control and the nature of cultural works and the reward for it"¹⁵. In this way, resistance is independence; to resist is related to generate culture, to have an active participation in culture, to the avant-garde of autonomous practices of creative symbolic communication¹⁶ and thus, aligned with art tradition and essence of art in occident.

¹⁰ Iqani, Mehria. "Breaking the frame" 2011. *Critical Arts*. Volume 25. Issue 2:11. ¹¹ Ibid. ¹² Hesmondhalgh, D. "The cultural industries" 2007. (Sage. Pg.5) ¹³ Sartre. footnote pg.26. ¹⁴ Marcuse, Herbert. "One-dimensional man" 1964 (Spanish edition: Parata-Agostini, 1985. Pg.149) ¹⁵ Hesmondhalgh, D. "The cultural industries" 2007. (Sage. Pg.9) ¹⁶ Iqani, Mehria. "Breaking the frame" 2011. *Critical Arts*. Volume 25. Issue 2)



Independent is the one who isn't influenced or controlled by others. Everyone is influenced nowadays in our hyper-connected world but about control, the refusal to undergo it can only come from an act of freedom. Understanding "freedom as the ability to choose and the possibility of making a proposal"¹⁷ and linking it to the enlightenment (dawn of the Right of Law societies in the industrial period). Besides "a reworking of longstanding ideals of terms of resistance or alternative articulations of the artistic and the political by coming up with new forms of representation instead of taking old (academic/ imposed/ mainstream) ones"¹⁸, is a practice assumed in Art History at a time when artistic practice is the equivalent of Art. Thus, that attitude based on critical subjectivity, freedom of thought and labour, and cultural/symbolic appropriation may be similar enough to artistic practice for making possible the collapse of traditional elite notions of art and provoke a magnification and relaxation of the curatorial terms being therefore able to expand to further fields of symbolic production. If we agree the migration of values in between art practice and creative symbolic production is real, we might find artworks whose authors are inside cultural hegemony and non-agency symbolic goods expressing a radically different conception of cultural production.

A conception evoking the figure of genius in a "place of the fullest expression of human excellence and virtue"¹⁹ as culture has been considered since the XVIIth century. Taking a romantic point of view, it catches the eye the fact that culture remains considered as the act of communication coming from the idealized figure of a kind of borderline²⁰ messenger, the artist, who's one of the chosen sensibilities to whom the secrets of the highest truths are evident plus, they pay one silver coin²¹ for taming them so we can access them too. The claim that the author is root figure to traditional cultural philosophy is as clear as author is conditional to the one in who highest human qualities impersonate. However, tendency in culture moves from individuality to commodification. We could mention the evolution in referentiality for the last fifty years, from the highest fields of knowledge (meta-language) to its massive popularity on the internet through linking or tagging (#). Trying to avoid the digital, there's a certain type of narrative in rap lyrics construction which employs references to poppost-industrial culture not only as ornament, but also as vehicle of meaning²².

The rise of culture industry has meant a "shift from culture as the domain of human subjectivity, to its commodification and thus objectification"²³. We are finally talking about cultural homogenization, the contemporary collage²⁴. Homogenization is certainly a good procedure allowing free access to the whole human knowledge and experience, but it is highly problematic as a radical defining concept, more even when academic tradition considers culture as if it were a "space of freedom"²⁵.



Such a baggage makes questioning about the nature of cultural product and production necessary, so we are placing culture in between two conceptual poles: the method inherent in industrial production organization and nature of human creation and expression. Iqani Mehita has delimited the dualism by talking about industrial and expressive cultural products. "The former have been conceptualized largely in pessimistic terms as limiting agency and manipulating creative expression, while the latter offer the possibility for individual creative empowerment"²⁶. This empowerment is a raise of the agent above just a consumer and so, to produce accepting this responsibility²⁷ is an act of subversion at a moment when values are dragged towards the realm of economy. We could find industrial consumer resistance in industrial aesthetic resistance and so aesthetic is politic, economic, artistic, social,...

The character of aesthetic as a commodification becomes an evidence. Its unification, homogenization, switches from industrial to expressive; mainstream, alterstream or elitestream; along the nature of its creative process does switch. Hands it's acceptable to say that in our context beauty depends on the positioning²⁸ of the beholder. Nevertheless the amount of significant multiplies in a world where things have an added merchandising meaning. As it happens to production means, we can find migrations among the products for instance, industrial consumer goods are present in industrial cultural ones far beyond product placement promotion techniques²⁹.

What is the filter then? What is the rule among all these differences? Industrial suits creative methodologies, has given us languages and meanings whether they are good or bad, has made word and image more handy than ever before, sets all the facilities required for a communicational boom and despite it blew up, the discourse seems poor for what it could be. Looking in depth, industry shows radical trouble. Industrial organization affects and tends to control every aspect of human living, both collective and individual. Besides it determines a direction for fields that traditionally remained out of efficiency criteria. What is needed to create an expressive cultural product according to industry and culture? Was Warhol subversive? Was he aware of the meaning of the aesthetic further aesthetic practice? What was his position towards it? Was his work an empowerment of the consumer or "just" a glorification of the industrial consumer good? At the end, was he a chosen-one who was making culture more accessible to the left-outs? Anyway it seems clear that making culture requires an act of appropriating culture and to do it in a sense that manifests humanity is conscious of itself enjoying self-recognition. Difference is freedom.

26. Iqani, Mehita. "Breaking the frame" 2011. (Critical Arts. Volume 26, Issue 21/22. "Remember, with great power, comes great responsibility." Spiderman, 2002. film. Dir. Sam Raimi. Columbia Pictures Co./ Marvel Enterprises) 28. "The art not brave enough to take part in a higher ideological frame, takes the risk of becoming entertainment"; Saal, Jonas. Art in defense of democracy, 2012. (New World Summit, Utopisch Nest) 29. Coca-cola bottle. The Gods must be crazy, 1990. film. Dir. Jamie Uys. CAT Films



“ Our program is cultural
revolution through
a total assault on culture,
which makes use of every tool,
every energy and every media we
can get our
collective hands on...
our culture, our art, our music, our
books, our posters,
our clothing, the way our hair
grows long, the way we smoke
dope and fuck and eat and sleep.
It’s all one message,
the message is freedom” .

John Sinclair.
Minister of information. White Panthers.
1969



CLOSER

How technology affects creative practice regulation and the form and dimensions of the completed cultural product plus, how the technological global flow of cultural products can mean that “cultural entities spin out of the control of their makers and take on a dynamic of their own”³⁰.

Conceiving tele-communicational technology, whether analogical or digital, requires a political questioning due to the choosing or implement of specific technological usages from among the sum of its possibilities provokes unavoidable consequences to every dimension of society. Besides, the virtual archive and its vital signs manifest through infinite interfaces and visualizations, plus its reproduction through so many other out-put devices; are a reorganizational process of reality themselves and so, reality undergoes processes of expansion, multiplication, ramification and duplication on a support medium that seems to be the closest technology can reach to spirituality. A limbo in a way, where things are not but exist, and which is considered the only archive capable of encompassing the whole world. Finally, the encyclopedic ideal looks reachable although it is no longer furniture but a cloud.

There’s currently no hesitation on what is the environment for the transferal of that all in our consciousness which is not just physical, or can be recorded as a movable transcript. Gathering all main and peripheral concepts we’ve been talking about (technology, industrialization, culture, knowledge, pop, politics, power), it is clear they merge in an information structure. 8 dimensions of information infrastructures are taken in count. “Embeddedness (refers to the degree to which economic activity is constrained by non-economic institutions, “rational” economic exchanges are



influenced by pre-existing social ties). Transparency. Reach or scope. Learned as part of membership (Identity, community). Links with conventions of practice. Embodiment of standards. Built on an installed base. Becomes visible upon breakdown: The normally invisible quality of working infrastructure becomes visible when it breaks; the server is down, the bridge washes out, there is a power blackout.”³¹. Besides, “Information infrastructures can, as formative contexts, shape not only the work routines, but also the ways people look at practices, consider them ‘natural’ and give them their overarching character of necessity. Infrastructure becomes an essential factor shaping the taken-for-grantedness of organizational practices”³².

[To show how this dimensional structure of telecom technology affects human collective and individual behaviour] To express the dimension of the dynamics technology may generate, historical facts can be given as example of the interconnections among the concepts named before (totalitarianism, control, initial choice, freedom, access,...) and the social behaviours that take place. They may appear to be opposite or just too historical or part of a documentary speech rather than the kind of aesthetic judgment this may be supposed to be, but all of them share a high technological character plus inherent aesthetic concepts which become in a contextualized symbology spread all over the world through technology.

Kennedy vs Nixon as a aesthetic-politic case of study (power adapts to new

“It’s one of those unusual points on the timeline of history where you can say things changed very dramatically — in this case, in a single night”³³ says Alan Schroeder, a media historian and associate professor at Northeastern University.

In 1960, almost 80% of american house holders had TV in their living room therefore, it isn’t difficult to understand the impact produced by the first broadcasted presidential debate in the USA. This sudden increase in TV spectators numbers, was a great deal to treat with and a potential advantage point to take. It was the younger candidate the one who ended up being more suitable to take the risk of trying something new, or may it have been not a risk but the way to face an anthropologically better positioned candidate for presidency? Whatever the reason, it worked out. Whereas Kennedy showed up as a reliable and extremely secure handsome senator, president Nixon resembled sick and sweaty, losing the duel before it even begun. Roles shifted and so did power, by pointing its finger to the man who represents the new sort of chosen-ones. A young man, intelligent enough to forecast where real public relations power (former propaganda) is. The political charge of this emergence, was defined by the opposite value of both, aesthetics and its symbolic ballast, which was exponentially amplified through this popular light box called Television. Since that night nothing has been the same. After being considered as the strongest tool to push up the mass, the new media language has been tracked close.



If Jacques Rancière was right, the sensibility is a category of the aesthetics, and it is not just referred to art. Aesthetic is inherent to the whole sense of existence, politic and social matters included. If the sense of aesthetic is interiorized and implemented to the beholder, it would be the tool for the most effective control, as much as an unavoidable element for using languages, media and opinion. It is argued that the political sphere presents mechanical systems to adapt and adopt the aesthetic flow of society by neutralizing its rebel, genuine changeable character. In other words, this process of camouflage can be considered a misuse of the aesthetic value, which is worked out from terms such as rhythm, channels, psychology or patterns. In this sense it can be approached as marketing or advertisement strategy.

The case of Sarah Palin is undoubtedly another keen example over the idea. "Mama Grizzly" is the first chapter of Sarah Palin's Tv show "Sarah Palin's Alaska", which was put on air in November 14, 2010. Almost 5 million of viewers discovered how "Sarah escapes her busy schedule to spend quality time with her youngest daughter, Piper. Together with her husband, Todd, they go salmon fishing in bear country. Later, Sarah and Todd climb one of Denali's most challenging peaks", according to the abstract of the first chapter.

The TV show is one of the most vane episodes of Palin's life, who performs an iconic example of politicians becoming media phenomenon and, as a consequence of this, gaining vote to get the chance to rule cities or even countries. As Deleuze already said in his "Postscript on the Societies of Control", a convenient management of the aesthetic and information flux can create a rooted identity within general standards of control. Quoting him: "The disciplinary societies have two poles: The signature that designates the individual, and the number of administrative numeration that indicates his or her position within a mass"

Satellite as a socio-politic case of study
(blind extension of emission's existence).

When the former Soviet Union launched Sputnik satellite on October 4th, 1957, the fact that this technology would actually contribute to its collapse was inconceivable. Telecommunications' effect on information access demonstrated the enormous ability of satellite information to empower receivers and, later on, senders. Not only by letting them access the information they choose, but also opening a channel for their expression. For the record, obviously unauthorized americans were also catching soviet emissions coming from the Sputnik. We could even mention a received coded signal that ufologists claim as a message from out of earth, to add a pinch of colour from quite a distant palette.



It is ironic that an opposite signal, coming from the other block, helped to activate the social displeasure needed to provoke what Mao named as impossible, during USSR decline³⁴. However, NATO's side filtration through telecom means occurred before the Sputnik was turned on. In example, 54 out of 56 rock bands had suffered soviet censorship in Leipzig by the 60's decade. Rock was one of the other side's uncontrollable radio leaks. Getting down to the brass tacks the matter here is the delivery into orbit of a european TV satellite out from Kourou by the European Space Agency (ESA).

Communication technology systems via satellite shook up image and information environment. They allowed the dispatch of images worldwide. We could even say it was then, the starting point of the "second" golden age of journalism, by paving the way for future dynamics such as The New York Times' journalist David Carr mentioned when interviewed by CBC radio host Michael Enright in Toronto (i.e. citizen journalism)³⁵. The very technology that made possible this advance unavoidably generated a newly added existence to the message that needn't belong to any physical storage system (tape). Although just as a temporary stadium for the time being, it came of in an ontological disability to restrain and control the flux of information taking this media as its channel. Lack of control generates a kind of collective consciousness over and above what's local.

The wall came down on air. Although given by Günter Schabowski (former Politburo member³⁶), the broadcasted order to open borders was given under such a citizen pressure that it resulted hasty. The report answered to the increasing amount of people concentrating next to the wall at that time in a rush such that no ordinary procedures were followed (remember consensus procedures in Context chapter). News had globally spread but for RFA's police force. We may say TV came to be a temporary factual power by forcing central government to comply with a "law" agreed in an autonomous way (acknowledging american influence). Forcing to take this decision spontaneously plus subverting chain of command order, results from media pressure broadcasting since Reagan's "tear down this wall"³⁷ up to and during the wall's falling. Symbolisms like these were often along the process. We can also take in count George H.W. Bush quote: "let Berlin be next" when a hole was open in Hungary on May 2nd, 1989. It's undoubtable that this whole process had worldwide coverage. This fact in a whole, fostered global visibility consciousness. The new condition became a trend. Nam June Paik's worldwide broadcasting "Global Groove" in 1974 or the latter Eurovision and MTV Awards are examples of "primitive" characteristics of telecom revolution. Despite of central soviet government efforts and totalitarian attitude, it was useless to oppose to a technological democratization that results in a cultural homogenization towards which different societies naturally tend to. USSR's attempt to control information and so people too,

34. "Once all struggle is grasped, miracles are possible". Mao, Zedong. (1896:1973). 35. <https://gigaom.com/2012/09/14/david-carr-con-newspapers-twitter-and-citizen-journalism/>
36. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHIKynAguE-3Z>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1djbBK6A>



ended up being a restriction on citizen's freedom instead of cultivating it. Besides, we may also take in count "A citizen's summit US/USSR" (1985), a TV program which provided communication via satellite (so called "space bridge") between both powers' citizens, or the 600 km human chains that linked Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius, as a protest to soviet domain in 1989. The former, as citizen empowerment result of direct autonomous usage of a high visibility/low control space to bring on banning of restrictions (live broadcasting)³⁸. The latter, as a spontaneously created symbol assumed by collective unconsciousness in a way it becomes ritually repeated. Therefore, this baltic region is a clear action of conscious high visibility usage to help achieving political goals by non violent means. Lithuanian independence was live broadcasted via satellite first from Vilnius, then from Kaunas. Revolution was televised in order to generate global concern on the topic and influence enough public's opinion so the russians couldn't react by using the strength required. Estonia held Eurovision Festival as former 2001 winner right the year after. The whole nation's behavior demonstrates people's willing to exploit this new field of visibility and global repercussion. Both, inauguration and the development of an expressive ability needed to communicate through the new channel, are proof to the will of participation, usage and speech (political voice) Estonian society had. Remarking the aesthetic character we could compare Anneli Peebo and Marko Matvere's greeting "Hello Europe!" and memetic sentence "Welcome to the Internet!". In this case, a technologically induced shift of identity is produced in just 5 years.

Inside real possibilities of technology usage, lives the option to use them in an way it is unexpected, excluded or marginalized by a given society's decision maker system. Individual empowerment in The Society of Information is directly attached to individual ability to access to a self-chosen source of information. The characteristics of the source will condition the characteristics of the information it provides. Censorship and access denial suffered in the group of Iron Curtain perimeter countries, is radically similar to information and image management on the internet, since the establishment of differences among sources comes in response to ideological differences due to the condition of the message as an industrial cultural product and thus, its adaptation to a hegemonic symbolic system.

It is not reckless to say that visibility consciousness raising, substitutes flags for placards, statements for slogans; and opens the door for an emerging aesthetic of resistance which reconfigures the symbolism of protest.

Telecommunications have given back to revolution what machine guns took from it.

38. A young man in a leather jacket, who assists as public, sends a hopeful message of friendship. This speech is in clear opposition to media's terror tone that dominated the program itself and the rest of the media. He said that what they were doing there, was right what their governments wanted them to do. They want us to fight and we must realize we are forced to live together, he said.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdF-9sqM14> [20.13.17]



Information management is not only caring about its content, but also supporting its flow. The key to effectively manage information is to take in count both, information modelling and structure. Information Structures (IS) design so becomes normative by determining usage possibilities of communication technologies. Different structural representations provide significantly different functions for media and hypermedia IS thus, ability to access, navigate and emit information is heavily depending on links, connection scope and data structures. Although decision making on IS design (information included and how to access it) is done in order to implement effectiveness in transmission, it can drift to technological control. Nevertheless, IS design tends to consider local support when questioning code in context, and data structures provide root context features.

As data structures, networks, allow access to information in a variety of ways. It encourages choosing a path to follow, a discourse, a drift; the very idea of navigation: the average user ability to “freely” surf the flow. Network structures are composed of associative non-linear links that bind common or related concepts together, within the information space, enabling access to the same information from different contexts or concepts. This double directional condition polarizes IS in between local and global scale, and makes network’s information relationships comparable to encyclopedic ones. Clearly opposed to this roaming be hierarchical structures, where access has to be granted. Digital IS result in an hybridation of both, network and hierarchical. A computer network is a telecommunication network that allows on-line computers to exchange data packets along network links. Telecom implementation in our individual daily life (PC, personal computer) has facilitated interpersonal communications (TEXT) by providing access to information on shared storage devices, whether personal or not. Besides file-sharing and information-access, computer networks allow net-sharing and computing resources deployment. Root features to collective on-line behaviours whether unilateral or not. Using distributed computer resources to accomplish tasks, is basic for crowdsourcing as well as for virus deployment or service denial and so, ability to alterate or control, to forecast and improvise, is deeply attached, if not inherent, to this technology.

The Internet is a (the) global system of interconnected computer networks from local to global scope, whose model and set of communication protocols is Internet Protocol Suite (TCP/IP). Transmission Control Protocol and Internet Protocol are hardware independent thus they are implemented to virtually any hardware networking technology. The Internet is established on these dual basic protocols. What is more, they both condition inherent dynamics of the Internet by supporting inter-networking from a “blind” point of view. Internet Layer (TCP/IP) works on whatever data structure besides, it’s incapable to control posterior Transport Layer operations. At this level, computer communication, the detaching of packets, gathers information about transferral, nevertheless it doesn’t analyze at all content or quality of the message (whether it is suitable or not). Blind Internet Layer permissiveness becomes essential when defining any attempt to control transmission as a posterior action.



In a way, the Internet seems to be very much like a dimension of existence with its own array of “natural” laws that chop off inappropriate “evolutionary” paths the same that bedamn certain tendencies to take place repeatedly. Ergo, only by giving the chance, it has provoked facts.

The broad orbit of information, applications and human behaviours held by the Internet, have forced all traditional media to adapt to virtual existence of information. Hypermedia, GPS, e-mail, p2p, 3G and 4G, file sharing and storage, telephony and video-conference. All of them and even more affect our living from stock markets to online shopping to V.O.I.P messaging.

What began as one-to-one communication or publishing on a personal web, has multiplied its capabilities through Hypertext Tansfer Protocol (HTTP), becoming in a multidirectional real-time flux of information. The same that advertisement and electronic commerce take advantage of, is employed to publish any content to a large audience by average users. Text, image, video and audio are broadcasted worldwide now by anyone owning basic digital equipment. Social networks are the very example of this tendency. A dynamic that has provoked behavior migrations from their traditional local scope to a global one. Extended politeness relaxation of humor across the net, may be the standard bearer of local to global shift.

Although effects of the internet on society are noticeable further than individual level, it doesn't carry a unified consequence along with institutional level. “The internet has no centralized governance in either technological implementatio or policies for access and usage; each constituent network sets its own policies”³⁹. It consist of underlayed networks that join the global one by free will, while keeping certain autonomy respect to it. This means that the chance to control and legislate Internet usage and scope lives within every inferior network.

Regarding Politics, censorship can be exerted as well as promotion. The first may be an act of demagogy, as it is in North Korea, or a righteous decission when blocking paedophilia or snuff films. The last takes place when ther's an institutional interest in making a certain technology accessible, as it happened in Spain when the government facilitated mobile phones acquisition. Concerning Economy, business and finances are highly conditioned by the Internet. However not in a centralized way but as a result of a local variation that spreads throughout the interconnected global market. This lack of centralized Internet governance finds its counterpoint in an autonomous sense of global user (even user-developer) community that was spontaneously generated: 90's Internet Utopia.



"I'm pro-file-sharing, and I think file-sharing is the process that Napster specializes in, and you have tons and tons of situations are going to join the process. We at Rapstation.com have Gnutella, and Gnutella does file-sharing as well. So my whole thing is the government is looking at file-sharing like they can stop it and they just can't. They're stopping one company, and I think that's shortsighted of the industry, but I don't really give credit to the industry for being too smart anyway."

"I think this is progressive for the art because the industry and corporations have dominated



and monopolized the outlets for the art whether it be radio, television or even the skewing of the price factor.”

“For the first time the audience has got into the technology before the industry. [...] Record companies are afraid because they will be forced to share. [...] We should think of file-sharing as a new kind of radio. We should think of the Internet as a parallel industry to the traditional one that is run by lawyers and accountants.”⁴⁰

Chuck D
(MC, Public Enemy).
1999



Napster as a techno-political case of study (under control).

Napster was further more than just an installed-base app. It expressed the will of a user/developer community to participate in the regulation of technology usage. At the time Napster was created, a high percentage of university networks formed the one and only Internet. This is one of the symptoms of 90's Internet utopia.

Network structure of the Internet propitiated a directional shift in authority from vertical to horizontal. It is the community, not the industry, who takes on this new dimensional condition of information structures. It is in this new environment where concepts such as user to user reliability or peer2peer interaction are born. One's visibility and thus importance and value too, depends on the merit of what one shares; a consensus that turns authority rank occupation into meritocracy. Napster also represents the equipoise in user-developer relation. Research on problems humans have when using technology as a natural habitat for behaving themselves is a sign revealing intentions of local/peripheral empowerment and self-publishing facility programming. Both to be labeled as utopian Internet goals along with freedom of information, visibility according to message value, collective construction of "communal arena". Napster's beginnings are representative too, as they take advantage of a new feature of internet network, distributed computing. This characteristic allows components in networked computers to share computing resources to accomplish tasks. Components communicate and coordinate their actions to achieve a common goal by sharing information. It is obvious so, that this is an extension of data exchange ability of telecommunication networks. As one of them, computer networks facilitate interpersonal communication by information packets transmission and thus, generate a sense of sharing and community, therefore it's catching the root of this idea what launched Napster to fame. In an estimated period of about 6 months, this app unbalances the whole music industry by providing a valid digital distribution model.

The application spread was exponential as a result of a sharp managing of structural network facilities such as IRC⁴¹ as well as app's high performance and a forethought that technology would reach an utopian goal of implementation in daily individual life. For instance, Napster's reticence to adapt to commercial legislation was founded upon the belief that such legal grey behaviors had to change, due to Internet's radical definition suggests people to behave likely. They felt themselves as pioneers. "We think there is a way that technology can be adapted to benefit all the parts involved: the artists, the industry and the users. We present a viable system that can be improved in the future"⁴², Fanning said. And their system really worked it out. Indeed, artists could already feel the benefits in their promotion through Napster. The band Dispatch gave their most crowded concert



up to the date when they played at Indiana's University Campus in 2002, and they did it without any promotion or management but Napster's digital distribution service. Now, they are managed by Universal Records Co.

Napster was a double technological revolution because it understood music's social character and pretended to make it extensive to the Internet. Discovering music by sharing and recommendation, generating friendships by matching similar music interests, ...; were revolutionary technology usages. Besides that, MP3 was a technical revolution itself. It tore down all music commercialization structure, from finding to release, providing an amazing user experience. Napster staff succeeded in creating a file-sharing middle-ware model without a centralized coordination when creating MP3. Their contribution to media file-sharing, decentralized workflows and search engine development is laudable. Consequently, they were able to index an archive mayor than the amount of commercialized music. It even contained unrecorded or undistributed music.

Napster's staff was conscious of the progress in global flow of files they were locally making. It is representative the fact that they chose a symbolic manifestation to commemorate events as a reward to autonomous, locally managed behaviors.

The night they indexed 1,000 000 files in one server they decided to make history via meme⁴³.





On December 9th, 1999; after Napster had delayed the licensing of their practice for several times, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) demanded Napster, fearing the whole Internet could be reorganized with napster-like technology. Fright conditioned legislation and the resulting law, which supports traditional concepts of intellectual property, reveals a conservationist interest in commerce hierarchy and so, the equivalence value-money. In this case, the mighty figure of the marchand prevails over real progress. Later on, another base figure root to traditional information structures will be questioned, the agent. But, what does it mean "an effect on music industry further than the closing of record stores"? New virtual features of information structures enhance music distribution by altering dominances among promotion, distribution and purchase. Altering dominances is a non-forecasted unbalance in technology control establishment. Before MP3 was implemented, technology had been profitable indeed for music industry. Successive improvements on music format forced to record the whole music archive more than once, with the consequent income from re-commercializing it. From 45rpm vinyls to CD's, to radio and TV music broadcasting control, to phonograph, they loved technology. They loved it till it went out of their control.

The fact: "You cannot build a business on copyright infringement"⁴⁴ and yet they did.

Although Napster was just providing a platform to share legally bought files, they were being treated as actual thieves. 16 years later, this legal grey area is still grey and as these young developers predicted, the tendency induced by file-sharing and decentralized workflow has been unstoppable. Napster's ideal positioning as digital music distribution system for labels never came true. Their mistake was to move towards profit and thus, accept industrial system rules. At the very time they become dreaming they could get rich, they were immediately dominated by the ones who had already dreamt of that.

Wikileaks as a techno-political case of study (out of control).

It's said the amount of classified information published by Wikileaks since its foundation is mayor than the one published by the rest of media together in the same period of time. This statement virtually means that a small activist gang is more able to publish relevant information than all the world's press together.



According to its founder, Julian Assange, classified information is key for political criticism and so, preventing citizens from accessing it, an act of demagoguery. Demagoguery is radically opposite to Society of Information definition. Wikileaks' statement is that revealing confidential info is an effective political weapon, since massive leaking costs loss of political power. Freedom of information is their goal, an utopian goal. Assange aims that they want to make example out of censors. He said: "if you behave immorally or unfairly, we'll discover it, reveal it and make you suffer its consequences".

Wikileaks pretends to publish classified information and to keep leakers anonymous by hyper technological means. It provides technological coverage for those who want to fight censorship and so, becomes a force protecting critical citizens from institutional power. Besides, its decision to do it under conditions such that don't prevent them from publishing whatever, although physically settled too, marks the difference among them and virtually the rest of international and national press. Albeit succeeding in free publication of information thanks to legal independence among networks, the other side of the coin is that they can be blocked by local networks as China, Iran or Thailand did. What means a debate arises.

Wikileaks' technological independence finding shelter under Swedish laws, provides total confidentiality to its internal communication, file-sharing and anonymity of the leaker [generates a ghost IP up to a safe point, so affects control effectiveness]. The reason behind Wikileaks server creation is to assure ever permanence of filtered information on the global digital archive that the Internet is, plus to foster its diffusion by encouraging its copy and distribution.

As soon as Wikileaks started off publication of filtered information, it gained online communities of activists and hackers acknowledgement. The sharing of an utopia brought up collaboration and to do so with Computer Chaos Club in 2007, introduced Wikileaks to www top hacker community.

Julian Assange and Daniel Domscheit-Berg became so Wikileaks' visible members. They both introduced what they called "The Switzerland of bits" into Iceland. A country which suffered demagogic censorship to prevent filtrations regarding legal responsibilities for the national bankrupt. Filtrations that the organization they represented made public. Media coverage of the fact, ended up in a proposal of law to establish and avant-garde Freedom of Information Law, unani-mously approved by the Parliament of Iceland at last.



Nature of the proposal aligns the kind of human expression this whole text stands for. A social agreement reached by participative construction of any system of meaning and value, among all constitutive elements of society, on topics that bear a huge and unilateral charge despite of defining the sense of the hugest and most unified collectiveness in History. Information activists effectively influenced legislation affecting their practice. Hackers, a disreputable profession, have indeed induced a social change, they have transformed society. Believing in the power of Information and Knowledge, and the importance to freely access them, plus standing for their materialization; has political consequences that empower citizens and push societies towards a more participatory democracy.

Consequences of variety of formats information is recorded on, re-create the actual fact closer than ever. HD video format stands quality enough to condition decision making apparatus of the military for the proper exercise of the Law of War. An aesthetic sense is sourced/sorcerized in addition to high definition. Daily stored reports leave an almost instantaneous print of acts. Journalists and activists efforts to identify victims and document their stories, upholds a narrative speech needed for the right understanding of information. We are not presented a dramatic visual narration until raw technical reproducibility it's tracked to its real origin. Drama is present then. The power of an image where identification is compromised, and symbology becomes reality back and forth its representation. Identification is polarized as the flow of the exchange between reality and representation goes. The same encoding and display is what extends sufficient distance for non-identification of gunners, as well as its symbology and realism can't help no other identification but one for horror and hardship of victims when their testimonies and identities trace the same line backwards to reality. The fact is that it is neither possible to identify victims nor to give word of their testimonies without the Freedom of Information that Wikileaks and information activists and legislators speak up for.

Whilst Napster's case regards benefit, and industrial goal, Wikileaks' one is about diffusion, an industrial process. The structural hybridation Wikileaks suffered to adapt itself to the type of global information boom planned with the international press to assure a certain safety, splitted the organization and merged an institution, an agency. Once again, adaptation to hegemony becomes a weakness, this time out of matters of material benefit. Therefore, the hierarchycal transformations Assange established, broke the sense of membership to the online community and made Wikileaks activity move towards a legal-political context where Institutions are able to attempt to control the leak. What happens here is that the awareness of the public required to authorize these filtrations, is channelled through local self-ruled networks that irregularly match hegemony, able to qualify an equally



“God knows what happens now.
Hopefully worldwide discussion,
debates and reforms.
Or maybe, I am just young, naive
and stupid.”

Bradley Manning
(Former U.S. Soldier).



authorized repressive institutional response. An homogenization node is being generated by this confluence, as it is here where all tendencies become even. As much hegemony has to assume alteration and subsequent power unbalance until it has been reconfigured by democratic means; as utopia materializes. Its birth takes place under industrial organization of productivity terms, as well as it raises resisting judges of value and legal difficulties that emerge from its mere existence. Making the fact that qualifies the question as relative redundant despite it is to hide atrocity.

In accordance to this, an homogenization node is a dynamic hotspot whose final quality will be result of a process of formulation of a new paradigm, which will become part of our civilizational heritage. A set of convictions through which humanity will look at future frictions or will reconfigure existing ones.



EVEN CLOSER

Behavior: online contemplation. The idea of archive and its ever linked existence.

The act of archiving is related more than ever to the idea of accumulation, being influenced by its null cost in the digital era. Photographic album for instance, in its more classic conception, has historically developed the role of identity heritage and legacy, while it was also a re-enforcement of the personality. In some point this remains throughout platforms such as Flickr or Instagram, however the twist is coming from its private and public character. Spotify playlists are understood as a colourful choice and personal composition; nevertheless, are there external limitations acquired along with its facilities?

Coming back to the idea of passive consumption of culture, although social behavior within social network structure has implemented more participation, it is weaker in terms of critical activity. This is the fact, in which Internet utopia has become a commercial state, not only in aesthetic terms, but also in ideological influence throughout brands (everywhere), politicians (Obama's campaign), sex (loneliness) and so on. We are under a sleepiness layer of "checking my wall on Facebook", which doesn't engage a selective and constructive process rather a new digital alienation. The original and ideological aim has been subverted into an assumed product of relationship and identity.



Baudelaire used to attend the “Paris Salon” with his turtle, which was liberated on the floor to restrict the pathway rate and favouring the ecstasy of his owner contemplating XVIIIth Century paintings. A sort of this feeling is kept when common user is embedded on the world wide web. The navigation experience, overwhelming amount of contents and cryptic systems of passwords neutralise the act of participation somehow. Accumulation does not mean participation. Archive must be participation, even self-participation. It must be through accumulation the path to walk to reach knowledge across comparison, transfiguration and subversion.

Fascination on self-identity creation is taken as origin reference to build up the virtual controlled society. This mental status becomes highly profitable for business on the net. The changeable character of the users is adopted as an advantage, covered across several tools designed for profit goals, such as marketing plans or on-line campaigns. Apps and macro-engineering designs have undertaken the race for these lost souls with sophisticated engines never reachable for common participants. An illustrative example might be “mass customisation” systems, which are defined as “effectively postponing the task of differentiating a product for a specific customer until the latest possible point in the supply network.”⁴⁵

Meme phenomena shows up as a response from inside, underlining the difference among participation - consumption - response - dialogue. It can be called resistance, it can be the lack of conformism or as simple as you do not have to support your opinion in terms of responsibility. In any case, meme can be an oddity along the most common internet behaviors, assuming the net as the XXI showcase, where they were all young or, at least, looked alike.

Why memes?

Meme shows up as object and practice founded in and corroborating all these brand new digital behaviors. It is a liturgy that recreates a whole new society’s symbology as much as it satisfies community’s ideological necessities/self-conception. Memes are born under the notion that not only accepts, but also generates enthusiasm to recognize our own virtual existence.

Raising meme to a free symbolic vehicle of meaning is a quality step-up. Considering it a valid cultural object implies its collection, analysis and archive can be done through curatorial means.

Although hypermedia technology conflicts with traditional aesthetic critic terms (author, marchand, museum), memes inherit a set of characteristics clearly representative of our new techno-cultural condition. Audiovisual language baggage, creative practice democratization, implementation of technology in daily life, mayor ability to interpret symbolic language, blurred hierarchy, a sense of community and collective construction of meaning and knowledge, etc. All of them leading into a user-to-user media conquest through media’s own principles of extended existence and interconnected achievement of goals (link, loop, ripple, video-tutorial,...) by a behavior migration from local to global (appropriation, parody, dubbing, spoof,...) turning into a reconfiguration of the world that can be uploaded to the cloud. A reconfiguration



that is born in the belief of dialogue rather than monologue, mythification rather than model identification, up-to-date rather than boheme, aesthetic resistance to a mass produced non-commodified culture industry, turning the symbolic universe in which we live into somewhere that looks more and more like home as fast, as we participate in it.

Despite technical requirements forced us to implement a different structural organization to succeed in essence and usage definitions of web and network, digital archive and value through display representation; there are root memetic characteristics to our conception of memetic symbolic value.

Cultural appropriations merciless to symbol origins. Doesn't matter whether highbrow or pop, low cost or business class; the whole set of human experience is available for users to be reconfigured according to their will to comprehend their new identity.

A new identity for a new community. Communities express themselves not only to commemorate high scale events, but also for the opposite. Individual, daily, basic expressions of affection and membership.

And so on, it is the community who filters information and reconfigures it according to its self-conception, as it subverts mass media hegemonic news feed or historical (mainly post colonial) speech to generate its own vision of the world. Mythification, humor, irony, information saturation,... are common procedures to meme creation practice and many other creative practices too.

Users are also concerned with the media supporting them, and they have strong opinions about technology polity. This media criticism stands for users rights and makes public demagoguery on technology control.

Finally, memes perform a constantly under-construction universe of symbolism, as an alternative to hegemonic cultural industry's one, by using the very tools culture industry provides for aesthetics that serve pure market goals and so, their creation, sharing and latter "ranking" in this new symbolic digital universe is an act of subversion.

PIL Project Website as an adaptation of the exhibition space to the digital circulation of image itself.

Post-Internet Landscapes (PIL)
is a collaboration between *ama*Collective,
Juan Crespo and Enrique Tutor Torres.

www.pilproject.net