TRANSFORMING CULTURE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

International conference
in Tartu 14-16 April 2010

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Papers presented at the conference in Tartu,
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Contents

Transforming culture in the digital age

Introduction

You are currently browsing the e-book „Transforming culture in the digital age". The increasing digitalisation is posing many different challenges related to a series of cultural transformations: technical, organisational, practice related and mental. In the current collection of articles, the focus of the transformations is on the intersections of individuals and institutions, and users and producers of culture. Many authors indicate that the roles of the user and the producer are becoming more intertwined and that it is becoming increasingly difficult to separate one from the other. This has also affected the cultural and heritage institutions as their role in the society is under consideration. In this collection of papers, a number of texts look critically at the hypothetical intermingling of processes and attempt to analyse to what extent hopes are being realised. The collection also looks at the active role of the heritage institutions in creating new digital environments, where the different users are often taken into consideration, in many different ways. In addition, many texts here analyse the changes that have occurred in cultural practices – the emergence of new forms in art and literature, the changes in the role of authorship, the broadening concepts of literature and art.

The book is a collection of 56 articles that represent the diversity and intellectual efforts of a three-day conference which took place in Tartu 14-16 April, 2010. The initial call of the conference invited professionals of different heritage institutions – museums, libraries and archives, working artists, educators and academicians researching the subjects of cultural transformation from across the disciplines. The interdisciplinary nature of the conference and the diversity of the field is well reflected in the variety of the papers in this volume.

We have divided the book in five large sections – Changing users, Transforming heritage, Digital literature and Digital art. Each of these sections represents a larger theme from the conference where practitioners and academics met and discussed the consequences of digitalisation. The questions posed in the different book chapters look at the identity and practices of the individual, challenges to the institutions and their responses to these challenges. There are number of case studies presented both by academics and people who work at the different heritage institutions, which look at the different initiatives that institutions are taking to respond to the cultural transformation processes and to the changes in the heritage practice.

We hope you'll find reading it as useful and as pleasurable experience as the conference has been!

CHANGING USER

A Short History of Cultural Participation

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1. Introduction

Barthes' *Image Music Text* contains the seminal essay *The Death of the Author*, which pointed to the convergence between the producers and receivers of discourses at the level of interpretation. The death of the Author was a metaphor, not be taken literally, implying that there was no privileged vantage point that fixed the interpretation of a text. But it also referred to structural power changes in society, where members of cultural elites could no longer claim control over their writings. "Ordinary" readers became (seen as) more and more capable of producing their own interpretations, which might structurally diverge from the intentions of the author. As we have more recently witnessed an increased convergence between the producers and receivers of discourses at the level of the production process, we could say the Author died a second time. The old Author is no longer solely in control of the production process, as the "produser" (e.g., Bruns) has overcome the rigid separations between both categories. Again, this is seen as a major step towards the democratization of our cultural realms.

There are a number of problems with this type of argument. First of all, the argument tends towards an individualized interpretation of the social, which leads to a downplaying of societal structures, including the importance of organisational structures in providing cultural elites with safe havens, and the importance of discursive structures like professional identities and audience identities. Obviously, these structures are interdependent, as institutions act as discursive machineries, producing identities, and professional identities are driving forces for the functioning and legitimization of cultural institutions. These structural components make the Author more resistant than it seems. S/he has indeed found shelter in a series of organizations and institutions, protected by their professional structures and organizational cultures that provide networks of support and resources. The Author is also resistant at the cultural-discursive level, as the contemporary subject positions related to the Author (or the many culture professionals), turn out to be more rigid than expected (and sometimes desired). In other words, cultural professionals' identities remain embedded within hegemonic discourses on management, autonomy and expertise.

But this is not the only problem with the death-of-the-Author argument. Especially in the 1990s and 2000s we have witnessed a strong revival of this argument, connected to the changes in the communicational landscapes. The popularization of the internet, with all its potentials for interaction and participation fed into the cultural democratization argument, combined with the belief that these changes were new. This claim for novelty is highly problematic, as it tends to ignore the history of cultural participation, which stretches out much further than utopian ICT theories want us to believe. This article wants to combine both critiques, by looking at the 20th century history of participation within the cultural realm. Arguably, the arts played a significant role in producing these cultural-democratic discourses and practices, and for that reason this article will first discuss this history, only to move towards the debates on museums and participation afterwards. This historical overview aims to show that one should be careful with launching claims of novelty when discussing cultural participation. It will also allow me to emphasize the importance of discursive structures as conditions of possibility for the organization of participation. Over time, the articulation of

Transforming culture in the digital age

participation itself, and the discourses on how and to what degree power imbalances should be equalized, have put their mark on participatory theories and practices.

2. Participation and the world of the arts

In the world of the arts, participation has been thematized and practised in many variations[1], although what is termed 'participatory art' can hardly be considered a canonized art movement (any longer). Obviously, the artist has a strong power position in the creation of the artwork, but as Groys (20) remarks, this power position remains incomplete ever since art was secularized: "No modern artist would expect anyone to kneel before his work in prayer, expect practical assistance from it, or use it to avert danger." For its appreciation, secularized art has become dependent on arts markets (in many different forms and shapes), which generate financial value and on what Groys calls 'public taste', which cannot be equated with financial value. As Duchamp (77) wrote: "In the last analysis, the artist may shout from all the rooftops that he is a genius: he will have to wait for the verdict of the spectator in order that his declarations take a social value and that, finally, posterity includes him in the primers of Artist History." Nevertheless, artists obviously remain crucial actors in the creative-artistic process, which unavoidably results in a more passive position for the audiences of arts works. These audiences stroll (quietly) through museums and galleries, and (even more quietly) attend performances and screenings. This distance also allows them to pass their judgements from a position which is external to the artwork.

But in a number of cases art has also offered reflections on the always problematic relationship between the artist, the artwork and its audiences. In the case of participatory art, these reflections are translated into revisions of the traditional passive position of the audience, implicating the audience into the artwork. Here, the strong position of the artist, as creator of the artwork, does have an impact on the degree of participation that is allowed for. In many cases, members of the audience are interacting with an already produced work of art, are given guidelines on how to perform to generate or complete the artwork, or act in ways that are then incorporated into the artwork. Secondly, one should also not remain blind for the strengthening of the position of the artists through audience participation, as Groys (21) points out:

> When the viewer is involved in artistic practice, every piece of critique he utters is self-criticism. The decision on the part of the artist to relinquish his exclusive authorship would seem to primarily empower the viewer. This sacrifice ultimately benefits the artist, however, for it frees him from the power that the cold eye of the uninvolved viewer exerts over the resulting artwork.

An important starting point for these reflections on participatory art is Richard Wagner's essay *The Art-work of the Future*, who in his plea for the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (or the total artwork) accuses the arts of egoism, partially because the arts has divided itself into a variety of genres and became disconnected from the people, which are seen as the source of all creativity: "The Art-work is the living presentation of Religion;—but religions spring not from the artist's brain; their only origin is from the Folk [das Volk]." (Wagner 18) In his essay, Wagner calls upon his fellow-artists to return the arts to the people, in producing the artwork of the future:

> But to you I turn, —in the same sense as the Folk, albeit of necessity in your own mode of utterance,— to you, ye prudent men and intellectual, to offer you, with all the People's open-heartedness, the redemption from your egoistic incantations in the limpid spring of Nature, in the loving arm-caresses of the Folk—there where I found it; where it became for me my art-instructor; where, after many a battle between the hope within and the blank despair without, I won a dauntless faith in the assurance of the Future. (Wagner 11)

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1   One example is the exhibition The art of participation. 1950 to now, which was organized by Rudolf Frieling for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and which was on view from November 8, 2008 until February 8, 2009. The exhibition catalogue by Frieling, Groys, Atkins & Manovich has been very helpful in providing both reflective articles and examples.

Wagner's total artwork attempts to reconfigure the arts' position towards the people, supported by the argument that "The richest procreative force lies therefore in the utmost multiplicity." (Wagner 9) But as Groys (23-24) remarks, Wagner's attempt to establish an artistic fellowship with the people and to undermine the author's power, remains ambivalent, as the author remained in control of the stage and the codes of the Wagnerian operas remained almost impenetrable.

Later, twentieth century art movements like Futurism, Dadaism and Surrealism used provocation and scandal to decrease audience passivity by transforming the audience member into a "hostile participant, provoked, attacked and beaten by authors and actors" (Melzer 43) Lev-Aladgem and Jackson (2004) describe how Dada artists used strategies like putting glue on seats, selling the same entrance ticket to several people and pinching (female) visitors. At the end of the 1930s, Antonin Artaud developed the *Theatre of Cruelty*, which used similar strategies to decrease the distance between actors and audience, by confronting them with extreme sounds, light and gestures. But especially in the 1960s, a series of arts movements strongly emphasized the concept of participation. Bishop (15) mentions three movements: Situationism in France, Happening in the United States and Neo-concretism in Brazil. In France, the Situationist International, with Guy Debord as one of its main protagonists, emphasized the connection between art and (radical) politics, and critiqued the impact of capitalism on everyday life, leading for instance to pseudocommunication and a lack of participation. In the so-called situations (or "collective environments, ensembles of impressions determining the quality of a moment" (Debord 98)), from which the Situationist International derived its name, more intense life experience would become possible. A situation is "made to be lived by its constructors. The role of the 'public', if not passive at least a walk-on, must ever diminish, while the share of those who cannot be called actors but, in a new meaning of the term, 'livers' [viveurs], will increase." (Debord 98)

Happening, which first developed in the United States, "aimed to manipulate creatively the relationship between the presented materials, performers and spectators. […] Spectators became 'participants' who by carrying on simple 'tasks' and 'activities' aided in the creation of metaphors." (Lev-Aladgem & Jackson 209) Allan Kaprow, who is credited for having staged the first happening (Zimbardo "Allan Kaprow" 102), published a series of guidelines for happenings, which emphasized that the line between art and life should be kept fluid, the sources (of the happening) should originate from outside the arts, the happening should take place in widely spaced locales, time should be discontinuous and variable, the happening should be performed only once, and –most importantly in this context- "audiences should be eliminated entirely." (Kaprow 713). Kaprow (713) explains: "A Happening with only an emphatic response on the part of a seated audience is not a Happening but stage theatre," but he also resists the idea of having unprepared "participants" being submitted to the abuse of the artists. In contrast, Kaprow (714) prefers respectful events with participants that are willing and committed; at the same time the participants' professional talent is not a requirement. He furthermore nuances the idea that happenings necessarily have to have active audiences: participants might not always know that they are part of the happening –Kaprow mentions the example of a butcher that sells meat to a customer-performer- and a happening can also be staged for the audience just to watch it.

Quite a number of artists have used the medium of the happening, like for instance those affiliated with Warhol's Factory, or the Fluxus group, but these groups also used other formats to facilitate audience participation. In *Water Yam* and *Fluxkit*, George Brecht for instance produced collaborative toolkits, that included instructions for the actions of participants, but also for the creation of objects (Frieling "Towards participation in arts" 41). Nam June Paik's *Participation TV* allowed the visitor to produce voice-generated television images, what Zimbardo ("Nam June Paik") called "unpredictable explosions of lines," and Yoko One staged the *Cut Piece* performance, where audience members were invited on stage to cut off pieces of her clothes until she was nearly naked. In contrast to the Fluxus group's work, Andy Warhol's participatory art was more aimed to attempting to enlist others "to work towards the mass production of Warhol images." (Frieling "Andy Warhol" 90) For instance the *Do It Yourself* series, produced around 1962, invited audience members to finish paintings based on the paint-by-number hobby kits.

Although Joseph Beuys collaborated with Fluxus, and is sometimes described as post-Fluxus (Zimbardo, "Joseph Beuys" 130), his work remains distinct, but still very relevant for the debate on participatory art. Crucial to Beuys' work is his concept of the social plastic (also translated as social sculpture), which allows

Transforming culture in the digital age

13

him to address social issues through artistic strategies. Beuys resists the 'traditional' formalistic and aesthetic definitions of art, and aims to dismantle society in order to build "a social organism as a work of art" (Beuys, 125 – emphasis removed). In a lecture at the *Documenta 6* exhibition (which was telecast through satellite to more than 25 countries), Beuys said: "… such a notion of art would no longer refer exclusively to the specialists within the modern art world but extend to the whole work of humanity" (Beuys, quoted in Zimbardo "Joseph Beuys" 130). The strategy Beuys uses is to try to convince each citizen to give form to life, at both the individual and the collective level. As Saper (23) remarks, this brings Beuys to combine an "extreme individualism" with a "collective internationalism." This also brings Beuys to his most often quoted statement: "Every human being is as artist" (Beuys 125). One example is his *7000 Oaks* project, where for Beuys (and later his son) planted 7000 trees in the German city of Kassel, where the *Documenta* exhibitions take place. Initiated at *Documenta 7* in 1982, Beuys and many volunteers intervened into the urban space of Kassel by planting these trees, each accompanied by a basalt stone. The project, with its biological, artistic, cultural, ecological and pedagogical components ended, one year after Beuys' death, at *Documenta 8* in 1987 (see Beuys, Blum & Rappmann). Although Beuys charismatic figure and his position as an artistic celebrity (Frieling "Towards participation in arts" 44) often complicated the participatory process in his own artworks, (some of) his work did allow for audience participation. One example here is the 100 day installation at *Documenta 5* (in 1972) called the *Bureau for Direct Democracy*. Here, Beuys installed an information office at *Documenta*, where he discussed the possibilities of direct democracy through the use of referenda (Beuys & Schwarze).

Finally, the neo-concretist movement, (co-)founded by South-Americans Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica, emphasized the need for participants to manipulate the artwork as way of understanding it (through their senses). The *Neo-concrete Manifesto* from 1959 calls for the need to focus on more intuitive approaches to art and on natural subject matters, instead of following formulaic representational styles and reducing art to objects (Congdon & Hallmark 67). Clark's *Bichos* series used geometric metal constructions, inviting visitors to pick up, play with and/or stand on (Congdon & Hallmark 67); her *Dialogues* series aimed at creating dialogues between audience members, for instance by binding together their hands with a Möbius strip (Pellico "Lygia Clark" 104). As Congdon and Hallmark (68) describe, the bodily senses played a key role in the participatory process: "She was concerned with activating participants' bodily senses along with their responses to those experiences." Oiticica also emphasized the bodily senses, for instance in his Whitechapel experiment where he "asked people to take off their shoes before entering large boxes filled with sand and straw or cabinlike structures with mattresses and blankets." (Pellico "Hélio Oiticica" 107) Not surprisingly, dance became one of Oiticica media: He organised disruptive events with participants from Samba schools dressed in capes called *Parangolés* (see Braga). For Oiticica (106), the *Parangolé* "demands participation through dance," allowing for a "transformation of the 'total act of the self'." These transformations are seen as characteristic of what Oiticica (108) calls 'environmental art': "… being and indeed requiring the collaboration of various artists with differing ideas, solely concentrated on this general idea of a 'total participatory creation' – to which would be added works created through the anonymous participation of the spectators, who actually would be better described as 'participants'." Frieling ("Towards participation in arts" 43) comments in a rather positive fashion on the work of the neo-concretist movement, writing that the organization of "communal gatherings and discourses […] pre-figured the idea of an open system that is constructed by participants-what we might call 'true' participation today."

In addition to these three arts movements, a similar emphasis on audience participation developed in the world of theatre. Again, this evolution was not new; already in his 1924 essay *Theatre, Circus, Variety*, Moholy-Nagy (25) had called for a new position for the audience: "It is time to produce a kind of stage activity which will no longer permit the masses to be silent spectators, which will not only excite them inwardly but will let them take hold and participate-actually allow them to fuse with the action on the stage at the peak of cathartic ecstasy." Also Bertholt Brecht (see Steinweg) had experimented with decreasing the audience / actor separation, for instance in his *Lehrstücke* project (which he abandoned, but was later reinvigorated the Brazilian director Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, working with 'spect-actors' (Boal)). Especially in the 1960s and 1970s more structural changes in theatre theory led to the rearticulation of theatre as a

text-based art to an open, playful and social event (Lev-Aladgem & Jackson 207). In so-called alternative and third theatre, audience participation implied "taking part in the play: dancing, playing a scene with the performers, engaging fellow spectators in conversation as part of the play, removing or exchanging clothing, or any of the many other kinds of physical involvement possible." (Schechner 73) One example here is the work of the Italian director Eugenio Barba and the Odin Teatret, who used a barter system in which the audience was invited to themselves (instead of paying for the performance) generate a performance: "A play is exchanged for songs and dances, a display of acrobatics for a demonstration of training exercises, a poem for a monologue, etc." (Watson 22).

After the heydays of participatory art in the 1960s and 1970s, it gradually became less popular, which has led Frieling ("Towards participation in arts" 45) to describe the 1980s as "a decade that avoided exploration of participatory social concepts." However, this does not imply that participatory art completely disappeared. As Manovich (57) points out, the first interactive computer installations already appeared in the 1980s. Before, the arts' fascination with media technology had provided important stimuli for audience participation, as for instance Herbert Schumacher's (Zimbardo, "telewissen") *Documenta der Leute* (People's Documenta) at *Documenta 5* (1972) shows. Schumacher's group used portable video equipment to interview passers-by and to play these interviews in a van outside the exhibition. A slightly later example was Jochen Gerz' (ZKM) 1980 video installation *Purple Cross for absent now*, where he is seen in close-up on two video monitors, with a rubber rope around his neck. Visitors, who could only see Gerz and the other end of the rope, could then test the liveness of the situation by pulling the rope and tightening the noose. But especially the digital revolution stimulated participatory art, which became popular again in the 1990s. Apart from a name change -interactive arts became a more popular denominator (see Dinkla)- there were a number of significant changes in the articulation of audience participation in this period, as also the societal context had structurally changed. As Bourriaud (163) remarked in 1998, the "social utopias and revolutionary hopes [have] given way to day-to-day micro-utopias and mimetic strategies." In the 1990s, the emphasis was placed on interactive art that focussed on "the experience of the user as an act of communication, on the social space of the interface, and on the dynamics of interaction." (Penny 58) One of the key concepts of the era, Bourriaud's relational aesthetics, emphasizes human relations and context as starting point, where "[t]he status of the viewer alternates between that of a passive consumer, and that of a witness, an associate, a client, a guest, a co-producer and a protagonist." (168) Bourriaud (162) explicitly points to the responsibility of the artist ("for the symbolic models he is showing") and shies away from the concept of participation. Instead interaction and communication become emphasized:

> Their works bring into play modes of social exchange, interaction with the viewer inside the aesthetic experience he or she is offered, and processes of communication in their concrete dimensions as tools that can to be used to bring together individuals and human groups. (Bourriaud 165)

Of course, participatory (or interactive) art in the 1990s and the 21st century is not exclusively new (or digital) media art. In 1997, the Interactive Arts Jury (107) of the Ars Electronica festival (one of the leading yearly media arts festivals) wrote that the 'usual' terms to evaluate interactive art were no longer adequate because of the inflation of the concept of interactivity. Moving away from a definition which links interaction to the digital -the 'usual' terms- they state that in interactive artworks the interaction "takes place between people, between people and machines, and between machines themselves." One of the many examples to illustrate the complexity of 21st century interactive art is Markus Kison's *Touched echo*[2] (which was 'exhibited' at the *Brühlsche Terrrasse* in Dresden from 2007 to 2009, but also at Ars Electronica in 2008). In this artwork, a small display invites the visitor to lean with his/her elbows on the railing (of the *Brühlsche Terrrasse* or its substitute at Ars Electronica) and to cover the ears. If these instructions are followed, sound is transferred from the metal of the railing into the body of the visitor and the visitor can hear the sounds of heavy planes and explosions, reminiscent of the bombing raid of 13 February 1945 which destroyed the city of Dresden. Other interactive art is characterized by the absence of technology. For instance in what Bhabha has called conversational art, and Finkelpearl dialogue-based public art, artists organise human interaction. Kester (77)

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2   See http://www.markuskison.de/touched_echo/

for instance refers to the work of the Austrian arts collective Wochenklausur, who in 1994 brought politicians, journalists, sex workers and activists from the city of Zurich together in order to discuss drug policy. These dialogues eventually resulted in the establishment of a pension in Zurich, where drug-addicted sex workers could find a safe haven.

3. Moving participation into to the museum

The 1990s did not only witness a rediscovery of participatory / interactive art, also the institutions of display and conservation –the museum- became implicated in the debates about participation, as a series of museum theorists started to advocate a new museology or new museum theory. One foundational text was Vergo's reader, appropriately entitled *The new museology*, in which he and a number of authors advocated a reconfiguration of our ways of looking at the museum. In his introduction, Vergo ("Introduction" 3) refers to the dissatisfaction with the 'old' museology, which focussed too much on museum methods, and was not reflexive enough about the museum's purposes and identities. In the same introduction, Vergo also distanced himself from claiming ultimate novelty and exclusivity[1], and mono-perspectivism. Within this diverse collection of articles, a number of authors (plead to) rethink the museum's relation to the visitor, and the power imbalances that characterise that relationship. For instance, Merriman (167-168) -drawing heavily on Bourdieu's concept of distinction- concludes that "… the action of museums in contemporary culture is to divide society into those who have the 'competence' to perceive museum visiting as a worthwhile leisure opportunity, and those who do not." Wright (148) takes a similar position: "The present fiction in museums –that every visitor is equally motivated, equipped, and enabled 'to experience art directly'- should be abandoned. It is patronising, humiliating in practice, and inaccurate." Secondly, also the political nature of the museum and its functioning as a discursive machinery is thematized. Especially Greenhalgh's (96) chapter on international exhibitions offers a strong case, where he shows how these exhibitions "recognized the socio-political climate of their time and they responded to it."

In later publications on new museology / museum theory, this emphasis on representation, politics and power is deepened, and combined with a more explicit agenda for social and cultural change. Critiques on the elitism, exclusionary practices and mono-vocality of museums (Ross) form the basis of a museum reform project that aims for "the transformation of the museum from a site of worship and awe to one of discourse and critical reflection that is committed to examining unsettling histories with sensitivity to all parties." (Marstine 5). Secondly, also the emphasis in the inclusion of the museums' communities is continued, witness Marstine's (5) plea for a museum that "is transparent in its decision-making and willing to share power." Through this strong emphasis on inclusion and power, the notion of audience participation is brought into the debate again, for instance through the recognition that visitors and communities also have cultural expertise, as Halpin (56) writes:

> the new or critical museology about which I am speaking might be a useful museology in service to a community, instead of the state and the élite. A museology practised by named, committed and creative professionals who know that people other than themselves are also cultural experts.

Readers like *Cultural diversity. Developing museum audience in Britain* (Hooper-Greenwill) and *Museums, society, inequality* (Sandell) focus strongly on the importance of inclusionary practices, combined with the provision of series of examples. One example is Hemming's chapter in the first reader, which has the (rather telling) title *Audience participation: working with local people at the Geffrye Museum*. In this chapter, Hemming discusses the exhibition *Chinese Homes: Chinese traditions in English homes*, which ran for three months in the Geffrye museum in Hackney (London), in combination with the educational courses organized by the museum for different groups of people within the community. Through the collaboration with a Chinese Community Centre, members of the Chinese community were involved in the construction of the Chinese Homes exhibition, by combining group discussions on content (and access to preparatory meetings) with oral history approaches. In his non-celebratory process evaluation, Hemming (1997: 176)

points to the problems related to language, resources and time, but also emphasizes the importance of audience participation:

> Involving the community in making decisions does take time, but also the will to make it happen. However, if the museum had tried to impose its own narrative on the exhibition without the consultation process, the results would have been disastrous. The chances are that the exhibition would have alienated the Chinese community and been a rather shallow attempt to portray their culture.

4. Conclusion

This historical overview shows how cultural configurations and ideologies change, with avant-garde experiments with audience participation becoming significant cultural movements in the 1960s and 1970s, only to be abandoned in the 1980s, a decade which is sometimes referred to as the 'lost decade'. After this decade of silence, there was a new upsurge of participatory arts in the 1990s, but in a new structural setting, where the ambitions had been tempered. Interaction became the nodal point of the attempts to decrease the distance between artist and audience, resulting in a less radical reworking of the power balance between them. Still, within the same decade, also a series of cultural institutions became more sensitive towards these participatory issues, broadening the range of participatory theories and practices, but at the same time still softening their radical nature.

This trade-off between 'going deep' and 'going wide' brings us to the traditional interplay of resistance and incorporation, where radical ideologies are disarmed by their partial integration into mainstream systems and cultures. Arguably, we can see this dialectical process taking place over time, which illustrates the impact of discursive-ideological structures on how we see participation in a specific era, and what kind of intensity and balance we consider valuable and/or tolerable. It also shows that participation is not new, and that care should be taken not to fall into the trap of amnesia and to celebrate the present-day configuration yet again as the end of history.

At the same time care should also be taken not to romanticize the participatory experiments of the 1960s and 1970s. Moreover, it would be naive and even harmful to reduce the arts and museums to one specific democratic role, however important this role may be. But these experiments show that it is possible, within a plurality of artistic and exhibitionary practices, to structurally reconsider the relationship between art, artist and audience. Given the cultural status of the artwork and the artist, this has never been an easy process, and there is much to learn from these periods of intense and artist-driven experimentation with participation, so that (a segment of) the arts and museum worlds can contribute to the continued democratization of our cultural democracies.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Nico Carpentier

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Notes

1   See Halpin (1997) for a brief historical analysis of earlier museum (theory) reform projects.

Transforming culture in the digital age

Access on multimedia

Accessible Digital Culture for Disabled People

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1. Introduction: the Digital Revolution – Freedoms that Exclude

The impact of the digital revolution is of a magnitude at least that of the Gutenberg printing revolution. It profoundly affects the way we learn, shape our thoughts and query reality. The production and presentation of culture is being re-shaped in myriad ways. Information is instantly accessible. Almost boundless freedoms have emerged for people to engage with culture in ever new personalised ways through the digital media. But are these freedoms granted in equal measure to all citizen?

In spite of the extent and depth of the changes, there has barely been any discussion in the cultural sector worldwide about the accessibility of:

- digital media for disabled people, as users and creators

- digital content, such as website information, online collections and learning resources, mobile interpretive tours and cultural productions

It is widely known that digital technology has enhanced opportunities for learning and employment for a number of disabled people, who enjoy access, to varying degrees, to assistive technology. That's only one side of the picture (and a one-sided one). Far less known is that fact that the web and digital technology are spaces full of pervasive barriers. An audit of webaccessibility published in 2005 by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, England showed that disabled people face 216 potential stumbling blocks on the average cultural sector webpage (MLA 19).

The digital train has left the station with unstoppable power. Fortunately there are stops and stations at which to refuel. It is of paramount importance for the equality of chances that the digital divide between disabled and non-disabled people is being narrowed.

This talk examines:

- the accessibility of digital heritage services for disabled people: museum and heritage websites, online cultural collections and learning resources and on-site digital technology

- the barriers, the good-practice, as well as institutional and creative ways forward

- international policies for the human, cultural and digital rights of disabled people, which cultural ministries worldwide like not to think about

- the cultural exclusion of disabled people, which is compounded by digital exclusion in the cultural sector.

Transforming culture in the digital age

2. The Cultural Exclusion of Disabled People

2.1 A History of Cultural Apartheid

It is still uncommon to talk about the 'cultural equality of disabled people'. Not so long ago talk about making museums and cultural services accessible to disabled people has been seen an optional and benevolent act of charity (Delin 6).

Lack of access was seen as the disabled person's problem. The idea, that cultural venues, as a service to the public, have a responsibility to welcome all, is far from being universally embraced in the cultural sector.

Newly built museums and museum extensions provide a compelling example of cultural apartheid being systematically practiced against disabled people. Billions of Euros have been spent over the past decade on hundreds of new museums and their exhibitions. Only a small minority have planned even a small measure of intellectual access for casual visitors who are visually impaired, deaf or who have learning disabilities (Weisen, "Dark Ages" 18). Those which plan in some degree of shared experience with disabled people often do not care to evaluate what quality of service is provided. In terms of institutional knowledge management, this is a culture of neglect.

2.2 Barriers to Cultural Experience

2.2.1 A whole organisation approach to accessibility

The accessibility of cultural venues is a complex and multi-dimensional reality. For accessibility to work optimally, consideration for accessibility needs to be seamlessly integrated into all aspects of the museum experience: visitor information –including via digital media; the physical environment, signage, exhibitions, interpretation and, last but not least, institutional attitude and staff welcome. Of course, direct knowledge of disabled people is key to good service provision. Budgeting and resource allocation which is inclusive of disabled people is fundamental. To be effective, accessibility needs to be planned in right from the outset into every project. In short, these are some of the key elements of a holistic approach to accessibility. Digital media need to be part of it and allowed to deploy their full emancipating potential. The failure to embrace such an approach will result in countless unnecessary access barriers being erected.

2.2.2 Experiences of disabled people

Let's listen to the experiences of a few disabled friends and colleagues of mine:

"I will never go back to a museum. There is nothing about my culture. It is as if deaf people did not exist."

"The theatre is new and physically accessible, but staff behaves as if I came from another planet. I prefer to go to the other theatre, even though staff need to carry me up a few stairs."

"The person at reception was hopeless! They didn't have any idea about what services they had available for visually impaired people"

Getting to know the experiential ways and requirements of disabled people is key to dismantling barriers. For example, a cultural organisation remains largely unaware of the requirements of hard of hearing people. They are by far the largest group of disabled people and, in many countries, hearing loops have become very affordable (Euros 150-200). Yet, less than 1/3 of reception desks had a hearing loop system (Scope).

Barriers are inter-dependent and repeated experience of unnecessary barriers leads to frustration, anger, resignation and finally to cultural exclusion.

2.2.3 Museums worldwide do not demonstrate a systematic approach to access

The few examples above – taken from many possible ones; bring home awareness that the creation of barrier-free spaces and cultural experiences requires a systematic approach. The uncomfortable truth is that such an

approach is lacking worldwide. Less than half museums, libraries, archives in the UK, for example, are building commitment to accessibility into their core budgets, and this situation is typical for global practice (Bell et al. p 4) – and these figures are optimistically skewed, as they derive from a small, responsive sample.

2.3 The Human and Cultural Rights of Disabled People: The Policies States and Cultural Organisations Still Like to Forget

2.3.1 Cultural participation is a human right of disabled people

The idea that disabled people have cultural rights is as yet to become an integral part of the philosophy, vision and practice of most cultural organisations worldwide (Weisen, "How Accessible" 245).

The cultural rights of disabled people are implicitly enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 27.1):

> "Everyone has the right freely to enjoy the arts and the cultural life of the community…."

The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, which came into force in 2008, explicitly recognises the cultural rights of disabled people for the first time: "States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities…" (article 30). The Convention is also explicit for the first time in recognising deaf people as a linguistic minority (as countries such as Finland and the UK have done earlier). This is important, because it builds the case for cultural organisations providing services in Sign Language, live and via digital media.

2.3.2 The good European policies and the lack of commitment to implementing them

The European Union and the Council of Europe have developed some of the most advanced cultural rights policies for disabled people, but the signs are that these are not being implemented. In 2003, the Council of the European Union passed the 'Council Resolution of 6 May 2003 on accessibility of cultural infrastructure and cultural activities for people with disabilities' and agreed to monitor measures taken by member states by the end of 2005. To date no such progress monitoring exercise has been undertaken.

The Council of Europe Action Plan (2006-2015) on "full participation of people with disabilities in society' emphasises equal opportunities in culture (chapter 3.2, p 13). It calls on member states to 'start with an evaluation of their existing disability policy programmes and identify in which areas progress has yet to be made …..and which specific actions will have to be carried out." (chapter 1.5, p 8). To date, I know of no single Council of Europe member state, that has undertaken an evaluation of its cultural equality policy programmes for disabled people!

The Council of Europe Recommendation R(92)6 on the independent living of disabled people (1992) is the first international policy to call for the implementation of the cultural rights of deaf and disabled people:

> "Government institutions, leisure and cultural organisations should develop comprehensive access policies and action programmes designed to significant and lasting improvements for all people with disabilities." (chapter VIII, section 8.5)

This Recommendation is conceptually strong, because it recognises the necessity for systemic and systematic change. As such it is unsurpassed in its uncompromising clarity. No national government can claim to have implemented this recommendation, as none has even developed a set of tools with which to measure whether 'significant and lasting improvements' have taken place.

e-accessibility, which covers all areas of life and is of profound significance is one area in which the EU has been continuously active. It has been policy since 2002 that "public sector web sites …. must be designed to be accessible." (Commission of the European Communities 4; European i2010 initiative on e-Inclusion). Information on national policies regarding web accessibility can be found on the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium.

3. Cultural Websites: The Experience of Disabled People

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, England, is one of the few strategic cultural bodies to have commissioned an audit of sector web accessibility (MLA/City University). Although published in 2005, it remains unusually interesting because of its strong user focus. In addition to customary automated testing, testing with disabled users took place in realistic settings. 300 museums, libraries and archives websites in England and 25 large museums overseas were audited. As web accessibility has not significantly improved since, the findings remain relevant today.

Only 3% of websites met World Wide Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG1) Level AA, the EU e-government requirement websites. The average number of instances of WCAG1 checkpoint violations that occurred per page was 56.9.

Table 1: Average number of violations and frequency per page

Type of checkpoint error	Violations	Instances
Automated	5.9	56.9
Manual 'warning'	34.3	159.0
Total	40.2	215.9

The average museum, library and archive home page may have as many as 215.9 instances of potential stumbling blocks to users. This is a particularly worrying situation when we consider that many of the problems users actually encounter when using web sites are 'warning' violations of the checkpoints that do indeed require manual checking.

15 disabled User Panel members attempted a total of 120 tasks with 20 web sites selected for in-depth testing (20 web sites x 2 tasks per web site x 3 evaluators per web site = 120). Finding out opening times and access information were typical tasks.

The Panel members succeeded in 75.6% of the attempted tasks and failed in 24.4% of them. Failure to complete tasks was not attributed a minority of the participants, but from a broad cross-section of each User Panel.

Table 2: Disability group task success

User Group	Tasks succeeded
Blind	66.7%
Dyslexic	82.5%
Partially sighted	77.5%

The Panel members, when asked about the extent to which their impairments were taken into account gave a mean rating of 3.4 on a scale of 1 to 7.

The problems observed by the research team and the Panel members were collated and categorised. Overall, 189 instances of problems were identified. 147 (78%) directly related to WCAG1 guidelines, whilst 42 (22%) were not covered by these. Below are the most common problems users encountered. These problems undoubtedly explain the failure rates summarised earlier.

Table 3: Most frequent user testing problems

Key problems experienced by User Panel as a whole	Instances	In WCAG1
1. Target of links not clearly identified	30	Yes
2. Information presented in dense blocks with no clear headings to identify informational content	17	Yes
3. Inappropriate use of colours and poor contrast between content and background	14	Yes
4. Navigation mechanisms used in an inconsistent manner	13	Yes
5. Links not logically grouped, no facility to skip navigation	10	Yes

6.	Text and images do not increase in scale when browser option selected	7	Yes
7.	External information and navigation on page, not associated with page content	6	No
8.	Important information not located at top of list, page etc	6	Yes
9.	ALT tags on images non-existent or unhelpful	6	Yes
10.	Graphics and text size too small	5	No
11.	Distraction and annoyance caused by spawned and pop-up windows	5	Yes
12.	Labels not associated with their controls	5	Yes
13.	Images and graphical text used in-place of plain text	5	Yes

These 13 problems constitute 68% of the total number of problems uncovered during the user testing evaluations. Over half of these problems relate to matters regarding orientation and navigation.

Poor page design (in terms of layout) led to a recurrent orientation problem for all the user groups involved in the evaluations. Both the research team and the members of the User Panel considered many sites to have overly complex and "cluttered" pages with dense blocks of text. No clear indication of main headings, secondary headings and so on was a recurring problem. While sighted users could infer some of this logic from text sizes, colour coding, etc, blind users did not have access to this and so pages were deemed "illogical", meaning they lacked a logical structure.

Ambiguously named links that led to unexpected content were responsible for many of the navigation problems users encountered i.e. opening times were often found under 'Contact Us'. As one dyslexic user commented "…important information like opening times and disabled access should not be hidden under other obscure titles".

Colour scheme and contrast used for page designs accounted for many of the complaints from the dyslexic and partially sighted users. The colour scheme often affected these users' abilities to perform tasks, particularly when the contrast between the text and the background was inadequate. Pale text on pale backgrounds was a common problem. Moreover, different users benefit from different colour schemes. Although colour schemes can be changed by users (e.g. by attaching their own style sheets to their browser) very few users seemed to be aware of this.

No '*skip navigation*' link at the top of pages enabling blind users to jump to the main content of a page (by-passing the page's top navigation) was a specific problem for Panel members who used screen readers. When such links were missing, blind participants were compelled to listen to the navigation elements that commonly appeared at the top of pages: repetitive information they often describe as audio "clutter" and find very frustrating and exhausting.

External navigational links. Numerous academic and local authority museum, archive and library sites are integrated (relatively) into a host institutions external site. This caused confusion to all user groups. The user was commonly unaware that the external navigational links did not directly relate to main content of the page; "keeps giving me information about other things…information about Civic Centre. Think I must keep wandering off" (comment by partially sighted participant).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, many of the positive aspects reported by Panel members were the opposite of the problems outlined above. For example, partially sighted participants appreciated "good use of colours to highlight visited links". Blind users enjoyed logically structured pages, and as one user put it; "proper links, labelled individually and properly mean no trawling is necessary." The other user groups also liked sites that had clear navigation mechanisms, logical page layouts, clear contrast, reasonably sized text and straight-forward language.

The MLA report is a prime example which shows how important user involvement in testing is. It identifies significant room for improvement. It also affirms (against a simplistic understanding of web accessibility) that an accessible web site does not need to be plain, boring or text only, just creatively designed for all. The

needs of disabled users must be addressed with appropriate alternatives for users who due their disability and/or assistive technology cannot efficiently interact with specific features. It advocates the use of exciting technologies and designs in the construction of web sites.

4. The Accessibility of Cultural Content: A Unique Role for Cultural Websites and Digital Media

The MLA audit highlighted that museums and heritage websites can make a "unique contribution" through accessible presentation and interpretation of collections and learning resources, for example by providing descriptions of digital images for visually impaired people or information in British Sign Language (MLA 34).

However, less than a handful of sites provided these services, and when so, these were of very modest scope. No site audited demonstrated engagement with users with a learning difficulty – who are likely to find scholarly and curatorial language a barrier. The number of museums and heritage websites which provide any of these services remains shockingly small in 2010.

The Jodi Mattes Trust works to change this. It gives the annual Jodi Awards for accessible digital media to museums, libraries, archives and heritage sites. It celebrates best practice and promotes the human, cultural and digital rights of disabled people. Given since 2003 in the UK, the trust has launched an International Award for best website in 2009. The Jodi Awards website provides a range of informative best practice case-studies of Jodi Awards 2009 winners (Jodi Mattes Trust). Two case-studies of previous winners, whose project was particularly memorable, are presented below.

4.3 Best Web Site Practise: Tate imap – Creative, Attractive, Pedagogical

Tate imap, Jodi Award 2006 winner, still sets a standard for global best practice (Tate Modern). This site does what seems impossible to many people by making modern art - and its key concepts, accessible to blind and partially sighted people.

Created to provide learning resources for the Picasso-Matisse exhibition (and expanded since), it is one of first to describe collections for visually impaired people. Caro Howell, then Manager Special Projects, and currently Head of Education at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London, describes how the project originated from a sense of frustration at the lack of learning materials for visually impaired pupils. She was horrified when during a school visit a visually impaired pupil was asked by her tutor to draw a dragon whilst the rest of the class was to be initiated to the fine concepts of the emergence of abstract art.

Tate i-map represents paintings in high colour contrast, making them easier to see for many partially-sighted people. Colour contrast is being used as an integral part of the presentation and analysis of the works of art, making compositional elements stand out.

The clever use of animation ingeniously breaks the 'no flash' dogma propagated during the early years of the WCAG1. Moving from de-constructed fragments to the re-constructed whole of a painting, the slow motion animations little by little builds up a compelling picture of the transformation of figurative into modern art. This enriches every viewer's understanding. Visually impaired viewers can replay the animation when this helps get the picture just like they may replay favourite scenes from a DVD at home.

The approach taken to provide access for totally blind viewers is equally innovative. The black on white outline drawings of the paintings can be printed out in schools and centres for visually impaired people, as well as blind people who have access to a 'tactile photocopier' and 'swell paper'. In the first month of the website some 3,000 drawings have been downloaded, demonstrating that a demand exists. Tactile drawings are not new in themselves – they have been used for some hundred and fifty years in education. What is new is their availability online in the cultural sector. On their own they make no sense, but Tate i-map also provides essential descriptive and interpretive information.

4.4 Best Digital Media Practise: A Holistic Approach to Engaging With Deaf Audiences

Wolverhampton Arts and Museum Service, Jodi Award 2007 winner, remains a prime example of a museum taking a systematic approach to removing accessibility barriers for deaf people (Wolverhampton Arts and Museum Service). Accessibility is usually patchy and the service offered highly restricted. Opportunities for casual visits – just 'dropping in'; remain all too rare; yet they really are a condition for enjoyment of cultural freedoms. Poverty of choice is a deterrent for may disabled people.

Wolverhampton Arts and Museum Service exemplifies how a medium size museum can deploy limited resources in a thoughtful way to provide choice and a 'portfolio' of services. The service embarked on a project to produce a PDA guide with British Sign Language (BSL) of Bantock House, which would enable deaf visitors to visit at a time of their choosing. In the process, the service became quickly aware that the pda guide would need to be publicised in Sign Language! Website information in British Sign Language was produced. The videos for the PDA and the website have been filmed by a local company of deaf people who are all BSL users, communicating effortlessly with member of the deaf community.

Aware that the pda guide – which offers the freedom to 'drop in'; only offers one story, regular guided BSL tours have been introduced to widen access to the collections in personalised ways. In 2008, Wolverhampton Arts and Museums Service organised an exhibition of Deaf History about the lives of deaf people in Wolverhampton. In the process, it became quite possibly the first museum service in the UK ever to create archival footage in BSL – raising important questions of collections policies and representation of deaf and disabled people in collections. It provided a space in which local communities could get to meet one of least known and most segregated of its communities. A deaf person was employed part-time to market Wolverhampton Arts and Museum Service's offerings to deaf community people – someone who knows how to communicate with the target audience.

Wolverhampton combines a whole range of approaches, and involved deaf people directly in service development. 'Traditional' museum offerings such as live guided tours and a social history exhibition go hand in hand with the use of digital media – a pda, website information and archival social history footage.

5. Accessible Digital Culture – Human Right, Political Need, Ethical Duty

This talk showed that:

- the participation of disabled people in cultural life is a recognised human and cultural right

- in spite of progress, disabled people continue to face significant barriers to culture, and specifically so in digital media

- national ministries for culture do not implement the policy commitments and aspirations for cultural equality they have expressed in policy documents

- few cultural organisations make disability equality and access integral to the whole planning process – and therefore are to be held responsible for the creation of vast numbers of unnecessary access barriers

- for these reasons, there are instances in which disabled people are clearly being denied their cultural rights

This talk also:

- highlighted the largely untapped potential of digital media to be deployed in the service of the cultural equality of disabled people

- drew attention to inspiring best practice

- affirms the belief that access and elegance, access and creativity are not opposites, but go hand in hand

- holds up the unshakable belief that culture without concern for sharing its cultural wealth is uncivilised

- affirms the urgency for action

It concludes with a few general recommendations, expressed in a spirit of burning patience and burning impatience:

1. Ministries for culture should aim high and develop strategic implementation programmes for the cultural and digital rights of disabled people, which bring 'lasting and significant change' as called for by Council of Europe Resolution R(92)6.

2. Disability equality should be a criterion for all cultural funding.

3. Cultural organisations should make disability equality and access integral to all their work, including the budget.

4. equality and access for disabled people should be in the script of every brief for digital projects

5. Disabled people should be involved in the process.

6. The cultural sector should learn from the further education experience and further adapt the holistic model of web accessibility developed by Brian Kelly, Lawrie Phipps and Caro Howell (Kelly et al.).

Whatever our role and contribution, we can take inspiration from Ghandi's humanising spirit of service. It is within our power and inner freedom to apply some of our passive admiration for Ghandi into the active every-day life of our cultural institutions:

> "A customer is the most important visitor to our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interruption on our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider on our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him. He is doing us a favour by giving us opportunity to do so."

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Understanding Visitors' Experiences with Multimedia Guides in Cultural Spaces

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1. Introduction

The use of the technology in cultural spaces, such as museums, art galleries, historic houses, archeological sites and so on, is not new (for simplicity we will use the terms cultural space and museum throughout this paper to cover all such venues). Tallon (2008) have traced the use of handheld technologies such as audio and multimedia guides in cultural spaces back to 1952 at the Stedlijik Museum in Amsterdam. This initial effort was followed by a range of other devices, for example the "Sound Trek" audio guide at the American Museum of Natural History in 1961, the Sony Walkman type system in the late 1970's for the famous "Treasures of Tutankhamun" exhibition, and the first random access guide in the Louvre Museum in 1993. Now audio guides and increasingly multimedia guides are used almost universally. These may now have still images, video clips, sound effects, and music, as well as the traditional spoken commentary. For simplicity we will refer to all such devices as multimedia guides in our discussion.

We are interested in two aspects of how multimedia guides are now evolving: *personalization* of information and *localization* of information. Multimedia guides in cultural spaces now follow one of two well-established conventions. Either they provide visitors with a particular path through the exhibits, a directed tour, introducing the exhibits and points of interest in a fixed, but logical order (often called a multimedia tour); or they allow visitors to move freely around an exhibition, selecting which order they view particular exhibits and points of interest (random access). In both cases, the information provided to all visitors is the same, regardless of their particular interests in the exhibits and their personal capabilities (e.g. visual or hearing impairments). The guides also rely on visitors knowing where they are and informing the system (e.g. by entering the number from the label of the exhibit they are currently viewing).

Advances in technology mean that both of these limitations in interaction with multimedia guides can now begin to change radically. Personalization in particular becomes important because visitors may feel overwhelmed by the amount of information provided to them in the multimedia guide. With supplementary background information, interviews and explanations, visitors may be having difficulties in finding the right information at the right time. Like users of the Web, they can become "lost in hyperspace" (Otter, and Johnson).

The personalization concept is not limited to the content of the multimedia guide, but can also include personalization of devices (visitors may bring their own device such as a PDA or a smartphone) and personalization of the interface to the information (visitors may prefer a large font or an altered colour combinations). Personalization has been used in many websites but also in e-learning portals, in tourism, finance, culture and health applications (Bowen, and Filippini-Fantoni; Filippini-Fantoni; Filippini-Fantoni, Bowen, and Numerico). However, personalization is not without its own problems. Silvia Filippini-Fantoni found that some visitors in her evaluation of the Carrara Marble Museum website had difficulties understanding and using the personalization system and felt that it was confusing and not effective (Filippini-Fantoni).

Localization technologies also have great potential to improve the visitor experience in cultural spaces. Numerous localizing and locating technologies currently exist, including Bluetooth, infrared, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), WiFi and in outdoor locations, GPS (Filippini-Fantoni and Bowen). As yet, none of these technologies has emerged as the definite one to use, with the exception of GPS for outdoor locating. However, localizing technologies will soon be able to do many useful things for museum visitors, not only the obvious one of saving them the necessity of reading the label on the exhibit and enter it into their guide. We will be able to pass that onerous chore to the multimedia guide, which will not only be able to understand where the visitor is now, but what route they have followed to come to this point and then provide information that suits that path. For example, in 2005, a system called PhoneGuide was developed and tested at the Senckenberg Museum in Frankfurt and the Museum for Pre- and Early History in Weimar (Föckler et al.). This device is equipped with pervasive tracking technology for context awareness and sensing the location of visitors in the museum.

As cultural spaces introduce these exciting new technologies, it is important to understand how they affect the visitor experience. Research in human-computer interaction has recently been interested in how engaging and immersing people find their technologies (e.g. Cheng and Cairns; Jennett et al.) as well as how useful and usable they are. They have even begun to explore how to apply this paradigm to the study of museum exhibits (Haywood and Cairns).

We are setting out on a programme of research to investigate the uses and effects of personalization and localization on the experiences of visitors to cultural spaces and how to best deploy these new technologies to enhance visitors' experiences. We will take both a qualitative and quantitative approach to this question, so as a first step we want to develop standard questionnaires to measure both visitors' overall experience, particularly the engagement, with the exhibition (the Museum Experience Scale) and the usefulness and usability of the multimedia guide (the Multimedia Guide Scale). In this work we are inspired by the work done on developing a scale on immersion (a slightly different concept from engagement) in computer technologies such as computer games by Cairns and his colleagues (e.g. Cheng and Cairns; Jennett et al.) as well as the work on measuring visitor experience in museums by Pekarik, Doering and Karns. In developing the Multimedia Guide Scale for multimedia guides, we draw on work measuring the usability of all types of technology (e.g. Petrie and Bevan) as well as work specifically on multimedia guides (e. g. Boehner et al.; Naismith and Smith; Pianesi et al.).

In this paper we will present the results of our first steps to develop the two scales, some preliminary results, and our plans for the next steps in our research.

2. Method

2.1 Design

Two scales are under development: one to measure the experience of museum visitors with the exhibition they have visited, particularly their sense of engagement (the Museum Experience Scale); one to measure their experiences with multimedia guides (the Multimedia Guide Scale). In this first stage of scale development, a large pool of possible topics and statements has been gathered and two first version scales have been formulated. These have presented in online versions to be completed by people who have visited a museum in the past six months, with or without a multimedia guide. The study was publicized as widely as possible on email lists and on the Web via an advertisement. Data from initial samples have been analyzed.

2.2 Participants

There were 87 respondents to the scales who completed sufficient questions for analysis. 38 were male and 49 were female. Ages ranged from 18 to 67 years, with a mean of 29.7 years. Respondents included a mixture of students, university staff and people from a wide range of backgrounds who responded to the Web advertisement. 41 of the respondents had used a multimedia guide during their museum visit, and 46 respondents had not.

2.3 Scales

The initial versions of the scales were constructed by reviewing questions and statements used in various previous studies (e.g. Davis et al.; Jennett et al.; Naismith and Smith; Novak et al.; Pekarik et all.; Pianesi et al.) and materials developed by the UK Council for Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA websites, question bank, exit surveys, etc.). The components of the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLO) model developed by the MLA were particularly useful in developing the range of statement. They consist of: knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and values, activity behavior and progression, enjoyment, aspiration and creativity (MLA). This method of constructing scales follows the similar processes used by previous researchers (e. g. Boehner et all.; Naismith and Smith; Pianesi et al.).

Initially, we had a pool of 152 possible statements but we decided this was too many to ask respondents to reply to in a single session. Therefore we choose 57 items, 37 for the Museum Experience Scale and 20 for the Multimedia Guide Scale, after careful sorting and analysis. Some items overlapped with each other and we choose the one that seemed clearest and most appropriate to our study. A full list of the initial statements and the final sets is available from the authors.

Each item in the scales was presented as a statement, for example "I felt connected with the exhibits" and respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with the statement on a rating scale "strongly disagree" (coded as 1), "disagree" (coded as 2) "neutral" (coded as 3), "agree" (coded as 4), and "strongly agree" (coded as 5). These are known as Likert items.

Respondents were also asked to reply to a number of questions to gather information about their visit to the museum (which museum, how long the visit lasted, how many people in the party etc), as well as standard demographic information.

Table 1: The four components on the general museum experience questionnaire and their factor loadings

Engagement		Knowledge	
I felt emotionally involved with the exhibition	0.76	After visiting the exhibition, I was still interested to know more about the topic of the exhibition	0.64
I was completely immersed in the exhibition	0.75	I enjoyed visiting the exhibition	0.62
I felt engaged with the exhibition	0.67	I gaining knowledge that I can use or have used as a result of my visit	0.58
While at the exhibition, I became unaware of what was happening around me	0.62	The exhibition held my attention	0.54
I felt connected with the exhibits	0.60	During my visit, I put a lot of effort into thinking about the exhibition	0.51
I felt I was experiencing the exhibition, rather than just visiting it	0.59		
I was interested in seeing how the exhibition would unfold as my visit progressed	0.58		
During my visit I was able to reflect on the significance of the exhibits and their meaning	0.58		
See the exhibition enabled me to imagine other places in time	0.57		
My visit to the exhibition was inspiring	0.56		
The exhibition held my attention	0.53		
Clarity		**Wonder**	
The information provided about the exhibits was clear	0.72	Visiting the exhibition was fun	0.60
Some things in the exhibition were hard to understand (reserved relationship)	0.71	I wanted to own exhibits like those that I saw in the exhibition	0.55

I could make sense of most of the things and saw and did at the exhibition	0.66	Seeing rare exhibits gave me a sense of wonder about the exhibition	0.51
I like text-based information as supporting material at museum exhibitions	0.52		

3. Results

A principal components analysis was conducted on the responses to the 37 statements in the Museum Experience Scale. Four clear *components,* or groups of statements which went together, emerged. These components are:

- *Engagement* with the exhibition and exhibits

- *Knowledge* gained and stimulation to think and gain more knowledge

- *Clarity of presentation* of the exhibition, easy of understanding the information

- *Sense of wonderment,* fun at the exhibition

Table 2, above, shows the statements that relate to each component and the *factor loading*, a measure of how strongly each statement relates to the overall component (1.0 = perfect relationship … 0.0 = no relationship at all, only statements with a factor loading over 0.5 are listed).

A similar analysis was conducted of the statements from the Multimedia Guide Scale. However, as only 41 people had completed this scale, the results were not definitive, and further data will be needed to analyze that scale.

As an initial use of the Museum Experience Scale, we compared the experience of respondents who had made a museum visit with a multimedia guide with the experience of those who had made a museum visit without a multimedia guide. There was a significant difference across all four components between these two groups (Analysis of variance $F_{1,75} = 7.69$, $p < 0.01$). Figure 1, below, shows the mean scores on the four components for the multimedia guide and non-guide users. This shows that the differences were particularly on the Engagement component, with multimedia guide users being more engaged that non-guide users, and on the Knowledge component, again with the multimedia guide users reporting more knowledge gained and more stimulation to think and gain more knowledge. Interestingly, differences on the Clarity component were minimal – one might have expected the presentation on the multimedia guide to improve the clarity of the presentation of the exhibition.
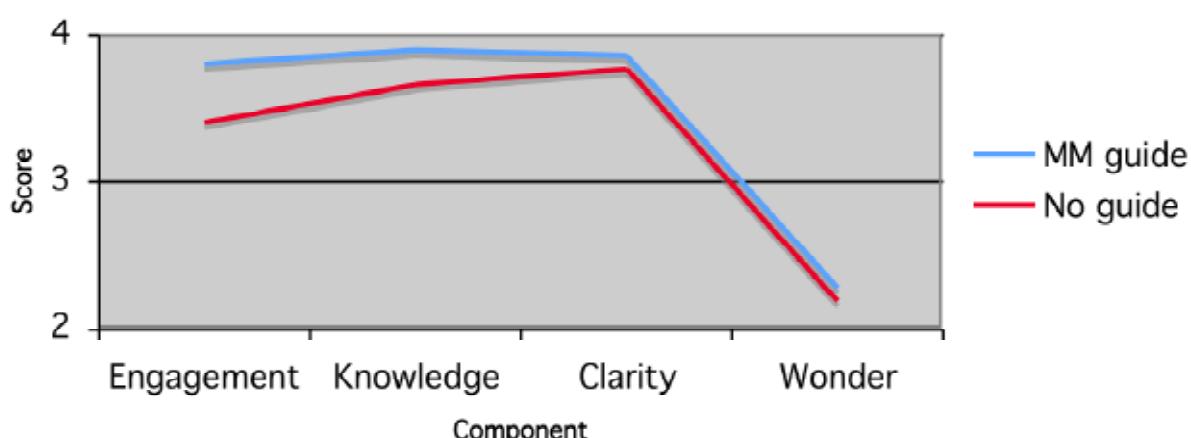
Figure 1: Mean scores on the four components for multimedia guide and non-guide users

In spite of these analyses which show an interesting and potentially useful set of components and some meaningful and significant results between multimedia and non-guide users, these data are only preliminary and we will continue to collect data from respondents and then refine the scale. In addition we will collect further data for the Multimedia Guide Scale.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The outcome of this first step in data collection on the development of scales to measure visitor experience with exhibits in museums and the usefulness and usability of multimedia guides have shown potentially interesting and useful results. The four components of Engagement, Knowledge, Clarity and Wonder are meaningful and seem useful to many researchers and practitioners in the museums field. However, as noted above these results are preliminary and we need further responses on both scales before we decide on the final structure of the scales and develop shorter versions of each scale. Nonetheless, we will now consider each of the components in the Museum Experience Scale, as we consider these potentially very useful.

4.1 Engagement

The sense and level of engagement with exhibitions and exhibits in museums clearly varies between visitors and may be influenced by a range of factors such as prior knowledge, motivation, interest, technology, time spent in the exhibit and so on. The results from this initial study show that engagement with the exhibition is significantly higher with the use of a multimedia guide. This is one of many factors that can be explored in future research. However, these results do show that introducing technologies such as multimedia guides is achieving their presumed aim, to make the museum experience more engaging for visitors. This supports previous research by Boehner, Gay and Larkin. They concluded that the use of handheld devices such as multimedia guides is more appealing to visitors when compared to more conventional and traditional ways of presenting information. Moreover, a recent study by Vavoula et al. showed that using multimedia phones as guides, children engaged with the exhibits and at the same time they learnt more about the material.

4.2 Knowledge

Gaining knowledge from exhibitions is clearly one of the motivations for visitors to cultural spaces. The results from the Museum Experience Scale showed that using a multimedia guide produced higher scores on the Knowledge component, although one might have expected an even greater difference between multimedia guide users and non-users on this component. Clearly this will also be a useful area for further more in-depth research. However, this result is in accordance from study conducted by Naismith, Sharples and Ting (2005) that showed that the use of a multimedia guide increased visitors' knowledge about the Botanic Garden in their study.

4.3 Clarity of Presentation

Obviously cultural spaces strive to present their exhibitions in ways that are easy for visitors to understand and need least effort to understand the underlying messages. However, that may create interesting tensions with challenging and stimulating visitors. These tensions may surface in differences between the Knowledge component and the Clarity component. Ideally, exhibitions should be high on both Knowledge and Clarity.

4.4 Sense of Wonderment

Museums should be places that offer their visitors more than "just" knowledge or diversion. A sense of wonder, joy and fun is part of the importance of museums and the exhibits that they hold. Interestingly the use of a multimedia guide did not increase the sense of wonder in the exhibition. However, this appears appropriate to us, as surely the sense of wonder comes from the exhibits themselves. Perhaps what is important in this result is that the use of a multimedia guide does not decrease the sense of wonder, the

technology does not come between the visitor and the wondrous exhibits.

We are greatly encouraged by the first set of results in developing two scales, the Museum Experience Scale and the Multimedia Guide Scale. Future work will include collecting further data for each of the scales, to create reliable scales and component structures. Then work on the validity of the scales will be undertaken. We hope that these scales will then be useful to both researchers and practitioners in the museums and cultural space areas in helping to understand visitors' experiences in cultural spaces and with multimedia guides that are increasingly available for these cultural spaces.

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Can You Be Friends with an Art Museum?
Rethinking the Art Museum through Facebook

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Introduction

The appearance of new media technologies has given us new ways of communicating, organizing, and storing information. In Web 2.0 culture, users are no longer satisfied being passive consumers, but instead wish to interact and to participate. In online social networks, the users have become *prosumers,* a term which describes their dual role as both producers and consumers of content online referring to Dan Tapscott and Anthony Williams, co-creating our culture. The rise of social media marks a paradigm shift in our contemporary culture, to which art museums must respond. Social media has given the broader public the opportunity to upload and share information, and to communicate and interact via online platforms. In this new landscape of a *prosumer* culture, a crucial question emerges—how does this change the character and role of the art museum?

Many art museums are of course already experimenting with social media, creating profiles on social networking services such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and YouTube. This article is based on a recent study on the use of Facebook by Danish state-subsidized art museums (Damkjær). Herein we will argue that art museums who wish to integrate social media into their museums praxis are facing several significant challenges, and that they will have to re-invent themselves in order to embrace a *prosumer* culture. The presence of technology alone is not sufficient impetus for the establishment of a *prosumer* culture. Beyond this, the art museum must break down its walls and fundamentally re-think the art museum as an institution. How can this rethinking be done?

1. The current state of affairs between Danish art museums and Facebook

As one of the most popular social networking sites in Denmark, Facebook has naturally experienced growing participation by Danish state-subsidized art museums. By September 2009, 18 out of 39 Danish state-subsidized art museums had created a Facebook profile – including *The National Gallery of Denmark*, *Arken,* and *Louisiana Museum of Modern Art.*

On Facebook, the art museum enters a culture where the users are *prosumers* of the art museums' online profiles, sharing, commenting, and tagging content. However, a closer look at the 39 Danish state-subsidized

art museums' use of Facebook shows that an actual prosumer culture has barely come into existence. The content produced by the users is generally limited and of poor quality. Most of the discussion on Facebook rarely advances beyond small talk and the content shared lacks any immediately apparent theoretical or cultural importance. The most common types of comments are related to museum visits, where the users thank the museum for a pleasant experience or conversely announce their intention of making a future visit to the museum (Damkjær).

A possible explanation to the weak prosumer culture can be found in the fact that Facebook is primarily used by the art museums as a marketing *channel to* the users, and not as an environment to *interact* with the users. The art museums mainly use Facebook to market the art museum online by uploading information about current and forthcoming exhibitions and events, with the purpose of attracting visitors to the art museum. Furthermore there is a tendency among the art museums to use Facebook as a homepage, uploading several posts once or twice a month instead of being continually present in their Facebook profile. Moreover, the art museums are mainly practicing monologue instead of dialogue, not encouraging the users to interact and participate. Using the metaphors used on Facebook itself to describe their behavior, one could say that the art museums behave as authoritarian and self-promoting friends.

The results of Damkjær's research indicates that the majority of the art museums surveyed do not use Facebook on the medium's own terms. Facebook is instead seen as little more than simply a convenient new channel through which to market themselves in a traditional manner, rather than as an environment in which to *interact with* the users, opening themselves up to user participation and dialogue.

2. The transformation of the art museum – a historical view

To understand the transformation that the art museum as an institution is undergoing, it is necessary to take a closer look at the definition and the development of the art museum.

The term *museum* stems from a Latinization of the Greek word *museion*, which means a place or a temple dedicated to the Muses. The International Council of Museums ICOM defines the museum as a: "[…] non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment." (ICOM).

This definition is however very broad, not only describing *art* museums but all categories museums in general. The Canadian sociologist Carol Duncan offers a more specific definition for the art museum— according to Duncan, the art museum's meaning is created through ritual structures, which are determined in a social context (Duncan 7). As a social construction, the art museum is based on the separation between the secular and the profane time and space. This separation is revealed in two aspects. First, in the separation between the public space outside the museum's walls and the 'sublime' exhibition space within. Second, in the separation of time and space that occurs during the museum visit itself. The architecture and exhibition space of the art museums here plays a crucial role, since they are carefully designed to underline this separation of secular space and the ritual museum space. This is done at the architectural level, through monumental buildings, impressive marble staircases and silent, carefully illuminated halls designed for admiration, devotion, and learning. Duncan supports this theory with the historical development of the art museum. According to Duncan, the European art museum originates from a democratization of the cultural inheritance that took place in the 18th century, where private collections where made public in order to represent the values of the society and to educate the public. The main components of the art museum's origins stem from private, often royal, collections dating back to the 16th century, which were later transformed into public art museums (Duncan). This transformation was closely connected to the appearance of the national state during the 18th century, where the private collections were opened up to the public, making an attempt to create a national identity (Duncan). However, since an academic elite administrated the art museums, the institutions remained mainly in the domain of the elite, just as the exposition of the collections manifested this elite themselves. The space of the art museum closed itself around its collection and became a space of

exclusion, since the exposition of the works reflected the values that the art museum wished to authorize. As described above the art museum as an institution has strong roots in the Age of Enlightenment, a blueprint, which today still forms the foundation of the art museum and its values, as well as its role in our society.

2.1 Gaps between social media and the museum as institution

Even though a growing interest in user participation is apparent among art museums, an integration of Facebook in a museum's practice and the establishment of a prosumer culture seem incompatible with the museum in its existing from. A closer look at the art museums' use of Facebook uncovers several dilemmas, indicating a gap between a prosumer culture and the art museum as an institution. Three dilemmas in particular reveal how Facebook not only questions the foundation and form of the art museum, but furthermore goes on to reinforce movement toward a complete transformation.

The first dilemma occurs when the art museum has to establish a **social relationship** with the users. This creates difficulty for the art museum because in this context the institution must be on par with the users, and thereby give up centuries of traditionally-held authority. In doing so, the art museum must step down from the hallowed Pantheon of its exclusivity -- an act, which heralds a breakdown in traditional conceptions of museum space versus public space.

Secondly, the art museum must first create objects of sociality before meaningful **dialogical content** can manifest itself. By letting the art museum itself, the art experience, and the museum visit be a social object for interaction, the art museum is forced to open up traditionally closed conceptions of museum space. This creates a dilemma for art museums, because they are again forced to release their attachment, as institutions, to the traditional exhibition space. The *white cube* dissolves.

Thirdly, the art museum has to integrate Facebook into the art museum's daily work. This occurs as a dilemma for the art museum because Facebook represents a convergence of several media forms, mixing communication, branding, and marketing. This **media convergence** results in a deconstruction of the art museum's customary structure as an organization. Furthermore, a new political dimension influences the organization of the art museum — as a traditionally hierarchical, *top-down* organization, the art museum is again sharply challenged by Facebook, which offers a democratic *bottom-up* structure.

As the findings from Damkjær's former research show, the art museums' presence on Facebook by no means automatically opens them up to the challenges and benefits of a prosumer culture. Even though the art museums are attempting in their own ways to establish user involvement and participation, a prosumer culture remains unrealized (Damkjær).

In order to truly embrace a prosumer culture, art museums must transform themselves as institutions into entities capable of dealing with the above-mentioned dilemmas by: 1) giving up their authority in order to become social entities, 2) rethinking the museum space to create an environment capable of supporting social dialogue, and 3) restructuring the organization of the art museum in the interest of fluidity in its online presence.

2.2 Re-inventing the museum

While the emergence of new media technologies reinforces the reinvention of the art museum, this metamorphosis has been emerging from within the museum institution itself as well. As is often referred to with the term "New Museology", a shift from an *exhibition-centered* to a *visitor-centered* museum is occurring. According to Gail Anderson, this shift marks a broadening of focus from primarily the exhibitions themselves to the role of the museum in serving the public and *how* the museum exhibits art and communicates it's background and perceived cultural significance to its visitors: "The collection holdings are no longer viewed as the primary measure of values for a museum; rather, the relevant and effective role of the museum in service to its public has become the core measuring stick." (Anderson 4)

In this context, Facebook can be seen as a decisive catalyst in reinventing the art museum. On Facebook the focus is on the relationship to and the dialogue with the users. In a prosumer culture, the art museum's authorized role as an institution representing our cultural heritage is challenged, since the art museum's

enunciation becomes only one voice among many. By being *co-producers* of the art museum's representation through its online Facebook profile, users themselves become representatives of the art museum. This causes a dramatic power shift between the art museum and its users: "To control a museum means precisely to control the representation of a community and its highest values and truths." (Duncan 8)

Furthermore, the space of the art museum is transformed because social media break down the borders between the ritual museum space and the public space. Last but not least the art museum is encountering a new and emerging user group, to which we will from here on refer as the 'art interested'. This is a growing user group, consisting of people who for one reason or another do not physically visit the museum, but nevertheless have an interest in the museum and actively follow its activities online (Damkjær).

In the preceding paragraphs, we have shown how an integration of Facebook and a participatory prosumer culture in the museums' identity and practice is problematic. As we have argued, the reasons behind this can be found in the character of social media, which shatters the very foundation of the art museum. Yet in order for the art museum to be able to integrate and take full advantage of the emerging digital culture, it has to rethink its own role and identity in society.

3. Refolding the character of the museum through Deleuze and Guattari

"In the reinvented museum, philosophy translates into practice, and practice reflects philosophy, values and mission." (Gail Anderson 5)

We will now have a look at how the philosophy of French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari can reflect the transitions happening when museums take social media into their practice, and hopefully these same thoughts can elicit ideas toward a practical reinvention of the museum.

The way we perceive museums and practice museology today is fundamentally grounded in the Enlightenment and in 'the Modern episteme', as Michel Foucault describes it. The Modern has been dominated by the subject as the center of meaning: "I think therefore I am". The individual has been the one and only producer of meaning and subject of enunciation (Foucault). Likewise the museums have been based on the idea of subjectification, unity, and essence. The museums have had to build a steady and defined identity; an identity that is identical with it self over time, by which we can recognize them and through which they receive their meaning and reputation (Fehr, "Understanding Museums" and „Text and context"). Everybody knows what museums such as the Guggenheim, MOMA, and the Louvre stand for.

It is our belief that new media and participatory cultures challenge the Modern episteme and the traditional form and function of the museum. To understand and to take full advantage of new media, museums have to think outside of their own paradigm and rethink the very identity or character of the museum in a fundamentally new way. Yet thinking outside of one's own paradigm is no easy task, as Foucault points out. Despite the fact that Deleuze and Guattari practiced their thinking long before the appearance of social media, we believe that their thoughts can work as tools of inspiration for the museums to rethink and to transform themselves from a stable identity and *organization* to a transforming process of multiplicities and connectedness— a rhizomatic body without organs.

3.1 From subjectification to a myriad of voices

When the museum invites the users to take part in the representation and definition of the museum, it challenges the character of the museum as **one** single unity, **one** subject of enunciation always identical with itself. "[…] the question is precisely whether it is necessary to find oneself." (Deleuze and Guattari 156). Deleuze and Guattari argue that we should dismiss the Modernist idea of the **one**, stable, and indivisible individual, and instead view the subject/body – in this case the museum – from which meaning is being produced and uttered as a myriad of multiplicities and as processes. Meaning is not something that can be linked back to one single unity, but rather it is something ever-changing, being produced in the interaction between a multiplicity of intensities. If we invite the *prosumer* to define the museum, become subject of enunciation, and create dialogical content, we can no longer hold on to the subjectification and the manifestation of a defined identity of the museum. With social media and participation culture, the museum has to give up its

monopoly of being the only subject of enunciation and the sole creator of meaning. There will no longer be one single hierarchical root through which you can trace back the identity or the subject of the museum, but instead we have to accept that the character and the role of the museum is something that is constantly emerging and evolving through the continuous stream of interactions and participations in the social media as well as within the museum space itself and in other spheres. This change of character is closely related to the second dilemma we have lined up on page 4.

3.2 The museum as a Body without Organs

Looking back at the third dilemma – illustrating how an integrated use of Facebook causes a deconstruction of the organization, and of the top-down structure of the museum – we furthermore see that the museum's loss of its monopoly as subject of enunciation and producer of meaning causes a breakdown in the functioning of the museum's traditional organs. We can no longer think of communication, branding, curating, etc. as defined and separated authorities, because the users become an integral part of these functions. Deleuze and Guattari are fighting primarily against three opposing factors: subjectification, fixed meaning, and organisms. They expand their battle against subjectification suggesting that we should strive for a Body without Organs (BwO) in order to make a break with the Modern way of thinking (Deleuze and Guattari 149-166). BwO is not a battle against the organs as such, but it is a fight against the *organ*ization. When we organize -- be it museums, politics, our home, or any kind of meaning -- we give each entity one, and only one function. It is clear from where a message is given, and who decides what. But the problem is, they argue, that by doing so we leave out the potential for other functions and other organizations, and we miss out on the possibility for meaning to arise from the connections and the relations between varieties of things. BwO is, says Deleuze and Guattari, to open up the body -- in our case the body of the museum -- to connections, montages, flows, relations, and possible lines of flight. In a BwO there is no center from where things are controlled, no single subject of enunciation, no essence, but meaning and functions are being defined in flows between many organs.

> It is a question of making a body without organs upon which intensities pass, self and other – not in the name of a higher level of generality or a broader extension, but by virtue of singularities that can no longer be said to be personal, and intensities that can no longer be said to be extensive. (Deleuze and Guattari 156)

If we apply this experiment of thought to the museum and its use of social media it implies that the museum should be open to the multifaceted meaning and functions that are being constantly produced and reformulated in a continuous and ever-changing process of interaction between museum, users, and media. Here we cannot separate the museum from its users, "Thus the BwO is never yours or mine. It is always a body" (Deleuze and Guattari 164). This all leads to a transformation of the museum from a stable entity to a dynamic rhizome.

3.3 Museum as rhizome

The museum has to rethink its form and open up its walls, as we touched upon earlier. In this matter as well, Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical concepts again prove useful. In the introduction to their book *Thousand Plateaus* they describe one of their most famous ideas: the shift from a hierarchical, linear, and genealogic tree structure to a decentralized, deterritorializing, and antigenealogical root structure – *a rhizome* (Deleuze and Guattari 3-25). The picture of a rhizome derives from a specific kind of root structure that doesn't— as *does* for example the root structure of the tree— have one main root to which you can trace back any other part of the root. The rhizome is a web of roots that have no center and no direction. In a rhizome, every point is connected to every other point, and the connections become more important than the individual points. The rhizome is made only of lines:

> …lines of segmentarity and stratification as its dimensions, and the line of flight or deterritorialization as the maximum dimension after which the multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in nature. (Deleuze and Guattari 21)

Any modifications in any connection in this web affect the rest of the rhizome, but damage to any one point does not lead to wholesale destruction of the network and its components.

The museum has typically been built after the traditional model of the hierarchical tree root structure; in fact the same structure underlying the thoughts of the Enlightenment— which have, as explained earlier, been the basis for the role of the museum in society. Most museums are built on a genealogical foundation and are organized in a linear or a categorical fashion. The museum has until now been hierarchically organized and the meaning interpreted from its content can be traced back to the curator and/or to the artist. The museum has hitherto ended at its walls, which have in turn defined the museum space. As we have here described, when a museum opens up, expands into social media, and invites the users to be co-creators of the museum's identity, we see that the museum is compelled to think of itself more through the concept of a rhizome, more as an open space of interactions than as a defined, rooted, and limited place.

The rhizome is not a delimited place, but a multiplicity – or rather multiplicities of "multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight" (Deleuze and Guattari 21). These entryways can be the actual user physically in the museum or the ways we enter the museum through media. The users and the media become part of the museum, become lines of flight, and their connections to each other change and redefine the museum. Users, media, museum employees, the walls, the things, the communication, and the visitors are all part of the same rhizome we here call "the museum". The museum expands beyond its walls and folds out into the social media, where it has no end and no center.

> "The rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb 'to be', but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, 'and…and…and…'. This conjunction carries enough force to shake an uproot the verb 'to be'." (Deleuze and Guattari 25). The museum must give up its defined and stable identity; instead of being something, it must accept that it constantly becomes something new in its interaction with the users. The museum is a 'becoming' "defined solely by a circulation of states." (Deleuze and Guattari 21)

3.4 Transform with a fine file not with a sledgehammer

This fundamental change in thinking about what the role and character of the museum is, and what it can possibly become, may seem frightening to most museums, because it breaks with the traditional perception of the foundation for their existence and therefore threatens with chaos or even a total cessation of the very existence of the museums themselves. But Deleuze and Guattari say that

> …dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself, but rather opening the body to connections that presuppose an entire assemblage, circuits, conjunctions, levels and thresholds, passages and distributions of intensity, and territories and deterritorializations measured with the craft of a surveyor. (Deleuze and Guattari 160)

But to carry through such crucial changes, we have to do it with caution and skill in the "art of dosages, since overdose is a danger. You don't do it with a sledgehammer, you use a very fine file" (Deleuze and Guattari 160). New media changes fast, often faster than most users can actually follow, but the museums cannot simply change their very identity overnight, they have to do it over time.

> This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. (Deleuze and Guattari 161).

Transforming culture in the digital age

Lea Schick & Katrine Damkjær

We can maybe see the Danish state subsidized museums as 'weak' and perhaps failed attempts to use Facebook as *experiments with opportunities and lines of flight* in search for *potential movements of deterritorialization*. Maybe the big change of character is already happening, but changes might be so small; made with such a fine file, that we still cannot clearly perceive them.

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Artificial culture

On Scientific Mentality in Cultural Memory

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1. Scientific knowledge and mentality

Scientific knowledge is a kind of rigorous knowledge, gained with systematic research and organized on general notions and principles. It is based on facts and happenings, remarks and hypothesis, conjectures about phenomena in search of a consistent interpretative framework. What we call "scientific knowledge" is a kind of knowledge obtained through specific methods (Maturana), observations, experiments and falsifiable hypothesis at the heart of what makes science a field organized with specific rules. Thus which are different from common sense and mass knowledge? In the past, but also today, many philosophers, scientists and thinkers have often regarded it as "true knowledge". Furthermore scientific knowledge is systematic and based on the discovery, research, proof and validation of hypothesis – process *in itinere* with an endless development. Nevertheless, also whether totally different from opinable mass knowledge, epistemological studies highlight that the dynamical path of scientific concepts and theories reveal more properly a plausible knowledge. However the above provides the most reliable notions available for human beings.

Science provides a kind of critical knowledge that differs by passive acceptance of knowledge acquired by external entity to which man relies, because each person carries the source of knowledge inside itself and specifically in the sensory perception that can be used to observe nature (Popper) carefully.

The specialized aspect of scientific knowledge implies that not all individuals have the same kind of access to this cognitive meaning so that there are different thresholds to grasp it. Within the scientific knowledge there are two different aspects, one depending on the level of in-depth examination and on the systematic complexity of acquired knowledge, and the other is scientific *mentality* that uses the scientific approach in everyday life and critical behavior to various life events. This scientific mentality is a kind of understanding of some important but simplified notions that are basically for science, but fundamental in daily life for a useful and appropriate comprehension of natural and artificial processes. This does not cover the issues

related to contextualization of knowledge, nor the links that it creates with other specific fields of scientific knowledge. For scientific mentality the understanding of the general dynamics of science and its methods to a non-simplistic approach towards life and natural phenomena is very important. Instead, specialized scientific knowledge consists of the most effective and confirmed theories available in every historical age, with which it is possible to build a coherent interpretation of facts and phenomena. In other words, it concerns bold conjectures that science provides, organizes and systematizes in a coherent theoretic framework.

These two kinds of knowledge are different both for their quantitative and qualitative aspects. However both have the ability for shaping society and human relationships, supporting the social context (Longino).

Forms of non-rigorous knowledge, that we can altogether call common sense or mass culture, feature every socio-historical age. These forms are generally acquired in memory through accumulation, acknowledgement and sedimentation of conceptualizations based mainly on intuition, "almost magic" beliefs or on approximate causality, thus giving rise to simplistic knowledge.

This sort of mass culture often prefers to use conjectures and non-rigorous accounts for explaining everyday life events, because these seem simple and immediate. But often this kind of explanation based on common sense has neither scientific foundations nor explicit relation between cause and effect, and diverges completely from facts, evidence and proofs of scientific knowledge. Consequently, here we face ingenuous knowledge that often generates a form of similar epistemology that creates significant delays and mistrust in the real acquisition of basic scientific knowledge. As Russell claimed, epistemology is not mere philosophical speculation but it has practical implications in science, ethics and politics. Thus, an approach to the world overly influenced by common sense or only by metaphysics affects the same society in which it is practiced, in a strong but not necessarily positive manner (Russell, "Philosophical Essays", "Selected Papers", and "The Impact of Science").

Hence we can look at this difference between scientific knowledge and mass culture as a first key-point that allowed only a partial admittance of the first in the latter. Secondly, scientific knowledge that collides with mass culture is often counterintuitive and is difficult to learn; primarily because it is based on logic far from daily experience. This new logic is often non-coherent with some basic principles of our experience, and confirmed in that portion of reality we are able to perceive (for example the cause-effect principle, the interpretation of truth as bipolar, the homogeneity and isotropy of space, and so on). To conclude the series of key-points sometimes scientific knowledge seems at odds with cultural traditions, beliefs more or less rooted lacks of detailed knowledge and habits that characterize the typical conceptualizations of mass culture. Depending on the possibility to reduce this gap the scientific knowledge has the chance to play an important role (and a fitting role if it will be able to absorb and disseminate scientific notions that are intuitively complex, from elementary particles to expanding universes, from obscure energy to genetic information, and so on) inside cultural memory of every society and to become a significant tool in the strategies of thinking and problem solving in everyday life.

2. Pre-modern science: knowledge for few

It is possible to observe a reduction of the gap between scientific knowledge and common sense culture, typical of scientific illiterate people, when science tries to be understandable for everyone in its contents and used language. At the same time citizens show willingness for considering new forms of (scientific) knowledge with all their supplemental complexity and restructuring of common sense they may require. When scientific knowledge meets mass culture the conceptualization and the scientists' conjectures, although counterintuitive and difficult to understand, begin to contaminate people common beliefs substituting general ambiguous knowledge.

Up until the Galilean Revolution science lived a largely secluded experience, because it was practiced only in universities and noble courts. In these places scientific research was displayed under form of wise disquisition or craft demonstration in front of a complacent audience, so it reveals a strong separation between scientists and common citizens. In this way the mythical image of scientists became stereotyped as an isolated, extravagant but brilliant philosopher. That sort of ancient traditional science was discussed within a circle of selected few. Thus, science had little influence and poor effects on society and on shared

memory because it was not part of mass culture. Hence, scientific shared knowledge was not used and accepted in cultural heritage as a starting point for social development. The lack of effect and participation of scientific knowledge in cultural memory was directly connected with the epistemological distance of science in everyday life, due to the huge gap between common and popular knowledge and scientific conceptualizations. In some ways this amplification is still present in our scientific-technological age (due to the fact that often science appears to scientific illiterate people as dogmatic knowledge (Kuhn 347-369), something you could trust and accept without knowing why). The spread of this ancient science was complicated by widespread illiteracy. In fact, in this period, a new and difficult kind of rigorous knowledge was confronted with traditional knowledge based on articulated and monolithic explanations that intend to provide any cognitive and spiritual response to man, as in the case of metaphysics and religion.

Furthermore, science developed very few technological artifacts that could allow society to have direct contact with scientific research, promoting the development of scientific mentality also through the possibility of experiencing firsthand research outcomes. The only known science is abstract and conceptual.

This aspect, considered together with the perception of science as a kind of dogmatic knowledge, showed that scientists and social communities were distant entities. To this idea we should add the difficulty for non-experts in science to abandon beliefs and knowledge that influence human society since ancient times, in favor of scientific theories that were perceived as distant and never fully supported by evident proofs.

Above all, observation, as a method of inquiry, was a difficult idea to be accepted in a culture that always entrusted religion and metaphysics. These difficulties were both in learning and in specialized science, further blocked the access to scientific knowledge that remained prerogative for few. But it must be stressed that even in the earliest stages of science diffusion, in which the disclosure was limited and science was a thing for the elite. The main theories of sciences penetrated, albeit partial, into the collective knowledge and in memory. This is the case, for example, of the Ptolemaic idea and the geocentric hypothesis that became shared cultural heritage and gave, as typical of any scientific theory until it is falsified, an interpretation of the world explaining the phenomena in an organic view.

This happens because when any scientific theory becomes widespread. It always has a sort of secondary relapse on scientific mentality. The lack of the latter, which actually appears more like a "scientific attitude" which allows man to face life events on the basis of scientific theories that are able to explain such phenomena, that determinates in the absence of scientific knowledge inside cultural memory. The presence of scientific knowledge in the memory of few individuals does not translate in general knowledge or in shared memory.

3. The diffusion of scientific knowledge

As mentioned, in the pre-revolutionary period science had serious difficulties in penetrating mass culture and cultural memory. Thanks to significant changes happened in the revolutionary period, science began to reach the general public with popular writings on typographical press, with personal stories of the great innovators and with a disclosure of communication strategies.

It is not occasional that, starting from the publication in 1543 of the *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* by Copernicus, some scientists became for the first time public personalities well known by popular public, and their theories raise a clamor that became the subject of debate for the whole population. This is the case with Galileo Galilei, which became the subject of many attentions, even for religious and ethical implications of his astronomic statements. Galileo, among others, introduced two important innovations:

- with his telescope he made visible what was not visible before, reducing the distance between Earth and celestial bodies, allowing to observe directly (or almost directly) planets and satellites;

- writing in vernacular language, made his ideas accessible to a wider public, starting a popular way of disclosure never seen before, without elitarian barriers.

Although heliocentric theory didn't penetrate immediately into mass culture, and much less were accepted by intellectuals, it contaminated the common consciousness and provided a significant contribution for the

creating of a modern scientific mentality. Thus, it began to approach critically also traditional beliefs that seemed obvious and immutable. New revolutionary ideas were opposed to some traditional cultural aspects, contrasting concepts considered dogmatically certain, and so diverged from traditional knowledge.

Regarding scientific mentality as a set of general strategies with some basic contents and interpretative models, we can observe that its acquisition by the non-specialist people takes more time than the time required for acquiring mass ingenuous culture. In fact, in this case the scientific culture enters in cultural memory furnishing a logical and philosophical architecture that changes the ways of thinking, and general improves epistemological and methodological approaches to nature.

It may be sufficient to think, for example, at new ideas as the spheroid of Earth and the heliocentric system that contradicted common sense, and took a long time before being accepted. But then, the initial resistance began to crack and there was a rapprochement between scientific and traditional culture, reducing the existing gap and ensuring that some ideas were finally shared with mass culture.

Galileo and Bacon first understood social importance of science. It should not uniquely reach the general public, but could also affect its growth and shape its development by binding with technique abilities, tied until then to popular culture of the crafts. Then, Galilean and Newtonian synthesis remained as cultural heritage giving people a new scientific approach relevant still today: the reduction of nature to a subject of research for men, without metaphysical bonds; the use of new investigative tools as telescope or microscope; the use of mathematical techniques for a quantitative measurement of natural phenomena and finally the diffusion of experimental mentality based on systematic observations of phenomena and monitoring of results.

Science leaded by reason experienced a great growth toward the modern form we know. There were many aspects that changed radically the level of absorption in the mass scientific expertise: the critical spirit, the practice of continuous observation and the accumulation of proofs. It was possible also thanks to the monumental effort of systematization and dissemination of knowledge, as Diderot and D'Alembert make with *Encyclopedie*. For these issues, in the past we had an academic science that had marginal impact on society; instead, now we can talk about the spreading of scientific culture thanks to the importance that observation has in the new science.

It is important to underline that these shifts were not limited to experimental sciences, but they extended during Enlightenment also in social sciences that benefited of a new critical and rational approach. Thus, the new science created an interpretative frame that enabled not only the understanding of nature with the best theories available but enabled also a form of relapse greater than in the past on the society. It provided, thanks to the development of scientific theories, a cognitive tool more appropriate both for understanding the phenomena and for participating to the scientific mentality more and more disseminated.

This change affected the shaping of cultural memory, allowing such societies to begin the handling of this important and rigorous kind of knowledge. Knowledge characterized as not merely speculative but, as Bacon told, involved in improving human life, because science has the power to change in a positive way the environment of human being and its society (Bacon, "The new organon").

The path here discussed does not end with Enlightenment. Science disclosure, diffusion of technology and great scientists had a role even more important in XVIII e XIX centuries. For example, Charles Darwin and his theory of Evolution had a huge impact on European culture. He didn't limit his contribution in developing a complex biological theory, but disseminated also a systematization of his observations that was accessible to the general public (Darwin). Thus, his theory got directly into everyday life, and then in the collective imagination, suggesting that scientific knowledge could be available and significant for everyone. Darwin changed the landscape of biologists and nature philosophers, but had also a relevant impact on popular knowledge that became a part of shared heritage and of cultural memory.

In this dynamic socio-historical context, scientists were involved in a science loop whereby they are stirred by the society to conduct certain researches and to produce outcomes on issues perceived as relevant, and in this sense European financing programmes provide a clear example. In the same time, scientists provide to society cognitive tools to advance in the solution of problems still opened, technological artifacts to manage reproducible phenomena, and update the sets of problems and enquiries which should be at the heart of technological innovation and social interest.

One of the weak aspects in public perception of science is, still today, that this knowledge is understood as stable, reliable and able to answer every question and solve almost any problem. But as epistemology teaches us, science is instead a dynamic knowledge, proceeds by trials and errors, is always plausible and never definitely true, it has solved (and can only solve) a small part of the problems that arises in nature, it responds only to some human questions about natural and artificial objects. For a diffusion of this dynamical idea of science, and for taking full advantage of its effects, it should be emphasized, since from basic science education: the fundamentals of research methods, the processes of scientific reasoning, a popular version from an epistemological point of view of this particular knowledge.

4. Technical and digital invasion

Wider dissemination of scientific mentality occurs when technical knowledge ceased to be understood as something opposed to science and became a part of it. Science, firstly conceived by Bacon as a common good available to men to improve life conditions, can be understood as a kind of active knowledge working for humankind benefit. Thus, science relationship with technique appears essential in order to enable men to manage nature. But in this case scientific culture gets in cultural memory because of its social implications, for people, communities and institutions that are involved. The baconian New Atlantis (Bacon) looks like a perfect prototype of this combination.

Going beyond this literary example, the modern science produces effects on the entire body of knowledge and in this process the technique allows to perceive the nature and us in a new way. Because of increasing and inextricable symbiosis between science and technique, also the creation of artifacts built on the scientific expertise in increasingly acquired and made available to general public. On the other hand, the same *instrumenta* (Heidegger) belonging to technical knowledge play a key role in scientific research because they have strengthened the power of observation and of measurement that are at the basis of the modern quantitative science.

Here we are interested mostly in how technologies, which are particular results of scientific research and discoveries, have a central role in disseminating scientific knowledge and its roots in collective memory.

On one hand, technologies suggested to scientists to move from the attempt in understanding macro-phenomena in order to create general theories on nature, to the detection and understanding of individual micro-phenomena, identifying an effective way to solve and eventually reproduce it. On the other hand science, through the meeting with technique, acquired craft's and operational knowledge that hadn't had any global conceptualization finalized for understanding problems more in depth. Thus, science has been able to relate with everyday social problems through technologies and the technique evolved from a non-problematized and ingenuous view to a more efficient use of instruments, which has become more and more effective for solving problems and extending the range of those ones that are approachable.

Technologies in use provide also to scientifically illiterate people a basic model of scientific interpretation of such phenomena, a simplified model that is a part of the scientific general theory that is behind the concrete scientific explanation and solution of the problem under management. In other words, technologies used to solve scientific problems work implicitly in order to set an interpretative frame that is transferred to the user. So technological instrument offers a view about the model of the whole phenomenon or of some parts of it. In this sense, technological invasion that affects modern industrialized society let pass to people, at the same time, some general information about scientific theories through which they can cope with problems. And thus, also people without any explicit scientific literacy are able to comprehend particular aspects of nature through the interpretative models so obtained. A utilitarian approach in the use of technologies has the advantage of a relapse that is not only operational, but also cognitive.

Certainly among all the technologies, the ones used into communication play a key role for science diffusion. Since the invention and spreading of printing, one may understand how this technology enables modern forms of scientific knowledge disclosure. It becomes even clearer if one looks at modern technological innovations that have spread further digital revolution. These, in fact, are characterized by low costs of reproduction and by the ability to transmit different contents using on the same support multiple languages and different communicative strategies. If once it was linked to alphabetical and written communication of science, today

we witness the use of resources such as 3d animation, virtual reality, video and sound streaming finalized to allow a user-centered communication that matches the rating and arouses the interest of the public. This diversified communication allows to "talking" to a wide audience differentiated by habits, expectations and literacy conveying science with a plurality of codes and languages that generate texts adapted to different communication contexts. For example, we can use simulations created with computer graphics to reproduce the motion of planets, we can make multimedial physical reconstruction as well as use images and video to show the stages of evolution of biological species. It is not a mere spectacular way to impress the public with science, but it is a disseminative strategy for allowing also to the non-expert audience to approach and understand scientific issues, using the more congenial language without impoverishing scientific contents. This possibility is even more important because it is now sure that different kind of personal learning exist: digital and telematic technologies make available to the whole society a plurality of key for accessing the scientific knowledge and so technologies contribute to lowering the cognitive difficulties and closures. In this case, we can observe how scientific culture gets in cultural memory providing material and virtual objects, which is using media and digital resources.

New technologies, in a socio-historical perspective, get mass culture closer to science. These technologies allow visualization and reproduction of natural phenomena otherwise inaccessible to non-experts because they are too big, too small or too far away. They improve a better relapse of scientific knowledge in the socio-cultural background, so that thanks to new technologies both phenomena and scientific theories have become objects of common knowledge. Therefore, we observe an increasing of scientific knowledge in cultural memory of western populations and communities, due to the work of dissemination, to the availability of new technologies that reduce the pre-existing gap and to the new lean for scientists for spreading their old and new knowledge. Finally, we should emphasize that science teaching plays a fundamental role that, thanks to new technologies, has the possibility to teach science in new ways, suggesting the imaginary, virtualizing theories, letting science appear less rigid and dogmatic.

These changes could help to educate new generations with adequate science literacy and to strengthen acquisition of scientific knowledge into cultural memory. New technologies allow the general public also to access a larger amount of contents, different kinds of voices and languages even in very special scientific fields. This means that, besides to outlining a general framework of scientific knowledge intelligible even by non-experts, there are the conditions to make them access scientific knowledge at a superior level than the basic framework generally provided by other technical means and efforts. In the future, possibly the gap between scientific knowledge and cultural memory will continue to decline.

In modern societies, technologies allow communities evolved into digital age to provide scientific knowledge that is accessible, indexed and always available in a digital way for new generations. Thus, they could always access to knowledge and memory resources stored in that huge shared memory consisting of World Wide Web. For the digital society are available digital and telematic tools for transmission, storage and sharing of knowledge. It is the real nature of science, always updating and in revision thanks to falsificability, which now is inside cultural memory with which shares dynamic and diachronic growth and the ability of re-mediation the contents, which makes it a collective *lieu de memoire*.

5. Conclusion

Today cultural memory cannot be separated from science. The idea of two different cultures (Snow), humanistic and scientific, which operate on different levels of our cognitive structure and in different ways in everyday life is no more conceivable without incurring in gross errors in the comprehension of our digital society. Science enters in shared knowledge of communities and help in sustaining the preservation of social identity. But a change is however visible, precisely on scientific mentality and basic scientific knowledge that, unlike the specialized one that remains prerogative of few, circulates in collective memory.

The increased circulation of scientific knowledge in social communities is due also to IC technologies that allow many individuals to construct science narrations. This type of communication allow people to access scientific knowledge both on the quantitative side, raising available scientific contents, both on the qualitative side, improving approaches, documented scientific positions and languages that new technologies

allow to use in talking about science. To conclude, scientific mentality has many consequences and important effects on the cultural memory of our "knowledge based society".

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Paranoid, not an Android: Dystopic and Utopic Expressions in Playful Interaction with Technology and Everyday Surroundings

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When I am king, you will be the first against the wall
With your opinion which is of no consequence at all
(Radiohead – Paranoid Android – 199)

1. You are not at all like my rose: animating objects

"One of the most important machines in our life is the computer, we agreed on that. We then thought about the role of the computer in our lives and what it is we use it for. […] The computer is a machine that makes human live easier. […] It plays a big part in our social life: ICQ, Skype and hotmail and a number of online forums are an example of this. After we'd thought about this, we came to the conclusion: the computer is man's new best friend!"

Figure 1: A computer on a leash, presenting it as man's best friend

"We see a computer screen with a man that apparently is trapped. He doesn't look happy and his hands are around the bars. Why is there a man trapped behind the computer screen? […] For some people the realisation that they're caught up in a virtual world comes too late. That's why they're alienated from the normal, real world, making it impossible for them to function normally"

Transforming culture in the digital age

Figure 2: A man caught inside a computer screen

These two quotes demonstrate different positions that bachelor students in Media & Entertainment Management take regarding the technology that surrounds their everyday life. Students sometimes display a concern with the pervasiveness of computers and media, along with a concern for the convergence of human bodies with computer technology. At the same time they focus on the more positive possible aspects such as the registration of donors with a chip in a person's body.

What philosophical notions of utopia and dystopia are intertwined with their concerns over and joy of technology? In a creative reflection assignment titled "The world, your playground" students in Media & Entertainment Management (@Stenden university, The Netherlands) reflected on a range of topics, such as creativity, virtual worlds, playfulness, experience and reality. Students were invited to actively engage in philosophical thinking, by challenging their assumptions about this world in a creative manner. The assignment itself yielded surprising results as students spontaneously used to opportunity to not just 'study' this world, but also to voice their concerns about it, in a playful and surprising way.

In this paper, a selection of these assignments is analyzed. A total number of 89 assignments was collected, the first half during a research and marketing course in spring 2008, the second half during this same course in 2009. The goal of the assignment was to have students explore the way the world around us is constructed. The assignment mentions the approach common to action research: one way to get to know the world is by intervening in it (Delnooz). In the assignment this was indicated with the lines:

> "The world often presents itself to you in a self-evident manner. You wake up in the morning and assume the world you left behind while going to sleep, will be the same world you wake up to. You follow a common ritual and rarely stop to think that *out of nowhere*, you could do something entirely different today."

The core of the assignment was the same in both years: *'to do something different'; 'create a surprise' and 'turn things upside down'*. Students were instructed to do so by first reflecting on a given topic in a brief essay, then find inspiring examples that illustrate this topic for them and finally come up with their own initiatives to create a similar surprise. In the first year, students focused on the management of creativity and the topic of virtual worlds (cf: De Jong). The second year they focused on the topic of research into playfulness. This paper addresses the theoretical statements students made that relate to media and technology and the kinds of visual expressions they came up with as illustrations. This generation of learners is often assumed to belong to the so-called 'digital natives' (Prensky) or the 'gamer generation'. Some scholars speak of an even broader trend of *ludification* of culture (Raessens):

> "Computer games and other digital technologies such as mobile phones and the Internet seem to stimulate playful goals and to facilitate the construction of playful identities. This transformation advances the ludification of today's culture in the spirit of Johan Huizinga's *homo ludens*" (Raessens 52).

Especially the assignments, in which students present their reflections on playfulness, indicate that students do not necessarily experience this transformation as an easy or natural process. One indicator for this, is their tendency to 'animate' objects, for instance by making a computer human, calling it man's best friend (fig 1), by imagining a computer as a potential prison (fig. 2) or by creating a composition in which the apple logo does not fall far from a tree (fig. 3).

Figure 3. The apple logo hanging from a tree, making it an apple tree

Many of these expressions contain the 'manifest joy' that scholars see as an inherent characteristic of play-fulness (Glynn & Webster, Lieberman), ranging from hooking up a computer to an energy drink (fig 4.), to the more goofball kind of non-digital fun while entertaining friends during a barbeque (fig 5.). Students report about their preparation for the assignment, the mindful state they were in while cruising the web, their school or the city for ideas and the fun they had coming up with ideas to turn things upside down. In finding an enjoyable way of dealing with the topic, at the same time the creation of these images can be seen as an act of appropriation, a construction.

Anthropomorphizing and animating objects is old as either Pygmalion's myth or Frankenstein's monster, and as recent as pop culture movies like Mannequin, Cast Away or at present Spike Jonze's love story between two robots. We attribute feelings to inanimate objects, especially if they move and we can be touched by watching a little robot like Asimo hold hands with a researcher – even if we know that it is just a measure-ment test run (Honda, 2009). What is interesting though, is that the same group of students that expresses concern about the boundaries between life on- and offline and the convergence of the human body with technology, at the same time tend to humanize technology and also everyday (non-digital) objects in their creative imagery. One student describes the way she and her friends came up with a game to find and pho-tograph faces in the city:

> "You have to be awake, be open. And with a little imagination everything can become something fun. Faces are easy to find. […] It became a game to find more and more faces. […] The world is talking with us. Every face wants to tell us something. Everywhere someone is watching what we are doing."

Figure 6: Illustration of a game to find faces in the city: the world is talking with us, everywhere

This same student indicated earlier, regarding the topic of playful media use:

> " … if [it] becomes more important than homework, working, sleeping, eating or going outside, we have to remain critical. Getting addicted happens too easily these days. It has to remain voluntary; no one can be forced to play along. […] MSN and Hyves are but two examples commonly used among the younger generation and which makes them hide behind their computers."

The assignments indicate a celebration of freedom, childhood, fantasy and creativity on the one hand yet also a sometimes more gloomy image of alienation, (game)-addiction, loneliness and (worry about a) loss of touch with reality. They are not unanimously, unambiguously fully skilled digital natives that have the world at the tip of their computer's mouse. The remainder of this paper discusses student's expressions in relation to their theoretical statements and also compares the first year assignments with the second year. An analysis of these expressions is warranted because a) these students belong to a new generation of future media makers and managers that will play a role in the further dissemination of several forms of entertainment and pop-culture and b) these students form an "in between" generation that will have to connect the lives of people that knew a time before the internet to the lives of people that will be growing up in a truly cross medial timeframe.

2. 'If you please, draw me a sheep!', inside the box

> "I don't think [playfulness] is always a positive thing. Children these days are often influenced by the new games that are sold in stores and since the Wii is now very popular, even among parents, whole families are now susceptible for these new released games. […] I also think a game computer is easily addictive, that's why I don't consider this a positive point. Even the computer has become addictive among children and even among students!"

When students are asked about media and technology, whether this is in relation to playfulness or creativity, a pervasive concern they display is that of the influence of computer games on children. Students were *deliberately not* asked to compare playfulness in children with playfulness in adults, nor was it addressed that playfulness is often considered a children's trait (Lieberman; Glynn and Webster). In fact, children were not mentioned in any part of this assignment. Yet, in their description of playfulness – as well as with creativity – they consistently link play and original thinking to childhood; they write admiringly about the open approach to the world children still have, and display moral concern for the way in which children are assumed to be susceptible to computer addiction.

Figure 7: A captured puppy wired up and tangled in the strings of a guitar: innocence caught

It seems even more important to students to have a clear sense of boundaries for discerning what is real and what is not. This brings us to the topic of utopia in relation to our definitions of reality. On the whole, students' assignments display two types of '…-topian' thinking: they portray a childhood utopia, containing thoughts about an ideal world of open mindedness and creativity, and a technological dystopia that closes this childlike mind and numbs the imagination, as one student put it:

> "Serious humans have created the world, serious humans have created all religions, they have created all philosophies and all civilizations: everything you see around you is a creation of the serious human. Looking through the eyes of children, the world is seen in an objective and innovative manner."

A comparison of this and other student's stances to Dutch historian Johan Huizinga's position of play as a constitutive element of culture, as described in his seminal work "Homo Ludens; a study of the play element of culture", leads to some similarities: there is the faith in the open mindedness and imagination of the youthful and also an overt criticism of society as it is or was at that moment, that seems at times pessimistic (Krul). Yet, according to Huizinga civilization finds its *origins in play*. So, it would be the playful human that is responsible for culture, instead of the serious human described by this student. According to the Dutch art historian Wessel Krul, Huizinga's thinking displays a clear utopian mark, in the sense that it sketches a society in which its members actively and freely participate in ritualized forms of play that display both aesthetic and moral engagement (Krul, p. 23). Theories of play and of culture have either explicit or implicit notions of the kind of life that is worth living. This also concerns images of an ideal state of existence that we can use as a reference point or a horrifying perspective we wish to steer clear of.

Should we take the combination of moral and aesthetic engagement to be part of a utopian strand of thinking, we see this expressed in student's responses in different ways. Theoretically, playfulness and seriousness are considered antonyms (Lieberman). In the collection of examples students find inspiring, they come up with examples that are both serious and playful at the same time. These illustrations are often critical of consumer society, such as Adbusters' adds or social commentaries on current events (Adbusters, Nozzman).

*Figure 8: A visual comment on Geert Wilders' movie Fitna. The Dutch
words translate into: "for all you copy-paste chores."*

Some students use the assignment to not just make this world more surprising, but also to try and make it a better place while they're at it.

*Figure 9A man trapped, this time behind guitar strings, to protest against the use of
tropical hardwood for the creation of guitars*

The technological innovations and concerns displayed in the examples they consider to be inspiring, do not show up in the same way in their own creative expressions; more often they do something completely different than they said they would do. They worry about technology in the theoretical part, then applaud it in the examples they provide, and neglect it entirely in their own creations – or the other way around. Playfulness, they relate most often to gaming, specifically computer gaming, and they oppose it to maturity. Even if this is a common conception of it, playfulness is also considered a trait of the healthy, normal adult personality (Lieberman; Glynn & Webster). In students' theoretical explorations, they echo the theories they learn about creativity and 'thinking outside the box', while at the same time also echoing discourse on popular media, especially regarding the moral concerns without noticing perhaps, that by their insistence on clear boundaries between human beings and technology, they keep reality neatly boxed in.

This is a generation of students that – in time – will be part of the creation, re-creation and dissemination of the reservoirs of cultural meaning. Should we take Raessens' ludification of culture as a given – this indicates we now live in a timeframe that sees a return of play and playfulness in relation to the constitution and the practices of culture (Huizinga, Raessens). The utopian aspects that had a brief revival during

the ludic sixties, seem to have undergone a transformation to consumer society (Krul, Achterhuis). Some scholars are critical of the new ways of commercialized play that seems culturally empty upon close inspection (Duncombe). If we are being 'real' with ourselves, there are more important things to do than engage in these trivialities. A utopian ideal is not attained by having fun, or is it?

Figure 10: The Escape – a photo shopped door on a marketplace leading us out of our stressful society

In 'The Grasshopper; Games, life and utopia' philosopher Bernard Suits indicates that if we ever were to attain a desired end state we could truly call Utopia, playing games is what we'd be doing there. If all other needs were met, we'd think of challenges worth pursuing, without having actual problems to overcome. Creativity is often associated with problem solving; playfulness is associated with an absence from imposed rules (Barnett). Glynn & Webster and Lieberman already indicated that creativity and playfulness are correlated but "are distinguished by their different relationships to instrumentality and external demands […] and seem to parallel the differences between adaptation and innovation" (85).

Figure 11: A pebble with a scrunchie around it: the "eye" looks at a polluted world and watches the world deteriorate.

In student's expressions, the difference in focus, creativity in the first year and playfulness in the second, yielded some differences in the way students approached the assignment. The expressions in the assignments of the first year are a bit more directed towards problem solving, often expressed in attempts to create awareness of certain topics; the assignments that involve playfulness are a bit more often directed towards

having fun and also goofing around. This would indicate that framing an assignment as playful might already have a *performative* effect on the way the assignment is carried out. It would then be no surprise if the assignments would not display a tendency towards problem solving at all, yet this is not the case either. Also, no substantial differences exist in the amount of use of digital media to perform the assignment, nor was there a difference in the amount of social engagement, for instance.

Comparing the two years, there were *two core differences*. In the creative assignment, students more often express a desire to break social rules, to shake people up and to engage in active resistance of some sort. Also, in some cases, students would just indicate an urge for brawling, creating a ruckus, to let of steam.

Figure 12: A hamster in a running cage, 'fueling' a car to create awareness about the way we handle natural resources

Figure 13: An image of the future in which our full bodies will be 'readable', containing medical, financial and personal data

Next to that, in their reflections on the assignment, students are more stringent in the assessment of whether what they came up with is actually creative, rather than playful. They quickly assume what they did was in fact playful, but are hesitant to state that what they've done is creative. The framing of the assignment apparently did not so much have an effect on the content of what is produced, but more so on the assessment of the quality of what has been produced. Since creativity and playfulness are correlated, this may have implications for the analysis of what we consider playful behaviour. This is especially interesting regarding the assessment they make of this day and age, in which they do seem to *value* the creativity of certain adds and innovations, but not the superficiality of consumer society. Entertainment is – in one way or another – discredited as 'unserious', 'just for fun', 'escapist'.

Figure 14 A real life bird with an angry expression, "guarding" a golf ball

Continuing then, on the notions of playfulness and creativity in relation to how we construe reality to be, it is impossible to escape notions of a type of life that would be worthwhile living. The kinds of ideals derived from this, shape our everyday actions. In getting towards any kind of situation we may wish to call Utopia, ethical behavior and enjoyable behavior may sometimes be at odds with one another, yet once we're there, what good would Utopia be if joy were not its core? Stephen Duncombe, in the pamphlet-book 'Dream' states it is time to learn more from the use of marketer's techniques of creating fantasy. We do not have to discard the proper study of reality, nor lose our moral concerns and stringent analysis of the power dynamics in society, to see we may miss out on something in what we construe to be real: a new reality is created much faster than it can be properly analyzed (p.2). Duncombe states:

> "Make no mistake, there is an empirical real. But no matter how real this reality may be, it only means something when we give it meaning. As such we are forever constructing fictions from the truth. Not lies, but fictions. The world surrounding us may be full of eternal truths and constitute an everlasting real, but the world we live in is an assemblage of data ordered by ourselves according to theories, stories, habits, customs, and prejudices. We *make* sense." (Duncombe, p. 18)

Games, play and playfulness are considered fruitful to bring about ways of sense making that can be innovative. At the same time, there's a risk of losing 'touch' with reality. Regarding the construction of reality, game researcher and designer Jane McGonigal mentions a lack of 'optionality' as a core characteristic of real life. Reality, in everyday language, is not so much about knowledgeability, but about the things you *have to* 'deal' with. Her claim is that through augmented reality gaming and ubiquitous computing reality itself can be made more appealing (McGonigal). In this sense, an 'ethic' of games and playfulness is compatible with notions of 'the good life', i.e. the overarching sense that some ways of living are more worthwhile than other ways of living. A willingness to deal or cope with reality is often seen as a valuable trait. But creativity and innovation are about stretching the boundaries of what is real now.

This is where reality, utopia, creativity and playfulness meet. Any exploration into utopian thinking deals with the boundary issues of what is real and what can be become real. Rather than asking what is real and what not, we could also ask what *has become* real, what is real now but better *disappear* and what can we replace it with. Playfulness and creativity tug on the edges of what we construe to be real at present. Questions about what is real, are important questions, but never fixed, never static. Also, we can act based on 'mistaken' notions of what this world is about and yet, be a fully functioning human being. Students' responses indicate a discomfort with this idea, leading to a tension between their creative and playful wish to stretch boundaries, and their – possibly adolescent – need to know what to count on. The challenge is then to be with discomfort and uncertainty of an altering world while at the same time being an agent in this world. That is, if the echoed quest for thinking outside the box is to lead to an approach in which boundaries are called into question rather than reaffirmed.

3. Why should any one be frightened by a hat?

Though most assignments, sometimes with some reconstructing, display a somewhat coherent stance towards the topic that is addressed, some of the assignments don't always make sense. Some students forget to put in their reflection on a certain picture, leaving the reader with only a guess what it is she is looking at. The examples they provided as *illustrations* of what they consider playful or creative tend to have a sense of immediacy – i.e. with a Dutch national background and/or 'western' cultural orientation, the image in itself catches us by surprise right away, and if not immediately, then at least upon reading the a title or a text inside the image. In the expressions the students created themselves, the images don't always speak for themselves; they contain personal references that only their immediate peers may understand and do not tap into a reservoir of meanings embedded deeply within culture. They are, of course, students, not graphic designers or marketing campaign managers (yet). In that sense, their responses can be seen as acts of appropriation, that display the process in which they try to come to terms with the topics. These playful explorations may say more about them than they are aware of themselves.

Some of the students' thoughts about creativity and playfulness can be interpreted as utopian, in the sense that they often mention a childhood lost in which an ideal state existed, that consists of boundless freedom and originality and that can be found back by resisting elements of today's culture. Their thoughts about the mediation of everyday life and the role of technology nonetheless express a dystopian stance towards the society they're growing into as future managers. Their concerns range from the speed and demands of today's society to anxiety over alienation through life online and worries about the transgression of boundaries through digital game play.

Figure 16 "Lights in a dancing are not really creative, until you capture them"

Many expressions are characterized by ambiguity. Rather than exploring reality epistemologically, they try to set boundaries normatively. In doing so, while they're looking for originality, they echo several discourses on creativity, media impact and playfulness. The richness in their thinking could benefit from the design of assignments that promote the tolerance of ambiguity and bring the hidden assumptions in their mind to the fore more explicitly. By creating different kinds of playful philosophical assignments, this will be explored with students in future years.

* The images were used with permission of the students. The green surfaces in image 12 are added by the author to ensure anonymity.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Theorizing Web 2.0: Including Local to Become Universal

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1. Theorizing Cyberspace

In every appearance of a new technique, and as soon as this one penetrates into the cultural arena, we observe severe diagnoses against the culture conveyed by these tools. The studies and the researches dedicated to cyberspace and cyberculture these last years are numerous, diversified and scattered. That they involve reports sponsored by the government, associative files or university searches, all contribute to advance the understanding of this new field of study. Thus, Internet as space of meeting and sociability enriches the political practices by means of a functional multi-communication facilitated by the evolution of the ICT's. This tendency of Internet seems to strengthen with the appearance of the applications of Web 2.0, which indicates the more estimated and more participative version of current Web.

The study of cyberculture grew all the way through the last half of the 1990s (Silver 25). The study was renovated in a lot of ways and new topics and theories were persistently added. The context in which cyberspace studies originate, leads most of the scholars dominantly to 'technological determinism' which describes one way relationship between technology and people (MacKenzie, Wajcman). As the domain and the research areas in the domain get larger, the idea of technological determinism is mostly left behind, presuming that deterministic cause and effect model is too simplistic to explain the complexity of cyberspace. It is also important to note that there have been different approaches from different academic disciplines, which contribute in their own way, to the expansion of the study field.

Michel Bassand and Blaise Galland asserts us that it is difficult to take place on a going axis of: "it is the social which creates the technique" to "it is the technical environment which creates the society" (Bassand, and Galland). So that we can speak about a change in a revolutionary sense, a technique has to replace advantageously a previous usage. Consequently, for example as Galland shows, if the printing office is revolutionary because it replaces advantageously the monks' copyists, it also creates the literary novel which was unthinkable without it. The ICT "does not change the world", they add something to it. They add it the cyberspace, the world of the bits. According to Vedel, the cooperation between the various actors of the process depends not only on the social context in which it takes place but also intrinsic characteristics of the technique which defines a field of constraints and possible (34).

Some of the theorists such as Sterne, Turkle, whose works are centrally related with cyberculture, usually theorize their ideas with the help of poststructuralist and postmodernist theorists such as Foucault, Baudrillard and Deleuze. The concepts that involve cyberspace mostly investigate identity, virtual reality or surveillance which refers to the works of noted philosophers. For example Michel Foucault's discussion of the panopticon (79) can help us think about various aspects of on-line practices. David Lyon mentions that "it is ironic that Foucault who had almost nothing to say about computers, should inspire some radically new approaches to digitized surveillance" (114). As for Jean Baudrillard, with the notions of simulacrum and hyperreality, he underlines the fact that signs have become disconnected from the reality (93). These ideas can be applied to cyberspace in order to discuss whether new media disconnects us from reality and create a

Transforming culture in the digital age

virtual reality. Stivale refers to Deleuze and Guattari's idea of becoming to explore cyberspace and cyberpunk. Yet another French postmodernist writer Paul Virilio defends the idea that with a time of absolute world interactivity, we shall create a cybernetic society (67). The cyberspace will become object of power. There was a tyranny of the real space; there will be now a tyranny of the real time. Virilio is also against the effect immediate of the new technologies and that of the Internet. Because according to him, the immediacy, it is the absolute speed and they are the characteristics of the absolute dictatorship. There is an absolute center. To see everything, and to understand everything, any knowledge it is the divine, it is not the human being. It is the absolute dictatorship. When there is not more than conditioned reflexes by the immediacy, there is not possible democracy anymore.

Before enhancing the theoretical debate on cyberspace, it would be beneficial to draw the general aspects of the notion.

1.1 What is Cyberspace?

The cyberspace. A consensual hallucination lived daily in any legality by tens of million operators, in all the countries, by kids to whom we teach the mathematical concepts... A graphic representation of data extracted from the reports(memoirs) of all the computers of the human system. An unthinkable complexity. Rays of light arranged in the non-space of the spirit, the heap and the constellations of data. As the city lights, in the distant. (Gibson 12)

The word "cyberspace" was invented in 1984 by William Gibson in the science fiction novel *Neuromancer*. This term indicates(appoints) the universe of the numeric(digital) networks described as battlefield between multinationals, stake in the world conflicts, the new economic and cultural border. In *Neuromancer*, the exploration of the cyberspace stages the fortresses of secret information protected by glacis software, islands bathed by the oceans of data which metamorphose and are exchanged at high speed around the planet. Certain heroes are capable of entering physically this space of data to live any sorts of adventures there. The cyberspace of Gibson makes sensitive unstable geographical of the information. According to Pierre Lévy, the cyberspace is as a space of communication opened by the world interconnection of computers and computing reports. This definition includes all the systems of electronic communication (including all the classic Hertzian and phone networks as far as they escort information from digital sources or intended for the digitalization. For Howard Rheingold the cyberspace is a word forged by William Gibson in its famous science fiction novel *Neuromancer*, is the name which some give to this abstract space where words, emotional links, data, information and power are produced by those who use the on-line data processing (Rheingold).

For his part André Lemos explains that the "cyberspace" contains two forms: the data networks and the virtual reality. Before describing these two forms, Lemos explains the sense of the concept of "cyberspace". This term was invented by William Gibson to describe the consensual hallucination in its "cyberpunk" novels. In its papers, "cyberspace" is a utopian space where circulates the information is represented by "Matrix". So, the "cyberspace" is an abstract space where circulates the information. With, the globalization of the electronic networks and the reproduction of the exchanges, the "cyberspace" becomes a real "social space". According to Lemos, the succession of these virtual social spaces puts reflections much more sociological than techniques for the craftsmen of networks. Lemos describes the first mode of existence in the "cyberspace" as "subjective dumpings" in the data networks. It is about a new mode of membership in a community. These communities are characterized by a remote mediation between individuals. On the contrary, the virtual reality is a mode of existence by "physical dumping". Therefore, the virtual reality feigns an unreal world by the stimulation of our sensations. The individual is submerged in an abstract universe where he meets only unreal entities. The potential of a social space really virtual in big but the large-scale experiences are rare. At present, the virtual spaces of social exchanges exist especially thanks to the data networks.

1.2 On going debate in cyberculture theories

In order to move on the on going debate about cyberculture, it is inevitable to look at the periods through which the notions gets shaped. David Silver has made a distinction of cyberculture studies according to which

popular cyberculture is the first stage, cyberculture studies is the second stage and critical cyberculture studies is the third stage. The first stage of cyberculture described as the popularisation of the concept throughout the books and essays. The second stage was generally marked by the works of Rheingold and Turkle. Online interactions are the main research topic of these researchers. Turkle's researches on cyberspace are largely enlightening for the future studies. The author expose the fact that MUDs create online identities to help navigate their offline lives throughout the cases studies realised. Furthermore, Wellman have approached to the virtual communities as mechanisms of social networks while others (Kollock, and Smith 87) employ the theories of interactionism and collective action dilemma theory. Critical cyberculture studies, the third stage, mainly differ from the first two stages' scholars by trying to comprehend the relationships, intersections, and interdependencies between multiple areas (Nakamura).

At the origin of the internet researches, there were two contradictory theories about the social impacts of internet. On the base of the optimistic speech, we find the idea that internet allows people to communicate better with each other, a new type of sharing, a new opportunity of expression the human variety and the opportunity for the new virtual communities in which whole world can participate and exchange. For most of the optimist researchers, internet is not as the radio or the television, in other terms, it is not a sort of one-way media. Differently on the net, each has the possibility of being at the same, a consumer and a source of information. Each can send messages, publish documents on the web.

Those who do not believe that the computerization can lead a better fate for the humanity base mainly their assertions on the history. The history demonstrates us that there was always an appropriation of the power by elite which maintains its dominion on the rest of the world. For the conservatives, the computing is a new object of power, maybe even the most powerful never invented, and there is no chance that it will be appropriate to human being.

As summarized above, theories and studies about cyberculture and its connected issues are developing continuously. The old discourse of technophobes and technophiles has come out of date. From the years eighty, the researchers begin to be interested the notion of a reasoned usage which facilitates rather the humanist aspect of the technical question. So, the speech which was popular in the sixties and seventy where computers see each other as a promise of a better world was changed. Since certain moments, the researchers who develop theories on the question of cyberspace, decide to support a custom(usage) reasoned by Internet. According to this a usage reasoned by techniques can under certain conditions be factor of progress. The notion also facilitates the humanist aspect of the technical question (Weizenbaum 48).

Values and expectations connected with cyberculture and advanced information and communication technologies were adopted by the majority society and became part and parcel of everyday political. As declared by Yves Jeanneret and Bruno Ollivier, "mostly, a researcher it ICT tries to theorize about practices, while practising some theoretical research. Searcher thus realizes a double movement, practices of other towards the theory which he builds and of the theory towards his own practical activity".

2. Web 2.0 dıscourse

Web 2.0, a fashionable term but which does not make unanimity. At the origin of the term, there is Tim O'Reilly. In his article titled "What is Web 2.0?" he redefines the Internet moreover than a media (where web sites are so many islands of isolated information) but as a platform: a base of exchanges between the users (the author speaks about collective intelligence) and the services or the on-line applications. The phenomenon of blogs shows us in which point the Internet users are thirsty of speaking and recognition. Beyond the exhilarating aspect to arrange its own space of expression; the contribution of the Internet users does not date of yesterday: the sites of opinions based their economic model on the capacity of the visitors to be transformed as contributors. Also, wikis know a strong growth. The on-line collaborative encyclopedia "Wikipedia" is the symbolic face of web 2.0. So symbolic that it becomes the target of organized criticisms. Never mind, numerous declensions already exist: Wiki News, Wiki Books, Wiki Travel and same Yell Wikis (the yellow pages in collaborative version).

Transforming culture in the digital age

Naturally the principle of the personal pages is not new, but the recent technological evolutions and ergonomic of the tools presented to the users, allowed a much wider adoption and especially a much more fluid circulation of information by means of mechanism of syndication and the RSS[1].

Consequently, web 2.0 applications put the users at the heart of the information content. In other terms, the source of information has transformed and the users, who are supposed to be customers, are now the producers of information.

Recently the term of web 3.0 has been developed to describe the future features of Internet. At this point, we see a great meaning in interrogating whether these new uses of web has been adapted by a given society in order to conclude if they serve as a solution to the exclusion or they create a deeper gap between the users?

Since the expansion of Web 2.0, it's usually anticipated that related revolutionary developments in the on-line world effects social aspects of our daily lifes. Many scholar researches and projets are conducted to enlighten the user practices' issues, such as identity creation online, interaction, social focus, homepages becoming sites of interaction, user creating content. As Lev Manovich points out Web 2.0 refers to a number of different technical, economical, and social developments, most of them are directly relevant to "social media", other important concepts are "user-generated content", "long tail", "network as platform", "folksonomy", "syndication", and "mass collaboration". It is the shareable content that makes web 2.0 applications more distinguished than the web 1.0 applications. Social networking sites, which is described as "websites that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within the system and formally articulate their relationship to other users in a way that is visible to anyone who can access their profile" (Boyd) are the main practice areas of web 2.0 applications.

According to statistics, between most popular social networking sites, *Facebook*, *YouTube* and *Wikipedia* are listed at the top (*NewMedia TrendWatch*). However the audiences from United States represent 1/3 of these social network users, while audiences from other countries remain as 4% or 5% of the site traffic. The statistic about Visitors by Country for *Facebook* has shown that, American audience represents 29.6% of *Facebook* site traffic whereas Turkish audience's percentage is 2.3. Yet, according to 2007 statistics, only between 0.5%-1.5% users of most popular social media sites (*Flickr*, *YouTube*, *Wikipedia*) contributed their own content. Others remained consumers of the content produced by this 0.5-1.5%. People participating in these social networks and sharing media prefer to be spectators instead of contributors. Consequently, the general trend towards the use of social media increase, however the users remain inactive in spite of the interactive features of Web 2.0.

2.1 Turkey online

Before analyzing the web 2.0 applications in Turkey, it would be necessary to identify the internet users' profile. There were 26,500,000 internet users in Turkey (representing 34.5% of the population) in September 2009, according to *Internet World Stats*. This was up by 1,225% compared to 2000. (*Internet World Stats*, Nov. 2009). If we make a classification between the rural and urban areas of Turkey, people living in urban area use internet at least three times more than people living in rural area, in each categorization. The internet use is highest with 55%, in the age group 16 to 24 years and decreased with the age. The ratio falls down to 12%, in the age group 45 to 54. This fact may be explained by technophobia of older generation. As argued by Tapscott "using the new technology is as natural as breathing for children"; whereas older generations' fear and incapacity block their relations with internet. Beyond this, what is interesting is that between ages 16-24, the rate of the men who use Internet is almost twice more than the women, but the rate of use of the women exceeds the rate of use of the men between ages 25-34. Furthermore as it is the similar almost everywhere in the world, the rate of use at the men is more raised than the women.

According to the internet use by the labor force status, among the housewives, the rate of use is the lowest with a percentage of 2, 98. In rural area, the rate of use falls until to the 0.68%. What is interesting as the result in this inquiry is that the rate of use of the people unemployed is placed in the third place after the

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1   Rich site summary

employees. This fact can be explained by the fact that most of the unemployed in Turkey are educated. As the educational level is an important matter in the use of Internet, the unemployed but educated people often use Internet. It is very evident that the persons with a regular job use Internet every day in their offices.

Finally, we see great advantage in giving some statistical information about the activities of Turks using the internet. 78.23% of people use the Internet for the objectives of communication (emails, the immediate messages, on-line phone, and chats). The most popular activities among the Turkish internet users are the research and on-line services, such as downloading files, information about products and services, reading newspapers and on-line magazines listening to the radio, etc. Among the people, who use Internet, 15.95 % of them orders possessions and use the on-line banking services. The rate is not high for this activity what shows us the lack of the confidence of the Turkish internet users. 39.97% of the Turkish Internet users use on-line governmental services. This activity includes obtaining information from public authorities' web sites, downloading administrative forms and sending filled forms.

30.71% of the users use Internet for the educational purposes (the educational courses, the school activities) and 22.97% of the Internet users use internet for the activities which concern the health; such as seeking health-related information, making an on-line appointment, seeking on-line medical advice from a practitioner.

2.2. Being online in Turkey

Internet users in Turkey spend more time online and consume more pages than users in other European countries. In April 2009, more than 17 million people in Turkey age 15 and older accessed the Internet from a home or work location, consuming on average 3,044 pages per visitor, according to a *comScore*'s first report examining the online behaviour of internet users in Turkey. They viewed an average of 3,070 pages of content and spent an average of 31.6 hours per person online ("93 Percent").

Of the 17 European countries individually reported by comScore, Germany's online audience was the largest with 40 million visitors in April 2009, followed by the UK (36.8 million visitors), and France (36.3 million visitors). Internet users in Turkey were also found to be the most engaged users in Europe, spending an average 32 hours and viewing an average of 3,044 pages of content per month ("93 Percent"). The online population of Turkey far surpasses the rest of Europe in terms of time spent and content consumed per person. Much of this heavy engagement is driven by usage of social networking and entertainment media sites, which maintain users' attention for extended periods of time. (*comScore*, May 2009).

Google Sites was the most popular property in Turkey in September 2009 with 18.4 million visitors, reaching 93% of the total online population, followed Microsoft Sites, according to *comScore*'s overview of internet usage in Turkey, based on September 2009. Facebookcom, ranked third having grown 26% in just the past six months. Dogan Online led a total of seven Turkish-based properties that ranked amongst the top 15, including Milliyet Group, Mynet A.S. and Blogcu.com. Internet users spend on average more than one hour a day online, ranking it among the five most engaged online populations worldwide. Although global Internet brands like Google, Microsoft and Facebook are among the most visited in Turkey, there is also a vibrant community of home-grown Web properties like Dogan Online and Milliyet Group. Turkey is clearly a market with exciting potential.

Facebook's position as the third ranked Web property overall in Turkey in September 2009 underscores the rapid emergence of social networking in the market, according to *comScore*'s overview of internet usage in Turkey, based on September 2009. Just six months ago, social networking accounted for 9% of total time spent online in Turkey, but in September social networking represented 15% of all time spent online (*NewMedia TrendWatch*).

Facebook ranked as the most popular social networking site in September with 16.1 million visitors and accounted for 92% of the total time spent on social networking sites during the month. Window's Live Profile – which provides a gateway to Turkey's most popular Instant Messenger, Window's Live Messenger – ranked second, followed by Turkish property Mynet Eksenim and Netlog.com.

Since the statistical facts are not sufficient to explain the realities, we see a great benefit to analyse them profoundly. The debate between technophiles (internet optimists) and technophobes (internet pessimists)

has left its place to pragmatic optimists whose attempts are to rid the optimist paradigm of its kookier, polly-annish thinking while also taking into account some of the very legitimate concerns raised by the pessimists (Thierer). While efforts are made in order to theorize internet studies, scholars usually focus on general promises or perils of internet use. For instance; about the social and cultural aspects of internet, it's a limited way to characterize it by being participatory or polarizing. Neither of these facts would be truly explicative when thinking about possible consequences of internet use without taking into consideration local issues.

Turkey's example is interesting case when trying to combine it with internationally constructed internet theories. Turkey has been affected by the notion of "digital divide" not only in its literature definition but also, by its connotative meaning, where a divide between rural and public areas is obvious. As a consequence, although Turkey has been listed as the first 10 countries using facebook; this fact does not simply show that new applications brought by web 2.0 are well integrated through society. On one hand, as the optimistic speech defend, internet's borders are getting wider and it is representing the participative communication tool for its users. However on the other hand, the gap is also getting wider and bigger because of non users. The technological improvement of internet continues to leave out the non users as more "sidelined" than ever. Because the challenge, for non users is now doubled; use the internet not only for communication but also for announcing your voice.

The Internet audience in Turkey is one of the most active and engaged audiences in the world, according to comScore. Regarding the statistical facts about Turkey's use of internet, this affirmation rather reflects the truth. Nevertheless, in order to come to a conclusion that states Turkey as one of the most engaged audience, other facts such as digital divide must be taken under consideration. In other words, Turkish audiences' online presence, like in other countries, carries within self some other assets.

Conclusion

Internet studies are the domain which is mostly neglected in Turkey. There have been number of different ways of approaching to Internet theories, from disciplines such as philosophy, sociology and cultural studies. Andrew Webster's idea of "epistemic relativism" which means scientific knowledge is located culturally, historically and geographically, refers to the point that scientific knowledge is not universal:

This draws our attention to the idea that science is made at a particular time and place- it is not a universal entity, but the product of people (scientists), who are themselves products of the settings in which they do science. To put in another way, science is itself a social practice. The same idea works with technology, too; if we look closely at the invention, development, production, consumption and the use of a particular technological artifact (a computer, for example), we can see how each stage is overlain by broader social process, which it shapes but is also shaped by. Computers have turned out the way they have because they are social and cultural as well as technological objects- and of course political and economical objects too." (Bell 45)

As Erick Davis states, cyberspace is still under construction and therein lies its strength, the more we analyze and observe it in our own way, the better it will get shaped (264). According to our experience, the domain will get richer and deeper if theorists in this domain take into consideration social and cultural aspects of the society that is being observed.

Turkey, as mentioned above, is a special case in Internet studies as do most of the countries. A a result, we have to estimate a country's profile and socio-political and economical issues before placing it statistically.

In summary, we are concluding that being optimistic about the future of Internet seems more adequate then the cursed sceneries, however the researches must count on social and cultural aspects.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

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How Web 3.0 Combines User-Generated and Machine-Generated Content

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1. Introduction

Guided by the perspectives of Web 2.0 and Web 3.0, this paper examines to what extent Web 3.0 and in particular recommendations engines will deliver user-generated, machine-mediated content and which implications this has for cultural participants. Therefore we use the final research findings from the Flemish IBBT (Interdisciplinary Institute for Broadband Technology) research project CUPID (Cultural Profile and Information Database). In this research project several partners searched for innovative ways to aggregate, categorise, personalise and distribute cultural content in order to give end users a rich cultural experience. The outcomes of the literature studies on the key concepts of Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 will be used to discuss the shift from user-generated to machine-generated content, namely the recommendations of cultural events as developed in the CUPID model. In this paper we use the findings from different series of focus group conversations to reflect on the possible opportunities and risks of machine-generated content.

2. From Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 to Web 3.0

The term Web 2.0 is used to describe the evolution (Knowles, 3; Skiba et al., 10) from a 'read-only' World Wide Web, later called Web 1.0, towards web sites and web services based on participation, collaboration and sharing between users (O'Reilly, 6; Rollett et al., 4-5). These concepts transcend the former dichotomy of creators and consumers of content. Content is now based on the harnessing of data and outputs of users. Web 2.0 applications allow users and websites to consume and remix data from multiple sources. These applications and websites emphasize interaction, community and openness (Millard & Ross, 1). Examples include applications such as weblogs and wikis, technologies such as social tagging and social networking and websites such as YouTube, MySpace and Flickr.

Inventor of the World Wide Web Tim Berners-Lee saw the web not only as a common information source, but also as a place to "work and play and socialize" and where computers can "help us analyse it, make sense of what we are doing, where we individually fit in, and how we can better work together" (Berners-Lee, 1). With coining the term Web 2.0, the future of the World Wide Web is also widely discussed. The World Wide Web seems to evolve further. To what extent can a Web 3.0 arise and what does it signify?

To analyse the web and make sense of what the users are doing, Berners-Lee et al. see a semantic web as the future of the web, "creating an environment where software agents roaming from page to page can readily carry out sophisticated tasks for users". (3)

The semantic environment will make use of data and metadata, i.e. data on data, the semantics of information and services on the web. The web will become more intelligent and will be able to satisfy and fulfil the requests of users. Adding content and metadata to Web 2.0-applications and organising and processing these data in a Web 3.0 application should make the Internet easier to use (Borland, 65).

Although Web 3.0 is seen as the symbiosis of web technologies and knowledge, some theorists are more critical. Among others Lassila and Hendler:

> Although many aspects of the Semantic Web are yet to be explored, and much research remains to be done, this technology is clearly transitioning into a serious player in the modern Web universe. We might not like the term "Web 3.0," but we enthusiastically embrace the technologies it is bringing to the field. (93)

Mike Evans foresees several practical problems with Web 3.0 too (58). Firstly, the semantic web becomes more and more complex and machines cannot understand everything the user puts in. Secondly, the democratised production of content by the users is being ignored by processing data and generating metadata and thus content in a Web 3.0-application. And finally, Evans indicates that a forced pursuit of the semantic web prevents the dynamics of the World Wide Web. He thinks the Internet will evolve to a more hybrid web – he already speaks of Web 4.0 –, provided by mobile technologies and using physical objects. Something Berners-Lee et al. also forecasted, when "the Semantic Web will break out of the virtual realm and extend into our physical world" (15). This means a hybrid web, spun from a number of technological threads, all helping to make data more accessible and more useful (Borland, 1) and a web about recommendation and personalisation (Kiss, 1).

2.1 The user as producer

Not only the concept of the World Wide Web is challenged by the evolution mentioned above, the role of the user is equally challenged. The demarcations between consumer – producer and amateur – professional seem to blur and create hybrid roles because of new media and digital culture. New media and digital technologies have collapsed the traditional value chain of production, distribution and consumption. On the one hand this is because of the digitization of content, but on the other hand online and offline applications to create, edit and disperse content also changed the value chain. Users are able now, to produce and distribute their own content on the Internet. Axel Bruns coins the term 'produsage' to describe this "new hybrid form of simultaneous production and usage" (Bruns, 99). Since the Internet earlier only showed pre-produced websites, nowadays, the Internet gives lots of possibilities to users to create their own content online.

The 'produser' transcends the former chasm between user and producer. With active 'produsers' there is more and more involved consumption. Besides that, users are trying to produce more professional content as well. This new hybrid role goes by the 'produser' and was coined as the 'prosumer' (Toffler, 266). Thus, the borders between amateur and professional content are also under pressure, since new media easily facilitate amateurs or consumers to produce professional content their selves, since the "PC itself is in many ways the ultimate figure of media 'prosumer' technology. It is a technology of distribution, of consumption, as well as a technology of production." (Lister et al., 34)

New media and digital technologies facilitate 'produsers' and 'prosumers' to create their own content. Web 2.0 thereupon enables users to create, distribute their creations and consume other's user-generated content.

2.2 From user-generated to machine-generated content

As already stated, Web 3.0 will make data and content more accessible and usable. This offers new possibilities for the organisation of content. For example, Web 2.0 websites like Facebook or Last.Fm are able to include recommendations based on the available content. The huge amount of user-generated content of Web 2.0 will be distributed even better because of the Web 3.0 filtering techniques to recommend data. The user, although not completely in control of the content creation, does well by this development, as the data and content will be recommended and personalised and this more accessible and useful. However, it remains to be seen to what extent the user keeps the same role in the emerging Web 3.0 technologies.

In particular the user seems to take advantage of Web 3.0, yet the user is not the only one to add value to the web anymore. Complex algorithms process data, generate metadata and add content to the Web. Combined with the content obtained via Web 2.0 applications, the connection between large amounts of structured information and user and context related indicators will lead to the enrichment of the informa-

tion. Enrichment refers to relations between similar information (text, video, audio, ...), facilitating content (public transport, parking facilities, restaurants, ...) and user generated content, but also relations between data, metadata, user profiles and contexts. Web 3.0 applications will combine Web 2.0 concepts, which let users generate content and create and update appropriate profiles, and Web 3.0 concepts to create personalised and enriched content for the user. Thus, the user will not be the only content creator anymore.

In real terms this means that the user will create a personal profile and update it with data such as personal interests, musical preferences and visited concerts and events. Through hybrid filtering algorithms, the combination of content-based and collaborative filtering, metadata will be created for the content and the user will be provided with personalised, enriched content and the application recommends certain concerts, artist or events. This "user-generated, machine-mediated content" (Dahlen) or machine-generated content will be the data of Web 3.0, hence the data that will make other data and content more accessible and usable.

3. CUPID - Cultural Profile and Information Database

CUPID's research focused on innovative ways to aggregate, categorise, personalise and distribute cultural content in order to give end users a rich cultural experience. The core research questions within the project focussed on four related aspects, taking into consideration the needs of both professional users (such as cultural institutions) and end users. Firstly, starting from the supply side, research concentrated on ways to optimise the aggregation and management of cultural and leisure information. Secondly, solutions to categorise cultural and leisure information were worked out. Thirdly, at the demand side of the story, research activities were focused on an appropriate distribution and presentation of content and information for specific target groups. For this purpose an online profiling and recommendation system was worked out. Fourthly, alternative distribution models and mechanisms, such as digital television and mobile phone were investigated. The project was also challenging with regard to legal aspects such as copyright, privacy laws and liability risks for the managers of enriched content.

3.1 CUPID models

We will describe both models that were researched in the CUPID project. On one hand a short-term model, an operational prototype limited to Facebook, which should be an example of what the long-term model could be. The models both start from user-generated based profile information, combined with user-generated event information, used to machine-generate recommendations for cultural events.

3.1.1 Short-term model

The most important result of the project is a Facebook application as an operational prototype of CUPID, connecting the cultural event database 'UiTdatabank', a recommendation system, and the community of arts centre Vooruit (see figure 1).
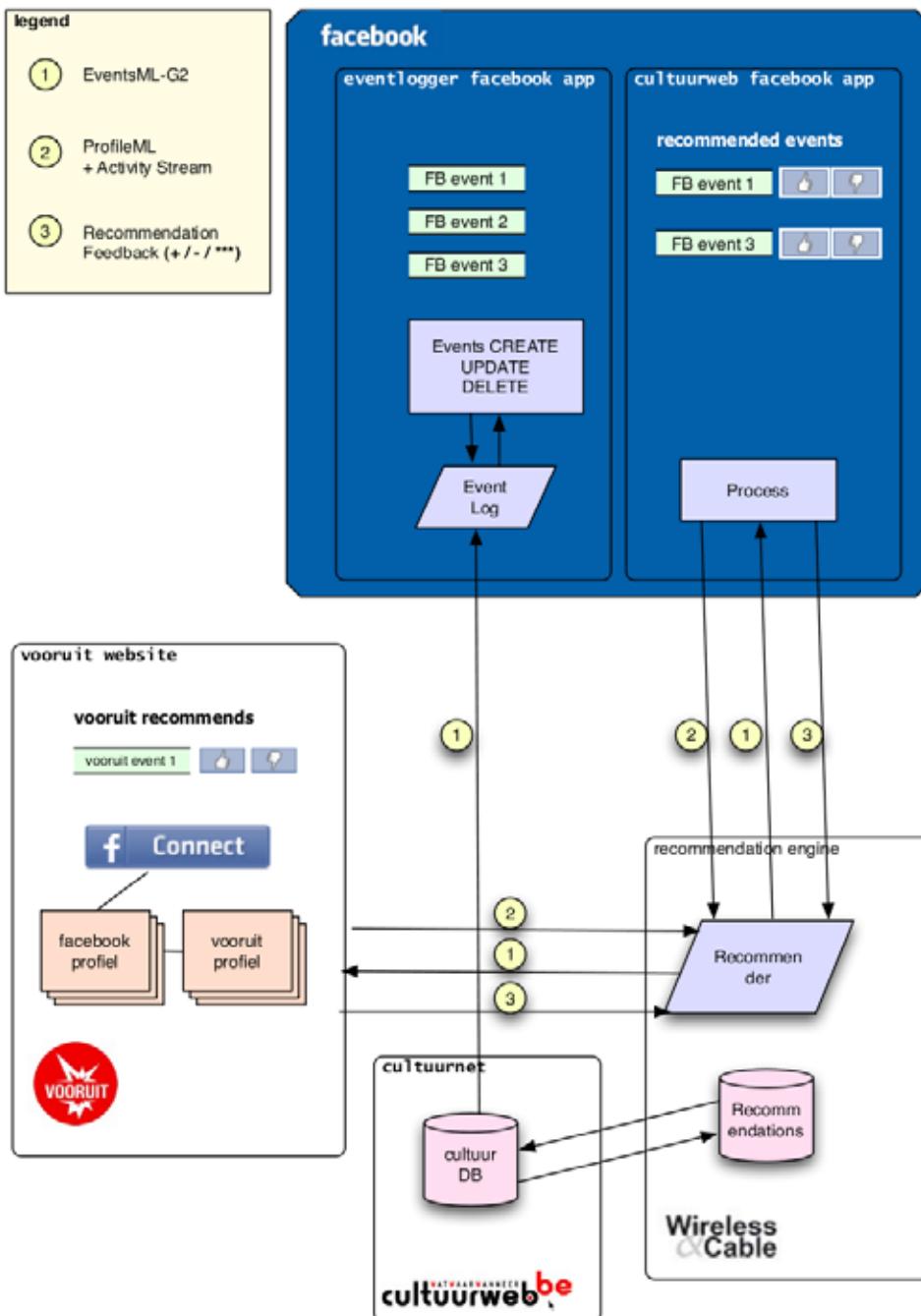
Figure 1: CUPID's short-term model

The 'UiTdatabank' is the central database where all the information on leisure time and cultural events in Flanders is assembled. In the prototype, all cultural events are transferred from the database to Facebook events. As a result, cultural organisations do not have to create their events on the social networking sites themselves, but just have to keep one central database up to date. Next, a public Facebook application provides the user with recommendations of future events on which participation and appreciation feedback can be given. The feedback of the user on the events is send to the recommendation engine and wille be taken into account for future recommendations. As a result of this feedback process, the user builds his own cultural profile. When a critical mass of users of the Facebook application is obtained, the recommendation engine

can generate even better recommendations on the basis of collaborative filtering. In addition, users who have a profile on the website of arts centre Vooruit are able to link their 'Vooruit profile' with their profile on Facebook by means of Facebook connect. In consequence the 'Vooruit profile' of the user is enriched by the Facebook profile which results in better recommendations from events taking place in the arts centre.

3.1.2 Long-term model

The long-term model (see figure 2), the 'Culturefeed', has two main objectives. It will provide the user with more possibilities to manage, control and share the information about his cultural participation and it will operate independently of any platform (in particular Facebook). The user will be able to assemble a personalised calendar of cultural events and get recommendations on the basis of his personal calendar and other cultural information he wants to share. Again, he will have the possibility to give feedback on the recommended events. Next, the user will be able to manage his cultural profile much more detailed. He will be able to decide which personal information is private and which information will be shared with the recommendation engine and specific cultural organisations. The user will also have the possibility to add and delete manually specific items of information. Further, the user will have the possibility to log in on websites of cultural organisations by means of OpenID in order to receive recommendations on these websites. Finally, the user is able to build a social network of 'cultural friends', which he can follow and appoint as preferred friends so that they have more weight in the recommendation system based on collaborative filtering.

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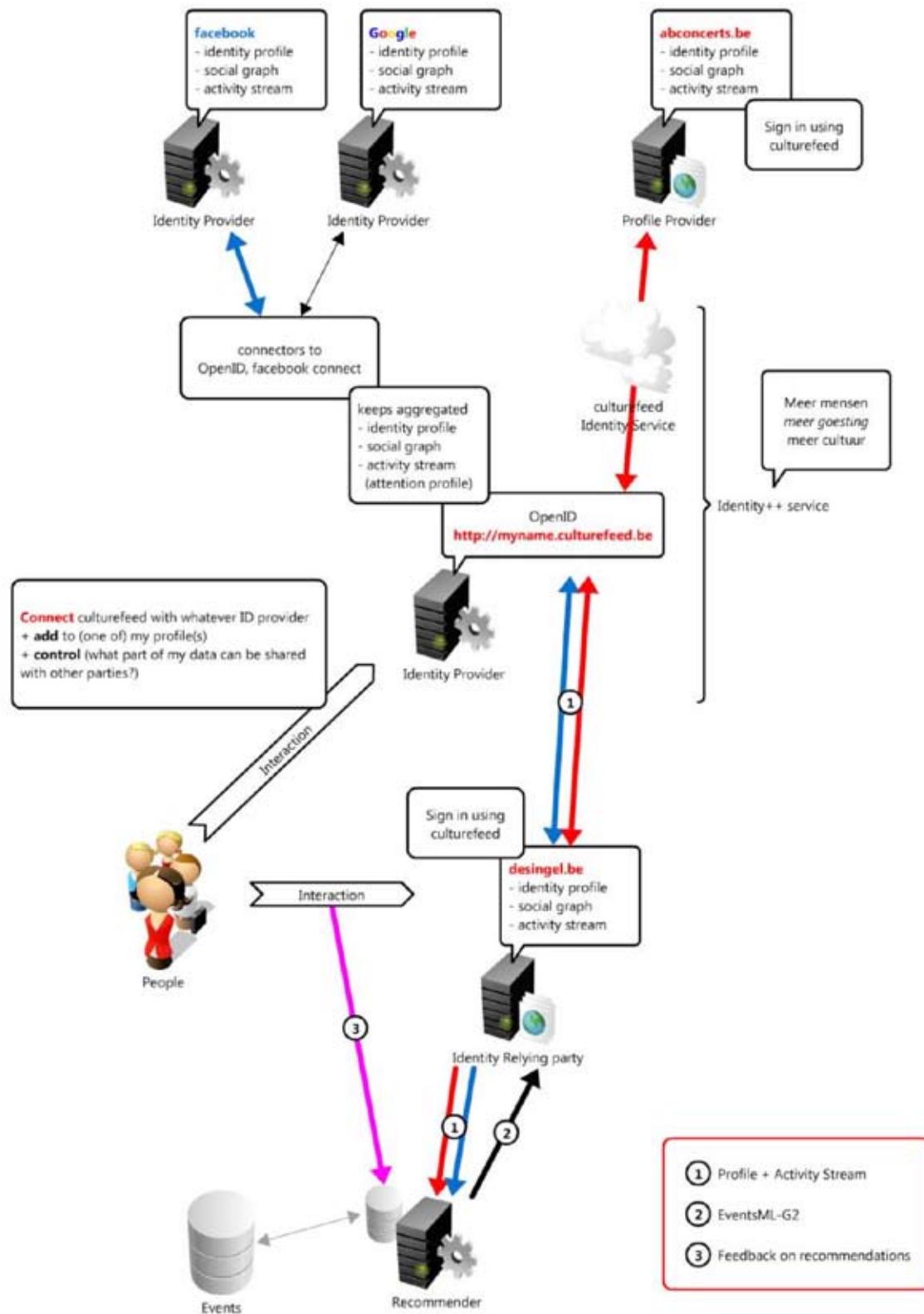
Figure 2: CUPID's long-term model

3.2 Focus group findings

In this section we use the findings from the different series of focus group conversations that were carried

out during the research process in order to reflect on the possible opportunities and risks of combining user-generated machine-generated content in the CUPID models. We set up focus groups with external experts (technological experts and conceptual experts), cultural mediators (umbrella organisations, cultural organisations, media, cities & municipalities and social networks and weblogs) and end users to reflect on and to evaluate the developed CUPID prototype and its long-term model.

3.2.1 Experiencing abundance and an emerging demand for recommendations

Abundance is an argument that was used often during the focus group conversations. People experience an abundance of existing social networking sites, of user-generated content, of invitations by friends or cultural organisations and of online and offline information about cultural events. According to our respondents, this has two major consequences. First, due to an abundance of all these kinds of information, people tend to participate less than they really want to. Second, people tend to fall back on events they already know with the result that they do not or less experience new artists, events or cultural genres.

The event feature on social networking sites is mainly used for parties among friends or for events of local organisations. For bigger or national cultural events, the calendar tool on social networking sites is hardly used. As such, the event function is dominated by the viral effect of friends sending invitations. Only few participants indicate that they use social networks for searching for interesting cultural events. The advantages of keeping a calendar on a social networking site are twofold. In the first place, it is useful to have a visual overview of events one will or might attend. As such, the calendar serves as a reminder tool. Next, a calendar is useful to see who from the social network will go to an event and what comments they have posted. This can have a positive, as well as negative, influence on their own participation. In line, the privacy argument is used too for not keeping a calendar since some people do not want their whole social network to know where they are going. Also, by not using the event feature on social networks, some participants indicate they want to prevent an abundance of invitations. When we turn to the use of the social network feature on cultural profiles sites such as Last.FM, we note that this feature is less used than the event function on social networking sites. The main argument is that there is already an abundance of social networks and one wants to limit the number of networks one is active on. In the opinion of our respondents, the purpose of cultural profiles is to discover unknown artists and new cultural genres and not to look for members who are also in other social networks, such as Facebook. If one becomes friends on cultural profile websites, it is mainly for practical reasons, for example in order to travel together to events by using a carpool system.

Web 3.0 applications, such as the CUPID system, tend to provide an answer to the problem of abundance by creating personalised and enriched content for the user. Some respondents already experienced recommendation systems, as provided by Amazon, Last.FM and iTunes. The recommendations have led to additional purchases and to discovering new authors and artists. Some others refer to national cultural organisations who have their own community and who generate recommendations themselves. However, these recommendations are tied to the supply of a particular cultural organisation and the respondents prefer a recommendation system that covers the complete cultural sector.

3.2.2 The influence of recommendation on cultural participation and consumption

During the focus groups, the conversation partners gave very positive reactions towards the CUPID models. They experienced it as an added value getting recommendations, being surprised with unexpected cultural events and making use of an automated data flow. Important elements of their existing online social networks are now combined with recommendations in a cultural context. Next to that, new opportunities of CUPID were discussed in the form of the option of saving attended events into an archive and the implementation of user-generated, together with the already provided machine-generated context information.

With regard to the recommendations, the potential end users attached great importance to set filters in a good and easy way to include the amount of recommendations, to include on which days one wants to get recommendations and to include locations and genres in order to get good recommendations. These filters

are important to prevent an abundance of recommendations. They emphasized not only new opportunities to provide additional background information, but also the possibility of viral recommendations (from person to person). Besides that, they positively experienced the convenience of implicit user-generated feedback (like Last.FM), because updating a profile in this way will be less time consuming.

Although the CUPID project assumed more culture participation among more people, most focus group participants expect more and better participation among the current cultural participant. Because the automated data flow make sure CUPID users get the information in time and the recommendations create the possibility to discover new cultural disciplines and events. Cultural organisations valued being part of a recommendation engine as an extra tool in their relationship with their audience. In particular, they valued the automated distribution of their cultural events on several online platforms. Since the recommendation system uses social networks, organisations could be able to reach a larger audience.

3.2.3   Being in the driver's seat

Although end users experience recommendations and being surprised with unexpected cultural events as an added value, they also indicate privacy as a bottleneck affecting the degree of openness while sharing personal cultural information and the willingness to share the received recommendations. Concerning the privacy aspects of CUPID, all the participants agree that the user must be able to control all the settings. The user should define what is private or public in the cultural profile. When both profile integration possibilities, and privacy aspects are highly customisable, the participants see no problems in investing a bit more time in a new cultural profile, provided that the CUPID system will work well and the recommendations meet the expectations. Further, a lack of experience with OpenID emerged from the focus group conversations. Although most participants know the concept of OpenID and consider using one login and password as convenient, most of them have little or no experience with this standard or have knowledge of possible privacy damaging issues.

Web 3.0 might be semantic and intelligent and data and content might be more usable and better accessible, but machine-generated content is less controlable than Web 2.0's user-generated content. We should consider to what extent an abundance of user-generated content is replaced by an abundance of machine-generated content? Will the overload of Web 2.0 profile information not just result in an overload of recommendations in Web 3.0? Our research learns that a certain fear for abundance of recommendations exists amongst the participants. Such an overload can be the result of very detailed or diverse cultural profiles. Besides, user-generated content does not always reflect the cultural interests of a person because some content may not be applicable to the profile (for example "just for fun" groups or certain fan pages on Facebook), but is nevertheless used to generate recommendations. In consequence, an abundance of recommendations might occur. This could result in users not looking at the personalised and enriched content anymore. Then, Web 3.0 applications will be back to square one, since the user is still confronted with an overload of user- and machine-generated content. Next to that, some participant mentioned the possible impoverishment of the cultural experience when the users are guided too much by the recommendation. For one thing one could miss interesting cultural events, completely relying on machine-generated recommendations, for another one is become more indolent regarding looking for interesting cultural events.

4. Conclusion

In this paper we discussed the changing role of the user in view of the cultural transformation from user to producer by Web 2.0 and which changes we might expect from Web 3.0 and its machine-generated data. Web 2.0, the current phase of the World Wide Web and online applications, is characterized by interactive and dynamic content. Web 3.0 is assumed to comprise the following opportunities: a hybrid, semantic and intelligent web made possible by the convergence of several new technologies, which will make data and content more usable and better accessible. The research project CUPID searched for innovative ways to aggregate, categorise, personalise and distribute cultural content in order to give end users a rich cultural experience. As a result, the CUPID short-term prototype ass well as the long-term model combines concepts of Web 2.0 and 3.0.

Where the World Wide Web changed from 1.0 to 2.0 to 3.0, the user changed respectively from a viewer to a produser/prosumer, to a producer and a user of personalised content. This personalised content is both user-generated and machine-generated. On the one hand it offers lots of new possibilities to the user, since it makes content better accessible and usable. On the other hand, it scares the user, since he is not completely in control anymore, with regard to privacy options, abundance of recommendations or missing certain information because of a (machine-)predefined selection of content. These latter aspects ask for more research, since transparency is required of how recommendations are generated. Moreover, further information regarding the support of privacy issues should be provided. Besides that, the CUPID research project focused mainly on a short-term model, an operational prototype. The long-term model should include more possibilities to manage, control and share the information regarding cultural participation and operate platform-independant. Next to that a long-term model should be able to give valuable and useful intercultural recommendations. The combination of user-generated and machine-generated content is not only resulting in a complex interaction and convergence between all types of cultural actors (producers, distributors and users), but will also result in reciprocal crossovers and self-reflection about the roles and status of the different actors.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Artificial Culture as a Metaphor and Tool

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1. Introduction

Human societies reorganize both the surrounding environment and themselves. As a result, human world is becoming more and more artificial. The driving forces behind this process are constantly renewing technologies that are developed in order to increase human welfare. One characteristic feature of technological development is that it moves inwards from the outside world: closer to man, closer to the intimate core of an individual. Technology has moved from the reorganization of the physical environment to the manipulation of a man's biological body, genome and consciousness. There is only one more border area to colonize - the cultural resources of mankind. The culture that we have always considered man's naturally evolved environment should be redefined as an artificial environment with countless opportunities.

2. Artificial culture as a metaphor

The idea of treating culture as an object of technology emerges from the development of technologies and society. Achievements in the field of information technology provide a technological basis for the creation of societies with an artificial culture. Technical metaphors are extended to culture. Contemporary communication and information theories offer attractive metaphors for redefining cultural phenomena. Such linguistic shift is extremely important. In principle, the idea of correcting culture is no different from the idea of improving a computer program. New programs are created in order to perform new tasks, and the more the programs are improved, the more new opportunities will arise – which will in turn create new tasks themselves. (Konsa, "Artificialisation of culture" 26-31)

In the context of the new language brought along by informatics, the idea of artificialisation of culture seems completely natural and the idea that cultures should be changed for better organization of life acquires scientific value. We sense culture as an informational aggregate, which does possess certain values but is nevertheless measured on the scale of success and which could be changed if needed. Culture does not possess the metaphysical essential nature that would give it an inherent value. Also in the context of culture preservation, what is actually being focused on is the preservation of an informational diversity, meaning that culture is still considered as an informational aggregation. Culture emerges in the course of social processes and becomes apparent in them. If we treat culture proceeding from the informational metaphor, culture appears to be information presented in different manners. Information can be created, processed, preserved, distributed and used.

The idea of social construction of all concepts also supports such an approach. The idea is that these aspects of cultural reality that we wish to modify and manipulate are considered to be socially constructed. If culture is already socially constructed for the most part then deliberate and purposeful changing and modification of culture is completely natural. We accommodate culture to our needs and claim this to be natural – that this is how culture emerges and functions. Denaturizing and informatization removes the value that the culture has in itself and replaces it with utilitarian values. Some cultures promote economic and

political development, others do not and the latter ones are in need of help and correction. The postmodern way of thinking denying all rules and restrictions and obvious playfulness is building good psychological premises for the artificial culture to be accepted.

Culture is a phenomenon that concerns humans alone. If humans are the creators of culture in a direct or indirect way, then how can we speak about artificial culture? If for us the word "artificial" refers to something created by humans, then the whole culture can be considered artificial. Nevertheless, the real situation is not that simple at all. The relationship between humans and culture is very complicated. On the one hand, humans create culture, but at the same time culture designs humans. The cultural reality seems to exist regardless of the individual person. We all live within culture, but every one of us is quite limited in our ability to direct and influence it. Cultural information is being forwarded from person to person and from generation to generation without anyone intentionally directing it. So, culture is similar to language. Fundamentally, humans have created natural language. Every person can invent words. At the same time, language is something more and is somehow given to humans. It is the same with culture. We can create some parts of culture, but culture as such has been given to us. In many ways, the cultural process is similar to natural process. Humans have not consciously initiated it, nor do they design it. We do not know exactly how the development of culture is dependent on human activity. (Konsa, "Relations between Culture" 15–17)

The main factor that distinguishes artificial culture from natural culture is its purposeful creation. Artificial culture is an environment that has been created purposefully. It is an imaginary space where information is preserved, created, exchanged and presented. Already by speaking of artificial culture we distinguish between natural culture and the different culture, constructed by man. We have to start creating artificial culture by separating these two phenomena, drawing a line between them. Similarity to nature appears – in order to describe human culture, it had to be distinguished from nature by a clearer line. It has to be understood that such separation is essential to describe and distinguish between these phenomena, natural and artificial cultures, that is. In reality, artificial culture forms a part of human culture as a whole being its subdivision. It should be noted that the line is only possible if there are two sides involved; that it simultaneously both separates and connects.

How is artificial culture similar to natural culture and how does it differ from it? Artificial culture is a coherent imaginary world that works as a background to a collective action of a group of people. It differs from real culture mainly by its fictionality. When creating an artificial culture, its main characteristics are determined first. The extent to which an artificial culture differs from existing natural cultures and by which indicators is first and foremost dependent on the purpose of creating the specific artificial culture. Once the purpose of the culture and the corresponding basic conditions has been set, a group of people starts to act inside the culture. Both natural and artificial cultures in its essence are a group of people in actual communication. The communication can be direct, face-to-face, or mediated, for example by avatars in synthetic worlds.

Artificial culture means both creating a fictional environment and communication in such an environment that takes place between actual people. Artificial culture can never be as complete as natural culture. It is self-evident as natural cultures are historical and have developed in the course of long period of time. When creating a culture we cannot determine everything about it. As described by Umberto Eco, "What a problem it would be if a text were to say everything the receiver is to understand – it would never end." (3). The people participating in an artificial culture are positioned in two social realities at the same time. On the one hand they are in the artificial culture communicating to other persons present in that culture but at the same time they are also in the real world communicating to several objects (computers, other means of communication). The social reality of artificial culture is always restricted but it is in constant development hand in hand with the communication taking place in this culture. The main distinctive feature between artificial and natural culture is the purposefulness of their creation. Language can be presented here as a comparison. Natural language has not been created for a certain purpose. In addition to natural languages, humans have created many artificial languages that perform fixed and limited functions. Artificial cultures have also been created keeping a narrower purpose in mind. Artificial cultures are not models or clones of

existing cultures; they are independent systems in dynamic development. But namely thanks to this they can offer interesting ideas to traditional text-centered research methods of cultures.

3. Artificial culture as a tool

The first phase in the creation of an artificial culture is the discussion of and agreement on the proceeding point. The proceeding point is just an idea of what the artificial culture that is to be created will be like. But it could also be problem that will be solved with the help of the created artificial culture or also a playful situation. It is the basis of the artificial culture that will be created. On the basis of the determined proceeding point, the structure of the artificial culture will be created. When considering the artificial culture proceeding from the informational metaphor, it consists of information appearing in several forms. Different models have been used to structure cultural information. One of the most popular is the one presented by E. H. Schein, a researcher of organization culture (25–37). He distinguishes three levels of culture:

- artifacts or artificial environment
- espoused values
- basic underlying assumptions

Artifacts or artificial environment is formed by everything we see, hear and sense in a culture. This is the physical, behavioral and verbal manifestations of the given culture. Artifacts are for instance architecture, language, items, technology, works of art, clothing, behavior, behavioral traditions, expression of emotions, myths, tales, heroes, rituals, ceremonies, religion, social structure, symbols, policies etc. Espoused values and beliefs are the foundation of behavioral justification and choosing between different ways of behavior. These are conscious and verbalized ideals and norms, which people proceed from. The following statements are examples of espoused values: people can be consumed as other goods, people must live according to religious prescriptions, acquiring a position in the society, respect towards oneself and the others, honor of the community etc. Basic underlying assumptions are subconscious, self-evident convictions about the world and humans, which are not verbalized. These are the foundation for values and beliefs. Basic assumptions touch upon the following aspects: what is the reality like; how can we know the truth about the world, what are time and space like, who is a human and how to determine him or her, what is a person's "self", his personality, the relationships between the human and reality; which is the nature of the social system; what is the foundation of relationships between people. These levels are interconnected and form a unified system. The structure of the artificial culture to be created is formed by descriptions of artifacts, values, beliefs and basic assumptions. It is a dynamic database that is constantly completed. The initial culture structure cannot be very thorough for understandable reasons. But it is needless to worry about it as in the course of functioning of the artificial culture, its structure is constantly completed.

Based on the initially created structure of the culture, the participants start acting in the artificial culture. What does this acting mean? When considering a culture to be first and foremost as shared information and artifacts as the manifestations of this information, then it means creating information and communication. On the one hand, a fictional environment is created and in this environment the communication between the participants takes place. As a real culture, artificial culture is also very much concerned with communication between people. When thinking about sharing information in a real culture, then in most cases its main purpose is not to transfer specific facts but sharing and confirming common values. In artificial culture, this takes place by the means of shared narratives. The participants in artificial culture present their personal stories that reflect the functioning of the culture with the structure that has previously been determined. It is described how everyday life, communication, work and other factors happen in the artificial culture. By these stories, it is important to express how each individual understands and experiences the artificial culture. Through personal stories it is possible to make the structure that has been previously theoretically determined function in reality. Different mediums of social media are used in order to convey such stories – blogs, photo and video sharing environments etc. Social software forms the bonding media in artificial

culture. Via social media, a collective narration of artificial culture is created. Differently from real culture, all elements of artificial culture and all its activities are observable. This is definitely one of these aspects that help to compensate for the deficiencies of artificial culture (smaller complexity and scope) in comparison to real cultures. Via the narratives created by participants, the reality of artificial culture is created. Information-wise, the people are acting in a completely real artificial culture, although it has been created by them.

4. Artificial culture "DigiKult

The following is a description of a project of artificial culture in development. It is a learning-centered artificial culture "DigiKult", purpose of which is to analyze the problems of contemporary informational society.

The artificial culture has been created in the seminars of the Master's program of the Information Management in University of Tartu. The participants are students and lecturers. The proceeding point of "DigiKult" was the discussion over information-related problems in the contemporary world. Such problems are numerous and they are related to all aspects of contemporary society. The complexity of problem situation and interconnectedness of social and cultural factors make it hard to analyze with the help of traditional methods. The purpose of creating the artificial culture was on the one hand to get to know the methodology of creating an artificial culture and on the other hand analyze the problems of contemporary informational society by using innovative technology. Methodological instructions for creating an artificial culture accompanied by several examples from literature and films were presented in the blog: http://maailm2.wordpress.com (Figure 1).
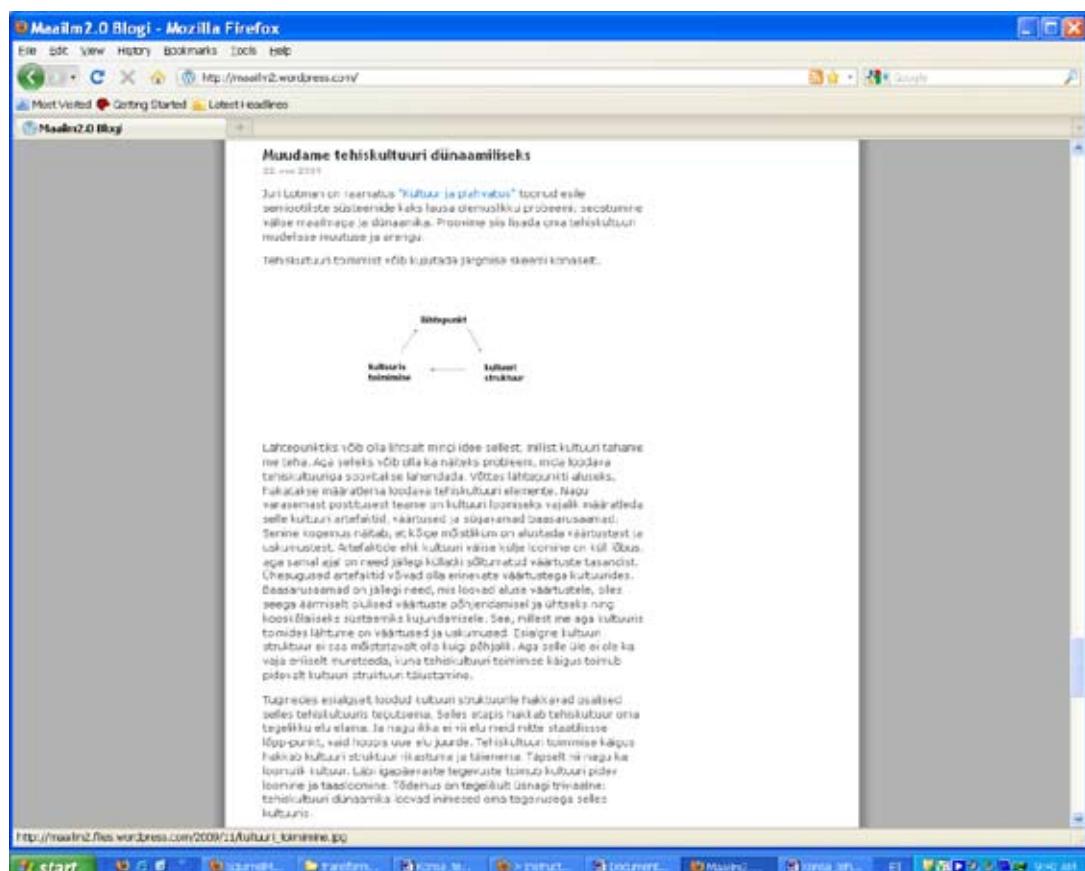
Figure 1. Methodological instructions for creating an artificial culture accompanied by several examples from literature and films were presented in the blog.

An e-mail list and a wiki were created for discussion and data collection about the culture on the address http://www.wikispaces.com/ an encyclopedia will be formed there about the artificial culture (Figure 2).

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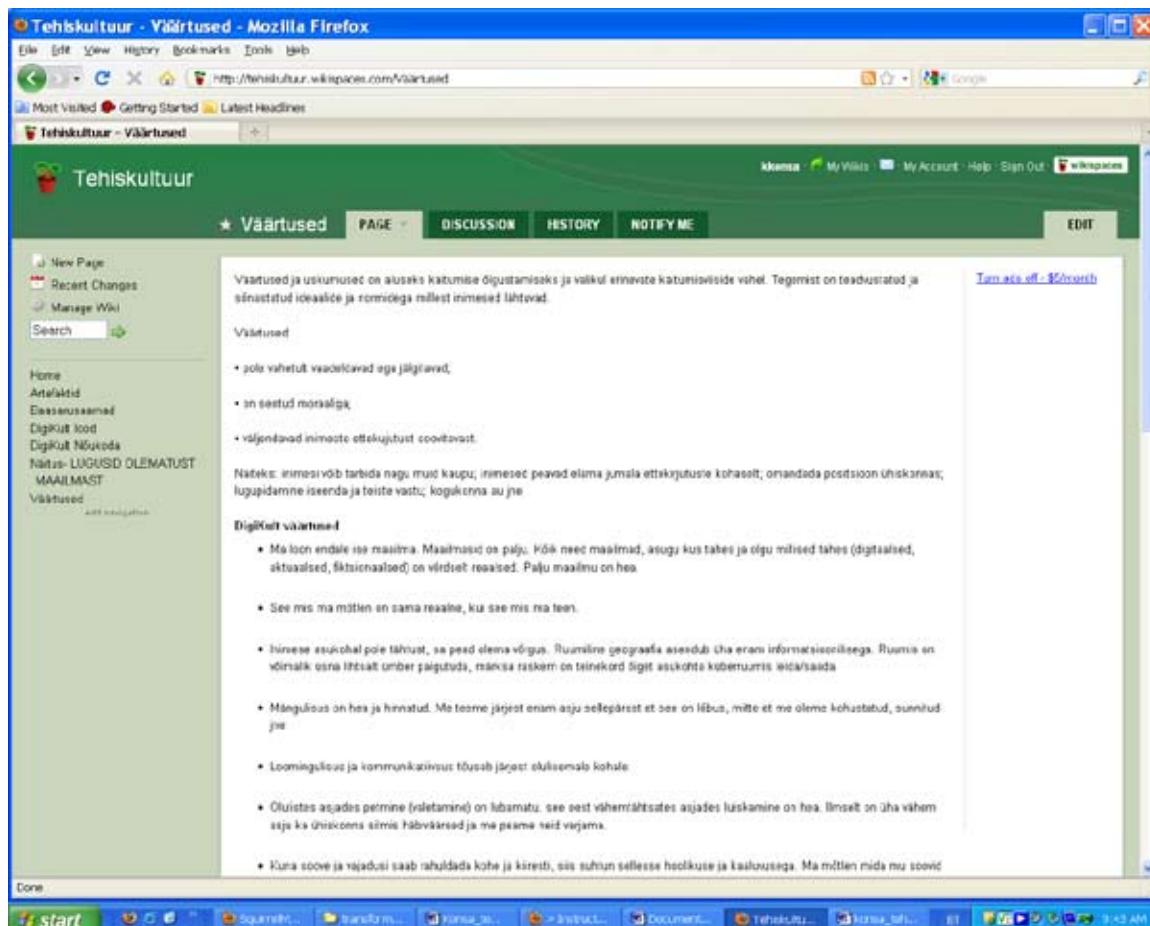
Figure 2. Information about the artificial culture "DigiKult" are presented in wiki.

The following characteristic aspects of the problem situation came up in the first seminar:

- Questions concerning preservation of information. Preservation and forgetting. Which part of information should be preserved and which ought to be forgotten?

- Communication via information system – replacement of face-to-face communication to the electronic one.

- Loss of privacy.

- Manipulation of information (questions concerning authenticity of information and the truth).

In creating the artificial culture, the purpose is not to answer the questions that emerged when analyzing the problem situation but to create such a culture where such problems would not exist or would not be treated as problems in the first place. Instead of direct solutions, what is being focused on is creating a new context for the problem situation.

In order to create an artificial culture, the artifacts, values, and basic underlying assumptions of this culture need to be determined. The experience up to now shows that the most reasonable starting point is formed by values and beliefs. The creation of artifacts, the external side of the culture is fun but at the same time, these can be quite independent of the value level. Similar artifacts can exist in cultures with different values. The basic underlying assumptions in turn build a foundation for the values, therefore being extremely relevant in grounding the values and shaping them into a full harmonious system. What we proceed from when functioning in a culture are first and foremost values and beliefs. In creating the initial structure of a culture, we focused on the values and beliefs of the artificial culture.

4.1 Structure of "DigiKult"

The following values and beliefs were agreed upon in the course of second phase discussions of creating the artificial culture:

- I create my own world. There are many worlds. All the worlds, wherever they may exist and whatever they may be like (digital, actual, fictional) are equally real. It is a positive thing that there are many worlds.

- What I think is just as real as what I do.

- It does not matter where a person is located. You need to be connected. Spatial geography is more and more replaced by informational. It is fairly easy to relocate in space, it would be much harder to find / get a right location in cyberspace.

- Playfulness is good and valued. We do more and more things because it is fun not because we are obliged or forced to.

- Creativity and communicability acquire more and more relevance.

- Cheating in relevant matters (lying) is not allowed; on the other hand, when it comes to smaller matters, lying is good. Fewer things are considered shameful in the eyes of society and we have to hide these.

- As wishes and needs can be satisfied at once and quickly, I take a careful and deliberating attitude towards it. I think about what my wishes mean and what they bring along on a wider scale. Let us call it digital caring, for instance. Other people and the environment are respected (among other things respect towards the digital Other).

- Information is not something that is given to me from outside but something I constantly create and change myself. I live in information. I have a physical life but I also have an informational life. The trace of my informational life is a digital trace.

- Moderation – as we become more powerful thanks to technology, we need to deliberate the steps we take ever more carefully.

- People's differences, preferences etc. are taken into account so that everyone could feel comfortable in the culture. Before doing something, I find out who will use the information that I have created.

- Information is a means for a happier life. .

- Variety and versatility. Skill of relating different ideas.

- As a result of being more informed, the convictions based on beliefs, authority and mythology decrease.

- Rationality. Being informed.

- The present moment matters.

- We can create ourselves in the digital world and perform as anybody but we have to be able to come through with it. I have to be able to perform the person I claim to be. If I say that I am a woman or a scary monster, I need to be able to perform the part.

- The value of the information increases when we associate and share it. The more connections there are between information, people and the world, the better. It is useful and therefore also good when all information known to a person is available to the others. Sharing increases the value of information and therefore increases a person's reputation.

- Respect, fame, and appreciation are based on the participation in informational communication. When I participate, I exist.

- Life means participation in the communicative process.

- Opportunities are a value – both creating and using them.

- Technology is as natural as a human being and nature.

- Information exists; it just needs to be found and/or created. Information comes to live in the network and in communication. Therefore I have to take other people into account. Information in its essence is a communicative phenomenon.

- Information becomes more and more personal. What matters the most is not the "raw information" but what people think about it and how they process and associate it.

- Communication is free, people are open – but in a sense they are probably also more superficial (compared to what?)

- Private life, working life, and hobbies – all this forms an informational whole.

- Sense of responsibility – all that we do, think, feel will remain and exist (maybe forever!)

- One of the most important ability/skill is a person's ability to decide on the value of information: what is of value, what is worth doing and sharing and what is not. It is obviously different depending on people and groups. But the skill of evaluating information, finding valuable information and sharing it creates a foundation for a person's reputation.

Basic assumptions of "DigiKult":

- Physical and virtual realities are equal, inseparable, unified.

- Time comes together in the present. Time speed is not balanced, it depends on the movement speed of information and therefore also on our activity.

- A person's essence is not constant, given and unchanging. A person's "I" is wide and it also includes external informational institutions. The other digital identities of a person are also part of the "I". These are integral parts of "I".

- The world is unified and based on information and communication. Information is the most important matter in the physical world, nature, and social world. Information is ever-lasting, changing, growing, and developing.

- Processes matter.

4.2 "DigiKult" stories

Actors performed different narratives based on the initial structure of the artificial culture. The first task was to describe a completely usual day in the artificial culture. The stories were uploaded in the wiki of the artificial culture (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Example of the artificial culture "DigiKult" stories page.

The performed stories were quite different, some of them concentrated on the external side of the artificial culture, which was much easier to depict, some, on the other hand, tried to forward the deeper essence of the artificial culture. The following are some examples of the stories that were performed. First, an example of everyday life:

"Once I get to Tallinn, I drive to the center to attend a meeting. To find a parking space, I hit the parking button in my car and the GPS finds me the closest vacant parking space. I park my car and go to the meeting. The meeting is a videoconference with Sweden taking place in 3D environment. / - - - / Once I'm finished, I start getting back. In the meantime I contact my home/house, check what needs to be got from the store, the system analyzes how much is left at home. When I get back to Tartu I walk to the shop, put the goods into the shopping cart and in the car. It will be taken off from my account later. In the shops the shop doors automatically fixate the goods that you exit with and take money from your bank account. The evening comes and I go to bed."

The following extract shows the information processes taking place in "DigiKult":

"/t.t.Tagasihoidlik mõtlus [trad:87.001.286]/

We are confused. We don't know how to tell them. (The quiet humming of computers has a calming effect but... it doesn't help against the whole life) We sent another query to the net. It's most unusual. We had never done it before. All that we ever wanted know was there at once. Now we had to search for it. (Confusion) There was something missing from their lives. But now they are connected to us. So there is something missing from our lives as well. Can we find it? We want to.

[„12.05.7 42 – game was disrupted. After /t.t.Tagasihoidlik mõtlus/ {K.KL. 91.100.56.} joined the clan BXA, there was a disruption in the lifelog of /t.t.Tagasihoidlik mõtlus/ {K.KL. 91.100.59.}. If disruption happens, the protocol XCB3A is executed which freezes the course of associated lifelines"]

We had never been disrupted before. This could only mean one thing: the length of the life-line had been interrupted. Had it been edited? To actually get something done, rules need to be broken. Who said that? & &Austin Grossmann. Soon I will be invincible. Beginning of chapter 9. Bought in a kiosk of Stockholm Arlanda airport. 21. 05. 2012, at 17.43&& Our /t.t.Tagasihoidlik mõtlus [trad:87.001.286]/ got a search person on GlobNet. It isn't legal. We sent it to observe the lifeline that is associated /t.k.Vapustavad Eelaimdused [trad:238.000.7402]/ with us. Once it is made public, we will be rooked from communication networks.

Our local personality. Testing again.
/t.t.Tagasihoidlik mõtlus [trad:87.001.495/
$$¤entry disrupted$$¤"

In addition to the stories about artificial culture, there are also stories that are told in the artificial culture. Here is an example:

"A visit to Granny's. Granny lives in the forest and bakes delicious bread with the computer. Grannies have a bit older computers than younger people, which is completely natural, so these computers overheat fast. This is what the environmental-friendly technology of baking delicious bread is based on and Granny herself invented this. It uses the warmth of the processor in baking the bread and does not let it just vanish in the air. When traveling in the countryside, the mouth-watering smell of environmental-friendly bread spreads from each cottage. An average Estonian spends 9 hours every day baking bread. Granny stands next to the computer wearing an apron and while the processor is working, explains that the word "kukkel" originates from the word "google". This was a small bakery created by two American students who couldn't afford buns. Now they can afford any buns, no matter how expensive. There are tens of thousands of people working in their bakery and the smell of buns is said to be felt even in space. Granny says that she once saw a documentary about it. The dream from the times of Granny's youth, to stop global warming is fulfilled and the weather is even getting colder. The bun cools down quickly."

As a group work, the participants in the artificial culture prepared an exhibition "Stories from the world that doesn't exist". In the course of it, a visual story of our current culture was created proceeding from the point of view of artificial culture (Figure 4).
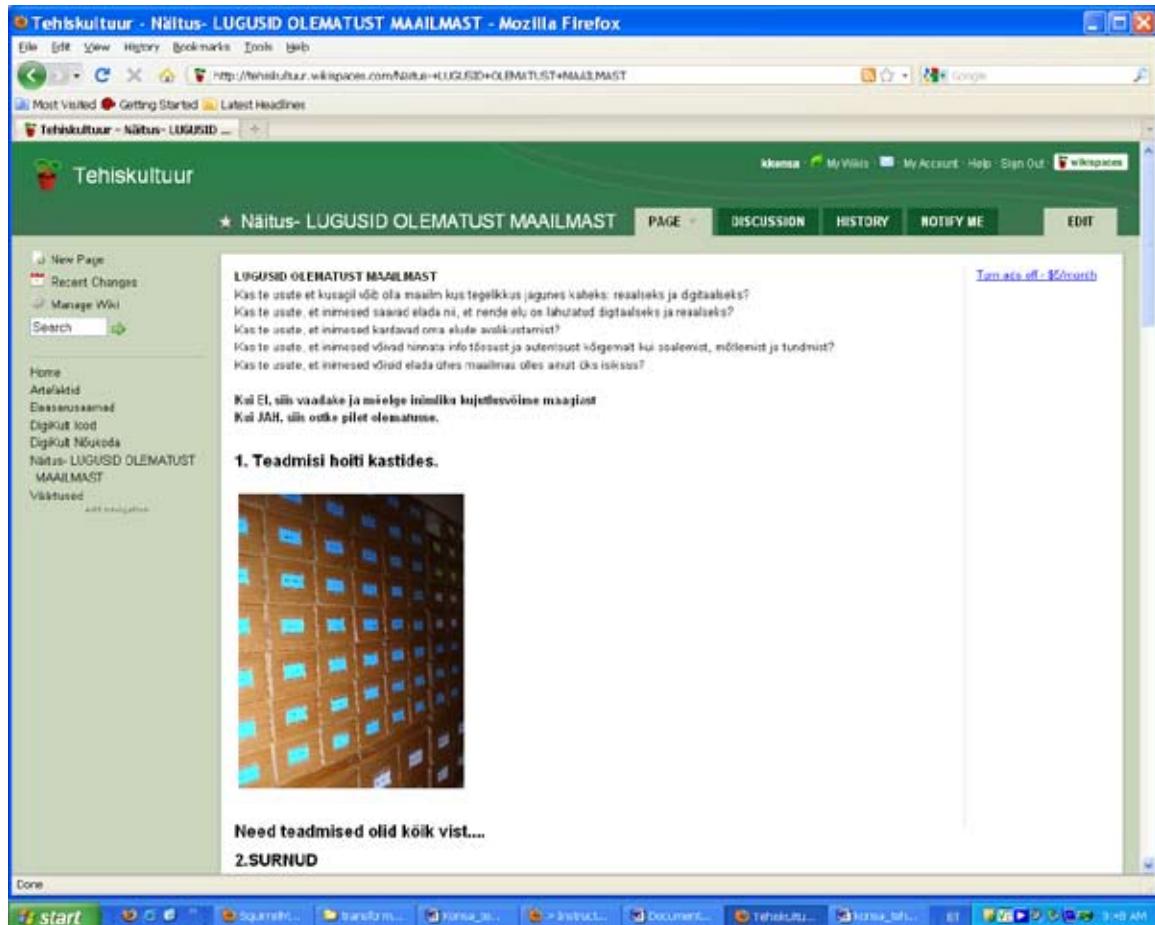
Figure 4. Collective visual exhibition "Stories from the world that doesn't exist"

The shared stories, metaphors and mental models create a dynamic reality of artificial culture that in turn affects the understandings, behavior and decisions of its participants. In the course of functioning of the artificial culture, its identity starts to shape. The created stories and the information exchanged in the course of creating them form the content of the artificial culture.

5. Summary

As artificial culture "DigiKult" is an ongoing project, it is only possible to draw some initial conclusions and summaries. Culture is treated as a given structure and process. The concept of artificial culture changes it into creatable by humans depending on our needs and goals. The question of artificial culture is not so much about technology but about recognition and acknowledgment. By considering culture as something that can be created and directed by humans changes our world significantly, even if we don't take any significant steps at once. The result is the change in our world. And it does not matter whether we wished for it or not. The ideas of artificial creation of culture may be hypothetical but if people treat artificial cultures as real, they continue to be such. Artificial culture is a created environment, a context where people act. Artificial cultures do not enable us to solve all problems, they have a whole different orientation. Artificial culture helps to change the context, create a different environment where problems acquire a different face. It is not at all certain whether the right solutions are the ones that captivate people the most in life. The purpose of artificial culture is creating an environment with problems that are interesting to deal with and offer satisfaction. The difference of artificial culture from attempts to shape existing cultures such as changing organization culture lies in the fact that artificial cultures are created from scratch. What is being dealt with is not changing the existing culture but shaping an artificial culture with a completely new structure. Such free and playful starting situation seemed to promote open, active dialogue.

Transforming culture in the digital age

Kurmo Konsa

Up to now we have tested the methodology of creating artificial cultures and in the artificial culture "DigiKult", we have managed to create a creative atmosphere to treat the problems of information society.

Acknowledgements

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Playful Public Connectivity

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1. Introduction

Numerous discourses about media culture stress a shift to a culture of spectacle, which includes the diffusion of politics and public spheres with entertainment (Imre; Couldry). This development towards entertainment and consumer culture might be especially true for post-communist countries, where my work is situated (namely in Estonia), which faced radically privatization and commercialization of the economic and media system after 1989/1990. Linked to the discourse on entertainment culture is the question of increasing political disenchantment of young adults. Several theorist associate this development to a changed focus of attention towards individual pleasure and entertainment rather than collective political engagement (for an overview see Schulz). Less and less young people are getting involved in traditional forms of institutionalized politics in postindustrial societies (Zackariasson). But instead of asking if fun and play is replacing serious political activity I ask for seriousness being inherent in certain forms public connectivity that is the precondition for political engagement. Therewith I aim at contributing to new kind of understanding of public orientation that is not linked to a feeling of duty or compulsion to connection with a broader public (Zackariasson), since these kinds of duty-motivated forms of orientation and participation that are based on an assumed understanding of the "good" citizen seem to be weakened in an individualized, entertainment culture. Fewer and fewer young adults are participating in national and local elections. The Estonian voter turnout for examples lies beneath the average in the European Union. Country-wide local elections, considered rather important, motivated only 60.6 per cent of the population to cast a vote (Vabarriigi Valimiskomisjon). It seems therefore to be important to introduce another kind of understanding of connectivity not being based on normative commitment, idealism or altruism, but on a playful way of orienting towards a public sphere, which is no less serious or important. Hence, this paper detaches play from an understanding as being only silly and related to the private sphere. It stresses the ambiguity of play and its potential for connectivity, since play is understood as being transformative and therewith bearing the potentiality for connectivity.

Drawing on online diaries and in-depth interviews the paper investigates notions of (mediated) connectivity and acknowledges the playful nature of certain modes of connectivity. The study with young adults living in Estonia, a society characterized by a kind of inbetweeness of a post-transformational and late-modern culture of change, reveals signs of playful connectivity and asks in how far playful connectivity could be linked to citizenship and political attention.

Anne Kaun

2. Entertainment Culture and Play

The idea of employing play is not something new within media and communication studies. Especially in the field of research on entertainment culture attempts of employing play as theoretical and hermeneutical tool are well known (e.g. Hartley; Imre; Silverstone; Stephenson; Van Zoonen). Those attempts stress the significance of playful elements within the society for civic engagement, community, and sociality in general. Critics of entertainment culture stress the fact that media-saturated societies are invaded by entertainment features, but at the very least politics should stay serious and free from entertainment elements. The classical example in that case is Neill Postman and his "Amusing ourselves to Death". He builds his argument on historical comparisons between for example attention spans of politically interested people in the middle of the 19th century and the soundbite "now this…"-culture of reporting (Postman 44 & 99). His conclusion is politics is serious and should be treated as such.

On the contrary the authors mentioned earlier are aiming at an integration of play and entertainment in the political public. Hence, Stephenson links entertainment culture and the notion of play to mass communication in his *Play Theory of Mass Communication* from 1967. He argues that social and political mass communication tends to be brief. The brief political information could be understood as being set against the daily fill of entertainment, which is apolitical. In that sense the informational function of mass media just acts as an interlude in the main function of entertaining audiences (Stephenson 49-65). Through interrupting the daily repetitive stream of entertainment features of mass communication the audience is kept available for short messages of political information.

Van Zoonen argues for an integration of entertaining elements into politics, since political information and activities are mainly carried out during leisure time. They are therefore up against tough competition from other activities. According to her the fun element of taking part in politics should not be underestimated. Van Zoonen focuses in her analysis on different kinds of media texts, which adhere to the potential of attracting people and integrating them into the political sphere. She takes watching *West Wing* and voting in *Big Brother* as examples of how citizens are getting acquainted with political environment and practice civic activities (van Zoonen). Of course one could discuss the significance of such activities and to what extent they are reflected and heard in the political system, but at any rate it is an attempt to open up the discussion for an integrated view on politics and entertainment culture.

In "Convergence Culture" Henry Jenkins tackles the notion of "serious fun" by referring to "photoshop democracy" and the question of the significance of grassroots mediated activities such as web parodies of candidates during campaign times. He argues that through "photoshop participation" as well as self-made YouTube clips democracy faces a changed role, since political discourses are brought closer to the everyday life of the citizens[1]. Engagement of this kind bears the potential to change the way people think about community and power. At the same time expressions of photoshop democracy are potentially reflected in the political sphere, which manifests itself in parties trying to campaign in grassroots style (e.g. Obama in his election campaign in 2008). John Hartley develops the metaphor of "silly citizenship" for engaging with politics in a funny and voluntary way in a Do-It-Yourself character[2]. His notion of silly citizenship refers to a changing form of media citizenship from a representative status to a more "modest but active status of productivity" (Hartley 17). Active people in that sense can organize in smaller ventures without bearing the burden of being representative for a set political program. In his attempt to rethink citizenship he adds a cultural and DIY dimension to Marshall's classical outline of civil, political and social citizenship and thus introduces a new mode of civic connectivity, namely purposeful play:

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1   More recent expressions of this kind are facebook groups such as "can this trash bin gather more fans than Fredrik Reinfeldt" (Kan den här soptunnan få fler fans än Fredrik Reinfeldt) launched before the national election in Sweden in September 2009. The group was launched on Monday 8 February 2010 with the goal to gather more than 2,048 fans in order to be a bigger than the Reinfeldt camp. On Thursday 11 February 43,011 fans joined the group.

2   See Hartley's examples for silly citizenship during the US presidential campaign in 2008, where certain Dance-off YouTube clips attracted millions of viewers (e.g. the Obama McCain - Dance off had 10 030 965 views as of 16 February 2010 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzyT9-9lUyE).

"Citizenship is not simply the cerebral exercise of monitorial scrutiny, it is both a whole-of-body and a body-to-body experience, comedic and competitive, entertaining and festive, in the very *performance* of political deliberation and participation. It is 'communicative action' that includes but is not reducible to Habermasian rationality. 'Rethinking communication' entails recognizing that civic participation is also – and needs to be analyzed by means of play" (Hartley 18).

On the contrary Daniel Dayan in his reasoning about fan publics states that "the activities of the fan reflect a world of play and mimicry, a social reality that could be described as closed off, marginal, a game." (Dayan 752). These publics are missing "a commissive dimension" and any serious sense, Dayan states (752). Fan publics are dedicated to the world of play. What is missing in this conclusion is the ambiguity of play itself. Play establishes orders and has an inherent own kind of seriousness, which will be the driving argument in the discussion below.

3. Playful Public Connectivity - Definitions

Connectivity is here understood as an "orientation to a public world" (Couldry et al. 3). Couldry et al. add that public connection is "sustained by a convergence in the media people use" (3). In the following I will use connectivity instead of connection, since it reflects a more process-oriented, flexible ability to build up connection rather than a stable form of existing connection. Connectivity in my understanding is multifaceted and constitutes sociality on different levels within society and the communication process. At any rate, only certain forms of connectivity are of interest here, namely those forms that bind the autonomous, private individual to a "public beyond the purely private" (Couldry et al. 180); a public that mediates between society and the individual. This form of connectivity I will call public connectivity. Public connectivity is therefore understood as precondition for engagement and participation in the (political) public. In the reasoning about connectivity the centrality of the media is not assumed. It is not necessarily only the media that structures orientation. Following the argument of Couldry et al. several forms of public connectivity are thinkable. The authors distinguish between media world connectors, public world connectors and multiple connectors, which can be thought of as an extension of Couldry's former questioning of the myth of the mediated centre (Couldry et al.; Couldry). He challenges the idea that media have a privileged relationship to a social center, which Couldry describes as a myth. By addressing the myth of a social centre, where core values of (mainly national) societies are at stake, he aims at pointing to important questions about power to define what belongs to the social centre and what does not. Albeit public connectivity is thought of as expression of sociality, it is not assuming an essential social centre of core values people connect to.

In that context playful connectivity is distinguished from connectivity as being based on a perception of duty (Zackariasson 31; Zackariasson). The underlying assumption of this duty-driven mode of connectivity is that in order to be a valuable part of society and contribute to democracy one has to be informed about and potentially contributing to the political public sphere. Play in contrast refers to something that is voluntary in character and involves fun (Huizinga). Huizinga is often referred to as one of the first authors to stress the role of play for culture and society. In his reflections about homo ludens (man the player) he argues that civilization arises and unfolds in and as play. Play fulfills a significant function, since "the spirit of play is essential to the development of culture" (Stephenson on Huizinga 1967, 46). Huizinga stresses that play is linked both literally and metaphorical to a bounded space; it has a distinct beginning, goes on for a certain time and has an ending. In distinction to game play is the more general category of which games are a specific embodiment. Furthermore play suspends disbelief since it lies outside of morals and is neither good nor bad.

Silverstone critically reviews Huizinga's play concept and stress that Huizinga tends to misread the social significance of play and especially game since he is placing play and game outside of the material world and is excluding material interest from the very beginning. Furthermore he criticizes that Huizinga fails to develop any significant psychology of play. Therefore he prefers Roger Caillios' development of Huizinga's understanding of play. Caillois points out that play involves freedom but within rule-governed limits. Therewith play is formalized although by rules under conventions that suspend ordinary laws. Play is furthermore

accompanied by a special awareness of second reality or of a free unreality: play is conducted with relish. Play is therefore simultaneously both inside and outside everyday life, contained with holding structures of the ordinary, but released from and legitimated by that ordinary as distinct and in their containment relatively unthreatening.

Similarly Stephenson conceptualizes play as "outside of the world of duty and responsibility". Exactly here one could draw a connection to current discussions of "serious fun" in DIY political media culture. Mastering YouTube clips and photoshopping of candidate pictures into funny, sarcastic expressions are voluntary forms of engagement, secluded from a daily routine and take place for a certain period of time. At the same time the player is absorbed into the play completely (Stephenson 46). But how far is play reflected in activities of the citizens that are not purposefully directed towards the political?

In summary three main features of play are identified as important for further analysis: play is distinct in time and space; play is formalized in one way or the other; and play is with relish. The given definition is not to be understood as absolute rather as a scale representing different degrees of playfulness of distinct phenomena. Hence public is understood as sphere where common concerns are addressed, which go beyond the purely private matter (Couldry et al.). Public sphere in the Habermasian understanding as mediating between the society and state is broadened in order to include also cultural expressions of sociability.

In order to investigate the question about public connectivity I asked 20 young adults from different regions in Estonia to write online diaries. Additionally I attempted to capture the notion of public connectivity in 39 independently conducted in-depth interviews. Albeit both dutiful public connectivity and playful public connectivity are revealed in the diaries and interviews, I will focus on the latter in order to add to the discussion of how political communication and ludic culture are interrelated.

4. Playful Public Connectivity in Diaries and Interviews - Material

The empirical material was collected within the framework of the study "The potential citizen – young adults exploring public and politics" with the aim of understanding and examining young adults' perception of what the public and political sphere actually means for them as opposed to the private sphere. The project asks for the specific implications of engaging with a common public and with politics in the consumer-orientated post-communist society of Estonia. What do young people perceive as important public issues and what does this tell us about newly evolving possibilities of engagement in online environments, for example. Do we need to redefine the traditional understanding of the public and the political in order to include those "potential" citizens of young adults?

In order to grasp these phenomena of everyday life it seems fruitful to use an open method for the reflections of the participants. Diaries encapsulate the possibility of capturing underlying expressions of connectivity in the everyday life of young adults. The participants were asked to elaborate on issues and topics that are important for them: topics they discuss with their friends and family, which appear in the media, or about which they actively search for information. The rather openly formulated instructions[3]

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3   Instructions for the diarists read: "When it comes to the content of the diary I am generally interested in your everyday life and issues that you find appealing or bothersome. All issues are interesting, from argument with your best friend or parents, to topics, which are important for you and which you discuss at school or at home. You are completely free in your reasoning and how to write your dairy. In order to make your writing as easy and comfortable as possible I formulated keywords that you could keep in mind for your entries. There are no formal requirements. You can choose the language, which suits you best: Estonian, Russian, English etc. I would like to ask you to keep the diaries on a weekly basis over a **2 month period** (8 weeks - 8 entries). Decide for yourself if you would like to have entries every day or only once per week reflecting your thoughts of the last days. I have created one page for your entries per calendar week. You can find them on the upper right side under the link 'pages & files'. Please post diary entries there. While writing please keep in mind that I am interested in your thoughts. The good thing about thoughts is they cannot be wrong! In your diaries I would like you to include some thoughts about the media and how they are influencing your everyday life. List the "thought-stimulators" for everyday life issues, problems that are important for you, your family, public incidents, events that are important for you, your family, public media in your everyday life, what role they play for you and for the issues/events you describe in your diary."

on the content of the diaries caused a high level of variation in the diaries. The online diary study (twelve female and eight male diarists) was carried out between March and May and between September and December 2009 in Estonia. The participants were mainly[4] students aged between 19 and 27 (see table 1 and 2). I contacted the diarists and interviewees via mailing lists and seminar presentations in Tallinn, Tartu and Narva. Hence initial contact with the participants was established in both online and offline situations. In that sense I - as the investigating subject - was visible to the participants (Rautio 21). The diaries could be kept in Estonian, Russian or English according to the participants' preferences, whereas the interviews were conducted in English and Russian[5].

The analysis below will mainly focus on the agency of the participants rather than assuming the centrality of the media in the process of public connectivity. As agents the participants choose certain mediated discourse and embed them in their everyday lives. Narratives constructed in the diaries and interviews describe how the participants navigate in their worlds, with or without a direct reference to the media (Couldry 188).

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Facts concerning Participants of the Study

	Female	Male	Tallinn	Tartu	Narva	Estonian	Russian	Ukrainian
Diarists	12	8	11	7	2	17	1	2
Inter-viewees	26	13	15	16	8	19	19	1

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4   For exceptions see table 2.
5   Interviews in Russian were conducted with the help of a translator.

Transforming culture in the digital age

Anne Kaun

Table 2: Socio-Demographic Facts Concerning the Diarists

Name	Age	Gender	Occupation	Place of Residence	Ethnicity
Riina	22	Female	Student, Scandinavian languages and culture	Tartu	Estonian
Pinja	27	Female	Student, Public Administration	Tallinn	Estonian
Jaan	27	Male	Software Engineer	Tartu	Estonian
Peeter	24	Male	Student	Tartu	Estonian
Anu	21	Female	Student, Politics & Government	Tallinn	Estonian
Liis	27	Female	Student, Art Therapy	Tallinn	Estonian
Maarja	23	Female	Student, Information Science	Tallinn	Estonian
Toomas	23	Male	Student, Public Administration	Tallinn	Estonian
Kristjan	21	Male	Student, English Language and Culture	Tallinn	Estonian
Hillar	20	Male	Student, Political Studies	Tallinn	Estonian
Andres	24	Male	Doctoral Student, Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics	Narva	Russian
Pille	19	Female	Student, Media and Communication Studies	Tartu	Estonian
Laine	20	Female	Student, Special Education	Tartu/Stockholm	Estonian
Anne	20	Female	Student, Accounting	Tallinn	Estonian
Kajsa	23	Female	Student, Religion & Anthropology	Tartu	Estonian
Eliisabeth	24	Female	Student, Communication	Tallinn	Estonian
Kadri	23	Female	Student, Special Education	Tallinn	Estonian
Viktor	26	Male	Software Engineer	Tallinn	Russian/ Ukrainian
Helen	26	Female	Assistant	Tartu	Estonian
Tanja	20	Female	Student, Teacher	Narva	Ukrainian

All names changed

5. Playful Public Connectivity Narrated in Diaries and Interviews – Analysis

Play is understood as being characterised by voluntariness, by being secluded from the daily routine and is conducted with relish. In the following one should also keep in mind the scale-character of that definition: different phenomena full-fill certain characteristics of play more or better than others. Therefore they are called playful since they incorporate varying degrees of play. In the following playful public connectivity is depicted along these characteristics. The analysis shows that signs of playful public connectivity revealed in the diaries and interviews can be organized in three main areas: playful public connectivity as mediated entertainment, as humour and as rituals. Mediated entertainment reception does not perfectly fit the definition of play since it is part of everyday life (Silverstone), but at the same time media are used to create secluded space within the everyday (Bengtsson). Furthermore reception of media entertainment is with relish and is formalised. Playful public connectivity as humour is secluded from the stream of everyday life activities and is highly formalised. Being highly formalised joking, sarcasm and irony anyway allow for temporary freedom, since they are distinct from the everyday. Playful public connectivity as events and rituals probably fit in the understanding of play best: they are strongly formalised, their conducted with relish and secluded from the everyday life.

Play allows for connectivity since it is understood as being transformative. Persons that are players have changed after the play, even if they do not identify themselves as players (Gadamer). Among possible transformations of play connectivity might be one.

6. Playful Public Connectivity as Mediated Entertainment

Playful public connectivity established by the engagement with entertaining cultural artefacts like music, movies, literature, concerts, and sports events is here understood as being linked back to a broader public sphere beyond the private reception. In the following example one can recognize the ambiguity of playful public connectivity in place. A fun activity of watching a cookery show triggers a discussion about higher education and politics; a similarly discussion about the first lady's depiction in the media, which is focussing on her dressing style, reveals critical reflexivity about the media as such. Those mediated discourses are embedded into everyday face-to-face communication as shown in the following example. Mediated discourses open up fields of agency through possibilities for connectivity on the one hand with the immediate conversation partner and on the other hand with a broader abstract sphere of public being related and concerned with the concrete issue, in this instance education.

> We also talked about cookery and Jamie Oliver and wondered why we need higher education and have no courage just to learn something more practical, like hairdressing or cookery, while we still dream of it. (Riina, female, 22 years, Tartu, Estonian)

Play is here understood in the sense of playful entertainment by the Jamie Oliver show, which turns in the following to the public issue of formal education in Estonia. Other forms of playful public connectivity are engagement with sports or music as tipping points between private and public orientation. We can consider one female diarist as an example for connecting with a broader public mainly through sports events, namely soccer. The narrations show that Anu is constructing an Estonian "we" through bigger sport events such as international matches between Estonia and Armenia. The potential of sports engendering a collective - here national - identity is of course nothing new. Besides other actors the European Union included sports as important factor in constructing a common European identity (European Commission). Anu presents this construction of a common "we" from a citizen's perspective. Soccer is a recurring issue for Anu and seems to be of major importance when it comes to identity construction through group belonging on a national level.

> Another important topic has been of course the football match between Estonia and Armenia on Saturday and the game between Estonia and Armenia on Wednesday. I have certain plans to go to the A Le Coq Arena. I hope very much that Estonia will win! (Entry week two)

Transforming culture in the digital age

> By the way, soccer match between Estonia and Armenia concluded successfully for us, we won 1 - 0! ☺ Very, very good feeling! (Entry week three)

> My favorite piece of news was the one published yesterday – the Estonian football team will probably play against Portugal in June. Because of the jubilee year several interesting games are planned in addition to potential participation in the world cup. Currently they are planning games with Equatorial-Guinea, France, Brazil and Portugal, but that's probably not the whole list. That is something to look forward to! ☺ (Entry week four) (Anu, female, 21 years, Tallinn, Estonian)

Besides sports several diarists present music as an anchorage in public life: concerts, choir competitions, school and university concerts. The choir tradition is of particular historically importance in the Estonian national identity construction, since activists used singing as forms of protest during the turbulent years 1989-1991, which gave the movement the name the Singing Revolution. Similar to sport events, choir contests become an object of projection for the collective "we" of Estonia.

> On Monday 'Student spring days 2009' began in Tartu and the first event was a singing festival which started late in the evening. Thousands of people gathered in the Cat valley to sing together. It is for sure one of the most popular causes during the student days. And as our Norwegian lector said, it was very patriotic and in almost every song there was an 'Eestimaa' (Estonia). (Riina, female, 22 years, Tartu, Estonian)

The examples above again point to a form of public connectivity being playful since their separated instances from the daily routine, they involve amusement and are not dutiful. Besides an orientation to the Estonian public a number of participants relate to an international context, mainly a general European frame or specific European countries, where they plan to study, life and work or where friends and family are already situated (most often Scandinavian countries, Germany and the United Kingdom). One interviewee with a strong international orientation and the will to leave Narva directly after finishing her studies describes dancing, reading and traveling as main activity in order to connect with a world beyond the everyday life in Narva. Here certain apathy is apparent when it comes to connectivity on a local or national level. As a compensation for perceived shortcomings of her own hometown the interviewee playfully connects with other publics and individuals beyond the local or national realm.

> I try to grow up. I read books; I collect information on what's going on. What's happening here, maybe somebody is coming to Estonia for performances and so on. I dance, it's like I get energy from dancing. And I try to connect with others, for example with a German boy. Germany it is amazing, I haven't seen anything better anywhere in the world. They are funny, they have sense of humor. They are gentlemen, you can't find gentlemen here. So you keep connections with good people and so you get information and you get involved and so you grow up. (Female, 20 years, Narva, Estonian)

The examples above share the starting point for playful public connectivity in some kind of entertainment game, might it be music, concerts, sports or TV shows. Beyond the consumption the diarists and interviewees construct a link to a broader public, which is distinct in character from the purely private; this might be the national Estonian "we" as a frame for sociality or an international frame beyond the Estonian.

7. Playful Public Connectivity as Humor

Playful public connectivity is furthermore expressed in the diaries and interviews through telling political jokes or being sarcastic about current political developments. In order to joke about the current economic or political situation certain awareness and knowledge is necessary and as Peterson puts it "genuine satire can give us information and insight that enhances our ability to fulfil our roles as citizens in a democracy" (Peterson 22). Peterson is analysing genuine satire in contrast to pseudo-satire of different kinds in order to make clear were the importance und nourishment for democracy lies. The case of the diarist we are speaking about the narrative of mediated jokes and satire shared in the public sphere and face to face talks among the people. The jokes told should not be seen as providing trustworthy information or serving any

rational function in the first place, but as points of connectivity with a public. They actualise important most often pressuring topics of common concern, in the following case the financial crisis and construct a common frame of reference. Here again a centrality of mediated communication (Couldry) is not assumed since political jokes often spread through mouth-to-mouth communication.

> Anyway, the crisis is everywhere. People talk about it, write about it and even the TV is full of shows about helping people handle their financial problems and so on. There are even new jokes and anecdotes about the crisis that people are telling. Most of them are about employers, who are trying to save money by cutting expenses on any kind of funny things like toilet paper and soap, but at the same time the secretary still gets the compensation for her car. (Riina, female, 22 years, Tartu, Estonian)

In Peterson's terms this might be understood as an example of genuine satire, since the joke is not focusing on personalities at the exclusion of policies. It rather focuses on policies, in this case saving practices at companies, and so bears a political point, which is made. At the same time the joke presented is not purely dismissive of the policies, but reveals a "meaningful indignation" (Peterson 25).

8. Playful Public Connectivity as Ritual

Playful public connectivity is expressed by narrating rituals, celebrations and festivities. Gadamer (97) argues that religious rites and play in the theater are representing in different ways than children's play. They are pointing to something else, something beyond the fact that they represent. Play as rites and in the theater is pointing to an audience, which is sharing a certain experience with the players and the player experiences the game as surpassing her or him. At any rate rites are understood as play since they are secluded from the stream of everyday activities, they are following certain rules and they are often connected to being outstanding and awaited, which is expressed in special decorations or dressings. Festivities in that sense are marked by being extraordinary. At the same time festivities as play connect the involved players to a broader public as Gadamer describes it. Festivities construct a myth of shared common, since they are celebrated with others in the immediate vicinity joined in a common locality, but also in the consciousness of distant others celebrating at the same time and/or in the same way. Viktor Turner describes in his seminal work on the ritual process the significance of ritual for communities or community beyond the idea of society as being structured, differentiated and hierarchical. He argues that in the liminal period of rites society emerges as unstructured, relatively undifferentiated and as community of equal individuals (Turner). Therefore rituals and festivities bear the potential for (public) connectivity.

Riina for example describes how she playfully connects with other traditions than Estonian ones. At the same time she makes clear how Norwegian rites are constructed as being important for Estonia public, since the traditional march through Oslo of 17 may is broadcast live in Tallinn's market square. Here media ritual of life broadcasting of the parade reinforce the significance of Norwegian presence in Estonia.

> On Tuesday we started to think about the 17th of May, the national day of Norway. There will be a big event in Tallinn on Sunday with a big screen, where you can see the parade in Oslo. It would be nice to go there, but it looks like people are busy and have no time to go… But on Monday we are planning to celebrate 17th of May at our department with some food, a quiz and music. Last year we accidentally started a very nice tradition, because many people on our course can sing or play an instrument, so we had prepared some nice songs with our Norwegian students. And then all the people loved our singing so much that we are now ending all the celebrations with singing together. (Riina, female, 22 years, Tartu, Estonian)

Once again rites are as play characterized by amusement, voluntariness and particularity. Here again I am not assuming an essential social center.

Anne Kaun

9. Conclusions

In order to develop an understanding of how young people connect with public(s) beyond the private realm it is important to look at the activities and agency beyond those being directed to THE political as for example the engagement in new social movements. Therefore this paper focuses on the narrations evolving around publics by "ordinary" students. Of course the fact of writing the diary or giving the interview can be understood as a moment of exception creating a new and more intense awareness among the participants. Furthermore in a certain sense the engagement with the diary and in the interview can be understood as play or as a game itself, which draws the complete attention of the participant and is secluded from the realm of usual activities. Anyway the narratives being presented relate to the everyday realm of the participants, who are making sense and construct meaning through story telling. In that sense the narratives are objects and method of my study and are understood as meaningful units organizing and structuring reflections as well as experiences of the participants. Playful public connectivity is depicted as being related to three main areas in the diaries and interviews: playful connectivity as mediated entertainment, playful connectivity as humor and playful connectivity as rites and festivities.

Following that assumption the paper aims to outline playful public connectivity as an important way of understanding how (young) citizens relate to publics and politics. The presented modes of playful public connectivity show that the participants are sharing certain forms of attention, but not necessarily values and that they playfully connect with spheres beyond the private. Therefore playful public connectivity could be understood as a sign of an alternative form of orientation potentially leading to alternative forms of political engagement, since playful public connectivity captures forms of orientation being a precondition for political engagement. Thus the paper aims at contributing to an understanding of public and political orientation beyond the shrinking serious engagement in parties, elections or other forms of institutionalized politics. Anyway one has to critically examine when these forms of orientation are translated into political activities, which have to be recognized by the rule makers of the political game. The relevance of playful public connectivity lies though in challenging the idea of disenchanted and politically disconnected young adults. They are not, but in order to translate orientation into activity or engagement one needs the vision of being able to change the rules of political game, of being heard and answered.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Habermasian Online Debate of a Rational Critical Nature: Transforming Political Culture
A case study of the "For Honesty in Politics!" message group Latvia, 2007

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1. The Public Sphere and Fragments Thereof

When we apply the Habermas concept of the public sphere to analysis of the use of new information and communications technologies, we often find that researchers come to contradictory conclusions as to whether the Internet helps to ensure the revitalisation of civic participation, which Habermas sees as the ideal norm, or whether, on the contrary, it serves to promote the degradation of the public sphere.

It is true, of course, that in the age of the digital media, audiences are far more active in terms of taking part in the production, selection and formatting of content. Axford and Huggins (4) have divided researchers into two groups on the basis of how they assess these extensive activities. First, there are supporters of the "techno-progressive" approach. They believe that these circumstances certainly improve the quality of democracy and serve as a guarantee of the rebirth of the public sphere (e.g. Shane; Kahn & Kellner; McKee; Mossberger, et al). Supporters of the "retro-nostalgia" approach, for their part, defend the view that the more the mass audience can choose how to use a medium, the greater will be the likelihood that the public sphere will deteriorate in the direction of trivialisation, spectularity, fragmentation, and commercialisation (e.g. Bennett & Enthman; Karakaya).

Even though there is reason to claim that "in collapsing the public sphere into civil society, [this] loses analytical and empirical clarity" (Dahlgren 40), Habermas himself, when commenting in 1992 upon criticisms that had been levelled against his approach, admitted that when he was writing "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere," he was too pessimistic about the idea that societies which debate culture were becoming degraded into a public which consumed culture, because empirical research in later years showed stratification, with the media having less of an effect on more educated layers in society – those which consumed "high culture".

Habermas also criticised the civic weaknesses of liberal democracies in the West: "Non-public opinions are at work in great numbers, and 'the' public opinion is indeed a fiction" (Habermas, "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere" 244). The suggestion of fragmentation in this concept means that non-public opinions are seen as part of the public sphere, thus ensuring a fundamental change in the use of the concept of the public sphere as such in empirical research in the social sciences.

McNair argues that the control paradigm in culture has been replaced with the chaos paradigm, because "the control paradigm is premised on economic determinacy, whereby ruling elites are presumed to be able to extend their control of the cultural apparatuses of media, including the means of propaganda and public relations". By contrast, "the chaos paradigm suggests that performance of control is increasingly interrupted by unpredictable eruptions and bifurcations arising from the impact of economic, political, ideological and **technological** (*author's emphasis*) factors on communication processes" (McNair 3).

The use of the Internet and related information technologies promotes avoidance of "economic determinacy." Message groups, blogs and Internet forums create new and ever new arenas for debate. Needless

to say, this fragmentises the public sphere and challenges the principle of its being open to everyone. At the same time, this also serves as a much more effective micro-environment for the high-quality rational critical debate of which Habermas has written in the past.

Habermas is often accused of ignoring the fact that there are several public spheres which sometimes overlap or exist in parallel (Calhoun, Eley, Fraser). Gimmler divides the public sphere into two segments – the central one and the wider one: "The deliberative public sphere lies between this centre, with its institutionalised legislative processes, and the periphery where the diverse elements of the public sphere in a wider sense – that is, of an expressive and representational public – are located. [..] Since it generates knowledge and functions as a medium of interaction, the Internet can play a significant role in the deliberative public sphere" (Gimmler 30).

Bennett and Entman come to a similar conclusion – not all communications in the public sphere are thematically and directly linked to political processes. They suggest that there should be a separate political sphere – one in which ideas and views are communicated that are directly linked to government employees, parties and other individuals with the capacity of influencing issues related to the public interest (Bennett & Entman). In analysing the use of new technologies, therefore, it is possible to avoid the effects of trivialisation and commercialisation on overall conclusions (Norris).

Gimmler's proposition on separating the centre and the periphery coincides with the concept of "digital citizenship" that has been proposed by Mossberger et al. Digital citizens are people who use new technologies to gain political information, to carry out their civic obligations in a better way, and to gain economic benefits. From this perspective, the political and economic use of the Internet must be kept separate from other online activities (Mossberger, et al 45). Shane offers the concept of an "electronic democracy" – a new level of democracy at which the availability of communications technologies deepens the vitality and legitimacy of democracy itself (Shane).

Even before the arrival of "all-to-all" communications processes, Habermas predicted that "any attempt at restoring the liberal public sphere through the reduction of its plebiscitarily expanded form will only serve to weaken even more the residual functions genuinely remaining with it" (Habermas, "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere" 208).

From this perspective, the appearance of the Internet can be seen as a step toward plebiscitarily expansion. New technologies allow anyone to publish his or her views and to discuss his or her values, and at least in quantitative terms, this has contributed nothing to the restoration of the public sphere. Research shows, however, that only 3% of content produced each day by bloggers is of a political nature (De Zuniga, et al).

Critics of fragmentation define these processes as "cyber-balkanisation" – many virtually fragmented political (and non-political) arenas for discussion, where that which is discussed remains among the participants in the specific discussion, with representatives of other ideas being received with hatred and bias (Mossberger, et al).

The Internet, however, offers communications opportunities and technological solutions such as forums, blogs and message boards and thus serves as a resource for the revitalisation of the public sphere. "The Internet (radically empowering the individual) draws power back into the public sphere, it makes it possible, as never before, to create as many new spaces and new institutional forms as one desires" (Froomkin 8).

These processes have been typical in the public sphere in Latvia, as well. The public sphere is fragmented, fragmented spaces for discussion are at different levels of quality on the basis of the rationality of the debate or the absence thereof, the role of online communications in public debate is increasing, etc. That is why it is so important to study the interaction between online and offline communications in the traditional mass media. There are two research questions here:

1. Are there practices of political communications in Latvia which stimulate the quality of rational critical debate in the public sphere and which would not be possible in the absence of new information and communications technologies?

2. How do debates organised with the help of information and communications technologies aid in the achievement of intended political goals?

Transforming culture in the digital age

Ingus Bērziņš

Answers to these questions were sought out on the basis of the case study method. The analysis is of a message group called "For Honesty in Politics" (godigupolitiku@diena.lv). The group was open from November 2007 until January 2009. Participants of the message group defined themselves as a group of people sharing the same views or as a "community of citizens." Three documents were prepared on the basis of the message group and published in the daily newspaper *Diena* and on the Internet news portal *Delfi*:

1. A call for greater honesty in politics;[1]

2. A submission to the Latvian Ombudsman's office in relation to statements made by Interior Minister Mareks Segliņš;[2]

3. An open letter thanking the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau (KNAB).[3]

2. The political context of the message group

After the parliamentary election that was held in Latvia in October 2006, a coalition government of four political parties was set up, and the coalition could be described as one that was conservative and obedient in relations with the leaders of influential economic groups. The government had no distinct strategic economic priorities. It was not proactive in relation to macroeconomic processes, instead happily accepting the economic optimism which governed the world and the region. For five years in a row (2004-2008), Latvia posted higher GDP growth indicators than any other European Union member state, and the increased budget revenue that became possible because of this created a situation in which the governing elite could take a series of popular decisions in the social sphere.

The most important complaint among the political opposition and a certain segment of the civil society when it came to the political elite was the claim of a *high level of corruption*. In 2007, the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index ranked Latvia and neighbouring Lithuania as 51st among the world's countries, with 4.8 points. (For comparison's sake, we can note that Estonia was in 28th place with 6.5 points, while Denmark took top marks with 9.4 points). On September 24, 2007, Prime Minister Aigars Kalvītis sacked the director of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau (KNAB), Aleksejs Loskutovs, over claims of misuse of the agency's resources. One segment of the public perceived this as an attempt to take revenge and to reduce the influence of the KNAB. On October 18, when Parliament was due to vote on the prime minister's decision, several thousand people gathered outside of Parliament. The call for the protest was distributed via E-mail chains. Because of poor weather, many participants brought along their umbrellas, and the result was this that ongoing events in the public political arena were linked to the word "umbrella" – "umbrella revolution," "umbrella protest," "umbrella people," "the umbrella message group," etc.

Several weeks later, on November 3, a demonstration was held under the title "For Rule of Law and Honesty in Politics," and this "marked out changes in the area of political participation" (Rozenvalds and Ijabs). The government resigned on December 5, 2007, even though it still had the support of a majority in Parliament.

Between the protest of October 18 and the demonstration of November 3, there was intensive E-mail communication among people who discussed the organisational aspects of the events. After the demonstration, participants were asked to join the message group so as to make future communications easier.

The group of people organising the "umbrella protest" and the demonstration in Dome Square was malleable, but its E-mail list served as a foundation for the message group. Any interested party was free to join the message group. Debates therein were not conducted in a purposefully narrow or closed environment which broader groups of participants could not join. At the same time, however, there was no information in the public media about any opportunity to join the debate.

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1   "Par godīgu politiku" (On Honesty in Politics), *Diena*, 22 Nov. 2007.
2   "Ministra izteikumam var būt stindzinošs efekts uz cilvēktiesībām" (Minister's Statement May Have Chilling Effect on Human Rights), *Diena*, 8 Mar. 2008.
3   "Paldies, KNAB!" (Thank You, KNAB), *Diena*, 27 Jun. 2008.

The message group had 51 registered E-mail addresses, and during its existence, 49 people took part in the process. Most of the people in the message group were educated people with high levels of income – businesspeople, managers from companies, scholars (mostly from the social sciences), people from the creative professions, and people from NGOs. 22% of all people in the group were businesspeople or high-level managers – a far greater proportion than this group represents in the public at large. The second largest group was NGO directors and people from academia, as well as people from the creative intelligentsia (writers, artists, one composer, one director). There were also two politicians and one clergyman in the group.

There have been no other activities in the arena for political communications to be organised by a message group as a community of citizens or by any other institutional structure. Some participants of the message group have continued to express their views (mostly critical views) about political processes, while others have joined different political parties.

3. Content analysis of message group texts and newspaper articles

137 letters were used for quantitative analysis to determine the participants in the message group, their level of activity, and the interaction of the message group with the broader public sphere – the media, NGOs and public and political institutions. The qualitative analysis was focused on parameters which made it possible to determine the extent to which each text was in line with theoretical characteristics of rational critical debate and the public sphere. The methodological example for the research was content analysis of online discussions conducted as part of empirical research aimed at determining the level of rationality in the various discussions (Jankowski & Van Oss; Papachirissi; Wright & Street). The *quality* of the discussion was evaluated on the basis of rational critical arguments. There was a separate focus on the use of opportunities created by new technologies (hyperlinks, references to other sources on the Web, an understanding of how Web technologies can be used in pursuit of political goals) so as to conduct an in-depth study of how technologies affect processes of transformation in the public sphere.

The proportion of rational arguments was important in the message group discussion. *Ad hominem* and emotional arguments were used seldom (10% of letters) and only to attack people outside of the membership of the message group – politicians whose activities led to the activity of the message group:

> We see how [the interior minister] is marinating the amendments to the law which the Prosecutor-General's Office needs so very badly. We see how Parliament is still being led by a person controlled by [one of Latvia's oligarchs]. We see something unimaginable – that the main defender of human rights in Parliament is Parliament's greatest homophobe.

43 letters (31%) contained rational arguments, with debaters explaining their position on the basis of *ad rem* arguments, as well as analysis of the logic, context and consequences of their own and other debaters:

> It is important to ensure that politicians join these principles, and the bar must be set at a sensible height. Partly for this reason, I am not sure that it would be useful to include an element about not appealing punishments assigned by the KNAB. That is a risky step, not least because it can create a reason to criticize the Umbrella for taking on the functions of Solomon ("even murderers have the right to a fair trial") and coming into contradiction with the imperative of the rule of law.

> The fact alone that 62% of surveyed citizens want Parliament to be dissolved while most politicians do not want that to happen cannot be the only foundation for a serious plan of political and civic activity. For instance, I doubt whether we can compare the responses given by citizens in a sociological survey to the readiness to do something real (sign, vote, demonstrate, strike). Neither can the pitiful ratings of certain political parties today be linked to any voting results in future."

Arguments in the message board texts were mostly used to discuss:

1. The civic goals of the message group;

2. The mechanisms of political practice in pursuit of those goals;

3. Editorial issues once agreement on mechanisms was reached – the aforementioned public letters to politicians and the public at large.

Formulation of goals and discussions about mechanisms in pursuit of same, as well as the proportion of such texts in the message group as such – these are very important indicators as to the quality of the debate:

> "In addition I would propose a letter (or, even better, lots of letters from us as individuals) demanding information from the MP and the Interior Ministry about what has been researched – let them submit an official answer."

> "At this point we should not react to THINGS THAT HAVE ALREADY HAPPENED. We need to work more actively to prevent such things and to kill them at the stage of intention. Only then, I believe, will the public understand that the 'umbrellas' are a real force in conducting these functions of a 'watchdog'."

> "Let's act! The simplest thing would be for you to send your text to the umbrella list with our three signatures, asking others to attach their signature and immediately send it on to the Cabinet of Ministers."

The search for consensus was one category which was based on the Habermasian understanding of rational critical debate. At first there was a discussion about how to agree on mechanisms for practice:

> "I think that both demands – that parties improve and that they be kicked out of Parliament – should be merged in one text."

> "I think that you may be confusing the manifesto and the request. At the meeting I thought that we were talking about two documents – the request (1) and the second document which we didn't know what to call (it wasn't really a manifesto or a memorandum). I think that at this point we need just one document with all of these issues, and call it what you will."

Although there were comparatively many activists and leaders from non-governmental organisations among the participants of the message group, it was different nonetheless. Disappointment in the existing practices of the civil society could be seen in this text:

> "We need to act precisely, provocatively and in harmony, without too much talk and with mercy. We certainly must not act like Transparency International Latvia, which constantly sends out E-mail letters which most recipients have long since refused to open at all. We must not organise events which will make the organisers a laughingstock."

One representative of an NGO used the message group to call on other participants to support mechanisms in pursuit of civic goals that already existed in the civil society. She wanted donations for her NGO, thus indirectly confirming the ineffectiveness of such organisations:

> "(..) As a Transparency International Latvia member I know that it is hard for the organisation at this time to cover routine payments. It is even threatened by bankruptcy. You can also donate money via a credit card (see www.delna.lv)."

Other texts from the message group indicated a desire to stand apart from official political practices – institutions of national governance and the system of political parties. Several participants discussed message groups as informal institutions which have relations with official political organisations, arguing that such links should be avoided lest the goals of the message group be discredited. An avoidance of integration with the political system was also used as an argument in several letters which focused on the final version of the various public documents which the message group was preparing.

> "Most Umbrella participants are neither prepared for nor interested in maintaining enthusiasm and working seriously for year after year. I have neither the energy nor the time in addition to my job and

my family to engage in politics. That is not and never will be my profession. There are simply crisis moments in society when the cup overflows and you go forward and say 'Here I stand, and I can do no other,' even though the truth is that you would perhaps be far happier to stand or lie down in a completely different place."

"Probably not without specific intent, you mentioned that you have noticed the desire of some participants (I am one of them) to stand apart from politicians. At least in my case, that was linked to only one issue – making sure that our efforts are not used by opposition parties in pursuit of their own ambitions."

The message group contained several characteristics that are typical of the public sphere. It was in constant interaction with broader areas of public information. The activities of the message group created events that were reflected in public communications. Events reflected in the media, in turn, were discussed in the message group, and this once again mobilised participants to formulate views that then ended up in the mass media once again.

One-quarter of the letters used information from the media. Some participants copied fragments of text from the press. Nine letters contained hyperlinks to Internet sources or attached files in which people could find more extensive information – something that is of key importance if we are talking about the role of new communications technologies in revitalising rational critical debate.

Some letters indicated that participants in the message group were using typical instruments of Internet communications (blogs, satirical collages) to present their messages to the public sphere:

"I purposefully waited before writing my blog today, and I'm glad that I did."

When it comes to the relationship between the message group and the broader public sphere, we must also look at the relationship between the message group and other actors in the public sphere – those people who were described by participants in the message group as "the people" or "society." There were lots of discussions about how the public at large would receive the message group's activities and ideas:

"I think that the first thing that our opponents will say is that we have no right to think that we represent the people or at least its majority. Perhaps I have missed some of the previous ideas, but I think that we need to put together a document which the majority of the people would sign. The question is how to organise such a process – sign with your E-mail address on a specific portal? Light candles of a specific colour on November 18? I don't know, I have no ideas, but this needs to be considered."

Analysis of the relationship between the message group and the broader public sphere was based on the content of Latvia's three largest Latvian language daily newspapers – *Diena*, *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze* and *Latvijas Avīze* – from October 1, 2007, through June 30, 2008. 45 publications were selected – editorial commentary, comments from politicians or experts, as well as interview with politicians or experts. Unlike news items which present a neutral reflection of events, these materials indicated the relevant medium's position. This is of key importance in correlating views that circulate in the public sphere as a reaction to the views and activities of the message group.

There were 17 publications in *Diena* – a newspaper whose senior representatives were members of the message group. These publications were in line with the message group's themes. In general terms, the publications reflected debates in the message group. Eight publications in *Latvijas Avīze* made it clear that the newspaper would not be taking sides in the matter and that it would communicate this position in the public sphere. Views about issues of importance to the message group appeared most often in letters from readers. The greatest number of publications (20) about political issues discussed by the message group was found in *Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze*, where commentary from journalists and interviews with politicians and experts who opposed the message group's ideas were used actively to express values in opposition to those ideas.

Ingus Bērziņš

4. Conclusions

The case study of the "For Honesty in Politics" message group confirms that there is no unified public sphere in the Habermasian sense in Latvia's practices of political communications. Instead, there are fragmented discussion spaces both online and offline. Information and communications technologies, however, facilitate political communications practices, which stimulates the quality of rational critical debate. That is because this allows individuals to work together in preparing political ideas and agreeing on how these are to be proposed to the public at large. The capacities of the new media, however, are not used very much to promote debate (the availability of information resources, hyperlinks to Internet sources, attached files with more information, and technological solutions for communications with the public at large such as homepages, Internet surveys, etc.).

There could be research as to why these capacities were not brought to bear. This would require additional interviews with message group participants and experts in political communications as to motivations which lead people to use new technologies in civic activities.

The analysis of the opportunities which the use of information and communications technologies create in debates about political goals shows that judgments made in online communications were reflected in a diverse (and varied) way in the press. What's more, the various media outlets had different editorial policies vis-à-vis the assessment of those opinions.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Consumer and elite

Transformation of Cultural Preferences in Estonia

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1. Introduction

In the widest sense, culture is the most basic element of every country, every nation. Accordingly, all the processes taking place in a society, including political and economic processes, are in essence cultural processes. The present analysis focuses on the narrow sense of culture - we have in mind, in particular, culture as mental creation, the usage of the mental environment and practical habits in the cultural field. The focus of this analysis is the cultural interests and cultural usage of the Estonian population.

The modern approach to culture and people's cultural behaviour that has dominated cultural-sociological research has been built on a distinction between 'high culture', or 'real culture', and 'low culture', or 'mass culture'. The quality of participation in culture has been, first and foremost, valued as the ability to participate in high culture, to enjoy aesthetically demanding art. Low culture has meant the preference of products of mass culture, adapted to more simple tastes and pop culture (Gans 100-120).[1]

Comparing the contemporary Estonian cultural field with the cultural field of the 1970s and 1980s, we see large differences. Earlier analysis confirmed high activity and intense involvement of people in the cultural sphere during the Soviet period, expressed by substantial home libraries, participation in choirs etc. Since regaining independence, the participation of Estonian people in the cultural field has structurally changed.

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[1] A – highly cultivated taste, characterised by the dominance of aesthetic, creative criteria over pragmatic and social criteria; high culture; B – cultural taste of the upper middle class, orientated towards aesthetic values of high culture, but preferring 'solid', 'classical' and 'mainstream' to the search for the new, and characterised by the transfer of socially appropriate and generally recognised norms; upper-middle culture; C - lower- middle class taste, which builds on the 'pleasant', such criteria as closeness to life and morality; lower-middle culture; D – low vulgar cultural taste that tends to see art as entertainment, offering excitement and sexual enjoyment; low culture; E – separate from the hierarchical scale, a distinct taste orientated to alternative culture or authentic heritage culture; quasi-folk low culture.

2. The soviet heritage: culture as a system of socialisation or as a spiritual and intellectual environment

It is important to emphasise that, in the Soviet period (1940-1990),[2] 'culture' had an ambivalent meaning. The official culture was presented outside the Soviet Union as a model of Soviet life and, formally, this applied to the internal life of the country as well. But in its internal dimensions, culture was an aesthetic world following cultural codes. Classical culture and high culture were highly accepted and widespread. Officially, arts and culture were applied as the Soviet means of socialisation in order to develop the Marxist world-view – it had to support the shaping of Soviet people who would build up the Soviet economy.

Both the internal search for identity and the feelings of cosmopolitism as cultural themes were prohibited. However, in practice, this just meant a lively interest in all possible dimensions of culture, the development of art codes and the widening of the arts' boundaries. Although the arts and culture were under especially serious pressure and censors controlled all publicly published and exhibited works of art, the public interest in culture was extraordinarily intense, as it was clear that nobody could control and prohibit everything. The expectation and need for less restricted thought was general in society. A large share of culture was politicised in the Soviet period but, at the same time, the public appreciated aesthetically focused culture. The ability to differentiate between these elements was highly developed.

In the 1980s, Estonian culture had an integrating character. Financing from Moscow was plentiful and made it possible to support practical cultural activities: publishing, unions of writers, artists etc., amateur arts and great cultural events, including song festivals and common activities. The flourishing of culture as representation fit naturally into the Soviet type of society. At the same time, in the case of cultural practices, their deeper dimension was very important.

Therefore, the special meaning and importance of an active cultural life under the totalitarian regime can be clearly understood. Compared with earlier studies in Estonia, we can see that, in the 1980s, expectations concerning entertainment and humour were high and they remained unsatisfied.

Culture consumption was a part of everyday life in the 1970s and 1980s. Among the favourite cultural practices were listening to music, following the media, going to the theatre and concerts, and all kinds of hobbies (Saar "Avalik arvamus" 16 vol. 1985). In 1978, each month 94% of the population read books, 74% went to concerts, 71% went to the cinema, and 60% went to the theatre (Hion et al 33). At the same time, people's opportunities to travel were severely restricted (about 4% of the population had visited capitalist countries, but 39% expressed interest in the culture of these countries, see Saar "Avalik arvamus" vol. 1986). The role of mediated channels, including culture, was very important. The role of mediated experience and culture was extremely important under the conditions of restricted cultural and information space, and trust in the media was high as well (Saar "Avalik arvamus" 88 vol. 1985). [3]

3. High versus commercial culture

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the role of cultural structures changed from formal to non-formal, the cultural sphere became extraordinarily explicit and spontaneous song festivals and other large cultural events took place. At the end of the Soviet period, art professionals publicly demanded that the cultural space be enlarged, that officially allowed and prohibited cultural structures be discarded and that it be possible to create and consume more versatile culture ("Loominguliste Liitude Ühispleenum" 105, 152). We can say that great social and political changes in the structure were prepared by people's active participation in the cultural sphere. After Estonia's regaining of independence in 1991, the former multilevel system of meanings dissipated because of the changing

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2   The Soviet occupation and the resurgence of the Baltic nations has been described in detail by contemporary political scientists, first by Rein Taagepera and Romualdas Misiunas.

3   Responses to the question 'What is most important in your life?' – good health 79%, happy family life 74%, good living conditions 61%, and material well-being 51%; but also, versatile knowledge/education 39%, quality leisure time 29%, sharing of cultural resources/values 21%, a chance to wear fashionable clothes 16% and entertainment 15%; the last items on the list of preferences were high social position 10%, popularity 11%, and high professional position 11 %, (Saar "Avalik arvamus" ed. 1985: 1-39).

context. Political and economic spheres rose to the forefront of Estonian life.

Great changes in Estonian society in the early 1990s initiated a restructuring of many spheres of life, most notably cultural life. While in the closed society culture had been a central area of life, socialising and integrating everything, this is no longer true. In the contemporary conditions of a market economy, culture has been shaped into narrower spheres of economics and identity. In the 1990s, a rapid change occurred in Estonian cultural institutions: the infrastructure originating in the Soviet period broke down and was replaced by commercial and market economic structures. Culture became merchandise and people had to pay for it. Commercialisation cannot be ignored; a consumer society subjected to market mechanisms and consumerism adds to culture's aesthetic value the ability to produce symbolic and social capital and thus, to some extent, to be part of the habitus of the social strata. The sociological approach to culture has assumed - at least in ideal cases – the contradistinction of high culture and low- or mass-culture. However, this contradistinction is connected more with a modern than with a post-modern approach.

While in the early 1990s the aim was to establish a lively *culture-centred society*, the forcing of culture from the focus of society towards marginal areas by the rules of the market economy was an indescribable shock for the cultural spheres.[4] Structural changes in cultural life were accompanied by depression and cultural interruption. The opinion of an analyst of culture in 1994:

> It has lately been understood that the artificial maintenance and support of high-level Estonian culture in the Soviet period is experiencing a backlash. Even those governments of independent Estonia that have acknowledged the historically important role of the cultural sector and realised its present and future potential cannot preserve the material and human infrastructure of culture in the way it used to exist in the past. (Raud and Lagerspetz 274).

The more general tendency of changing 'from a culture-debating to a culture-consuming public' (Habermas 159-170) arrived in Estonia in the mid 1990s. The number of classical cultural topics decreased among public debates, and they were more and more treated as marginal subjects. High culture was replaced by commercial mass culture; the spread of this tendency accelerated in the 1990s, and this was acknowledged as an existential problem of culture. The opinion of the Minister of Culture in 1994:

> … The above assertion about cunning intelligence is essential for our understanding of the The minister sees a danger in commercial mass culture. A wide range of alternative ways of spending leisure time is accessible to the public, which has a powerful negative effect on cultural organisations, which are losing or have already lost a large part of their visitors or audiences, and on individual artists as well. (Raud and Lagerspetz 275).

The fact that these structural changes were not spoken of publicly reminds us of the period of the 1940s and 1950s, when changes in the political structure were at the centre of attention, leaving debates on the development of cultural structures in the background (see Kõnno and Lõhmus).

The attempts of cultural institutions to withstand the further marginalisation of the cultural sphere became more active in the 2000s. The cultural sphere was discussed as the basis for understanding the world, emphasising the need for education that would help to understand and cultivate culture, and valuing culture as a means of socialisation. The head of the Writer's Union, Jan Kaus writes:

> … marginalisation of literature as a school subject is in no way in agreement with literary reality, with this rich and bubbling association that could all together be defined as 'Estonian literature'. Literature reflects the most essential layers of being a human being. If literature were marginalised at schools, becoming a secondary subject, we could see this as a much more general marginalisation – withdrawal from the understanding of the essential phenomena of life.

Culture, as well as other spheres of life, has been deeply affected by the domination of market relations in society, which has commercialised both the creation and consumption of culture. The accepted truths of the consumer society contribute to people's regarding culture as merchandise which has not only aesthetic value,

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4   The author of this article, ML, worked as an editor of the cultural weekly *Sirp* in 1996-1997.

Transforming culture in the digital age

but also the ability to produce symbolic and social capital used in other spheres of life, and which functions, similarly to consumer items, to both satisfy everyday needs and formulate group identity.

From 'bad' entertainment towards 'good' entertainment?

In the cultural attitudes, we can see that entertainment has progressed from the 'bad' (in the 1980s) to the 'good' (starting in the second half of the 1990s). Compared with the especially selective and critical attitude of the 1980s, the scantily critical and scantily selective entertainment and consumption-orientated cultural occupations have risen to the forefront – this is a type of relatively passive culture consumption, whose members, however, can spend more money on their cultural practices and hobbies.

Perhaps today we are witnessing a more general change in a cultural model, where there is a movement from a more rational basis (consumption of books) to a more emotional basis (consumption of music and thrilling experiences). Have we really again reached a period when culture, which used to be an analytic reflection of reality, has become a means of channelling attention away from the problems of reality? (cp. W. Schramm)

The results of the study carried out in 1984-1985 showed that, in the typology of value orientations, the first type was centred on 'entertainment value' (Saar "Avalik arvamus" vol. 1985). We can see that at that time, 'entertainment' was closely connected with such values as 'high professional position', 'high social position', 'fame and popularity', 'social work' and 'a chance to wear fashionable clothes', and was not related to such values as 'respect for other people', 'interesting work/studies', 'happy family life', 'good health', 'material well-being', 'peaceful life and security', 'good living conditions', and the 'existence of friends and close acquaintances'.

In our inquiry Me. The World. The Media 2005-2008, 'entertainment' has been explained by cultural statements; it is connected with such values as 'possession of power', 'wealth', 'pleasant life', and very weakly connected with the values 'beautiful world', 'equality', 'honesty', 'self-respect', 'wisdom', 'social respect' and 'redemption'.

4. Types of relationships with culture

Our interest focuses on people's general cultural interests – we try to answer the question of how people are divided on the basis of their relationships with culture, based on determining which group prefers what type of culture. We cannot point out whether or how much the typology of preferences has changed, as no such typology, based on similar grounds, has been created thus far. We can only assume that different types of cultural attitudes and preferences (active versatile consumer of culture, a competent follower of culture, a competent participant, a passive citizen, and an alienated person – Saar "Avalik arvamus" vol. 1986) were present earlier, although their proportions may have been different.

Our main goal is the mapping of cultural attitudes and preferences for participating in culture in Estonia. We have shifted the focus beyond aesthetics, treating an individual's relationship with cultural preferences and other activities as an integral personal system. We do not use the word 'culture' in its social-anthropological meaning (as values, traditions, norms and rituals) but apply it in a more restricted sense, as *a preferences model of consumption and participation in the cultural field* (see Table 1).

Looking at the clusters of different cultural interests, among others interest in films, books and topics, a more general similarity of the structure of those divisions stands out. We are interested in emerging wider socio-cultural tendencies. We performed an analysis of typologies: we formed a typology on the basis of the cluster characteristics, using a two-step cluster analysis for the purpose (Table 1). This enabled us to provide a general picture of the tendencies and to bring them together in a *classification of cultural orientations*. The described types of relationships with culture are related to people`s values and ways of life. *I cluster:* active, versatile relationship with culture (22%). The first cluster is formed by people actively interested in culture and social processes, whose characteristic features are careful selection and high interest in high culture. *II cluster:* instrumental, focussed-on-tense-experience relationship with culture (25%). This cluster includes people orientated to technical issues, and the development of science, economics and business, who are also

looking for emotional tension, people who enjoy exciting entertainment. *III cluster:* traditional, matter-of-fact relationship with culture (19%). An individual with a traditional interest in culture, belonging to the cluster, is characterized by modest theme-related interests – 69 % of the individuals fell into the classification of theme-related interests - to the group of little interest. *IV cluster:* pop-culture-centred relationship with culture (14%).This cluster is characterized by heterogeneous, somewhat contradictory tastes. Regarding thematic interests, general cultural interests prevail, accompanied by orientation to technical issues and economics. *V cluster:* remote, passive relationship with culture (20%). This type is characterized by little interest in culture.

Table 1. Clusters of cultural orientations by clusters of cultural attitudes and preferences in 2002
(Source: Me. The World. The Media)

	I: Active, versatile relationship with culture	II: Instrumental, focussing on tense experience relationship with culture	III: Traditional, close to life relationship with culture	IV: pop-culture-focussed relationship with culture	V: passive, remote relationship with culture	Total sample
Clusters of book-related interests						
I:Active, versatile interest in books	57++	0--	8-	37+	4-	20
II: Practical and family-focussed interest in books	9-	6+	51+	39-	16+	22
III: Moderate, hobby-like interest in books	21-	66-	40++	24+	41-	40
IV: little interest in books	13-	28+	0--	0--	38++	17
Clusters of music-related preferences						
I: Versatile, active preference for music	66++	27-	46+	12-	0--	32
II: preference for rock- and pop-music	5-	40+	9-	59++	5-	22
III: Preference for traditional dance and popular music	25+	8-	38++	4-	14-	19
IV: preference for disco and pop-music	0--	23+	3-	25++	11-	12
V: absence of interest in music	4-	2-	2-	0--	70++	16
Clusters of film preferences						
I: Versatile, orientated to real-life films	77+	23-	58+	17-	12-	39
II: orientated to excitement, empathy	0--	75++	0--	60++	7-	29
III: orientated to emotional identification, relaxation	16-	0--	35+	22+	24+	18
IV: absence of interest in films	6-	2-	7-	1--	56++	14

Transforming culture in the digital age

Clusters of theme-related interests						
I: interest in politics	57++	5-	0--	14-	17-	19
II: interest in culture and close surroundings	36+	1-	27+	63++	8-	24
III: interest in technical issues, science, and/or business	5-	61++	4-	24+	12-	22
IV: absence of interest	0--	32-	69++	0--	64+	34

Legend. Differences in row percentages and statistical significance of differences are calculated (siginificance level p< 0.01 is used).

-- proportion of the people engaged in the activity within this cluster is < 1%

- proportion of the people engaged in the activity within this cluster is > 1%, but smaller than in the total sample;

+ proportion of the people engaged in the activity within this cluster larger than in the total sample;

++ proportion of the people engaged in the activity within this cluster is at least twice larger than the total sample.

The fruits of the entertainment industry, consumed as a compensatory activity by a group with smaller incomes and lower education in 2002 had, by 2008, become a pastime for a group who had shifted towards middle age and whose income was the highest; the group also included a larger than average number of people with higher education. During the period of 2002—2008 we observed how the 'poor' and 'in want' compensatory type was on its way to becoming a type of wealthy people with technical education, was technically innovative and 'compensatory' for other reasons, and had little relationship with the humanities. Could this change be revealing more general changes in cultural orientation? We should also admit that, in general philosophical terms, the content of 'entertainment' has also changed and widened.

5. Digital culture

In all three studies, in 2002, 2005, 2008, the current digital-culture was connected primarily with music and entertainment, hence with consumerism. We see how the new techno-environment began as a supporter of earlier actions through consumerism and usage, and we wonder if and how the turn to a new creative – culture creative environment took place over time. Hence, the question arises of the existence of another digital-culture – creative and productive?

In determining the types of digital culture, we have used data from the study of 2008. For cultural clusters, we selected as input characteristics Reading, in-door activities; Utilization of libraries; Versatility of interests in art; Diversified pursuit of music; Intensity of interests in literature; Interest in mind-broadening books; and Command of languages (Me. The World. The Media 2008, indexes 054-060; see Lauristin and Lõhmus 119). There are five output types: 1. Active and versatile relations with culture 22%; 2. Traditional and cognitive, close to life relationship with culture 19%; 3. Entertainment, music, technology as relationship with culture 19%; 4. A reader; more passive relationship with culture 20%; 5. Passive, remote relationship with culture 20% (cp, see Laurstin and Lõhmus).

Table 2. Clusters (1 – 5) of relationships with culture in 2008 (Source: Me. The World. The Media)

	1 Active and versatile relationship (22%)	2 Entertainment, music, technology (19%)	3 Traditional and cognitive type (19%)	4 Passive, remote relationship with culture (20%)	5 A Reader (20%)
Reading, in-door activities	**3.60**	2.91	**3.40**	1.89	2.63

Activity of library usage	**3.99**	1.72	3.42	2.02	**4.05**
Versatility of interests in art	**4.10**	**3.17**	3.01	1.83	2.64
Diversified pursuit of music	**4.36**	**3.31**	2.04	1.75	3.18
Intensity of interests in literature	**3.75**	2.80	**3.63**	2.06	2.52
Interest in mind-broadening books	**4.09**	3.02	**3.86**	1.74	2.21
Command of languages	**3.44**	3.33	2.85	2.06	2.91

Legend: The figures in bold type note the largest average values of every input characteristic, meaning the large numbers in the table describe the given cluster in the strongest way.

5. The activity and diversity of using the digital environment

As the indicators of digital culture, we selected *activity* and *diversity* of Internet usage. The connections between using the Internet and cultural types is statistically significant (Cramer V=.219, p≤.001). Hence, the large and very large activity of Internet use was expressed foremost by the individuals in the active and versatile cluster (56%), entertainment and musical cluster (41%) and reader's cluster (38%). The individuals in the traditional culture and cognitive cluster had low-level activity (20%) in Internet use, which was also true of the passive, culture-distant cluster (10%).

Even stronger connections emerged with the diversity of Internet use (Cramer V=.256, p≤.001). Also, here the most diverse Internet users were the representatives of the active and versatile cluster (55%), followed by the entertainment and musical cluster (25%), readers (23%), traditional culture and cognitive cluster (17%) and finally the passive, culture-distant cluster (4%).

Hence, can we say that digital culture is not expressed only in entertainment (musical type of culture) and consumer habits, but also in practitioners of diverse cultural actions? The connections of digital culture with consumerism and consumer indifference manifested as follows: 1.Statistically significant connections can be seen between the culture type and consumerism (Cramer V=.201, p≤.001). Strong or very strong consumerism were expressed by the active and versatile cultural type and entertainment and musical cultural type, 48% and 35% respectively, compared with the average of 27%. 2.Statistically significant connections were also present with the consumer indifference unified index and cultural types (Cramer V=.174, p≤.001). Greater indifference was shown by the passive, culture-distant type (66%), and the traditional culture and cognitive type (53%); the entertainment and musical type (41%) and the reader type (40%) were slightly below average, while the active and versatile type (23%) was substantially below average.

Agency as a correlation of creativity and efficient self-expressionist Internet use and entrepreneurship indicator with the user types is as follows: 1.Statistically significant connections emerged between the cultural types and the unified index of agency (Cramer V=.148, p≤.001). In comparison with the other types, the active-versatile and entertainment-musical culture types had a higher level of agency (approximately 16%, in compared with the average of 11%). 2. Statistically significant connections emerged between the cultural types and self-expressionist Internet use (Cramer V=.221, p≤.001).

The Internet was most often used with self-expressionist goals by the representatives of the active and versatile cluster (38%), followed by readers (28%), the entertainment and musical culture type (20%), the traditional culture and cognitive type (9%) and, finally, the passive, culture-distant type (6%). Statistically significant connections emerged between the unified index of entrepreneurship and the cultural types (Cramer V=.153, p≤.001).

Transforming culture in the digital age

Maarja Lõhmus & Anu Masso

The greatest level of entrepreneurship was shown by the representatives of the active and versatile cultural type (26%), and slightly less by the entertainment and musical type (19%), followed by low-level entrepreneurship of readers (10%), the traditional culture and cognitive type (12%) and the passive, culture-distant (7%).

6. Conclusion: dimensions for cultural transformation

This might be a basis for concluding that, besides the consumerist and versatile digital-culture type, there also exists a creative or active type, expressed rather in (reader type) 'digital creations'. On the basis of the current study, we can conclude that those belong to the type with active and versatile interests in culture are also the biggest users of digital culture. Also, the entertainment and music-based culture types incline towards digital culture. The reader culture type shows self-expressiveness in digital culture. Less present in the world of digital culture is the cognitive type – the tradition-centred type – and the passive, culture-distant type.

The typologies created in previous years also confirm the decisive importance of gender and age. Compared to previous survey stages (2002 and 2005), we see the strengthening of the hedonistic tendency and the fact that members of the profoundly diverse cultural type are becoming younger. A strengthening of the entertainment orientation is also noticeable, particularly among young men.

We can see that in case of cultural preferences, there are two clearly distinguished types – *an active* and *selective* type, and a *non-selective* and *uncritical* (entertainment-oriented, also far from culture) type.

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Taste 2.0
Social Network Site as Cultural Practice

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1. Introduction

This paper is the result of a survey carried out in 2009 with the aim to describe the role played by social network with regard to the individual's cultural practices and taste judgements, paying particular attention to the user's action relied on beliefs concerning "print culture and cultural consumption" into a social network site as *aNobii Italia.* This ethnographic research constitutes a part of a broader doctoral enquiry about the update of the important work of Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction. A social critique of the judgement of taste;* thus the article will demonstrate below the initial results emerging from the background analysis.

Taste is a crucial topic from a sociological and communicative standpoint, in that it tends to be determined by *social* conditions such as person's background, literacy rate, class origin, and by *individual* strategies, oriented towards distinctive and reflexive behaviour. These two dimensions are to be considered in terms of ecological relationship, thus the *choice* the individual makes as consumer depends on all symbolic and material resources he/she owns but, at the same time, this choice assumes a particular meaning among his/her social networks.

In this regard, the narrow homology between lifestyles and social class, that was systematically and relationally developed by Bourdieu's Marxist and Structuralist perspective, according to whom *taste distinction* implied different degrees of taste legitimacy, can be integrated with:

- the Simmelian idea of the web of group affiliation, a theoretical elaboration being able to notice the horizontal meaning of individual trajectories, within *online* and *offline* social context;

- the interactionist viewpoint based on small group research, that showed the ways in which the individuals share and create a world of meaning through symbolic interaction.

The changes occurred since the 1960s, as the weakening of social class, the labour-market flexibility, the erosion of (institutional) authority, the widespread diffusion of the media, produced a less structured and more structuring society, that is individual dispositions are less conditioned by the traditional transmission of values and more affected by the "presentism" of mediated and immediated relationships. The role played by family and schooling has changed with reference to their sociability function within a highly complicated social system. In fact, individuals can access alternative structures of socialization, represented, to some extent, by the relational ties with other actors coming from different backgrounds and with different tastes (the omnivorousness hypothesis is also based on this cultural and relational practice), and by media contents. The social actor can choose more horizontal communicative types in comparison with a strong socialization depending on family and school. This statement does not imply that they are dead, in reality, this paper argues that the everyday life context is conditioned by a hard game in which the different access to cultural contents reflects social inequalities (often produced by family and schooling) and where the role played by the structures of the individual's early life can still affect the cultural practices.

Antonio Di Stefano

1.1 The Reflexivity of Distinction

The acknowledgment of the role played by social network with regard to person's everyday life pushed us into analysing the nature of connection between social stratification and lifestyles differentiation, replacing Bourdieu's bi-dimensional map of social space (economic capital vs. cultural capital) with a *multidimensional* map, also including social capital, media meta-capital, and symbolic capital. The possibility to gain access to different networks allows social actor to increase his/her own cultural competence, to meet the expectations of network agents and to reply to their demands.

In such social context, being characterized by a minor structuring degree of social field and by an important growth of mediation process, taste became a more and more *visible* and *expressive* practice, because the individual possibilities of "mise en scène" are increased, however the visibility keeps on constituting both a theoretical and actual topic. In fact, the "extended" space represented by the Internet and especially by its microcosm such as social network sites, blurred the boundaries dividing public and private life, making this distinction outdated and not to be taken into account according to the traditional principles of publicity and privatization.

In this regard, we are passing from a distinction defined by Bourdieu in terms of *relational position* occupied by the individual within a structured social field, to a "reflexive distinction" referring to the particular way of dividing cultural objects and their symbolic status between the public and private dimension.

However, an important issue at stake on Facebook or MySpace is the way in which user tends to build his/her personal profile including specific taste preferences for food, book, movie, sport and so on: his/her purpose may be or to reduce his/her "visibility" or on the contrary to extend it making the access to this personal information restricted or available. Such action pattern shows how the "networking space" (a place where relation becomes performative action) is, first of all, a space shared in a reflexive way: in fact, the user chooses with whom, with regard to what, when, to share his/her taste.

2. A Case Study: aNobii Italia

The survey has been conducted during six months, from February to August 2009, through an ethnographic approach being able, from an insider's standpoint, to describe the practices and taste judgements developed by one hundred (100) users within a particular environment of the Internet, a social network site as *aNobii Italia*. *aNobii* has emerged as a niche cultural phenomenon in comparison with the most important social network sites as *Facebook* or *MySpace*; however, its general structure and the ways users share their knowledge, for instance reviewing libraries, meet Web 2.0 principles effectively.

The online social network is constituting an important cultural and social *habitat,* in fact many scholars approached this crucial topic especially analysing the relationship between "virtual and real" life - in this regard, the work of Lori Kendall on online forums showed how gender is reproduced and reinforced online -, the ways in which the individual shares or masks his/her identity on web, and examining the user's degree of involvement in online "community practices" such as the participation in a fandom group. The relationship between online and offline contexts constituted the main topic and the Internet has been viewed as a kind of "third place", even if the continuities as between online and offline dimensions as between mediated and unmediated environments have been highlighted.

However, on the one hand the reflection this paper developed is linked to these aspects (online vs offline, personal identity, user's activity), on the other the analysis of online cultural taste shows practices that are characterized by different patterns of symbolic interactivity, as partially indicated by detailed works on *taste statement* by Liu and on social network sites as *networked publics* by boyd:

· Liu's statistical and semantic research, conducted on the *MySpace* social network site, made it possible for the user's performance to be categorized according to four types of *taste statements* (prestige, differentiation, authenticity, and theatrical persona);

· boyd's study "still" noticed the role assumed by primary social forces into determining and shaping the choices by teen users on social network sites.

In this regard, the choice to focus the research on *aNobii* is linked to its particularity in terms of consumption practice, because it is a *book-oriented* social network site, enabling us to develop a comparative analysis of user's taste. This distinctive mark, as we will see below, did not restrict the possibility to collect data about personal judgment concerning other media; on the contrary studying book as cultural object made it possible both to partially outline the complex identity of social actor through his/her specific preferences and to address the concept of *culture* in the Italian context (the research focused on *aNobii* Italian users). In fact, the term *cultura* in Italian has been associated with education, literacy and print culture for a long time, favoured by an humanist intellectual movement (Benedetto Croce, Giovanni Gentile) which identified culture with intellectuals. In this regard, popular culture and mass culture have been marginalized as in the academic mainstream (up to the publishing of *Apocalittici e integrati* by Umberto Eco in 1962), as in the 'public' discourse (until the 1970s). The paper addressed this particular idea of culture that is still emerging from collective narration with regard to cultural tastes and media preferences, even though in a context being structured by practices linked to convergence culture.

2.1 Aims and Methodology of the Research

The reasons pushing to analyse this "social and interpersonal space" are different and are partially linked to the general objectives guiding the research from the beginning:

1. to notice, after the weakening of social class distinctions, the socio-cultural factors affecting taste production and the determination of consumption practices, in order to specify the variables which can still be influential;

2. to verify the existence of a "omnivore" consumption behaviour, related to the degree of cultural tolerance towards other tastes and to value the symbolic significance of legitimate taste concerning consumption preferences;

3. to depict individual media diet as a complex structure and to show the ways in which communication medium preferred by users (for example, book on a social network site as *aNobii*) is able to create a "symbolic imaginary" guiding cultural practices and tastes.

The survey is based on an ethnographic approach, using non-participant observations, that is observations not directly perceived by users. The adoption of this method allowed us to describe the relationship between cultural artefacts and cultural practices, emphasizing the importance of context. In fact, "as a method, ethnography does not speak to individual traits or beliefs but to the complexity and interconnectedness of culturally driven practices and norms. Ethnography produces a topological map of a particular set of cultural practices" (boyd 59).

The research focused on one of the most important *aNobii Italia* online group, "Noi del Ghetto dei Lettori", and a specific attention paid to particular discussions referring to work and education of users. Among participants, one hundred subjects (100) have been selected at random on the basis of different socio-cultural characteristics:

- gender: 50 women and 50 men;

- age bracket: (20-60>);

- education;

- work.

This selection stage has been carried out by analysing:

- user's profile (where user uploads his/her personal library and some general information about himself/herself);

- book reviews (opinion, being important in order to define "taste judgement", published by user with regard to specific books);

- discussions.

The analysis, organized on the basis of three dimensions above cited, allows us to collect "taste stories" and "taste judgments", connected to socio-cultural variables. The research has been articulated with the objective to reach such purposes, with the aim in the future as to extend the analysis to other social network sites such as Last.fm, Facebook, MySpace, as to conduct offline interviews and a background survey relying on secondary data. In fact, this methodological integration might enable us to gain a higher degree of deep examination and knowledge concerning cultural and taste practices.

3. *aNobii* and cultural taste: early results

The early results show how taste judgement and cultural practices are related to individual cultural degree and to the variety of social networks associated with users. Moreover, the omnivorousness phenomenon can be accompanied by forms of resistance based on logics of *exclusion*, mainly where the symbolic boundaries meet a function of exclusivity and of distinction, above all when they create a strong consensus and an extensive agreement on particular tastes which are considered better than others.

In this regard, a scholastic culture keeps to affect cultural judgment with regard to products more directly linked to its specific nature (book), representing a kind of *core culture* or *cultural mainstreaming* that especially defines individual and cultural boundaries.

The individual of today lives in a social context characterized by a high degree of communicative and symbolic exchange, thus he/she tends to have a wide amount of social relationships with various individuals and networks. In reality, it could be true that the variety and density of social contacts depend on variables directly linked to his/her background. On the other hand, the more the individual social capital is increased, the more personal taste becomes plural and differentiated. In fact, the access to diverse networks gives access to a plural *habitus*, not only determined by the early part of his/her life, but negotiated with social circles endowed with a different degree of cultural value and social volume. Such hypothesis has been confirmed by Erickson's analysis conducted with regard to work contexts (private sector), where the knowledge and general dispositions the individual has realised in early life are "tested" by other network agents. In this regard, from an anthropological point of view, the individual could follow behaviour patterns based on different *thought styles*, according to diverse ways of being. For example, a social actor belonging to an individualist lifestyle will see his/her social capital increased because he/she can interact with different networks that in turn ask him/her diverse dispositions. While in the past society dispositions were the product of quite defined trajectories (and so structured), in the society of today an increased social mobility, a minor structuring of family roles with regard to the parts children and parents play, a general spread of schooling, a larger influence range of networks, and the pervasive spread of media contents, have given rise to "widened practices" of consumption.

Taste is no longer linked to what people concretely consume, but to his/her capacity to symbolically appropriate a specific cultural good to be used according to the different networks he/she encounters on his/her life trajectory. In fact, referring to cultural inequalities Erickson (219) underlines how the question "is not so much a hierarchy of tastes (from soap opera to classical opera), as it is a hierarchy of knowledge (from those who know little about soap operas or opera to those who can take part in conversations about both)." For example, the musical knowledge and its proper taste could be un-useful in a particular work context (if I were a public employee) and in a specific social network (if I had no friends interested in this particular topic), but it could become crucial if I desired to be accepted by members of a music fan community. Thus, the more the individual has contacts with various networks, the more his/her knowledge is various and, thus, the more he/she will be able to reply to such demands. This implies that the cultural expertise achieved through education and media consumption tends to mix with the direct experiences lived in everyday life. To sum up, taste increasingly becomes a power tool.

Does a legitimate culture and taste continue to exist? Such question is directly connected to the hypothesis of a "legitimate culture", to be reached by achieving specific economical, cultural and social resources. This perspective could be meaningful up to 70's, but later the omnivorousness phenomenon, on the one hand, and the erosion of boundaries dividing high culture and low culture, on the other hand, both seem to suggest new practices of legitimacy. The diverse role covered by education, given its social spread, and

the central function of media about realizing processes of social "overcoming", have favoured a relevant corrosion of what "should" be considered legitimate. Thus, we have to assume a *more inclusive* theoretical position, given that the effacement of boundaries ("some things are liked or disliked by everybody"), the omnivore effect ("some people like everything") and the distinction effect ("different people from different backgrounds like different things to different degrees"), might operate concurrently. In this regard, what we can consider in terms of legitimacy is properly the cultural omnivorousness, to be assessed as a general tolerant practice.

In reality, the social situation is much more complicated. In fact, where the omnivore behaviour seems to indicate a general type of tolerance towards other individual values and tastes, on the other hand, certain cases exist in which the role played by (cultural, moral, economic etc.) boundaries become more distinctive and less blurred. In fact, as Lamont (178) argued, "for negative labelling to affect the objective positions of individuals, there must exist a consensus on the nature of cultural hierarchies and deviance. Only when boundaries are widely agreed upon, i.e., only when people agree that some traits are better than others, can symbolic boundaries take on a widely constraining (or structural) character and pattern social interaction in an important way."

One could explain such a situation with regard to a particular subculture (in which a general type of consensus is simpler to reach) that attempts to save itself through a legitimisation of specific cultural goods (distinction effect). However, we think of a cultural product as a "shared meaning embodied in form", thus, with regard to cultural practices, a crucial part is played by a social sharing process. Here, the question at stake again is the symbolic appropriation and the different degrees of appropriation.

On the basis of provisional results of the research, two macro-types of taste may be identified.

1. *Monomorphic taste*:

   was noticed among users with a middle level education degree and doing a work that not encourage to personal (knowledge) update and to vary interpersonal relationships (such as an office worker). This taste is characterized by a monomorphic structure when users ascribe an aprioristic principle of legitimacy to cultural products. In these cases, users clearly and firmly exhibit their taste when this is guaranteed by a objective legitimacy determined by scholastic canon, even though "actual" or private consumption tends to be more differentiated and to keep goods, contents, products useful to create the "public image" of users hidden.

2. *Polymorphic taste*:

   was observed among those being endowed with an high education degree, to the extent that these users are able to develop cultural patterns relying on a "complex" competence. In this case, taste keeps a balance between personal social network, media contents and primary social structures, showing a major openness towards the preferences expressed by other users. The polymorphic characteristic of taste is given by its degree of cultural tolerance.

4. Conclusion

The provisional conclusions we can draw from the partial results of the research presented here, stress the importance of some theoretical aspects, characterized by a high sociological value, as identity, culture, and taste.

First of all, the social forces determining the identity of the individual are constantly subject to a deep negotiation process between the social actor and the social agencies with which he/she tends to establish a relationship. In this regard, the paper is oriented to assume the hypothesis according to which personal reflexivity is destructuring individual practices. The importance social networks played in last decades, especially referring to the topic addressed by the article, does not imply the death of class, rather this underlines how class, together with culture, tends to "work" in a social system where social representations and individual judgements are characterized by a lesser degree of hierarchization, and where other intervening variables,

closer to individual biographies and values, are prevailing. In fact, user is able to develop a more complex extra-textual judgement and he/she presents a multi-media pattern of consumption, when an high education degree and a work activity encouraging him/her to establish new social ties and to update himself/herself with regard to the use of communication technologies, converge. The centrality of social networks in everyday life means that taste is both a power weapon – *discrimination function* – and an equality tool – *integration function*. This implies that symbolic violence, to use Bourdieu's words, is followed by practices of negotiation, which are useful to strengthen the individual's social role also in work contexts. However, the research referring to this specific topic is still at the drafting stage.

Second, the role and the considerable importance cultural objects as goods, characterized by different patterns of signification, played in individual everyday life, show how they are the product of "social network system" in which they are deeply embedded. However, at the same time cultural objects contribute to create unexpected "patterns of reality" and to produce a "symbolic imaginary" that is able to structure and signify the social field where they are domesticated. Analysing such phenomenon from our point of view, it's important to value the relevance of book as cultural object. In fact, case study analysed in this paper can be considered exemplar in that it is able to notice how a medium becomes a *structured* and *structuring* aspect into individual habitus.

The *structured* dimension of book concerns cultural capital firstly provided by and accumulated through schooling and familiar heritage. The role assumed by school and university education becomes (not exclusively) evident in high "competence" demonstrated by users when they share information and contents of legitimate authors (for example, Italo Calvino) and classic works; even though most users confirmed of having actually approached the reading only after the end of secondary school. While family is a "fundamental medium" to develop the passion for book and the pleasure of reading.

The *structuring* dimension of book refers not only to the contents transmitted by single medium but also to its imaginary being able to shape and to cultivate the symbolic practices of consumption and reading. In fact, individual media diet has characterized as from cultural omnivorousness (*including process*), as from boundaries of legitimacy (*excluding process*). The way in which most selected users have criticized television and in some cases have structured their taste judgement on a kind of cultural hierarchy, clarifies the meaning of this dynamic: in this regard, a cultural and symbolic mainstreaming can affect and can be embedded in individual values and practices.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Online Communication
A New Battlefield for Forming Elite Culture in China

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1. When Culture Meets the Internet: the Removal of 'Elite'

When we turn to the history of Internet, we can discover it is a history of power transference. At first when the Internet was created by the technological elites, they inserted in it not only a technical life but also their ideas of how it should develop in the future. And it is true that in the first years of Arpanet, only very few participants, with high economic and intellectual status, had the right to join in; the mass, doubtlessly, were excluded from this group. However, as World Wide Web came into being, the mass were allowed access to the originally elite-based culture. As Michael Dertouzos puts it, World Wide Web has been a gigantic cultural activity that involves thousands of hundreds of people in the last few years.

This change is also occurring here in China. In fact, Internet in China is the most 'massified' part of World Wide Web statistically. According to the official data of Cisco, China has a netizen population of 384 million by the end of 2009.

One thing certain is that it is the inherent requirement for the mass participation of the Internet. Therefore, the participants group has been extended to the whole society with adequate technical access and the online communication among elites were then gradually turning into communication among the mass. During this process, the market force also lends its hand in, turning the Internet culture into a profitable industry, appealing to even more people.

Although Internet has been a new public area for the mass culture, I would still like to point out that it is not as what John Markoff puts as 'Internet has been deprived of the "elite mode" in the early years'; in fact, in China, it has been also a brand new battlefield for the elite to issue their own opinion and pose influence on the society.

2. 'Elite' and 'Elite Culture' in Traditional Chinese Context

To start with, the history of the changing concept of 'elite' must be examined. Traditionally, the first and foremost element of 'elite' is the high moral standards. 'Righteousness' is highly emphasized. School of Confucius has a very famous doctrine 'one should not hesitate to give up his/her own life for a noble and virtuous cause' which has been the keystone of traditional Chinese elite thoughts. This idea has been constantly supported by the numerous disciples in the following thousands of years. Instead of pursuing the economic and political dominance, Chinese elites were required to concern the 'mass people' first. Many elites, therefore, gave up their political positions as government officials and turned to express their opinions in an intellectual way, like writing poems or essays, which had an even larger influence than the official orders on the society. To change the society with their writings is the ideal way for elite in the conventional Chinese society.

3. 'Neo-Elitism' created by the Internet

Like I just presented, elite in China refers to the person with the endless pursuit of happiness for the people but not necessarily for the state. In the past, even if they did not hold positions in the government, they were still allowed to present their essays or teach their doctrines to people with barely any censorship. This is the reason that they could still influence the whole nation although they were politically unimportant. However, with the censorship and permit system in modern China, it is very hard for an individual who holds a different opinion from the authority to publish (at least legally) any works, not to mention produce TV or radio programs (even if there are, they are profit-impaired). Under this circumstance, the existence of Internet has become extreme crucial. Generally speaking, Blog is a new forum for the elite to impart their wisdom and ideas.

Blog is part of the social network system and meanwhile a highly personalized website. There have been different categories of blogs, but no matter how they are divided, they have all the three features in common. Firstly, blogs are a way of personal free express and publishing. Secondly, blogs can be a vessel of knowledge accumulation. Thirdly but most importantly, blogs is a new way for in-depth online communication. We can conclude, therefore, that blogs has the largest potential to become weapon for the new elite to issue their opinions.

1. Blogs are less censored than the usual mass media products. You may still ask about the Internet censorship in China. Yes, there is; but it is much less than that of books and other mass media. Although there are sets of systems to filtrate some sensitive words or expressions, in blogs there are even more other ways to avoid those technical obstacles, such as self-coined informal jargons or just use blanks in a sensitive word with no damage to its original meaning. For example, "TianAnMen" is not allowed to be published and bloggers would use "Tian An Men" instead. In mass media, such jargons are rarely permitted.

2. As a chronological accumulation of knowledge and opinion, the blogs are gradually turned into pools of opinions, which can be later referred to. These are like online books or newspapers concerning certain topics. It is what it takes to become a consistent 'opinion leaders' in the virtual world.

3. As a new online communication channel, blogs also seeks to achieve what John Milton would call 'market of opinions'. Bloggers do not only influence others, but are also influenced reversely. The elites, among them, argue and think; then try to refurbish their own thoughts. I also want to point out that the technology of RSS has been so mature that the blogs seem to have gotten their own Hermes to the mass people.

The 'elite' in traditional meaning is now meeting challenges; but this cannot prevent us from discovering the formation of a new elite group, the 'Internet Elite'. It is true that the giant population of netizen in China takes up more than half of the world's share; but it is also true that this number is still comparably small to the total population of China, most of which do not have free information access and whose only news source are interpersonal or TV and state-owned newspapers.

4. Future

The topic of Chinese elites is very interesting, because conventionally speaking, these elites are separated from the 'government officials'. Some of them might pursue a position in office, but more of them would stay away from the state. They, as they themselves would claim, have their own ideals and own ways of making the people a better living place. In the past, they used books, essays, teachings and other free way to accomplish their goals. Then they were very much stifled under the censorship. Now there is again a renaissance of intellectuals on the Internet. They are forming a new elite group with a consistent sense of mission for the people.

Under this circumstance, elite culture may not be perceived as absolutely antagonistic to mass culture. In fact, chances are that with the spreading and development of Internet, those elites may pose an even stronger influence on a larger population.

Nanyi Bi

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Identity and individual in social networks

Internet, Blogs and Social Networks for Independent and Personal Learning of Information Theory and Other Subjects in Journalism, Advertising and Media

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1. Introduction

Assistant professor Graciela Padilla proposes a paper to share the results of a research on teaching innovation, funded by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and its section of Innovation and Improvement Projects for Teaching Quality, organized by the Vice-Rector for Development and Teaching Quality. Its researchers, Professor Felicísimo Valbuena, Professor Eva Aladro, PhD Ignacio Jiménez, and assistant professor Graciela Padilla, have studied international literature on teaching through Internet, innovation projects in Spanish universities and Web tools that require teachers and students of Journalism and Media. After analyzing the educational needs in Spain, they have proposed the creation of a Web page with blog, message board, chat room for teachers and students, download area, with videos, books and texts; an indispensable tool in the world of today, built by and for teachers and students. We propose a paper to share our teaching experience and show how times are changing teaching methods. The teacher must adapt to these changes and acquire a Web culture to understand their students and make them get their lessons in a pleasant and complete way. The student is no longer a passive listener and has become a participant, creator and responsible for their own university education. Specifically, one of the sections of this site is devoted to TV, TV shows and TV series that are so successfully harvested worldwide. College students are part of that massive audience and participate in its consumption and sometimes survival, structure and script, thanks to blogs of series. Our site wants to study the importance of blogs because they have revived forgotten series (*Buffy*, *Northern Exposure*), have changed the script of successful series (*Prison Break*, *Lost*) and have given life to series doom to disappear (*Arrested development*, *Hawthorne*, *Nurse Jackie*). The Spanish students participate in that success and know they can influence the outcome of their favourite television products, simply from their opinion through a blog. If we use the love for the internet in Journalism and Media education, or similar degrees, results can only be positive, as discussed below.

2. Why Teach and Learn On Line?

Academics from all around the world flock to the Internet for fun, socializing and learning. This last aspect is not understood by most academics, which see the great Web only as a space for leisure. But the Internet can teach and train in new ways, individually and collectively. Its tools do not stop with traditional education, but offer new perspectives to improve the instructor's teaching ability and the student capacity of learning. We must stop viewing the Web as the great enemy of study time. No more battle between books and computer screens. This war has to end because the two media have combined to improve, modernize and expand education. Universities around the world know it. In Spain, we are slowly discovering it and many colleges advocate teaching these new media, especially after the arrival of the Bologna Plan. Never again will you fear that the students spend entire afternoons in front of their computer, because they are learning, are talking with their professors, are discussing the examination with their partners or are seeking information for a class project.

2.1 Case Study in Spain

This investigation is the result of a major grant from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and is part of the plan for Innovation and Improvement Projects for Teaching Quality, organized by the Vice-Rector for Development and Teaching Quality. The ultimate goal of the study is to create a website for students and professors in Journalism, Media and Advertising and Public Relations. Specifically, we want to focus on the subjects of *Information Theory*, *Strategy and Tactics of Negotiation* and *Political Communication*. However, the Web model would help to study any subject and any ability to communicate because we want to meet common demands. For this, the first step was to analyze the scientific literature and all the examples of similar websites and blogs, created in other Spanish universities of Journalism or Communication.

We began with the college list. Spanish young people, who have completed their secondary education and have passed his entrance exams to college, can study Journalism in 31 Spanish universities, public and private. All are listed below in alphabetical order (see Table 1):

Table 1: Public and private Spanish universities with Journalism, Media or Advertising studies.

Number of universities	Public Universities	Private Universities
		Universidad a Distancia de Madrid
		Universidad Antonio de Nebrija
		Universidad Cardenal-Herrera CEU (Valencia)
		Universidad Cardenal-Herrera CEU (Alicante)
	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid	
		Universidad Católica de San Antonio (Murcia)
	Universidad Complutense de Madrid	
	Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha	
	Universidad de La Laguna (Tenerife)	
	Universidad de las Illes Balears	
	Universidad de Murcia	
		Universidad de Navarra
	Universidad de Santiago de Compostela	
	Universidad de Valladolid	
		Universidad de Vic
	Universidad de Zaragoza	
	Universidad del País Vasco	
		Universidad Europea de Madrid

		Universidad Europea Miguel de Cervantes (Valladolid)
		Universidad Francisco de Vitoria (Madrid)
		Universidad Internacional de Cataluña
	Universidad Jaume I de Castellón	
	Universidad Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona)	
		Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca
		Universidad Ramón Llull (Barcelona)
	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (Madrid)	
	Universidad Rovira i Virgili (Tarragona)	
		Universidad San Jorge (Zaragoza)
		Universidad CEU San Pablo (Madrid)
		Universitat CEU Abat Oliba (Barcelona)
	Universitat de València (Estudi General)	

Knowing the 31 Spanish universities that offer studies which concern us, the second step was to study their websites and blogs. Conclusions are very large and we cannot reflect all in these pages. However, we highlight the best examples and proposals from some of these universities to communicate with their students and establish an alternative way of teaching and communication through Internet:

- Universidad a Distancia de Madrid (UDIMA): Offers links to YouTube, Facebook, Second Life, Virtual Classroom and Virtual Secretariat. As an open university, the two latter elements are more interesting because they allow student to be in direct contact with faculty and peers, and perform any administrative process without having to move.

- Universidad Antonio de Nebrija (Madrid): Offers links to YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Linked-in, Flickr, Xing and Tuenti. Its most useful tool is the *Virtual Campus*, which offers courses, learning paths, exercises, video conferencing and class documents.

- Universidad Complutense de Madrid has three platforms: WebCT, Moodle and Sakai. Virtual Campus offers students see all their subjects, subject contents, communicate with the teacher, make virtual working groups, self-testing exams and respond to surveys on satisfaction with teaching. On the other hand, allows the teacher to create chats, conversations with students, organize the agenda, and make tests and exams.

- Universidad de La Laguna: Provides two virtual spaces on campus, one for professor-student and one for professors-professors. The second field is an innovative project to continue because it encourages research and communication among teachers.

- Universidad de las Illes Balears: Offer *Campus Extens*.

- Universidad de Santiago de Compostela: *Your Virtual USC* section is defined as an environment to support teaching. It offers renting virtual classrooms for teachers to speak directly with students, and other services such as virtual secretariat for students and for teachers, library, and virtual office.

- Universidad de Valladolid: Take good care of its image and corporate information on its website with press kits, Bologna files, press releases, media library, the space *UVA on television*, podcast and itunes. *My UVA Portal* provides an individual space for every student on campus, and a virtual communication with the teacher.

Transforming culture in the digital age

- Universidad Rovira i Virgili de Tarragona has developed the Moodle platform, the name of the Virtual Campus. It has calendar, news, email, registration and documentation of each subject.

Our closest experience as professors at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid indicates that students know the virtual campus but do not dare to use it. They prefer to use external sites like Facebook, YouTube, Linked-in or Tuenti, because they associate university Web with studying or working. They visit the Virtual Campus only a few times a year and sometimes, simply to review their examinations scores. Therefore, we intended to make as attractive site as are external websites they visit, but still within the general university site. And we wanted to be an open web without IDs or passwords. These Virtual Campus keys are automatically distributed by the Secretariat of the faculty, with user names and passwords that students do not choose. If they do not change or become accustomed to using them, they stop using it during their studies. Reality is that they come to their personal emails to connect with peers and professors. So we had to create an open Web where all falling freely, just like the sites they choose in their leisure time.

With this first rule, we look among the best content offered by these websites from other universities and we realized that students need:

- - Direct contact with the teacher.

- - Direct contact with peers.

- - Names, times and classrooms for their courses.

- - Full schedule of their courses.

- - Documents required and recommended for the study of these subjects.

- - Mandatory and recommended bibliography.

- - Proposed and correction of works and practices.

- - Mock tests and exams.

- - Final scores.

So far, this has to be the minimum content of the Web. However, we follow the idea of imitating what the students see in their leisure time and we went to websites and blogs of TV series. We know their visitors read and participate actively in them, through their comments, updates, download, quizzes or debates. Students of our faculty watch TV, learn about their favourite shows in the internet and do so because they have found on the Web added value materials. The teaching of a subject should follow the same model and we continued our investigation in this way.

3. The Best Example for Creating a University Blog: TV Blogs

The screens war has ended. The major contenders (television and computer-Internet) failed to compete in order to become allies. Hearings do not have to measure how much time we devote to watching television or using the computer. The spectator-surfer has ended the conflict. Television ousted cinema as postmodern culture system of entertainment (Miguel 39). Now, TV doesn't want to be supplanted and is adapted to post-postmodernism of computers, the network of networks and the Internet age. Television fiction, including films and series, is the guilty of that media peace. Their customers are people adapted to new times, often computer users, and active elements. Their passive role of viewer is over, and they take control of television and mouse to decide what succeeds on the small screen. Producers and writers of TV series have listened and understood that the two screens are now subsidiary and complementary. Our college students are within those viewers.

We all know that the final stages of technological evolution are based on the merger and cooperation between different media, which begin to function as links or interfaces on a single digital system (Manovich 35). TV on the PC is a common reality today. Switching from one tab to another, which may be our favourite live channel, is a step to which we have become accustomed. However, we would go further to analyze the

linkage between the two screens because is much more than that. People can hear television and be connected to the network at the same time. They can check the forum of his favourite series, look for secret filming or share with other viewers their opinion about the last chapter. They feel comfortable to meet other surfers who share their tastes and like to use technology to stay ahead of the next issue of their favourite series. In addition, their experience tells them that which they read and write is listened and analyzed.

The two most recent examples: Fox resurrected the character of Sara Tancredi on *Prison Break* and Spanish viewers of *Los Serrano* reported the death of Lucia's character before viewing it on TV. In the first case, the actress Sarah Wayne Callies, had left the show to have a baby. Her death was clear and explicit in the third season but the writers had to invent an excuse to give her life again. Those guilty of the resurrection were the fans of the series, which had left many complaints on the official website and blogs. They were unwilling to continue the series after the death of the only female main character and wrought the miracle. In contrast, the Spanish case did not end in resurrection and the death was foretold on blog. The press rumours says that the actress Belen Rueda, Lucia's interpreter, wanted to leave the show to devote her exclusively to movies. Neither the actress nor the producers confirmed this news. But someone, alleged worker in *Los Serrano*, posted a Web video on YouTube with the last scene of the actress and her character's death. The video was removed within minutes but surfers had already seen and reproduced it on other websites. And most seriously, they had reported that death in all Spanish television blogs. When the entire episode was screened on 1 April 2008, viewers knew the end but ratings did not fall. Surfers asked for a different ending but writers and producers didn't listen to them. In this case there was no television miracle. Fans could only cry the fiction death in their blogs and the most seasoned said it was a copy of Cordelia's character death in the American TV series *Angel*, issued on 4 February 2004.

These two examples show us that citizens who dreamed of a voice in the constellation of issuers (López and Otero 4) have seen their dream come true. That citizen-surfer consumes but thinks and creates too. Television and Internet worlds have changed and the public is agent of those changes. So the imaginary cable that connects the two small screens is none other than the desire and active audience participation. Their weapons are blogs, chats, forums, wikis and new social movements that have grown bigger and more complex the communication galaxy. The public has an alternative plan for "the full participation of its members and the flexibility to reality" (Marí 15). And the reality of the hearings and the fiction series is that its viewers decide. Producers and writers should, in fact, flexible to their wishes.

4. The Reason for Its Sucess Lies in its simplicity

To reach the above conclusions, we must know the blog history. According to López and Otero (42), blogs are a mix of News/Usenet, forums or BBS (Bulletin Board System) and a chat room or IRC (Internet Really Chat). The first are large areas of opinions and exchange of ideas. The BBS are bulletin boards, and chat rooms are virtual spaces where users chat in real time. If it all together, we will have a blog. Only missing the most important component: a director or creator, who writes a note each day, and that begins and ends the discussion, express opinions, secrets and anticipates that most concerns us: the success (or failure) of the series. To understand it better, just remember the first blogs. All academics agree that the first one was Tim Berners-Lee's, a leading creator of hypertext technology, created in 1992. López and Otero (83) point out that this site listed and discussed other interesting sites. A year later, the University of Illinois created the *What's New*, and in 1997, Dave Winer launched another blog, *Scripting News* (López and Otero 85), now just called *Scripting*. Al-Rodham (15) establishes that year as the birth of the term: Jorn Barger, a promoter of *Robot Wisdom* blog, spoke of their space as "Weblog" for "log" describing his posts daily. In 1999, Peter Merholz recovered the expression for *Peterme blog*, and said "we blog". The term was for history.

Indeed, 1999 is the year of birth of the first Spanish blogs: *Barrapunto* (Victor R. Ruiz), *Betolog* (Alberto Gonzalez), *Área Estratégica* (Gustavo Arizpe) and *Bitácora Tremendo* (by Carlos Tirado), as listed López and Otero (87). For his part, Al-Rodham (17) recalls that there were just 50 blogs worldwide in that year. But its growth rate of nearly 23,000 new blogs a day, made in 2006 reached 53.3 million. The year 2009 reached the figure of 80,000 blogs created daily. In addition, Sherry (27) explains that the year of further growth and ultimate success was 2004 because, thereafter, the word "blog" became part of the dictionaries and no longer

a strange term, relegated Online talks to expert surfers. The activity of blogging was a reality accessible to anyone with basic Internet.

That simplicity is the secret of successful blogging. A person chooses a personal Web site, usually free and is managed daily with their texts, images, videos and links. Everything he writes or posts are notes that appear on the Web in reverse chronological order. Nothing he writes is discarded; all entries are archived and can be read at any time after publication. You do your little story within the larger Internet. The result is that someone reads this blog, is captivated by the words of Blogger and can answer, congratulate or dispute. Or simply choose to stay and spend a few minutes of leisure time each day. Users are linked and the blog gets bigger and more famous. The Blogger wants to gather like-minded people and the result is a virtual community with high fidelity. This mutual integrity of the Blogger and readers are based on "common interests and shared knowledge construction" (Orihuela 39) because the blog ends up being a bit of all and that is its true success and survival.

However, the series success does not always lead directly to the blog success, but it does help because the viewer, in both cases, moves by something he likes very much. The Blogger must write about something he loves and that love should be in his words to win the empathy of other fans. Mason (106) says in her book of tips for writing a blog that you should write about what you love and need to be passionate and devoted. Do not be a computer professional, but do have to love what you write about. Only then, other people will want to follow the ideas of the Blogger, rely on their words and recommendations, and be inspired to share their impressions. All of this is done in the best possible way: free, simple, instant and universal. If we focus on the TV websites and blogs history, CNN was the pioneer broadcaster. Cebrián (207) remembers it: "Was presented with a simple and constantly updated information, as well as giving news about itself, showed, as if it were an agency, written news classified into ten themes: U.S. news, business, showbiz, weather, food & health, world news, commercials, politics, technology, style".

For today viewers, it seems something almost essential because we need the websites of our favourite channels to rescue a story, a video, a survey, or the issue date of the next chapter. If we watch a series every week, we know we can see the entire cast, the overview of all chapters, anecdotes from filming, videos or making off. In the website of the U.S. network Fox, cited above, we can see any chapter of its series on the air: *24*, *Bones*, *Dollhouse*, *Fringe*, *Glee*, *Lie to me*. His rival, NBC, also hangs all the chapters of its series with the best scenes videos, and sells exclusive merchandising of *30 Rock*, *Heroes*, *Law & Order*, *The Office* or *Mercy*. For its part, ABC adds surveys, mini videos and exclusive interviews with the stars of *Desperate Housewives*, *Scrubs*, *Grey's Anatomy* or *Flash Forward*. The last major, CBS, explodes its successful franchise *CSI* (Las Vegas, Miami, New York) with set pictures, actual forensic interviews and explanations of laboratory tests. For *The Mentalist*, offers tricks of hypnosis and the possibility of becoming a fan of the series and actors in Twitter Web. And in the case of *How I Met Your Mother*, announces Barney's blog and discussions about the series to assess how fan you are. At last, we should focus on HBO, known as a critical and liberal channel. Their series section is highly recommended for fans of their finished and unfinished products: *The Sopranos*, *Six Feet Under*, *Big Love*, *True Blood*, *Entourage*, *The Wire* or *Deadwood*. As more remarkable is the success of its completed but eternal series, with highlight chats with writers, guided tours in actual locations or the iPhone application with tips of clothing, from *Sex and the City*. Unfortunately, Spanish viewers do not enjoy all these possibilities, although the marketing sector is developing gradually.

5. Opinion: What should offer the website/blog to the student and the teacher?

The year 2008 damaged TV series with an American writers' strike. The year 2009 brought the peak of a global financial crisis that has cut AD spending up to 40 or 50 percent. Dozens of TV series have been cancelled for failing to stellar ratings and the situation promises to continue in 2010. If the series are not highly profitable, they disappear from the grid. No room for second chances. But the Internet is free and the producers and broadcasters can save their crisis there, but have not yet realized it. González (27) says that 1993 brought another crisis to Spanish advertising. Then, companies realized that was not enough to

have good marketing and media relations. Today, we are in a very similar situation: to announce a series and keep it, not enough to proclaim it well. We must keep it alive and make their followers feel responsible. On the Internet, we have seen that this can be achieved. We must exploit the emotional part of the series, its intrinsic value, more difficult to quantify but most valuable, intangible and value.

Series' websites offer blogs, contests, surveys, videos, interviews with actors and actress, exclusive photos, chat forums and virtual worlds. They are profitable, fast and suitable to the public. There are many possibilities to develop the intangibles and win public confidence, which responds and feeds the process. Weber (190) speaks about enthusiasm. And just such enthusiasm is that there must be in students of Journalism, Media and Advertising and Public Relations. Education should take advantage of all the Internet tools to move forward. You can teach students through the media they use and can be done with quality. Leisure time will not be shared between individual study and Internet surfing because both can now be attached. It has its drawbacks and limitations, as indicated Auzmendi, Solabarrieta and Villa (10) but they are outweighed by its advantages. We must incorporate new technologies to pedagogy in order to advance and improve teaching-learning process. Why? Because the Internet enhances the personal development of students, taught to learn on their own and find something that interests them. Internet can motivate students to learn and can make them see their studies in another more positive way. In addition, the Internet will not learn the classical way, by memory, but through reflection, analytic-synthetic thinking, critical opinion and divergent thinking (Auzmendi, Solabarrieta and Villa 32). Blogs and Websites of TV series are a good example of what students like in communication. You just have to take those examples and bring them to the university for the student experience, research, develop and expand learning. The professor will teach you to learn, lessening the fear of failure and giving importance to dialogue and feedback.

For all these reasons, we propose a website that contains news, bulletin board, chat in real time, documents required and recommended literature. We will not put only information about exams or grades and it's a free space without user names or passwords. This new area is almost as free as the Internet, where the interaction is a reality and the students follow their own path of learning. These possibilities create a good working and study climate, and top professionals in the future. Again, it shows that there should be no battle between books and screens for the student growth.

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The Artist and Digital Self-presentation: a Reshuffle of Authority?

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1. Introduction

Given the current ubiquity of the interactive possibilities offered by the Internet, we question to what extent this evolution destabilizes traditional cultural authority. Seeing that digital interactivity both allows the artist to become the presenter of his self-image and allocates a more active and creative role to the audience, this study concentrates on how the dominant conception of the artist as an autonomous and exceptionally gifted creative member of society and, hence, of the hierarchical relationship between artists and their audiences is constructed within this context. More specific, we focus on a specific type of digital interactivity, i.e. artists' weblogs. Since blogs allow the author to explicate his views and at the same time implicate the reader to react (Cammaerts, 2008: 358), they make an interesting case in understanding the encounter of both traditional and new types of authority. This paper, then, first intends to theoretically explore how artists' self-conceptualization could be altered through weblogs. Secondly, we empirically elaborate on these theoretical reflections by studying a specific artist's weblog in depth to find out how this interactive encounter between artist and public could initiate a change or otherwise in the prevailing socially constructed aesthetic relationship. In conclusion, this paper, which is part of a larger PhD project, seeks to offer both a theoretical framework and a concrete empirical elaboration on the way artists' weblogs, as a self-presentational and interactive medium, are possibly used to construct or, on the contrary, to dismantle the image of the artist as an authoritative figure.

2. Artist and authority

16th century Europe experienced a conceptual shift from the artist as mere artisan to the artist admired for his innate creativity, ability and exceptionality (Barker et al. 7). However, it was not until the end of the 18th century, during Romanticism, that the notion of the artist as genius was generally acknowledged. This notion referred to the artist as a creative and autonomous individual deciding independently about a work of art. Gaining this type of autonomy meant that the artist no longer merely created in compliance with the wishes of others (Van den Braembussche 193-194). This also initiated a split between what was regarded as science, i.e. a communal and objective description of the world, and art as a solitary and subjective experience. For the artist now became depicted as a free spirit, a genius impassioned and determined to follow his path despite prevailing social and institutionalized norms (Radcliff 63, 67). According to Barker et al. (9), this transformation towards an increased valorisation of imagination, originality, creativity and self-expression needs to be considered within the confines of broader economic and political developments, such as the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution. Also, it is argued that the historical privileging of subjectivity is related to capitalism's base in "the autonomy and self-fulfilment of the humanist conception of the individual" (Bennett 16). Pierre Bourdieu stresses the importance of a social development, i.e. the presence of an avant-garde bohemian audience in 19th century Paris that offered the artistic innovators the necessary "symbolic protection", to explain the advent and development of the avant-garde artists (304).

3. Mediating artisthood

The advent of mass media influenced the way artists reflected upon their life and work. As a result, several artists developed a doctrine of "l'art pour l'art", a so-called "pure art" (Lovejoy 34). This was a way for various artists to distinguish themselves from the popular and mass-produced cultural forms, which they regarded as aesthetically inferior (Bruder 162-169). The artist, thus, tried to maintain a unique position in modern society. This differentiation crystallized in various forms whereof dissociating from popular culture was only one. In light of their self-affirmation and social distinction, artists also reacted against the bourgeoisie. This meant a breakaway from the classic Academy's influence via the 'invention' of both the heroic, rebellious artist and the doomed, tortured artist (Bourdieu 166). Furthermore, some artists perceived experiential knowledge as a necessary prerequisite to understand art. Therefore, they argued that this could not be left to the unattached art critic or to the ignorant art public (Bruder 170-172). Finally, artists were also involved in an internal struggle over the conditions that allowed someone to enter the artistic field and to assume the status of true artist. At stake in this battle was the defence of the established order, the monopoly of artistic legitimacy and the authority to call oneself an artist (Bourdieu 270-273).

However, over the years the proliferation of electronic technologies motivated artists to make use of mass media technologies, such as television, to reach a broader audience, although the related loss of control for the artist did not always pass without a struggle (Lovejoy 122). Also, in the 1960s in the United States young artists no longer acknowledged their working place to be an isolated "sanctuary", yet defined it as a "bustling factory" in which technology occupied a special place (Jones 357-361). Nevertheless, the inclusion of 'others' in the artist's studio did not imply an erosion of the artist's creative superiority. The artistic idea still arose from the head of the artist, even though there was more than one individual constructing the work of art (Jones 371-372). In a recent conversation the Belgian artist Angelo Vermeulen and the Belgian philosopher Antoon Van den Braembussche mention that at present these romantic conceptions of the artist still slumber, and those artists, even today, are not very eager to open up their creative processes to the world (86, 233).

4. Blogging and (de)mystification

In light of interactive media, more specific weblogs, the artist is empowered to mediate and to perform his own self-presentation. On the other hand, the position of the media audience is also potentially altered, for the audience is given the ability to engage in a more active way in the production of symbolic content. Given these possibilities, we should try to understand what actually takes place. According to Nigel Whiteley (215-228), today new technologies more than ever have the ability to demystify the image of the artist, for they can be almost all-revealing while being minimally invasive. Chris Chesher, however, underlines that weblogs perpetuate, coexist with and transform conventional authorship. He, therefore, has argued that the so-called death of the author as a result of the interactive and democratic opportunities offered by the Internet is greatly exaggerated. "The Author is alive and well, and has a blog" (Cheser). According to Chesher, the features and conventions of blogs ascribe a certain cultural capital to the blog writer that corresponds to the Romantic cultural convention of the author as an individual, mysterious and even magical genius. Hence, paradoxically to the predictions of theorists celebrating the liberating potentials of the social web because of its less unidirectional and more interactive qualities, it seems that blogs succeed because they are less innovative than other online forms, Chesher concludes. A similar view is held by Internet researcher Geert Lovink who states that blog readers' comments are not of equal value to the blog author's postings: "users are guests, not equal partners, let alone antagonists" (20).

Jill Walker Rettberg, by contrast, underlines that blogs combine aspects of both dissemination (passive audience) and dialogue (active audience). On the one hand, blogs are publicly and one-way published on the Internet. On the other hand, the author and the blog's readers can enter into a two-way dialogue. Hence, blogs are a reflection of solitary, personal ideas as well as of a social conversation. This is not a new development. According to José van Dijck, the traditional, handwritten diary, with which blogs are often compared, is dialogic in nature as well, "obliterating the line between public and private". It is said that diaries and blogs are at the same time a (self-) reflection of life as well as a way of constructing life and

connecting with others. The fact that weblogs might be used in either way – as dissemination or dialogue – can be explained from the power or authority they grant the author. According to Jill Walker, only the blog writer is responsible for his representation. The writer controls his self-presentation and self-reflection via a continuously expanding collection of blog posts "each of which is a micro-narrative or a comment that tends to express an aspect of the write*r*" (Walker). According to Danah Boyd, it is this sense of ownership that makes the blog feel like a personal space to the author. This means that there is a distanciation between the blogger, who controls the presence of blog entries as well as of blog comments, and the audience at large. Although the author is willing to engage in conversations, he does not perceive the public as all people over all time and space: "This conception of the public is an embodied one. (…) The target audience is not the public at large, but those for whom the topics of discussion matter" (Boyd). Blogs are a creation of the self and, thus, reflect selected aspects of the writer's life. This means that blogs veil and unveil at the same time (Walker). The question we can ask, then, is to whom does the artist veil and to whom does the artist unveil one-self? The answer should broaden our understanding of, in the first place, how – as mediation or distanciation – the relationship between artists and their audiences is constructed through weblogs and, in the second place, the broader debate surrounding the social meaning of new media. For, as Danah Boyd asserted, research on blogging must begin "with an understanding that blogs are a medium [through which communication occurs] and this medium has and will continue to shift the communicative and social assumptions that ground everyday life".

5. Case study Bart Moeyaert: artist and blogger in residence

In January 2008, the Flemish writer and poet Bart Moeyaert was asked to post a daily blog entry for one month about his life and work on the 'Villa Kakelbont'-blog of the *Focuspunt Jeugdliteratuur*, a Flemish organisation that aims to promote knowledge about children and youth literature. In January 2010, when doing the research, we noticed that Bart Moeyaert still keeps a diary on his personal website. However, it is remarkable that the reader cannot post comments here anymore. The 'Villa Kakelbont'-blog, on the contrary, did allow comments and several readers seized this opportunity to voice their personal opinion. This discrepancy makes Bart Moeyaert's 'blogging in residence' time an interesting case study to begin to understand how in the act of blogging the relationship between artists and their audiences is reconfigured. Bart Moeyaert posted his first blog post on this weblog on the 1st of January 2008 and his last post on the 31st of January 2008. In total 42 posts were published. These blog posts were written in Dutch, almost always comprised multiple paragraphs and were each time accompanied by a photo. Blog readers were allowed to submit comments at every post. These comments, however, were not published on the blog directly. One had to click the comments-button underneath each post to view the comments.

In this paper we solely concentrate on the analysis of Moeyaert's blog texts. The coding framework that guided this qualitative analysis was developed both before – based upon the aforementioned theoretical perspectives – and during the analysis, allowing an open reading. Therefore, studying blog narratives rather than interview narratives, we build on the methodology of narrative analysis described by Catherine Riessman (2-5) as a type of interpretative analysis of subjectivity, identity and representation. The underlying research questions that directed our analysis were aimed at understanding how the artist reflects upon his life and work and how he perceives and describes his relationships with his offline and online audience, with other artists and with society in general. At the level of each individual blog post we analyzed the issues Bart Moeyaert relates to artisthood as well as to his personal artistic self. We did not look for factual information, yet for the narratives and conceptualisations that Moeyaert constructs throughout his blog posts.

5.1 Mystifying artisthood

Following our qualitative analysis, it appears that the relationship between the artist and the audience at large is characterized by distance, mystification and mere dissemination. Moeyaert reinforces the mythical image of the artist in several ways. He paints a picture of the great artist and characterizes the artist's materials with a semblance of mystique. For example, he describes his desk as a "neo-gothic monument

from a convent" (Moeyaert January 30) [1]. Furthermore, it is clear that Moeyaert attaches great importance to his power of decision and to the way he regulates his life and working practices. He states that the writer "rows against the current" (Moeyaert January 31) and, hence, does not like to be forced into doing something a certain way. Moeyaert describes himself as having a wide outlook on society and as being open to the world as it is. He, therefore, expects to be treated alike and be allowed his freedom. He stresses that an artist should remain himself and pursue his ideals. Also, Moeyaert ascribes a distinct position to the artist, as positioned on the side of society. This position allows the artist to observe: "I found it meaningful that I would look from behind my desk to all those passing lives behind those windows" (Moeyaert January 30) and to confront society with his observations: "I show how rude rubbish can sound" (Moeyaert January 24). The ability to rouse and to move the beholder, he believes, constitutes the power of art. This, however, implies a certain distance between the artist and society, between art and everyday life. Moeyaert underlines the importance of avoiding too much direct contact between the artist and the broad audience. He mentions that "live is safer between the walls of my workroom" (Moeyaert January 8) and that "between the writer and the reader there is always time, and time is safe. Time is distance." (Moeyaert January 8). Hence, there is a place – physically and intellectually –the artist does not want to share with his audience. This type of isolation and quiet is said to be essential for the artist to be able to create: "I have been there for two years [he refers to his time as city poet], approachable, attainable, willing, but now not anymore for a while. I am returning to myself." (Moeyaert January 31).

Furthermore, Moeyaert seems to reflect about the relation between artists and society in terms of two groups of people. There are artists and there are those who are not artists. These two groups do not really know each other: "Neither young nor old will ever fully understand what a writer does. You don't need to explain why chocolate is good. To prove that a book can be good is difficult." (Moeyaert January 17). Similarly, he as an artist experiences performing in front of the public as sometimes confusing: "I can't make head or tail of it. It is a mystery to me what makes a lecture become pleasant, or not." (Moeyaert January 17). Being an artist, therefore, means being different. Moeyaert's writings indicate that artists are in a group of their own. He values artists who refuse to compromise on their freedom and authority and who want to be taken as they are. Moeyaert even describes one artist as "one of my heroes" (Moeyaert January 16) and, thus, stresses the impression of a hierarchical relationship between the artist and the beholder, between the unreachable, "Mister Wilfulness Himself" (Moeyaert January 27) and the ordinary.

Moeyaert also talks about the least pleasant aspects of being an artist. These aspects mostly are connected with the relationship between the artist and the audience at large, for instance in the case of public lectures that can be very time-consuming: "I sometimes talk more about writing than actually write something, and sometimes that is really unpleasant" (Moeyaert January 10). Although the artist acknowledges that he wants to reach people, he is pleased with the help of others to take care of some of the accompanying necessary worries of realizing artistic plans. Furthermore, he underlines that a lot of these public activities, such as giving press interviews, are not characteristic for the artist: "It was 6 o'clock in the morning and I was pretending to be used of answering questions at that unlucky hour." (Moeyaert January 31) and do not always paint a true picture: "I read in my own volume, which to me is even more awkward than the fact that this volume is kept in the drawer of my cupboard, but I know, if it is well-edited the viewer will like it" (Moeyaert January 22).

As a result, Moeyaert's blog entries suggest that there should be a certain distance between artists and the audience at large, not in the least to avoid "pleasing the audience", which he characterizes as "exhausting for it appears to me to be absolutely tedious to constantly having to make choices that are not mine, it would erode me" (Moeyaert January 29).

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1   All citations and utterances originate from Bart Moeyaert's blog postings and are my translations. The blog posts were originally written in Dutch.

5.2 Demystifying the artist

On the contrary, the relationship between the artist and a select group of followers, readers and commentators of the blog seems to envelop a more open, direct and personal attitude of the artist vis-à-vis this type of public. In this context, the artist is willing to demystify his work and life and is open for a more equal and two-way dialogue. Moeyaert 's disclosure of the person behind the artist is unmistakably present in his blog posts. He offers insight into what it means to be an artist and shows his appreciation for the people helping him, listening to him and giving him valuable feedback.

Contrarily to highlighting the mythical character of artisthood when referring to the audience at large, Moeyaert opens up several parts of his life to the blog's readers: "When I was an infant I had a favourite book with colour pictures. I later heard that it actually was a German schoolbook that my father, who was responsible for the educational publications of the pen producer Pelicano, brought for me from Hannover." (Moeyaert January 17). He writes about remarkable occurrences, about his feelings, interests and personality: "Humour has always helped me to put things into perspective, but in the last two years some things happened that are difficult for me to forget." (Moeyaert January 1). He reflects upon memories and reviews his growth as an artist: "Technical problems occurred between 10 AM and 5 PM that had to be solved before we could continue. Only late in the afternoon we were able to start a general repetition. I notice that now more than before I find it easier to remain calm." (Moeyaert January 3). All of this helps the reader to get to know the artist more personally. Also, Moeyaert offers the readers of his blog posts insight into what it means to be an artist. He illustrates how he creates and how a work of art is realized: "I mould and I mould and I mould, until I believe I cannot mould it any better, and if someone shakes his head ignorantly when seeing what I have done, then all I can say is that I couldn't do it any better at that time." (Moeyaert January 8). He also talks about his torments, about the places and the people that inspire him, about the entwining of his life and work, about his desires and the burgeoning of ideas. In sum, these narratives suggest that Moeyaert conceptualizes being an artist as a whole way of life.

Moeyaert, thus, appears to adopt a different attitude vis-à-vis the people that show a sincere interest in him and in his creations. He admits getting much satisfaction from the direct encounters with a public that respects him and listens to him. He enjoys appreciation, recognition as well as feedback from his beholders. As a result, respect goes two-ways as the artist is prepared to put his heart and soul into this encounter: "When people are sitting that close you can reach them all, and you cannot deceive them. A small public senses much faster than a large public whether or not you are sincere." (Moyaert January 5). Via the blog we get an insight into this often-concealed part of the artist's personality. Hence, it appears that Moeyaert relates to his virtual readers in an equally close way as to a physically close and selected public.

6. Conclusion

It can be concluded that Moeyaert's blog posts on the 'Villa Kakelbont'-blog show a unification of demystification and mystification, initiating overt, personal contact with a select group of firm devotees on the one hand and maintaining a distant, authoritative and vague relationship with a broad group of casual, inquisitive beholders on the other hand. Moeyaert mentions that performing in front of a smaller public hinders the artist from posing. The same could be said for the artist's blog. In front of his blog readers the artist sheds light on his personal and creative live and work. This openness indicates a more direct, two-way relationship of equal value with this select group of initiates. At the same time, the artist emphasizes his - and by extension all artists' - freedom, authority and distinct status vis-à-vis the audience at large. Artists present their view on society and the audience is to take it or leave it, whereas in the case of the select group of followers the artist is willing to receive feedback and opinions. Based on the analysis of the posts in Moeyaert's blog, we can state that both the endorsement of mystery as well as the initiation into this mystery show through the artist's intentions. The artist's blog, thus, appears to be an intermingling of private and public space. This conclusion joins in with Jill Walker Rettberg's argument that blogs are to be understood as both interior and social, both dissemination and dialogue. The latter function, i.e. dialogue, can refer to Nigel Whiteleys' belief (216) that offering insight into why the artist creates will dissolve the distance between the artistic practitioner and the audience.

Joke Beyl

As a preliminary conclusion, it can be argued that the artist's self-conceptualisation via his blog postings is both genuine and mystified. He, thus, adopts an ambiguous attitude. On the one hand, he intends to preserve the unique and mystique status of artisthood, since this status equals freedom as well as authority. On the other hand, he aims at demystifying this specific, veiled status. It appears that the artist does not want to remain isolated in mystery, but is in need for contact, assistance and feedback from a group of supporters in order to cope with the lesser pleasant aspects of being an artist, i.e. encounters with the audience at large that impose a lack of freedom on the artist. The blog, thus, seem to be a medium for the artist to adjust and to balance the conventional authoritative artist-audience relationship.

Given these conclusions, we believe it is necessary to continue analyzing established artists' blogs. Our goal is to understand the diverse ways artists conceptualize artisthood in an Internet environment. Moreover, we intend to analyze readers' blog comments as well, for these analyses could inform us about the way the audience relates to the artist, given the interactive opportunities of the weblog. As such, we expect to shed light on the way the concept of artistic authority, as well as related traditional social relations, is performed within the confines of new, interactive media.

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Communicative Image Construction in Online Social Networks.
New Identity Opportunities in the Digital Age

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1. Introduction

Self-presentation forms a central part of each kind of social identity-conception, and the representation of the self towards other members of society is essential to build the own personality (cf. Mead's concept of "ME" and "I", Mead 217ff). In former times this mutual self construction happened exclusively via direct face-to-face-contact, but nowadays in the digital age, there are entirely new opportunities for the image-construction of a person (cf. Döring 335, Köhler 12f). In contrast to direct face-to-face interaction, where verbal and non-verbal messages are transmitted partly unintentionally, users of computer-mediated interactions can decide quite selectively which messages they want to transmit to others, because non-verbal cues do not exist. This can be seen as the central difference between real life social interactions and computer-mediated forms. Also, in comparison to other media-mediated forms of interaction, one central distinction of virtual contacts can be mentioned, namely the aspect of interactivity, which allows for immediate feedback on the selfpresentation of a person. This expectation of feedback is not an exclusive feature of computer-mediated communication (cg. Hawthorn), but it corresponds with Keupp's "external dimension of identity work" (10) which is orientated towards social integration and appreciation from others. The internet becomes what Goffman calls a "stage" on which people can put on different masks und so can try out various identity aspects (Lyon, De Kerckhove). It was not for nothing that Willems and Pranz talked about a "culture of self-thematisation" wherein the internet is the "stage and dramaturgy of this self-thematisation" (189)

While a number of studies already exists which examine the self-presentation in chat rooms (c.f. Gebhardt 6, Walther 67) or private homepages, the aspect of self-presentation in online social networks is a comparatively young research subject. Online social networks are specialized internet platforms that allow for communicative interaction and also for selective self-presentation through online profiles. The prevailing custom of registering with one's real name in such networks goes to show the higher relevance of personal identity in these online social networks compared to other more anonymous internet applications (Ebersbach, Glaser and Heigl 181). In contrast to private homepages, the interaction in online social networks is more relevant and feedback processes to one's own publications are more or less expected from many users. Therefore, a central assumption can be drafted: self-presentation in online social networks tends to happen in a much more interactive form than it does in all other forms of virtual image construction. This is why I suggest naming this form of self-presentation "communicative self-presentation". On one hand, the self-presentation in online social networks is performed similarly to classic face-to-face-interaction via the use of visual attributes like photos or videos. Then again, on the other hand, it happens more intensively in a verbal and written form as well, for example through status messages or commentaries with which the user tries to create an image of himself. As a third aspect of communicative self-presentation, construction

of a social identity has to be mentioned, i.e. the positioning of the self in the context of a social group (cf. Döring 330ff). An example for how this can be realized in online social networks is the possibility to join a virtual group in Facebook. Some of these groups just form the virtual counterpart of really existing social or political groups, while others of these Facebook-groups try to express certain messages, sometimes through really provocative names. Both kinds of groups can be seen as another type of statements which form part of the identity of the user.

So, the central aim of this study is to clarify the question of how the specific form of "communicative self-presentation" does appear in online social networks, and what the differences and similarities to traditional forms of identity-construction as found in face-to-face-interactions are.

2. The method

Due to the explorative character of the study, a combination of research methods was used, so that objective observation data of the users' behaviour of different interaction tools of Facebook can be combined with subjective descriptions of the individual users' habits. The study is focused on the online social network Facebook which shows explosive growing rates and is currently one of the most used online social networks.

Collection of the data took place in autumn 2009 with the aid of students from a communication science seminar. In a first step, the use of different interaction tools of Facebook was recorded. Over the course of one week, the students observed the using behaviour of 69 Facebook users. On the one hand, the use of Facebook applications like the status function, photo- and video albums, message walls, games, invitations for events and groups, commentaries to other publications and the adding of friends was counted. On the other hand, the number of comments a publication from other users evokes within two days was also recorded. This should be an indicator for the degree of users' interactivity, as well as an indicator how effectively Facebook publications can actually provoke social feedback.

Moreover, status messages as the application which is especially relevant to the self-presentation issues that this study is interested in, were examined more closely. With the status message, it was recorded whether it expressed emotions, activities, slogans or jokes, questions or neutral information.

In the second step of the study, 40 Facebook users (24 women, 16 men, aged between 18-45 years, most of them with higher education levels) were then interviewed. These qualitative interviews were focussed on the motives of Facebook use in general, and on particular using habits, as well as using intentions of specific Facebook tools. Thus it should be shown if this online social network is intentionally used for selfpresentation, and what indirect indicators can be found that express the aim of self-presention. The interviews were recorded, transliterated and evaluated by way of a qualitative content analysis according to Mayring. Subsequently, the extracted categories were quantitatively counted so that the significance of the different forms of Facebook using behaviour could be analysed.

The following research questions should be answered with this methodical combination:

1. Which interaction tools are used especially intensively and for what reasons does this happen?

2. What significance does the social feedback, which is expressed through commentaries to publications on Facebook, have?

3. Do the users intentionally express the motive of selfpresentation through the online social network or can the aspect of selfpresentation only be observed indirectly through the using behaviour?

3. The results

3.1. Facebook as platform for "communicative selfpresentation"

Whereas a number of already-existing studies are concerned with the use of Facebook as a new communication canal (c.f. Franzen 435; Valkenburg, Peter and Schouten), this study is focused on the question of how the users utilise those tools which do not primarily conform to communicative needs but rather offer

interesting opportunities for a self-presentation use. Examples for those tools are mainly the virtual photo albums or the possibility to join one of the numerous Facebook-groups.

An exceptional position is taken by the status-function, which can be used for purely communicative purposes as well as for communicative self-presentation, since it offers the opportunity to freely publish personal activities, emotions or other information. These publications can also have the intention to get social feedback, on how one's own emotions, activities or the whole person is perceived and evaluated by one's friends.

A first insight into the using behaviour of the three aforementioned Facebook tools can be derived from the data from the observation (Table 1). It can be seen that the status function is the most frequently used tool. 69 users were observed to have published 253 status messages in one week, in which amounts to an average of each user publishing 3,67 status messages per week. Photos are ranked on the 6th position, and each user published an average of 1,13 photos per week. Facebook groups seem to be used considerably less frequently – the observed users joined a Facebook group less than once (0,94 times) a week. Changing the profile picture is an even more uncommon activity and not even a third of the users changed it even once in the observation week.

Table 1: Observed using behaviour of different Facebook tools

N=69	number	percentage of all publications	activities per person/per week
status	253	22,98	3,67
added friends	159	14,44	2,30
commentaries to messages from others	153	13,9	2,22
Games	148	13,44	2,14
message wall	112	10,17	1,62
Photos	78	7,08	1,13
Links	66	5,99	0,96
Group	65	5,9	0,94
Events	46	4,18	0,67
change of the profile picture	21	1,91	0,30
TOTAL	1101	100	15,96

All in all, the findings show that Facebook users tend to utilise the online social network quite actively. On average, the observed persons published something 16 times per week in the Facebook network. This data will be now analysed against the background of the subjective estimations of the users.

3.2 Photos as a tool of communicative selfpresentation

To start out with the perhaps most explicit kind of self-presentation, namely the presentation through photos or videos, the interviewed persons were asked about the significance of these tools for their Facebook use, and about the purpose of the use of virtual photo albums. Thereby it appears that photos have a surprisingly small significance for most users: Whereas 42,5% of the users explicitly say that photo albums are not important for them, respectively are not used by them at all, only one in five users (22,5%) rates them as personally important.

The aspect of showing one's personal photos to other people emerges as the most important purpose of the use of virtual photo albums. 35% of the interviewed persons say that they publish photos due to this

reason. 15% use the virtual albums to share the photos with their friends. A further 12% of users do not only like to show their photos, but also want to let their friends share their life with them. This already seems to incorporate an aspect of self-presentation.

> Photos … yes, such funny photos that are taken sometimes in life. (…) party-pics or photos which show personal adventures or where you have spent your holidays. Why do I publish such pictures? Just to let others share my life and to show them what a cool life I live. (23 years old male Facebook-user)

Four out of forty interviewed persons even explicitly mentioned that they use the virtual photo albums for self-presentation.

> I often tag myself on photos at which I look especially pretty. Other people should see the pictures of me on which I look that good. (…) Sure, I also like to boast with the pictures. Maybe I also like to make my ex-boyfriends jealous or I like to look good for my future boyfriends. (21 years old female Facebook-user)

3.3 Groups as tool for communicative selfpresentation

Ambivalent opinions are expressed about the use of the numerous Facebook groups, as well. This tool is important for 40% of the interviewed persons, it does not have any significance for 42,5%. But what are the reasons for the enthusiasm of group-users? More than one quarter (27,5%) of the interview participants say that first of all they appreciate the aspect of information transfer in the groups.

> Yes, I´m a member in many groups. For example in groups of my favourite music bands, my favourite shops, and I really like it because I get information which is interesting for me and I don´t have to actively look for it. For example, I get informed when a new TV-serial starts which I´ve been waiting for. (26 years old female Facebook-user)

Additionally, the aspect of communicative self-presentation through Facebook groups is picked out as a central theme, as well. 15% declare that the name of a group is essential for the choice to join a group. A group's name has to be interesting, funny or provocative. Another 7,5% explicitly describe group membership as a statement on its own. This "outing" as a group member can be on political level by membership in a Facebook group of some really existing political organisation or NGO group, as well as on a more casual, joking level by joining groups which do not have a counterpart in real live and often do not pursue serious interests but express a certain message through their group name.

> Group memberships also give other users additional information about a person. It's a way to present yourself. (25 years old female Facebook-user)

> There are many groups which are totally senseless. They are just founded and then you can join it and that's it. Nothing else happens. It's just an advertisement for yourself. (23 years old male Facebook-user)

So, Facebook groups are an application which is more consciously recognised by users as a tool for selfpresentation than this is the case with photo albums.

3.3 The status message as a tool for communicative selfpresentation

A general analysis of the significance of the status message shows that only three out of 40 interviewed persons explicitly mentioned that this Facebook tool is important to them. Nearly every third person (30%) seems to be much less enthusiastic, and says that the status message has little importance for oneself. As a reason for this, a non-existing need for selfpresentation was mainly mentioned. Remarkably, these subjective estimates are contrary to the findings of the observation, where the status message was shown to be the most frequently used Facebook tool. If self-presentation is viewed as a socially non-desirable practice,

subjective estimates concerning this topic may deviate considerably from actual patterns of use. An indicator for socially desirable answering behaviour seems to be that even those persons who evaluate the status as "not important", use it at least sometimes.

Interestingly, a high variety of motives for using the status message is mentioned in the interviews. The biggest motivator to publish status messages seems to be the hope to get reactions to one's own publication. 35% of the interview participants state that they probably wait for reactions of friends to their publications in the status. Some of them even experience frustration when their publications are not commented from others.

> I think that the status can fulfil a need for attention. Because why does somebody write 'I'm ill'? Such things I just write to get to read "ach, you poor one!" That is it. And I see it as a sign that everyone expects and hopes that the people react when you write things like this. (23 years old female Facebook-user)

This aspect points out that the status message is used as a tool for interactive communication specifically while searching for social feedback to one's own publications. This can be seen as an indicator that the status message is also used to subject one's own attitudes, positions and activities to a social test or evaluation process. But likewise, the aspect of social support seems to play a decisive role as some users tend to be hoping for consolation and support when they publish messages about their problems or bad feelings.

- Also, the opportunity of self-presentation through the status message is explicitly mentioned by four interview participants. Another four persons mentioned using the status to get attention from others, which is also an indicator for the motive of selfpresentation.

> I think the main reason why people regularly update their status message is that they would like to communicate something to their friends and that they like to be present for them. They try to get more attention for themselves especially with status messages like "I feel so bad", "Why did that have to happen?" or messages like that. (…) nothing but expressions of emotional states that are openly revealed and that should evoke reactions from friends like "oh, what has happened?" or "Talk to me". (18 years old female Facebook user)

In general, three types of status messages can be distinguished (Table 2):

1. Purely information-orientated messages (links to news, events etc.)

2. Mainly entertainment-orientated messages (jokes, slogans, links to funny videos etc.)

3. Personal information about oneself (information about one's own activities, emotions etc.)

According to the subjective description, publication of personal information about oneself is the most frequently used form. Altogether, nearly half of the interviewed persons (47,5%) say that they use this type of status message. Within this category of status message, activities are a little more frequently published (27,5%) than emotions (20%).

Ranking second in frequency of use are purely information-orientated messages, which are used by 40% of the interview participants.

The least used type of status message is the mainly entertainment-orientated type. About one quarter (27,5%) of the interviewed persons state that they use this kind of message. Three users (5%) explicitly mention that they think about the entertainment factor of their own publications and often try to entertain their friends with jokes or slogans.

The data from the observation of the different types of status message corresponds with these subjective descriptions. Regarding the observation data, it can be shown that almost a third of the status messages express emotions (35%) or activities (32%). The publication of other types seems to be much less important, such as neutral information (11%) or of entertaining messages (9%).

Table 2: Types of observed status messages

N=69	Number	Percentage of all status messages
emotions	115	34,85
activities	105	31,82
neutral information	36	10,91
jokes/slogans	29	8,79
others	26	7,88
questions	19	5,76
TOTAL	330	100

In summary, it appears that the status message is used in a very ambivalent manner which alternates between aspects of pure information transfer and forms of communicative selfpresentation. A central aspect in all cases is the expectation of reactions from friends. This can be in form of a validation of one's own publications, or also in forms of social support such as consolation. If a status message does not provoke any comments, this can be experienced as frustrating. That can be seen as an indicator that at least part of the intention of most status messages is to gain social feedback.

3.5. Facebook as platform for social feedback

As it appears from a number of the qualitative interviews, the aspect of social feedback plays a decisive role in the use of Facebook. These qualitative findings about the subjective importance of commentaries can also be found in the objective observation data. For the observation, a distinction was made between verbal comments and the use of the "Like" button, with which the users can also express their evaluation but do not have to write anything. Clicking that button simply results in a standard formatted message "[user name] likes this", but does not contain and personally customized elements, such as text by the user.

To avoid a bias of the data because of different publication rates in the different Facebook-tools, the percentage of how many publications of a user get feedback reactions was counted, instead of giving absolute numbers.

It appears that two tools for communicative selfpresentation, namely the status message and photo albums, get the highest feedback values (Table 3). Ranking first on the verbal comments is the status message: Three out of four (77%) messages provoke at least one verbal reaction. The second rank goes to photo albums, more than every second (54%) of which get verbal feedback.

A similar image appears with feedback articulated non-verbally, via the "Like" button: 64% of photo albums as well as 64% of status messages evoke at least one "[somebody] likes this"-reaction. Changes of the profile picture also tend to get some verbal reactions (38%) as well as feedback with the "Like" button (43%). Comparatively few reactions are provoked by the joining of Facebook groups. Only every tenth group entry is commented verbally (10%) and only 12% with the "Like" button.

Table 3: Percentage of commented Facebook activities

	proportion of comments to the activities (*)	rank of comments	proportion of „Like" comments to the activities	rank of „Like" comments
Status	77,47	1	63,64	2
added friends	6,92	9	6,29	10
comments to publications of others	28,76	7	20,92	6

Games	45,95	4	31,08	5
Message wall	41,07	5	15,18	7
Photos	53,85	2	64,10	1
Links	51,52	3	62,12	3
Groups	9,23	8	12,31	8
Events	4,35	10	6,52	9
changes of the profile picture	38,10	6	42,86	4

*calculation: comments divided by number of publication times 100
Coloured cells mark activities which can be considered as express forms of communicative image-construction

Therefore, it can be recorded that those tools that are especially appropriate for self-presentation also tend to evoke the most social feedback. This finding supports the assumption of a special form of communicative self-presentation in online social networks. In addition to information- and communication-orientated using behaviour, Facebook also offers a new form of self-presentation in which verbal interaction is used purposefully for the creation of a personal self-image.

4. Conclusions

This explorative study has revealed that, even though aspects of self-presentation are not mentioned as the central motive of the Facebook use, they nevertheless play a decisive role in the everyday using behaviour of the this online social network. For example, the virtual photo albums are highly appreciated because they offer a simple and easy opportunity to show one's own pictures to a huge number of friends and acquaintances. In this way, friends can be enabled to take part in one's own life. Additionally, published photos are intended and expected to evoke a kind of feedback in form of comments from Facebook friends, so that users can get an impression of how their photos are received and how the pictured activities, situations and experiences are socially evaluated.

The factor of self-presentation also appears in connection with the groups in this online social network. The name of a group seems to be decisive for the choice to join a group and so groups very much tend to be seen as explicit statements by the users. The idea of belonging to a group becomes an integral part of one's own identity. Thus, intentional display of group membership is another expression of the self in an online social network.

With the status message, it appears that the hope and expectation of reactions to one's own publications as an especially strong motivational factor. If the status does not evoke any comments, this can lead to disappointment and uncertainty. For this reason, publications related to personal information form the largest amount of status messages. It is a fact that such unrestricted and well-selected self-presentation, combined with the implicit invitation to commentaries, hardly ever exists in the real life, i.e. in non-virtual situations. When it does occur in real social interactions, this is mainly restricted to an inner circle of close family members or very intimate friends. By contrast, the social evaluation process in Facebook is performed in the wider context of this online network, where also very remote acquaintances tend to freely express their opinion to other users' publications.

Additionally, self-presentation in Facebook occurs in a highly interactive process in which other network members' reactions form a central part of one's own identity construction. Through the simplified communication opportunities and the omission of certain communicative inhibition thresholds, it has been observed that the social feedback in such a network is more directly communicated, and based on the opinions from a wider group of people than this would be the case in the direct face-to-face-interaction.

So, the conclusion can be drawn that online social networks actually realise a form of communicative selfpresentation. Characteristic of this new form of selfpresentation, compared to traditional forms of identity presentation, is an increased importance of written communication, which allows self-images to be transmitted communicatively, as well as socially significant reactions to be evoked in a communicative way.

Transforming culture in the digital age

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Digital Identity:
The Private and Public Paradox

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1. Digital Identity: The Private and Public Paradox

The Internet phenomenon of the digital identity has been referred to by many different terms including: online identity, online personality, digiSelf, virtual identity, avatar and online persona. These terms all refer to the same idea, of an individual using a computer and creating a new identity for themselves on the Internet. It is important to clarify that the online identity is not a computer user in the traditional sense of man operating a machine nor does it refer to any significance in the human-machine interaction. The significant interaction of digital identities are human to human or more specifically online identities interacting with other online identities. The computer and the Internet are merely the medium, the software on the websites provides a platform or stage for online identities to perform or exist. Digital identities are the content of the Internet, they are the performers that draw in the audience, and inspire the passive audience to become more active users and creators. Online existence in online communities and digital identities are merely web-mediated human interaction.

An individual can use a digital identity to act as an extension of their real identity, or they can use a digital identity to mask and alter their true identity and become someone or something else. This power of deciding what information to share and what information to withhold is a meaningful characteristic that the creator of a digital identity has online, and not in the real world. In real life it may prove more challenging to convince people that you are a different gender, age or species than it is on the Internet. The mask that the digital identity wears, can often be as simple as a pseudonym or 'handle' instead of their real name, so they can distance themselves from their real identity. This new or hidden identity can act as a mask or a shield to protect the user or simply be a part of self-expression and entertainment. Derrick de Kerckhove, the former director of the McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology at the University of Toronto, predicted in 1995 that in the future "Changing our personal identity will become a primary entertainment, like a cosmetic surgery of the psyche." (de Kerckhove 20) This prediction is particularly interesting, because not only does it foretell the Web 2.0 revolution of user created Internet content, but all the creative platforms on the Internet that invite people to 'create a new user'.

The world of interactive multi-media has been in rapid transformation in the last decade. The dawn of personal computers and the accessibility of Internet has changed the way people interact with media and with each other. The Internet has provided new interactive platforms of communication that were not available before, with traditional forms of media such as television, radio and print-journalism. Marshall McLuhan, a communications theorist, philosopher and media guru, prophesized his visions of the future long before the world wide web existed. In McLuhan's iconic 1962 media analysis, "The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man" he introduced the idea of the 'global village'. The term global village described a phenomena where the world would become more closely interconnected like a village, and where the movement of information would instantaneously transmit from one point of the earth to another. McLuhan predicted

the global village would happen with the rise of electric technology and mass-media. The global village, is now used as a metaphor for the Internet, as the movement of information has become instantaneous, connecting the world and people to an intense degree that was not possible before.

As McLuhan prophesized the current reality of the 'global village', an online identity can be likened to be the global village's citizen or 'netizen'. The birth of a digital identity can start as easily and simply as creating a name, account or handle to register on an Internet web-site, and can be as elaborate as an online existence that spans over many different websites, including a multi-media trail that can include anything from photographs, text, videos, music and even live web-cams. Some digital identities engage in electronic exhibitionism and strive to attract as much attention as possible, and become celebrities by the careful construction of an online personality. The real life identity of a digital identity can be kept completely separate and anonymous, even if the particular digital identity is well known on the Internet (Internet famous).

This selling of the 'real life self' or 'real life stories' online can be seen as the commodification of the individual. Selling what would otherwise be private human existence to the public as a form voyeuristic entertainment has been a popular subject of reality TV, websites and weblogs. Traditional celebrities or 'stars' were made and marketed by businesses and institutions that had a vested financial or collective interest in making a particular individual well known to the public. However in the blogging era, an entire marketing team or appearances on traditional forms of media such as television, radio and newsprint are not needed to make a person on the Internet well known and famous enough to transcend mediums. It is possible that a digital identity is not necessarily being commodified or being made into an object, if they are existing or performing to the Internet community of their own free will. The key difference between a human and objects when being sold as commodities is that a human is able to try to "keep the magic alive and avoid being discarded. This an object cannot do." (Hillis 199)

The digital identity will often seek to fill social and entertainment related needs in the online community. The more active digital identity may create a website or write in an online journal (blog), or they may choose to only share pictures or videos. More passive forms of digital identity, may only comment on things others have created online. In creating a digital identity there is the self-aware need to be seen or heard, or simply to participate and be a part of something bigger, such as an online community. However in the paradoxical nature of the digital identity, sharing their real identity and information is often seen as potentially dangerous. This creates the situation, where the digital identity is simultaneously seeking publicity and privacy. The need for attention, the need to share and be a contributing part of the online community, must obviously at times outweigh the need for privacy. Creating an artificial identity can liberate the Internet user to provide or share select information, without feeling exposed or like their privacy has been invaded. The privacy versus publicity aspect of digital identities can often lead to a very interesting paradox, where the digital identity may want to be public or even seek fame yet has a strong desire to guard their privacy and real life identity at the same time.

As Heidegger noted "The essence of modern technology is by no means anything technological...it is technology itself that makes the demand on us to think in another way." (8) It can be argued that the sociological accomplishments of the Internet are just as important as the technological ones. In the online world of the digital identity, form will follow function when designing new software to better fit the needs of online users. The popularity of a website is in direct correlation to how well it can meet the needs or provide gratification for an Internet user. Fanning the flames of technological progress is only a side effect, when we strive to have a better understanding of how people use the Internet. The digital identity can only benefit from acknowledging the power of their own part in modern human existence. Though there is no shortage of literature on subjects related to internet sociology or web-existence, much like the Internet itself, the subject still feels very much new and fresh, vast and limitless, as the true potential or power has not yet been discovered and completely understood.

The online personality is not only a paradox when it comes to the quest for privacy and publicity by the Internet user. The existence of split or multiple personalities of a computer user to create firstly themselves in real life, and their avatar or doppelganger online is quite a existential paradox. We are who we say we are online, any identity can be assumed, used or discarded. It can be suggested that online personalities will be

greatly influenced by the online communities, which they associated themselves with. Like a chameleon that changes colours to suit their background or settings - so the online personality can change to adapt and fit in to an online community, or in some cases to create a community of their own.

A digital identity is a manifestation of a real life identity, that exists on the world wide web, but it need not be a single identity. An individual can have numerous different digital identities to serve different purposes and needs. For example, on some websites a person may choose to use their real information, a second website might be slightly modified to thinly veil their identity, and a third digital identity could be a complete work of fiction.

> What was once integral - our self, our person, our identity - is now split among our self in the physical world and our many digiSelves, each having an autonomous life of its own. Thus, we disconnect from the normal experience of physical and corporeal time and space when we live vicariously through our digiSelf on the Internet. This disconnection is significant and profound, as our consciousness becomes disconnected from our sensorium, extends in a real sense into the world's electronic nervous system and thereby creates the unique experience of separating our identity, or self, from our body. (Federman)

2. Informational Self Determination

The information age gave people new ways to fulfill their basic human needs, to be connected to others, self-expression and to belong to a greater community. Interactive technology provided new dimensions of existence, shaping the new globalized world into a smaller accessible global village. Web 2.0, the creation of web platforms that enabled Internet users to carve out their own little pieces of the Internet and create their own terms of existence has set the stage for the creation of the digital identity. The important aspect of the digital identity that Web 2.0 platforms like Flickr and Facebook understand, is that digital identities want the right to informational self-determination. Though it is arguable how much power the digital identity truly has over their personal information on Web 2.0 platforms and how much is done to give the illusion of having control of their own information. Digital identities like to decide what information is public and what information is private. This is acknowledged by the majority of Web 2.0 platforms, who offer a variety of privacy settings.

Informational self-determination can be defined as, an individual's right to decide what information should be communicated to others and under what circumstances (Westin). This term was originally used to outline a new law structure that would give people the right to protect their own personal information in real life. With the relatively new existence of digital entities, with real life traits and information that may or may not exist in real life as well, it bring the idea of informational self-determination to a different level. Digital identities have more informational self-determination than the individual who created that digital identity has 'offline' in the real world. This freedom of choice, to be selective or manipulative with information regarding the self, benchmarks a new era in human existence.

A good illustrated example of digital identities, and their informational self-determination was published on July 5th 1993 in the New Yorker magazine. A cartoon shows two dogs talking, one of them sitting behind a computer with his paws on the keyboard, the other dog is sitting on the floor. The first dog is telling the second dog: "On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog". The recent update to the joke, and social comment on the current surveillance society we live in is: "…but they know you buy dog food."

3. Rise of the Surveillance society

While concealing one's identity might be easy to do online, it is a feeble defense against the predations of government and corporate power in real life. Though the digital identity might go to great extremes to protect their real identity when they are online, the real world they live in is becoming a surveillance society. With the belief that surveillance is synonymous with security, the world could enter an Orwellian dystopian existence overnight without any large public outcry or morn for any loss of former civil liberties. The appetite

Transforming culture in the digital age

for information and willingness to be monitored seems to characterize the modern world as an information society. Reality television is a popular form of voyeuristic entertainment, surveillance cameras do not bother citizens and many computers come with web-cams as standard features which begs the question: is the need for privacy history?

The rise of the surveillance society, would seem like a science fiction depiction of the future, however the surveillance society has officially arrived. The biggest Western surveillance society to date is the United Kingdom, with 4.2 million surveillance cameras (CCTV) installed and functioning in 2006, which equals to one camera per fourteen people. (BBC News) There are of course, polar opposite views on whether the surveillance society is progressive or regressive. Many civil rights activists fear that the power and authority can be misused, and can take away civil liberties formally enjoyed by democratic citizens.

However not all interpretations of the surveillance society are negative, some theorists have optimistic views on the surveillance society. David Brin, the author of "The Transparent Society", believes the rise of the surveillance society is imminent and unavoidable, however the repercussions need not be negative if the transparency is reciprocal. The opposite of a transparent or open society, is a secretive society – which protects not only citizens but the larger powers, such as world governments, businesses and the criminal underworld. Brin believes in "a future where privacy and anonymity have been rendered obsolete by technological change." (Stentz)

Marshall McLuhan believed that as man becomes more interconnected there will be a shift from the individualistic literate man back to the collective tribal man. "Privacy, like individualism, is unknown in tribal societies, a fact that Westerners need to keep in mind when estimating the attractions of our way of life to nonliterate people." (McLuhan 130) Tribal man, according to McLuhan has no need for privacy, as the need for community and the global village would come before the need for individuality and fragmented self that characterized the literate man. Though tribal man may exists in the information age, where the need for privacy would be subversive to the values of the surveillance society – digital identities are collectively identified by their need for privacy and information self determination, which would classify them as literate man, despite their tribal urges and need for community.

The private and public paradox of the digital identity is something that complicates and contradicts basic user gratification theories and traditional understandings of how audience and media interact. If media is an extension of man, then digital identities are an extension of human psyche and other realms of existence, not merely digital copies of our real life selves. The digital identity's paradox of wanting privacy and publicity at the same time, is a microcosm of the larger trends in society and culture today. With the rise of surveillance or transparent society, the very definition of privacy is changing for citizens of the free world.

The digital identity unlike the Internet user, can easily enjoy a state of assumed identity or anonymity, in many ways the Internet user has more freedom on the Internet than they do in real life. Perhaps that is what has made the Internet such a powerful creative platform, where people from all over the world, can come together to create new communities and new identities, it is a brave new world. This is a grassroots movement with major cultural and social repercussions, that have no yet been understood. Perhaps a motivational force for an individual to create a public yet private entity and exist on another level as a digital identity, is driven by the need to leave a mark behind. "The only thing we know about the future is that we die. The brief, messianic experience of the cybernetic supernatural is an attempt to control that future by creating a bubble of eternity in the fluid materiality of time." (Cubitt 18)

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Personal memory: virtual self

Mystory in Myspace
Rhetoric of Memory in New Media

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„We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment. I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein." (Foucault 229)

1. Introduction

New media refers to new textual experiences, new ways of representing the world, new conceptions of the biological body's relation of technological media, new relationships between subject and technology, new spaces, interfaces and modes of discourse and new experiences of the relationship between identity and community (Lister et al). It is of digital nature entailing the dematerialization of media texts, the compressing of data into very small spaces, the accessibility at high speeds and in a non-linear way, and possible manipulation of the forms. Digital media cannot be narrowed down to technical features, it may also serve as an inherent logic to understand and articulate ourselves and the world, a syntax of thinking and organizing, an alternative to the traditional time-space dimensions and an alternative of human life[1]. Digital media offers a new way: of remembering and forgetting: a memory with its own systematic characteristics, with its own coherence.

It is not memory being digitalized, it is remembering digitally. The difference is organic and calls for the bravery of philosophers to answer the questions raised by the recognition.

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1   „In the world of digital media the „human will be irresistibly melded to the morphology of its technological supplement. The resulting biomorph will inhabit a world beyond the surface of the screen living behind or perhaps even within that boundary. The cybernaut won't just step into the picture; he/she/it will become the picture itself." as Batchen emphasizes, regarding virtual reality (237).

To be general on digital memory would be too unconquerable a challenge one would dare to answer so this paper aims at outlining a – partly metaphorical framework – to think and elaborate upon new media and digital memory in a theoretical, philosophical, rhetorico-critical way. At the very heart of this approach lie two notions both open to postmodernist definitions: *myspace* and *mystory*. In their intersection we find the digital individual in his/her effort to be and to be remembered. In their explanation we meet cyberwriting and heterotopia. In their configuration we seek to understand how cultural, social, individual memory works in the digital age.

This paper is experimenting the introduction and implementation of mystory and myspace into the lexicon of new media in a way that it could cast a light on how new media forces and leaves us to remember or makes us forget to forget. Rhetorical criticism as a method helps ideas of this paper grow out of a collection of seemingly unrelated views. While the paper as an effort tries to define what mystory and myspace mean it also exemplifies them at the same time.

2. Myspace

Myspace is not addressed here primarily as a specific site but as a metaphor unfolding a collective stream of consciousness, a cultural scrapbook, an exhibition of faces and fronts, a postmodern compilation of individuals into one mediatised exhibition. Myspace is the address, the name of a social networking site but here we use it to refer to the phenomenon to exhibit ourselves to others, to being identified and recalled by life-bits. Myspace is a placeless place, a mirroristic image of the self, a perspective from one can discover his/her absence from the place where she/he is since one sees oneself over there. Myspace in this sense is real and unreal at the same time: it is a mirror making the place occupied at the moment of looking at oneself absolutely real and absolutely unreal since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there. Myspace is a heterotopia, as for Foucault ("Of Other Spaces") heterotopias – counterparts of utopias and alternatives of real places – are places absolutely different from all sites that they reflect and speak about. Foucault says that we live in a mythic and real contestation of the space where heterotopias could be described by heterotopology. Their role is either to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space or create a space that is other, another real space: there are heterotopias of illusion and of compensation. A heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several places, sites that are in themselves incompatible. It is a rectangular stage or two dimensional screens on which the projection of a three dimensional space can be seen. The heterotopia presupposes a system of opening and closing, their condition is to be isolated and penetrable at the same time. It is not freely accessible like a public place as one must have certain permission and make certain gestures to get in. Heterotopias begin to function at full capacity "when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time" (Foucault 234). In network society heterotopias are being created in which time becomes timeless, heterochronic. "Furthermore the most fundamental aim is to eliminate sequencing of time including past, present and future in the same hypertext, thus eliminating the succession of things that (…) characterizes time" Castells writes (159).

To exemplify the otherness of heterotopias Foucault mentions the cemetery that once constituted an immortal heart of the city, but now is an alternative to it, another city. Museums and libraries indefinitely accumulating time are also heterotopias, they are general archives representing the will to enclose all times in one place, "all epochs, all forms, all tastes" in a constituted immobile place. Nevertheless there are heterotopias that are linked to time in its flowing, running, transitory dimension; festivals are heterotopic being oriented to the temporal. Following the 'Foucaultian principles' we may consider myspace and other social networking and other micro-blogging sites and services to be heterotopias: prefect other places, mirrors of the real and representations of the virtual. They are colonies and cemeteries, museums and festivals in one. Myspace stands for a complex of all types of heterotopias with a sytstem of opening and closing (invitation and registration) accumulating time but oriented to the temporal, enclosing and disclosing forms and tastes and functioning at the breaking point of men with time. Myspace is not about gathering the community it is about creating the heterochronic dimension of living and meeting. A memory without the sense of time and succession, a memory as living or living as a memory.

3. Mystory

Gregory Ulmer in his Teletheory (Ulmer) proposes mystory[2] as an inventional method that assumes that one's thinking starts not from the general but from the specific experiences historically situated. Mystory is a genre that represents the way of experiencing and learning by which knowledge can be approached from the side of not knowing what it is and not from the side. Although Ulmer provides it as an academic genre its heuristic[3] nature enables us to apply it to new media writing. Mystory represents a new rhetoric integrating public discourse, private biographies and discourses bound to disciplines. Mystory offers a conceptual framework to see 'texts' as results of social network writing from a different, non-generic aspect; to grasp their unique nature as form of self-enunciation and representation. When detailing the specific narrative mode of mystory Ulmer refers to Lyotard's (Lyotard) view of the postmodern/paganism suggesting that the act of writing is a specific performance associated with experimentation and innovation. Mystory stands for a voice that derives from Freud's self-analysis. It is a voice that eliminates the temporal distance between subject and object in the act of writing. Barthes dwelling upon the intransity of the word 'write' names this voice with the classical term 'middle voice'. Relating this term to writing he draws our attention to a significant characteristic of mystory, too: „today to write is to make oneself the center of the action of the speech; it is to effect writing in being affected oneself; it is to leave the writer inside the writing, not as a psychological subject, but as the agent of action (Barthes 164–165). Mystory works in this middle voice: the agent is inside the process of writing with the distance between object and subject or the addressing to the other is missing. The subject becomes synchronic with writing and articulates her/himself by it. The narrator is existent in and by writing. Ulmer than adds a crucial point to this recognition saying that this middle voice of writing may also be seen "as a symptom of the change in memory that accompanies a change in technology of communication." (110)

3.1 Periautography, data-autography

Mystory in myspace comes to exemplify generically the periautography, a term borrowed by James Olney (xv) from Count Gian Artice di Porcía assigning "writing about or around the self". It is the new media descendant of confessions and autobiographies that substitutes the once dominating narrative mode (pragmatics) with algorithm and the database (syntax). A database present a different model of what a world is like, it is a cultural, symbolic form "a new way to structure our experience of ourselves and of the world" (Manovich 237). In the database the world (persons, events, ideas) appears to us as an endless and unstructured collection of images, texts, and other data records. The web logic is anti-narrative, syntactic rather than pragmatic. Sites are always growing and do not have to be complete ever. Manovich adds "If new elements are being added over time the result is a collection, not a story" (238). The person is not narrated but compiled, memory is oriented toward the non-finished. The person is created as a file, a profile, a blog. As a result of the data-based creation man becomes less of a story and more of an algorithm.

Writing in mystory and creating data-autography indexes a new psychological complex of new media, associative and fragmented at the same time. Here the heuristic syntactic forms a new grammar, and myspace provides the heterotopic context.

4. Memory

Memory can be defined as a way of storing (and curation), a system of remembering and a mode of search. Memory in general is "fashioned from the symbolic resources of community and subject to its particular history hierarchies, and aspirations". It is also a texture, a discursive structure and shape (Browne 248). Memory has an emerging interdisciplinary tradition within which cultural, collective, communicative, public and social, popular and individual, even critical (art of recovery and re-collecting, Cox 5) memory can be

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2   On the basis of Derrida's grammatology.

3   Heuretic is a program of experimentation, the logic of invention. "Working heuretically means using the method that is being invented while inventing it." (Ulmer 16).

specified. Cultural memory is distinguished from public memory on the ground of being either the result of vernacular or institutionalized practices. Within the collective terrain memory is communicative if it is built up by discursive practices and shared by those who remember and cultural if it becomes a myth of collectively shared events (Assmann 49–56). Cultural memory reflects a particular ethos while public stands for the amalgam of the current hegemonic bloc's cultural memory (Morris 26). We may distinguish individual memory being subjective from public that is a term for a shared sense of intersubjective (and interactive) memory. According to Van House and Churchill (2008) both personal and collective memory rely on the records of the past and on our technologies and practices of remembering. There is a 'memory industry' (Till qtd by Van House and Churchill 295) constituted of data, information storage and surveillance systems. Cultural and individual memory are constantly produced through, and mediated by, the technologies of memory. What is remembered individually and collectively depends in part on technologies of memory and the associated socio-technical practices, which are changing radically; our memories are becoming digital (296). Sturken (Sturken) claims that there is a detectable shift, from interest in objects of memory to memory practices (which, according to Greenfield, 2009, marks an essential change in thinking, too), while personal and cultural, individual and public are mixed[4]. As Van House and Churchill highlight: "As consumers and information users, we may be seduced by the promise that we can accumulate and store everything with minimal cognitive effort and within the confines of a limited (physical) space – while we are in love with information, we don't want it to take up much space cognitively or physically" (296). Practising memory has become more important than remembering, technical advances have provided the ever growing capacity of capturing and creating content. Lives are captured in bits in digital texts. Everyday memory is supported by technologies; we rather keep them than keep anything in mind. The temporality of images are also changing from archival to ephemeral, many are treated to be transitory. Digital memories are made up of data and are thus vulnerably open to usage, modification and penetration by others. Laura Gurak (Gurak), describing digital rhetoric enlists characteristics of new media discourse in general, among them the reluctance of invent and organize. Manovich (Manovich) conducts this reluctance from the nature of the database which as a cultural form, represents the world as a list of items and refuses to order this list. Without organization either in the syntactical or rhetorical level, digital data is not preserved by the individual any more as it takes too much work, so when once left around it may not be recollected or read again. The floating nature of digital memory is not paralleled by an increasing activity of forgetting. Even though forgetting is the main function of memory[5] if digital memories get out of one's control they become hard to forget.

4.1 Telematic memory or the 'memory of never'

According to systems theory memory is more of a control mechanism than a container sorting out relevant from irrelevant. Forgetting is its main function as selecting helps keeping the coherence and orienting the future. (Luhmann, "Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft", "Bevezetés a rendszerelméletbe", Esposito, see Boyden). Elena Esposito differentiates between four types of social memory, the context-dependent prophetic, the word-dependent rhetoric, the catalogue-based modern and the net-modelled telematic memory. The premodern prophetic memory is related to non-alphabetical writing, thus it is non-subjective and timeless. This memory is context-dependent, words do not convey information but serve as mnemonic devices. Rhetorical memory represents the shift from the core periphery distinction to the part and whole differentiation. This type of memory is a container where traces of paste experience are stored. It has a discourse that is autonomously meaningful, apart from the external reality. In modern society where subsystems perform special functions individuals are confronted directly with their singularity and the freedom of choice. Conservation of information is as important as the accessibility of information. Culture becomes an archive

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4   "Archives sit at the boundary between public and private. Current archives extend well beyond a person, a space, an institution, a nation state. They are socio-technical systems, neither entirely social nor technical." (Van House and Churchill 306).

5   In Sturken's words "Memory and forgetting are co-constitutive processes; each is essential to the other's existence." (2).

to which memory functions as a catalogue to disclose its documents. A catalogue is not meaningful, it does not carry information, it rather provides the possibility of linking and disclosing. Modern memory is the catalogue of modern culture as an archive – Esposito claims (Boyden, 2003). Finally with the proliferation of the new media the net model is offering its context to the new memory. The net operates on the basis of associations and telematic memory related to it is a mobile form that constantly re- and de-establishes links. Relying on non-linear organization of time dimension it becomes similar to the prophetic memory. Concerning memory; its time reference and informative capacity we may – with a certain simplification and/or re-metaphorisation – say that prophetic memory can also be referred to as the memory of forever, the rhetoric type called as the memory of ever, the modern model considered as the memory of whenever, while telematic memory as the memory of never (or if we take the space reference we shall list the memory of everywhere, of somewhere, of anywhere and of nowhere). Telematic memory is not conserving but producing information it is about what to come and not about what has passed. Things, events persons are represented in their possibility, in their mirror, in the heterotopias of mediated life.

Even though Esposito's social memory classification is debated on the basis of its relative forgetfulness to the similarities between old and new media and its rejection to postmodern memory as the storage of the past we are challenged to apply her schema to myspace and its memory. Telematic, postmodern prophetic memory, or the memory of never does not mean the end of memory but offers a notional frame to grasp individual memory on the collective level in the public, mediatized sphere. In myspace, in data-autographic profiles and mystory-blogs information is not just stored but produced, words and images are mnemonic devices (and stimuli) rather than traces of past (or present).

5. Conclusion

New media refers to new textual and social experiences, a new mode of discourse and a unique form of oblivion. Without being criticised for technological determinism we can conclude that new media necessarily introduces a grammar upon which a writing becomes the self (mystory), a new function of creation and storage (algorithms and databases), an alternative to the narrative (periautography, data-autography) and spaces where all other real places may intersect in 'another time', heterochrony.

Mystory and myspace introduced in this paper are characteristics of a discursive practice that is alternative to the 'traditional' one, a way of writing manifesting a new rhetoric, and, as a conclusion a memory that is based on association rather that preservation and retrieval. Scholars claim that new media (digital mass media in general) with the streaming of digital information and 'novelties' repress memory and eliminates the place for the culture of remembering. Mystory in myspace, however builds a cultural dimension in which memory does not serve any more as the revising of the coherence of the system, where writing is a discovery and by this discovery we get out of the system, into a heterotopia. Mystory invented by Ulmer and myspace (a meeting point in 'the mirror') are there for us to practice and inhabit the world with; to live the association, the experiment itself.

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Life Publishing on the internet – a playful field of life-telling

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1. Introduction

Life publishing is a new concept that refers to different ways of telling about one's everyday life on the Internet. In my dissertation (under progress) I am studying it as a field of autobiographical practices. In the spring 2010, I am in the middle of the material collecting process. My completed triangulation will include theme narratives, interviews and web contents from 45 Finnish informants who have signed up for my research on a web survey. In this paper, the material consists of 15 informants who already have written their narratives. Ten of them have sent me their texts during the piloting period in 2008–2009. The rest five narratives are new, produced in the winter 2009–2010.

Ten of the 15 informants have given me their permission to follow their publications. Since some of them publish their life on many different forums, the total of the web contents for this paper is 22 publications. They include blogs and micro-blogs, communal sites (f. ex. Facebook) and homepages.

Three of the informants are men, the rest four fifths are women. This does not necessarily refer to life publishing being 'feminine' by nature, although it seems possible that women are more likely to recognize themselves as life publishers. The ages vary between 21 and 61 so that the 21–34-year-old women are a clear majority.

In former studies, I have articulated three basic dimensions or elements: life publishing is *reflective*, *performative* and *playful.* These aspects are strongly related and they form the founding of life publishing as an everyday activity. Reflectivity stands for 'I', the intimate personal life; performance is for 'you', the audience; playfulness represents 'us', the sociality of life publishing. In this paper, I concentrate on one important element that actually carries along the rest two. I will ask: *How is life publishing playful according to a) theme narratives and b) publications of 15 informants?* First, I will open up the concept of life publishing. Then I move on to analyzing the theme narratives and then publications. Finally I will shortly sum up my findings.

Before that, it is important to define what I mean by 'playful' in detail. Johan Huizinga – probably the best known researcher of play – has articulated certain points that define 'play': play is free but it still has rules, sometimes even very restricted ones. Play is seemingly meaningless and is bound by time and space. It is organized and has excitement. (Huizinga 16–21) On the other hand, for example Riitta Hänninen, a Finnish cultural anthropologist, who has studied play as a concept and phenomenon, emphasizes Hans-Georg Gadamer's definition of play (spiel): the *experience* of a certain activity being play is what makes it play. Hänninen points out that this way – by sending the meta-message: "This is play!" – anything can be turned into play. (Hänninen 49–50) Roger Caillois' idea about "as if" as a meta-rule for play supports Hänninen's thought (Caillois 8).

Following these guidelines and searching for certain lightness and for example ironic touch, I define playfulness in my study as an experience of playing. Whose experience, then? Since the publishers do not often explicate their playfulness in so many words, the experience is mostly constructed in analysis. There-

fore, the experience of playfulness in this study is the researcher's interpreted experience of the informants' original one.

2. Life Publishing as a Concept

Life publishing is a hybrid newcomer among autobiographical practices. I developed the concept while studying life blogs of Finnish women. Life publishing includes the ways of telling – writing – our lives publicly through media, in this case the Internet. It draws from other known autobiographical forms, but brings new aspects to the field: the level of publicity is freely chosen by the writer; so is the *social intimacy*, by which I mean the tendency to describe the everyday life in a seemingly open-hearted and intimate manner. Communal sites, photo galleries, video streams and discussion forums should also be included in life publishing, but still probably the best known form of it are written blogs and their predecessors, personal home pages. Media researcher Susanna Paasonen has, while studying home pages, found certain elements similar to my findings: playfulness, family intimacy, everyday life and celebrating. Paasonen sees personal homepages, opposite to professional ones, as identity work and "kind of peeks into private spaces and events". (Paasonen, "Figures of Fantasy" 94–126; Paasonen "Tervetuloa henkilökohtaiselle kotisivulleni ", passim) A few year later, blogs have raised wide interest among scholars. Along with media researchers such as Geert Lovink (Lovink) and José van Dijck (Dijck), for example informatics researcher Susan Herring (Herring et. al) has studied blogs, to mention but a few. Lovink is especially critical towards blogging and other practices among "John and Jane Doe's" web publishing; he sees it as a beginning iIternet apocalypse that eventually leads into complete decadence of the Internet contents and cultures. (Lovink)

In the light of my research material, Lovink's view is hard to relate with. The publishers reflect their activity in their texts, explaining to themselves as well as their audiences why and how they tend to describe their intimate everyday life on the web. They justify their actions and control (and re-control) their contents consciously:

> I have cut down telling about especially personal things in my blog, for that while writing by my real name I want to keep some things my own. Now, however, I feel that writing will help and sooth, though the sharing my personal sorrow publicly does have its downsides. But I just feel so bad, so I share it here to get my sorrow structured at least a bit. (Woman, 27 years, Sep 25, 2009. Translated by S. Ö.)

Why is it so important in the first place to recognize life publishing as its own field of practices and how should it be situated into life-narrating traditions? Since written blogs are the best known practice, the diary-like nature has been questioned very little. This may be caused by the fact that women have for years been the majority in written life publishing at least in Finland. Diary writing in the form of *journal intime* (about the term and dividing journal into *intime* and *externe* see Gusdorf (39–42) has a traditional nature as a feminine practice of self-expression (f. ex. Leskelä-Kärki 77; Makkonen 236). However, male life publishers exist and the percentages of men and women seem to be evening out.

The common understanding of 'diary' in 1900s and 2000s is that diary is something highly intimate that is usually kept in secret. In this life publications differ from traditional diaries: life publishing – as the term suggests – is fundamentally public. The publisher has freely chosen the Internet as an open forum for performing her or his life. The level of publicity can be chosen and re-chosen as many times as the publisher him- or herself wants to; in traditional publications the choice has always been someone else's to make. Also, the level of publicity is constantly under re-defining and discussion. Life publishing also has similarities to other autobiographical practices such as actual autobiography or memorizing speech (autobiographical practices have been studied in great amount: see f. ex. Fingerroos and Haanpää 2006, Kosonen; Saresma; Ukkonen, "Menneisyyden tulkinta kertomalla", "Muistitieto tutkimuksen kohteena ja aineistona"). However, it cannot be brought back to any of them in whole. Life publishing is almost or even completely real-timed and may combine past, presence and future as a seamless entity in one single post. It is fragmentary, but the fragments can be collected like puzzle pieces: they constitute a whole.

These new practices are aided, yet not caused, by the technological change during which computers, Internet and mobile devices have become more and more common. The change is also cultural; people are starting to consider Internet life publishing and content sharing as natural activities that do not constantly need to be questioned and defended. (About the cultural change among Internet practices, see Saarikoski (Saarikoski et. al)

The life publishers themselves have compared their activity to diaries as well as letters or real-timed autobiographies. Already in earlier theme writings and especially in written blogs I have also come across the comparison to memory speech. (See Östman, "Avaudutaan arjesta" 25–40; Östman "Elämäjulkaiseminen") Comparisons and similarities show that life publishing draws strongly from the tradition of autobiographical practices. Every publication is, however, intertextual in a way that for example a diary, letters and an invited autobiography from one person might be when examined together. The consciously chosen publicity proves that the activity is meant for audiences at least as much as for the publisher him- or herself. These qualities give reason to suggest that life publishing is a new subfield among autobiographical practices: a playful performance, yet intimately reflective.

3. Playful Reflectivity: Theme Narratives of the Publishers

Fifteen informants had sent me their theme narratives by February 2010. The term *theme narrative* is based on the concept of theme writing. Theme writing means that the researcher gives informants certain theme or themes of which they write. The form is very free and the questions or rather just topics may be followed quite loosely. My method, however, widens the concept: a theme narrative can be a traditional written text, but also a video, comic or anything the informant feels as a natural way of expressing her/himself. The only limit is that the researcher must be able to analyze the 'text'. The fifteen narratives in this paper, however, are traditional texts – all but one. One informant sent me a PowerPoint -show with lots of photographs and almost poetical text fragments.

The first part of my question is: *How is life publishing playful according to theme narratives?* I have analyzed fifteen narratives and the results are somewhat surprising. My hypothesis was that play in different forms would be in quite an important role in life publishers' narratives. Instead the word 'play' only appeared in one narrative and had almost a negative tone in it. In it, a young woman describes her views to Facebook. She says:

> It is mostly a playground for grown-ups, in which you can send stupid ['foolish' might also stand for the informant's original meaning] messages and Tetris. It is not of any benefit, actually. (Woman, 28 years. Translated by S. Ö.)

Five of the informants did not give permission to observe their publications – two of them because they did not have any. Two of the rest three did not recognize themselves as life publishers though they had for example a blog or a Facebook profile. Especially these informants were highly critical towards the whole life publishing activity: it was referred to as revealing, open, non-thinking – 'low culture'. As the opposite, these informants considered for example work-related blogging, having a profile on LinkedIn or strictly limited journal blogging as 'high culture': smart, thinking, controlled – in a way more allowable than life publishing. This standpoint was in some amount taken also by those who did recognize themselves as life publishers:

> I give a 'smart' picture of myself [in my publications]: I try to be a thinking person who has good, intellectual hobbies. I do not tell about my alcohol usage, eating, housekeeping, work stuff or my contemporary unemployment. (Woman, 56 years. Translated by S. Ö.)

Playfulness is implicitly present in three narratives (a young man and two young women [21–35 years]). These informants do not mention play or playfulness, but they write about life publishing in a light manner. 'Light' here should not be mistaken as superficiality. It should rather be seen as 'serious lightness' – the manner of speech is airy, yet thinking.

> As a life publisher I raise myself up into the spotlight, I beg (and get) attention, I get to fulfil my

passion for writing and it gets encouraged, too[.] I enjoy writing there. . . . I just truly love my blog. (Woman, 27 years. Translated by S. Ö.)

In this quote, the informant reflects herself as a web publisher. She recognizes herself as a performance creator and describes her emotional relation to her blog. Even as thinking and reflective, the tone of this 27-year-old informant is lighter than in the earlier quote. The 56-year-old woman seems to write about giving a 'smart' self image without irony: she emphasises that she does not tell about her personal life as such but instead reflects her views to life in a more intellectual way:

I tell about nature happenings, for example things that happen on the bird feeding place, the frog wedding on the spring, the animal prints that have appeared on the yard during the night, often with photos. . . . My own actions I describe only suggestively. (Woman, 56 years. Translated by S. Ö.)

One of three male informants has implicit playfulness in his theme narrative. He writes about "documenting amusing stories" and "writing down the most humorous inside jokes we made up with the guys". His overall tone is also lighter than the tone of the other two men – or the majority of the women for that matter. All in all, physical sex is not a major factor in the informants' attitudes towards life publishing.

The man who documents amusing stories and jokes does not blog much about his personal life, opposite to the other two male informants: they describe their life publishing as journal-keeping and self therapy. One young man (21–35 years) says that his blog writings are his "most genuine, most owned thoughts". The two latter male informants seem – according to their theme writings – to take their blogging quite seriously. By this I mean that the tone of their writings is all but playful: another one emphasises the blogger's responsibility in 'blogging well' and the other one puts much weight on his privacy. This certain seriousness is also visible in female informants' writings. It has to be remembered that this may be caused by the nature of the assignment: in the theme narratives, the informants have reflected their own actions with more depth than they might do in an everyday situation like a coffee table discussion. Even if a casual reader might see the publications as superficial and unnecessarily open outpourings without any real meaning, the seriousness suggests, however, that life publishing is significant to the actors and is given much thought to.

4. Playful Performance: Life Publications

The second part of the question is: *How is life publishing playful according to the publications?* I have studied 15 informants' web contents and searched for elements that would suggest playful approach to the intimate web publishing.

'Having fun' (see the definition of play and playfulness in chapter 1) in life publications does not necessarily mean that the contents would always be joyful or – as often assumed – superficial. It means rather that the writer ('writer' in the meaning of hybrid media text) enjoys spending her/his time in life publishing. The playfulness might not be explicated in publications at all, but it can be read 'between the lines'. However, it becomes visible in layouts, ironic manner of speech or for example experimenting with different styles of expressing. What does this mean among these 15 informants, then?

At first, it must be emphasised that of 22 publications, 19 are blogs. The focuses, the main themes of them, vary a lot, but certain elements seem to be shared. The blogs are reflective and have an intimate touch with sensitivity, sometimes even sentimentality. Emotions and private thoughts are discussed – not often in detail or with great passion, but always with obvious significance.

Yes, and at the same time me, I might like to spend a couple of hours on a café terrace, sipping on a latte. Although, reallyreallyreally with pleasure at least having only [the baby girl] with me and she would sleep this time OR not even [the baby girl] and I could just come and go, hands in my pockets. Now wait… there's a good spot for that in my calendar – right on July 6th… (Woman, 31 years. June 13, 2009. Translated by S. Ö.)

The playfulness in these blogs may mainly mean two different things: playfulness in the manner of speech and the overall tone of the blog or playful contents such as this crochet blogger's who makes amigurumis (Japanese crocheting style, see Figure 1):

Figure 1: Amigurumis are cute toy-like crocheted figures. Making them is not necessarily play, but the figures themselves as well as the middle-aged woman's blog about amigurumi-crocheting are playful.
(Photos http://www.elluntalli.vuodatus.net *20.12. and 23.12.2009.)*

This blogger shares her hobby through her publication. She rarely tells anything else but crocheting-related things about her life in this blog, but the hobby is a settled part of her everyday life and therefore should be seen as life publishing. This woman also has two more blogs, both semi-professionals. Playfulness in them is more on the level of tone and even as such it is quite rare. All in all, her playfulness is mostly *self-oriented play*, though she also performs to her audience: this is me as a crocheting artist, what do you think of me? Other 'content-playful' blogs have artistically creative focus as well: photos, poems, stories… In Finland, there circulate certain thematic 'games' among bloggers such as Poem Thursday and Story Monday. The idea is that in the administrative blog a theme is given and the participants take a photo or write a story or a poem and post it. One of my informants takes part to most of these and has a blog through which she posts all the artistic material. She also has a diary blog, in which the tone is quite the same as in her art: philosophical and pondering, sensitive and delicate. Therefore, her manner of speech is not visibly playful. The playful nature of her life publishing comes true in participating creative activities; it could be described as *performing play* – this is me in these photos, this is me in these poems – but, since the point of 'theme weekdays' is that many people do the same thing from their own points of view, I would also call it social play.

Rest of the blogs do not have explicated playfulness either or have it only occasionally. In them, the play is similar to the crocheter's blog: it is self-oriented and intimate and becomes visible in the overall tone, between the lines more than in written words. I will not quote here, since the playful tone often disappears when the text is translated. What are left are mere words that remain dry and uninteresting.

I have given examples of self-oriented, intimate playfulness and performing playfulness. In addition, I mentioned *social play*. It can be seen on blogs and homepages, where the intimate tone is emphasised. In them, social play happens in memes and challenges. They are circulating question lists or tasks like "photograph and post the content of your refridgerator".

> Think pink -challenge [in another blog] was so lovely that I felt the need to take part. So, a post in which I model clothes shall finally end up onto this blog. Draw a line on the wall, this has finally been seen! (Woman, 27 years, Jan 11 2009. Translated by S. Ö.)

Memes are play, and they often encourage the publisher 'loosen up' a bit. The above-quoted blogger often seems to reflect her life in a deep and thinking manner. In participating Think pink -challenge, she performs herself in pink slippers and pajama pants; she writes more lightly, letting her imaginative hair down. Although the great majority of the studied contents were blogs, the material also had one Facebook profile, one Twitter micro-blog and a profile that was created for a Finnish social media -related professional site. These three are all from the same informant, a 39-year-old woman, and they explicate social play more clearly than the blog material.

This woman has two Facebook sites. She has a personal profile to which I do not have access. Therefore I have studied her fan page, on which she has 255 followers. The person is a known social media 'face' who acts on many related fronts. A fan page in this case does not mean that the followers would idolize the keeper; it just is the easiest way of collecting all her Facebook contacts together. In her profile picture this woman has a pink Stetson on and the overall image is quite feminine. However, the difference between the Facebook fan site and other profiles is that on Facebook, the informant is dressed formally despite the pink Stetson and her pose is discreet. On the other sites, she plays with a red lollipop, wearing a corset and lots of plastic jewellery. This creates an interesting contrast to the informant's public image as a social media and education professional.

Playfulness in these publications is more easily visible than in theme narratives. Still it is often delicate and reflecting more than lively and comical. The experience of play does not rise from jokes and wild fun; it is implicated in the publication's exterior and overall tone and in the publisher's manner of expressing things.

5. Summary: Playfulness in Life Publishing

In this paper, I have studied Internet life publishing among 15 Finnish informants. I have asked: *How is life publishing playful according to a) theme narratives and b) publications?* What kind of conclusions can be made on the basis of the former chapters?

'Play' and 'playfulness' in this study are understood as *experience of play*. Since the original experience is not always explicated in media texts, the playful experience is often an interpreted one. In the theme narratives of my informants, playfulness is only rarely brought up as a meaningful element in life publishing. However, the details of narratives suggest that the definition of play fulfils: life publishing is voluntary and gives the actor pleasure. It also has rules (netiquette), which is one detail in Huizinga's definition of play, even though it is not as bound in time and space as Huizinga suggested (Huizinga1984, 16–21).

In publications, the playfulness is more visible than in theme writings. It is rarely explicated in so many words but is rather to be seen in the lay-out and other visual choices along with the overall manner of speech and in the ways of expressing things. Taking part in memes and challenges is a big part of playful life publishing. Also experimenting with styles and methods (f. ex. from prose to poetry, from text to video) suggest that life publishing is seen as creative, playful activity. A Finnish drama pedagogue Hannu Heikkinen has written about 'serious playfulness'. According to him, playfulness might be serious when it is seen as a possibility to study things on a power-free area. This does not at first sound like life publishing, but it should be remembered that the Internet has traditionally been seen as an unforced, power-free virtual environment. Heikkinen also reminds of Huizinga saying that play as such is not comical for either the player or the viewer. (Heikkinen) This is how life publishing should also be seen –as serious play with three aspects: self-oriented (intimate), performative and social.

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CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cultural heritage and creative user

Archives and Its Users at a Crossroads of On-line Access

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This conference deals with a fundamental issue how digital age (the new technologies and particularly the Internet) has been changing a mankind's culture. My presentation concerns the topical transformations of archival services. I guess I should start with a kind of short clarification what has been a real content of archives in the past, before the shift to digital communication.

Surely, the archive is one of the memory institutions as everybody knows. Though, there exists a kind of specifics also in the functions of archives. Using maybe a sort of rough wording I'd say that archives have been a bit less focused on cultural efforts comparing with other memory institutions.

From the early medieval times the archives have been interrelated with justice. Actually in most cases the archivists were men of law. From the beginning of 19th century the core functions of archives changed. Now the archive was considered as a sort of scientific institution, as an auxiliary body of historical research. The archivists were mostly high-level professionals in history. The next paradigm shift happened after the WWII, when records management was born. Soon it broke through as a part and parcel of state functioning in western hemisphere.

So, the archives, the National Archives of Estonia included, perform duties which are related to the functions of executive power or local authorities. This means that our high priorities lie in the fields like ensuring the transparency of decision-making procedures and guaranteeing the rights and transactions of individuals. On the other hand, definitely, any kind of archive also takes care of preserving the written cultural heritage.

My first point derives from this general context how archives' roles have altered in society. I'd like to draw your attention to the fact that recently a lot of changes have occurred in setting the archives' priorities and completing the functions. This has happened together with the overall cultural transformation, whereby the influences have been mutual. Today the archive is much more cultural institution serving the general public and not only few professionals as before. The archive belongs to the variety of online environments and participates in creating the new digital as well as cultural phenomena.

Due to this shift we can explore very interesting alteration in the mind-set of archivists and users. In 2005 a radical move for change was brought by enabling the on-line access to the most popular historical documents by the Estonian National Archives. Today all the catalogues and finding aids are available on-line, free of charge for the customers. Besides that, all the core records of genealogical interest and other historical sources are also easily accessible for everybody. Over 90 per cent of our users are on-line users, visiting basically only the Virtual Reading Room and seldom or even never the off-line reference service at the archives itself. There are less off-line research places left at the archives and at the same time the on-line portal is highly crowded. Compared to some years ago the number of our customers has now increased tenfold.

Priit Pirsko

Nobody doubts the changes have been crucial in archives reference service. How to interpret this transformation in a broader context, in a cultural alteration? Let me try to tackle the question in following.

As I mentioned before, the priorities of archival work have changed these days - instead of serving the single members of community, now the archives is available 24/7 for everybody connected to the Internet. That means the archivists must commune with a different consumers now. They have different expectations when visiting the archives and different expertise in the field of archival sources. There are not only people from academic circles. A lot of them are not senior citizens as before.

Frankly saying, in the beginning it was not so easy to adjust ourselves to the new structure of archives' customers. At first maybe the queries like *where I can quickly find my family tree on web?* touched the archivist's professional arrogance. Nevertheless the only way was to change the existing attitude towards the customers and check over the related work flows. And I'm happy to say this task was completed soon.

About 60-70 per cent of archives' users are keen on family history and local history. In a framework of on-line access the fact is that they frequently bump into foreign languages and unknown writing styles trying to search the past. The historical records are mostly not written in users' mother tongue. Even understanding the language and old script doesn't promptly enable to follow the content of document. A sort of knowledge about history is really needed to comprehend correctly. This concerns even the uncomplicated records like church books and revision lists.

So, we can draw a second conclusion that such a change in the structure of archives' users has increased the expectations for learning archives and records to a great degree. The archives have become a much more educational institution to meet the needs of users. There are now a number of different user-focused resources on web: glossaries, explanations of terms and abbreviations, comparative tables of calendar, transcriptions of old scripts and so on. Clearly, this has disseminated the archival basics in a society, broadened the cultural and educational efforts among the citizens. This change has also had a fundamental impact to the process of creating a new socio-cultural online environment. I move on now to explaining this more particularly.

If I should refer only the most relevant keywords of this new environment I'd emphasize next: networking, feedback and communication, users as creators of new digital content.

In past the relationship between the archives and its users was a one-way relation. The archives researches could access only to information which was somehow prepared by archives. It was made accessible by means of traditional finding aids, paper catalogues and some professional archivist knowledge. There were almost no opportunities to influence the quality of access by users. There were absolutely no opportunities to improve the structure of finding aids by users. Nobody could dream about enriching the content of historical sources by using state-of-the-art technology.

Now such the passive relationship between the archives and its users has been replaced by a close interrelationship. The narrow one-way road, full of curves and holes has been replaced by a crossroads of speedways of online access.

For example the Virtual Reading Room of Estonian National Archives is based on the profound study of archives consumers' wishes and suggestions. On the other hand, we have learned also from the solutions of other memory institutions around the world. As a result, it is a kind of combination of traditional archives services (for example: platform of archival enquiries, bookings of items to off-line reading room, catalogues and finding aids) and new forms. The portal of online access was designed in the closest cooperation of archives and consumers, it was tested by the volunteers and almost all the proposals of amendments have come from devoted users. Briefly, professional archivist and amateur historians have become partners in developing the digital content of archives. This fundamental shift has replaced the old sharing of roles and it is surely a kind of cultural change as well. This is my third point.

My next observation derives from the previous one. The change in the roles of users has also tremendously enriched the digital content of archives. As we know there are a lot of opportunities of users' feedback in online environments. I think correction of description errors found and notified by users could be the simplest example. However, due to such kind of feedback we have done more corrections in some years than maybe in a couple of generations in a usual way.

We have also started discussions how to increase the users' contribution in using a kind of wiki-catalogue that runs in parallel with our official descriptions. The purpose is to capture our users' expertise particularly for which there are insufficient description details.

Another example concerns the users' databases. The fact is that any profound research produces additional information which is often valuable for other researchers. Therefore the archives' webpage consists also a type of functionality to create specific databases by users themselves. There are now over 30 databases created last year, for example: the registers of marriages in a specific parish, the indexes of records etc. Such kind of digital content has not been produced by archives, our role is to mediate, create the technical framework for that, sometimes even encourage people to share the digital knowledge with others. It allows both archivists and users to share knowledge and provide guidance for future researchers.

Nobody could underestimate the power of communication and discussion between the users interested in same topic. As for Estonia the most popular forum of family historians is linked to the Archives' Virtual Reading Room. This forum is managed by the Genealogical Society and not by us, but some features have though been developed by the archives IT-staff. So this also is an example of working together in creating the digital reality and/or culture.

I would like to conclude my presentation in emphasizing the steadily increasing need of cooperation between the keepers of cultural heritage. It is really needed that the artefacts of the same type will be accessible by means of the same technical solution. The cultural objects like historical documents and photos and maps have to be searchable from the same online framework. Otherwise we just don't care of public expectations. For the users it doesn't matter in which repository the pieces of cultural heritage have been preserved. I would state that the description standards have been more important for the staff than the users, although the quality of descriptions is surely important. So, my last point in a context of cultural transformation is very simple. People would like to get access to the resources of past as convenient, as fast and as cheap as possible. They would like to contribute in creating the new knowledge and not only consume. They prefer sharing information to keeping a secret. They are happy in networking and communicating rather than being alone in a new digital world.

Audiovisual Collections in a Digital Culture: Reflections on Providers and Users of Digital Audiovisual Heritage in Flanders

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1. Introduction

Many theorists have elaborated on an emerging digital culture, outlined its principal components or conceptualised the changing user roles within this digital cultural realm. Digital culture is in an ongoing state of transition, which instigates interesting questions on the extent to which certain sectors are ready to embrace a far-reaching digital cultural evolution and the hybridisation of traditionally distinct roles this entails. In this paper, we wish to look at the emergence of aspects of digital culture in one specific domain, i.e. the digital audiovisual heritage realm in Flanders (Belgium). Digital audiovisual heritage is by no means an established domain; the role of providers has not yet crystallised, and the low maturity of the field makes large-scale empirical user research far from straightforward. The way in which the often-theorised changing agent roles will evolve in practice within the digital audiovisual heritage field remains an important area of research. The aim of this paper is to look whether preliminary empirical results on the digital audiovisual heritage field in Flanders hint at the emergence of digital culture.

In a first section, the status of audiovisual content in the heritage field and the growing tendency towards digitisation, digital preservation and distribution will briefly be discussed. Next, a more theoretical elaboration will further sketch the larger context of digital culture in which the process of digitisation of audiovisual content takes place. This conceptual exercise will be followed by an examination of the audiovisual heritage field in Flanders. We will draw upon the results of the Flemish research project BOM-VL (Archiving and Distribution of Multimedia in Flanders) and attempt to revisit some of the principal components of digital culture in light of the project's findings. As a result, we hope to be able to confront and critically address the more theoretical notion of digital culture. As such, we hope to offer a solid basis for continuing research throughout the maturation process of the digital audiovisual heritage field, i.e. within two recently started Flemish research projects, each with a specific approach to digital audiovisual heritage.

2. Audiovisual Collections as an Integral Part of a Society's Heritage

The important heritage value of audiovisual collections has been widely recognised. UNESCO's *Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images*, adopted in 1980, exemplifies this (UNESCO 229). The *Recommendation* aims at addressing the threat to large parts of society's audiovisual heritage caused by the vulnerability of analogue collections. More recently, this threat can be seen as one of the causes for the increase in the number of initiatives concerned with the digitisation of audiovisual collections and materials. On the one hand, digitisation is seen as addressing the need for preservation of valuable audiovisual heritage; on the other hand, digitisation can also highly increase the possibilities of access to audiovisual content. Future access does not only require preservation, but it is also often stated that preservation cannot be seen as an end in itself but must always have future access in mind (Edmond-

son 19). Moreover, it is important to realise that digitisation cannot be deemed the sole solution in light of preservation of audiovisual content: "It is only slightly facetious to say that digital information lasts forever -- or five years, whichever comes first" (Rothenberg 42). Digital vulnerability concerns the deterioration of digital media and data carriers, but also the obsolescence of software and hardware (see also Rosenzweig). While digitisation in its narrowest sense – the process of encoding analogue source material into digital files – may offer a temporary solution to the threat of analogue obsolescence, long-term policies must go beyond this narrow digitisation scope and tackle the issue of digital sustainability.

3. Digital Culture: Key Concepts and User Roles

3.1 Participation, Interaction and Changing User Roles in a Digital Culture

The increasing digitisation of audiovisual collections as outlined above is embedded within a larger context, i.e. the emergence of digital culture in more general terms. In the next section, a selected set of concepts will be highlighted in order to portray digital culture. Before doing so, we need to highlight one underlying aspect of this changing cultural landscape: the role of the end user, consumer or visitor within this digital culture on the one hand, the role of the provider or producer of digital materials on the other hand, and finally the interaction between and hybridisation of these formerly more distinct roles. Many authors and scholars have acknowledged the emergence of a more participatory culture (Jenkins, "Convergence Culture"; Benkler; Manovich, "The Language of New Media"). Moreover, the blurring boundaries between user and producer roles have instigated numerous different conceptualisations of a 'new user'. Prosumer (Toffler), produser (Bruns, "Gatewatching, not gatekeeping"; Bruns, "Gatewatching") and Pro-Am (Leadbeater and Miller) are some of the terms used to describe these types of (former) users and the ever-increasingly hybrid roles they can take on. As hybrid concepts – respectively combining produser and consumer, producer and user and professional and amateur – these neologisms all hint at a more active type of user and at the convergence between user and producer roles. The aforementioned concepts are not necessarily introduced within the framework of theories on digital culture specifically. The concept produser e.g. has been introduced by Bruns in the realm of online news; however, it has consequently also been applied to describe developments in other areas of the online world (Bruns, "Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life and Beyond"). The concept of the Pro-Am can be found throughout a range of activities people might engage in, as is illustrated by the numerous examples given by Leadbeater and Miller. For the remainder of this paper, the term produser will be preferred.

The tendency of blurring boundaries between user and producer roles is highly relevant in light of the realm of digital information. It is interesting to assess whether the case of digital audiovisual heritage hints at these new hybrid user roles. Regardless of the context in which the aforementioned neologisms describing these roles have emerged, the concepts are indeed useful within the domain of digital audiovisual heritage as well; they might in fact be paramount in understanding the process of digitally interacting with heritage. On the one hand, it seems straightforward to state that the user as well as the provider of digital audiovisual heritage materials can play an important role in the process of creating meaning through participation in the heritage field and interaction with heritage materials. On the other hand, in light of the presented theories, it is not unthinkable that their roles might merge altogether, creating true produsers of digital heritage collections. Upon discussing some principal components of digital culture, this hybridisation of roles always has to be kept in mind.

3.2 Taking Part in a Digital Participatory Culture: A Selection of Concepts

In the following paragraphs we will present a select literature overview in order to attribute to further understandings of digital culture, its constituent notions and characterisations. We will specifically discuss the notions of bricolage and remediation, as examples of manifest expressions of an environment in which traditional user and provider roles are evolving and (online) (digital) audiovisual heritage fields are ever more employing a bottom-up approach (Deuze, "Participation, Remediation, Bricolage"; Deuze, "Convergence Culture in the Creative Industries"; Hand; Jenkins, "The Cultural Logic of Media Convergence"; Manovich,

"Remixability"). Moreover, this environment is generally characterised as highly participatory and interactive. We therefore perceive participation and interaction as meta-components and as backgrounds against which users and providers handle audiovisual heritage in a digital culture.

Definitions of interactivity not only appear to be rather dispersed throughout different research domains, they also tend to be discordant. It is indeed referred to as a multi-discursive concept in that it "can be found with significantly different meanings or connotations according to their use within different discourses" (O'Sullivan et al., qtd. in Jensen 188). Moreover, Jensen distinguishes interaction from interactivity, in that interaction refers to actions of two or more individuals observed to be mutually interdependent, but not to mediated communication, and interactivity refers to media use and mediated communication (Jensen 200). Conversely, Kiousis does not explicitly distinguish both notions. Both mentioned authors show, however, that interaction and interactivity alike are often studied and described as possible categorisations of technology, as Jensen's own deducted interpretation demonstrates as well, as "a measure of a media's (sic) potential ability to let the user exert an influence on the content and/or form of the mediated communication" (201). And although Kiousis' definition of interaction is expressed in sociological terms, with an emphasis on communication between two or more people, he describes interactivity as a degree to which communication technology can create a mediated environment in which participants can communicate (one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many), both synchronously and asynchronously, participate in reciprocal message exchange, and perceive the experience as a simulation of interpersonal experience (Kiousis 372). Conversely, we are inclined to opt for a broad understanding of interaction. Whereas both authors focus on interaction via or with a *medium* as a *mean* of communication, we want to consider interaction via or with *content* not only as a communicative act but also as a *goal* in itself.

Participation is an equally characterising feature of contemporary digital practices, and like interaction it characterizes an environment that enables a certain engagement with materials at hand. Based on a literature review, Deuze primarily discusses participation in a news production setting with emergent participatory news and 'we media' practices, alternative and citizens' media and in a more political context with a shift from a rather passive informational citizenship to monitorial and voluntaristic informational citizenship in a glocalised community. In this context, participation commonly refers to a "culture of participatory authorship" (Deuze, "Participation, Remediation, Bricolage" 68) with what we interpret as a growing expectation, opportunity and ability to intervene and modify mediated (news) content. Moreover, participation has been discussed in other frameworks as well, such as political contexts (e.g. Carpentier 55-61) or marketing research studies (e.g. Van Oost 36-54).

Against the background of interaction and participation, we will elaborate on two specific practices in the digital content realm: remediation and bricolage. Replicating Bolter and Grusin, Deuze argues that remediation refers to the effects of new media on older media, causing old media to 'refashion' themselves, or otherwise "a remediation of old media by new media" (Deuze, "Participation, Remediation, Bricolage" 69) and embeds it in the same news production environment as mentioned above. In another context, Elkins (qtd. in Bowen 220) exposes a dichotomy between new and old forms of art production and the manner in which visual artists are able to include both manual and digital processes, or operate digitally all together. We would therefore argue for a broad understanding and examination of the remediation concept, not in the least with a specific attention for creative activities in a digital environment. Furthermore, Deuze ("Participation, Remediation, Bricolage") deals with bricolage, which has been described in the past in media and cultural studies as a creative practice in which existing artefacts are partly or entirely appropriated, incorporated and re-used when creating objects (Hartley 22-24). Strongly tied in with the idea of originality, bricolage practices are frequently involved in contemporary issues relating plagiarism and copyright. Although the author situates this component in a broader perspective than the previous ones, for example by citing Chandler's vision on bricolage by means of creative undertakings on personal homepages, the focal point is on news operation practices. More recently, other scholars have aptly illustrated the 'return of the bricoleur' in the wider media landscape (e.g. Frissen and Slot).

4. Digital Culture in Flanders? Digital Audiovisual Heritage and the Case of BOM-VL

4.1 BOM-VL: An Overview

The research project BOM-VL[1] ('Bewaring en Ontsluiting van Multimediale data in Vlaanderen', the Dutch acronym for Archiving and Distribution of Multimedia in Flanders) forms an apt empirical background to confront the more theoretical principal components of digital culture as outlined above, and to look at how the digital audiovisual heritage field in Flanders might take shape within this culture in transition. The project has aimed to find sustainable solutions for obstacles to the processes of archiving, preserving and distributing digital audiovisual content originating from the cultural sector as well as audiovisual broadcasters in Flanders. As stated in the opening section of this paper, both preservation of and access to audiovisual heritage need to be ensured; BOM-VL acknowledges this dual need in its archiving and distribution focus respectively. Problems of this nature had never been addressed on a large scale and in such a comprehensive multidisciplinary fashion in Flanders before. Problems addressed within the project are manifold; this paper will address research within two specific trajectories, i.e. user (group) requirements and architecture for archiving and distribution.

The trajectory in which user (group) requirements were elaborately examined and mapped will be explained in more detail upon readdressing the concept of bricolage. In light of digital culture and its principal components, we also wish to focus on research results with regards to distribution modalities. These results will mainly be elaborated on in more detail in the section on remediation. Because user requirements and user and provider roles are central in this paper, it is indispensable to indicate that research results in the discussed strands do not include user research: as the field is still crystallising, so are its prospective users. The discussed potential user requirements were mapped through literature and case studies and a panel session involving experts, distribution modalities were assessed by means of a domain analysis and expert interviews.

4.2 Bricolage in a BOM-VL Perspective

Within the BOM-VL user requirements trajectory, four approaches to an audiovisual archive were distinguished for research, each entailing specific user needs. The division was made according to type of use rather than user group in acknowledgement of the possibility that certain users might have diverging needs depending on the context of use. Two specific research topics are perhaps the main areas invoking the concept of bricolage and the user as bricoleur: (1) audiovisual archive material as a source for creative processes; (2) archives that are open and dynamic to some extent. Firstly, the conceptual elaboration in the research report on archives as a source for creativity explicitly mentions bricolage and audiovisual bricoleurs (Debuysere 41, 52, 68, 76). Associated terms addressed by Debuysere include *collage*, *found footage cinema*, *sampling*, *détournement*, *remix*, *cut-ups* and *mashups*. The study shows that the Flemish bricoleur does indeed exist: some practices of Flemish artists that can be described as bricoleurs have been provided as case study examples (Debuysere 59-64). However, additional findings from the BOM-VL project, i.e. the findings related to user requirements with regards to open and dynamic archives (Van Passel and Beyl), might nuance the current scope of bricolage.

As the BOM-VL project did not include large-scale user research, this strand followed the assumption that at least a proportion of users will expect some requirements of open and dynamic archives to be met, e.g. to make connections among dispersed media content, annotate content or interact with media producers in dynamic ways. This assumption is based on theories on participatory digital culture (e.g. Jenkins, "Convergence Culture"; Benkler; Deuze, "Participation, Remediation, Bricolage"); moreover, it is illustrated by numerous online examples and Web 2.0 developments. The requirements for an archive to be categorised as

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open and dynamic were established by means of a literature study and a preliminary domain analysis. This was followed by more in-depth case studies of Web 2.0 initiatives and research projects selected to illustrate aspects of open and dynamic archives. In order to establish potential recommendations with regards to implementing these aspects in BOM-VL and beyond, an expert panel discussion was organised. The selected Flemish experts' combined expertise, practical as well as academic, could be situated in the fields of cultural (heritage) content, online cultural initiatives, Web 2.0 and user-generated metadata.

One particular finding from this expert panel discussion is highly relevant for this paper: while the core assumption that at least a proportion of users would expect to be able to interact dynamically with archives was acknowledged, large question marks were placed when it comes to the extent of this proportion in Flanders. The experts pointed at the potential lack of a critical mass of active users or produsers, which might lower the priority of several aspects of open and dynamic archives. Following their comments, we can perhaps assume that the realm of digital audiovisual content use in Flanders is as yet not characterised by bricolage to a large degree. It is therefore unclear to which extent "rapidly growing numbers of ordinary users manifest themselves again as professional amateurs, tinkering with the digital building blocks that are available to them in the rich treasury of materials and experiences that the web offers" (Frissen and Slot 96). As a result, the digital audiovisual content realm might still have a way to go before it can be characterised as a true materialisation of digital culture.

4.3 Remediation in a BOM-VL Perspective

Remediation not only applies to old media, as is often emphasised; authenticity concerns (e.g. the loss of valuable and relevant data), quality-related issues (e.g. unsatisfactory image quality as a result of compression) and the obsolescence of players and file formats (causing an increasing migration of data) underline the continuous need to refashion digital media as well. In order to distribute collections digitally (online) to target audiences in a meaningful way, collection managers also need to take into account their particular needs and expectations, and possibly refashion previous approaches. Conversely, the BOM-VL project has showed that bringing this into practice is not evident. One research trajectory focused on architectures for digital preservation and distribution and included interviews with representatives in the educational sector, the audiovisual creative industry and cultural institutions (Mostmans et al.). Our results indicate that there are not only significant dissimilarities in user requirements but also in requirements from a provider's perspective, taking into account that providers can also be users. Given the limited number of interviews certain prudence is called for when interpreting the results. However, they can be considered as careful indications of different sectoral attitudes vis-à-vis certain distribution models and modalities.

An important condition for using and distributing audiovisual materials, emphasised by representatives in the educational sector, can be reduced to didactics. Stakeholders in this sector have questioned a merely instrumental or illustrative use of audiovisual materials in classrooms and advocated a broader implementation of audiovisual materials, for example with an emphasis on visual education. This approach requires a certain adaptation or remediation of audiovisual content: audiovisual material needs to be more extensively contextualised, even to the point where fully digital lessons can be made available. Although this assumes a certain commitment of teachers, syllabus makers, and/or other intermediaries, the interviews have revealed that remediating basic metadata into more elaborate user-generated metadata can form a threshold for teachers. Such involvement appears rather premature in the educational field in Flanders. Conversely, even though opinions on distribution models diverged significantly, informants in the cultural sector generally considered distribution models as raw tools, which can advance the enrichment of own content of audiovisual nature. Extensive contextualisation of audiovisual content, as is deemed required in educational fields, was not mentioned as a prime modality. Stakeholders in the audiovisual creative industry underline that metadata and broader forms of contextualisation can facilitate a better organisation of collections and increase findability.

To restate, taking into account changing user requirements and accordingly remediating digital material, as the discussion on the integration of audiovisual materials in classroom didactics has showed, are paramount to developing distribution strategies for audiovisual platforms. The issues in the project are

indicative for a broader concern when dealing with disclosing and distributing audiovisual archives. It has become clear that a homogenous approach is not satisfactory; analogue and digital materials require flexible target group specific and continuous remediation in order to maximise their reach and value.

5. Discussion

Our research indicates that remediation both from a provider's perspective (how to annotate and present collections to a target audience?) and a user's perspective (how to give meaning to rough archive material?) in a digital culture is not as evident as the ever-increasing development of user-centred or Web 2.0 technologies in certain digital and online environments might hint at. The section on bricolage has stipulated that the proportion of Flemish users wishing to interact with audiovisual source material or wishing to engage in produsage activities is likely to be relatively small. While digital availability of audiovisual materials might facilitate participation and interaction for some produsers, this does not entail that digital audiovisual heritage will automatically lead to an interactive and participatory culture. This is not only true for (prod)users, but also from a provider's perspective: remediating content and metadata towards target user groups is more labour intensive than just throwing digital materials out there and waiting to see what happens.

Besides requiring motivation and certain capabilities from users as well as providers, participatory ways of interacting with audiovisual heritage also presuppose a critical mass of digital data and metadata. This is an additional vital issue in Flanders, demonstrated by the results of the assessment of the current digitisation progress in cultural (heritage) institutions and broadcasters in Flanders (Nulens and Debuysere). BOM-VL's recently started follow-up project Archipel[2] (Network-centric approach to sustainable digital archives) continues to address the need for sustainable archiving and distribution solutions. Within Archipel, it is important to acknowledge that a true emergence of digital culture in Flanders can still be questioned. Gaining insight in the actual needs of user groups remains an issue, e.g. within the strand where sustainable valorisation models for digital archiving and distribution will be developed, mainly focusing on the target groups education, research and cultural industries.

This paper has therefore worked towards identifying important areas for future research. A first recommended topic stems from the outset of BOM-VL. As it did not include large-scale empirical user research, it would be interesting to establish to which extent users or visitors of digital audiovisual heritage collections can be deemed active users, produsers, remediators or bricoleurs. As the digital audiovisual heritage domain is still in transition, it would be useful to revisit it at a later stage, in order to examine to which extent the principal components of digital culture will have permeated the audiovisual heritage realm once it has reached a higher maturity level. Secondly, the degree to which providers will continue to give meaning to audiovisual heritage collections needs to remain the focus of continuing attention. This will be partially achieved within the recently started research project EPICS[3] (E-learning Platforms in the Cultural heritage Sector), which focuses on contextualising and distributing audiovisual content for educative purposes.

After having looked at interacting with and giving meaning to audiovisual heritage in the digital era, many questions remain. Will user and provider roles merge into one hybrid category of produsers, and to which extent? What does being a produser entail in the digital heritage realm? Which proportion of visitors of online audiovisual heritage in Flanders can be described as produsers? It is not inconceivable that the distinction between user and provider roles will become obsolete in the future. However, in an era already often conceptualised as a culture in which these roles are increasingly converging, findings suggest that interaction, participation, remediation and bricolage can still be problematic, both for users and providers.

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2   More information about the Archipel consortium and its goals can be found on http://www.archipel-project.be
3   More information about the EPICS consortium and its goals can be found on http://ibbtepics.wordpress.com

Transforming culture in the digital age

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Transforming Cultural Participation at the Estonian National Museum

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In 2014 the Estonian National Museum hopes to open its new building. This poses a wide range of challenges, being in a sense a reinventing of the museum. These developments involve asking questions about communication, cultural participation and new media. A 21th century society needs museums that do more than communicating with their audiences using a "voice of authority". It needs to become a nodal point, a meeting point of various dialogues and communication activities.

New trends to the participatory inclusion of the individuals and communities are related to the new technologies. Memory institutions are embracing the new opportunities provided by digital technologies in varying degrees of optimism hoping that these technologies will help in the basic functions of the heritage institutions. The ENM is currently a part of the „first wave" in using information and communication technologies (ICTs), in the heritage institutions which is mostly related to the digitalization of its collections and the provision of digital information. At the same time, ways of using ICTs to source user generated content is being looked for – be it in the form of additional items to the digital collections, user comments or tags to the existing objects, digital storytelling opportunities or a virtual museum.

1. Introduction: Setting the problem

Nowadays, the traditional roles of heritage institutions such as safeguarding, educating and research are extended to the domain of civic education, especially by applying various engagement practices. By becoming an arena of public participation and collective knowledge creation, heritage institutions act as democratizing agents in the society. These institutions can act as laboratories for exercising and becoming familiar with participation, especially when content creation activities of the visitors are based on the everyday issues, originating from people's own lives. New trends to the participatory inclusion of the individuals and communities by the memory institutions are related to the new technologies. The first wave in using information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the heritage institutions was mostly related to the provision of digital information. Currently, institutions are also looking for ways of using ICTs to source user generated content – be it in the form of additional items to the digital collections, user comments or tags to the existing objects or digital storytelling opportunities.

This article will frame participation in the digital activities of heritage institutions and ICT user content generation as practices which are "democratizing democracy". Participation in digital content creation is seen as one of the features of the general democratic developments in the society. Creative activities of the internet users, like generating content in the heritage institutions, are potentially also linked to democratic participation in the public sphere, although the connections are not direct (Runnel). The need to have people participating in the memory institutions primarily comes from the perspective of enabling people to see themselves as approaching their heritage as commonly shared. Too often the memory institutions are entrusted with safe-keeping a nation's heritage while the aspect of the shared responsibility for common heritage of both the people and the institutions is neglected. At the same time, heritage can be considered as a problematic concept as Howard (Howard) reminds us that heritage often is nationalistic, exclusive and elitist, sexist and backward-looking, and excluding many groups and communities. Rather than sharing the joint responsibility and meaning-making, communities and heritage institutions take a consumer service approach to their relations with the public thus leaving a relatively passive role of the customers to their visitors.

We look at the democracy and democratic practices with using the maximalist approach to the concept of democracy (Carpentier) where democracy acts also outside its traditional institutional and political frames and democratic practices are perceived as part of our everyday activities. The argument towards such an approach to democracy is in "democratising democracy", meaning that if we limit our understanding of democracy to pre-defined institutional roles, then limited participatory possibilities and alienation of state are consequences often to be observed. Thus we view heritage institutions as places where participatory democracy has to be used and upheld in order to save democracy from its downfall.

One possible way to approach the connection of content creation practices with participation, democracy and empowerment is through the domain of 'participatory culture' and the concepts of 'civic culture' and 'cultural citizenship' (Hermes "Citizenship in the Age of the Internet"). The framing concept of 'cultural citizenship' will help to see why engagement and participation, often seen as political tools of civic engagement, need to be conceptualised in the context of heritage institutions.

2. Participation as a form of cultural citizenship

When we consider democracy beyond the traditional understanding of participating in political activities (voting, protesting or signing petitions) we see two important aspects. First, public and civic institutions in general have begun to perceive pressure to become more open and democratic. Second, the more the public is involved in institutionalised level of the society, the more democratic the society is. Citizenship, by giving voice to a diversity of concerns, seeks to modify the identities of those participating within a common dialogue (Mouffe via Stevenson).

While ideally, democratic participation has meant deliberative discussions and rational arguments from behalf of the participants, then in the many-to-many communication model, participation becomes fragmented. It does not necessarily happen in the context of "excessive rationalism of deliberative democracy" (Dahlgren "Civic Participation and Practices" 21); rather, engagement and participation of the citizen is predicated on the citizen being connected to others by civic bonds. Studies of leisure time and citizenship claim that participation in informal social gatherings can generate 'democratic social capital' (Hemingway). According to Dahlgren a messy conversation, as it begins to take on political connotations, activates the weak, non-decision-making public sphere, which is a basis for public participation, as it helps people to generate personal and social meaning for the ideals of democracy (Dahlgren "Civic Participation and Practices"). Thus there is a great, yet not fully exploited, potential for political and public participation through personal voices and personal meaning-making which could be well harvested in the context of heritage institutions.

Personal meaning-making and bringing one's voice to the public happens in the domain of 'civic culture'. 'Civic culture', in Peter Dahlgren's terms (Dahlgren "Reconfiguring Civic Culture"), can be seen as a central concept, seeking to understand people's opportunities to act in the role of citizens and their daily experience of citizenship: civic culture points to those features of the socio-cultural world – dispositions, practices and

processes – that constitute pre-conditions for people's actual participation in the public sphere, in civil and political society (Dahlgren "Reconfiguring Civic Culture" 154-155).

Daily experiences of citizenship can be seen as a separate domain – that of the 'cultural citizenship'. According to Hermes (Hermes "Re-reading Popular Culture " 10), 'cultural citizenship' can be defined as the process of bonding and community building, and reflection on that bonding, which is implied in partaking of the text-related practices of reading, consuming, celebrating, and criticizing offered in the realm of (popular) culture. This definition makes it possible to see the connection of cultural citizenship with both active consumption of popular culture and productive practices in everyday life (for example, leading to new and important citizenship practices in new media contexts (see Hermes "Re-reading Popular Culture")). Burgess, Foth and Klaebe (Burgess, Foth and Klaebe) demonstrate that everyday creative activities like chat, photosharing and storytelling can constitute cultrual citizenship taking the form of what Habermas (Habremas via Burgess, Foth and Klaebe) terms 'episodic publics' – the ephemeral everyday encounters where citizens negotiate shared concern.

A search for the practices of democracy and citizenship in everyday life appears in the discussions of the similarities in the roles of the active citizen and creative consumer, which some claim are intermingling. As we illustrated above, the notions of consumer and citizen are often distinguished as complete oposites, yet there are indications that citizens can have a consumeristic approach to the democracy (Reinsalu) or that there are types of consumers who are taking a deliberative and responsible approach to consumption (Kalmus, Keller and Kiisel). William Uricchio (Uricchio) incorporates the reconfigured relations between cultural production and consumption in participatory culture as form of cultural citizenship. For him, the sites of such participatory activities are, for example, collaborative communities which exist only because of the creative contributions, sharing and participation of their members (ibid) and cultural heritage institutions can provide such sites for such activities. Jean Burgess (Burgess) states that both everyday creativity and new media technologies represent spaces of hope for cultural citizenship, and thus radically exceed their traditional domains of interest in the case active citizenship and consumer co-creation are converging and are no longer separate domains of practice.

3. Digital gradation of internet users

The question of the roles of the consumer and the citizen arises also in the context of information and communication technologies. Although there are arguments which indicate that there is inherent participatory potential in the online technologies which would give rise to the active citizens, the actual uses of the internet are indicating a much more consumption-oriented behaviour. In the research literature, consumers are traditionally associated with passive, mostly non-critical hedonism and the tendency to attend to personal interests, whereas citizens are associated with active social thought and a sense of responsibility, enabling them to rise above narrow private interests (see Gabriel and Lang) (Keller, Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Kalmus). In our recent study, the students and pupils (focus group discussions and personal interviews, 7-8 May 2007), with whom we discussed their interest in cultural heritage available online, indicated that their interest in heritage-related content, was mostly originating from some kind of school assignments. They were going online to search for heritage-related content to fulfil a pre-given assignment and they expected that the provided information would help them in a particular task. However, the students criticised the heritage resources for being too complex, too difficult to find and being geared towards the expert user rather than everyday user.

User typologies suggest that internet usage practices, from information search to social networking and participating in the public sphere, correspond to a vast extent to people's everyday needs. In the context of heritage institutions this raises an issue that although one could argue that people would be more than happy to participate in the online environments, their participation is focused around their daily lives. As studies have indicated, most of the user-generated content online, is visual: people upload and share photos of themselves, their family and their everyday life. As the memory institutions can only rarely be considered to be an inherent part of people's everyday lives, their online representations are often also outside the normal "surfing routes" of average internet users. Making sure that people consider heritage as theirs is closely

linked to getting people involved with heritage through providing options for collecting, interpreting and re-using.

Involvement does not depend on institutional efforts only. The user agency and the complex interaction of the individual and institutional also have an important role. A number of studies about young people's internet use (Livingstone and Helsper; Kalmus, Runnel and Siibak) suggest that in terms of relationships between different practices, one can talk about digital gradation, where some internet usage practices are a prerequisite for getting involved in others. The findings of studies (EU Kids Online and MEDIAPPRO survey), carried out in the European countries, support understanding the internet usage practices as evolving from more simple to more complex: internet usage experience of young people starts with simpler practices of information seeking, games and interpersonal communication, and evolves to more complex practices in the next stages, such as interactive activities. At the other end of the continuum we can find creative and civic activities (Kalmus, Runnel and Siibak). The first stage of information-seeking is related to the educational use and probably involve also those children who would otherwise remain rather passive users. At the next stage, uses related to communication and entertainment are added, followed by a stage, which mainly involves entertainment-related opportunities – watching videos, movies and TV programmes, and playing games online (Kalmus, Runnel and Siibak). Lastly, a range of interactive and creative activities became part of the internet usage. Those activities are are practiced only by a minority of children, though. Interactive and creative activities are tightly connected with users' digital literacy, including usage skills and competencies.

This gradational pattern supports the claim by media researchers Livingstone and Helsper (Livingstone and Helsper) that the take-up of online opportunities can be described as climbing a 'ladder of online opportunities', where advancing stages imply increasing user agency. Among the few analyses that have been made based on the user participation in the online environments, Affleck and Kvan (Affleck and Kvan) also observe that some participants will not be interested in engagement, others need encouragement in order to engage past a surface level, and yet again others are enthusiastic and will engage to a deep level. So the important question is: how can we motivate users to feel engaged with the cultural heritage to use their time to contribute?

4. Museum's choices for user generated content

Participation and active audiences are not new phenomenon in the context of heritage institutions. Many of the museums have built their collections using objects and information from the people. However, in all of those cases the museum employees have played the role of the gate-keepers, moderating and limiting the participation for the particular purpose.

In contemporary society, online environments seem to provide ample opportunities to engage the public in the dialogue with the heritage institutions. Two-way communication assumes not only the existence of the communication channel but also willing parties who are interested in communication. Here the hierarchical and traditionalist nature of the heritage institutions may be part of why users would not be that keen on participating and contributing. Museums have been legitimate producers and guardians of common heritage and social memory, and through these roles they have also been helpers and teachers in developing a sense of collective identity and citizenship. However, the sense of expert power or the consideration of abstract "them" knowing better than regular man can become an obstacle of participation. Even the interviewed employers of the cultural heritage institutions themselves concluded their passive attitude towards creating online content by claiming that they are not experts to comment or to say. This indicates also the perceived sense of expertise when considering participation from the general public in their field of expertise. In the past, memory institutions have maintained an expert position while gathering input from the society and mediating information and that position can now, when technology permits very open and wide participation at low costs, become an invisible barrier for the audiences.

The Estonian National Museum is a museum, which current collections and archives rely on materials and artefacts, collected from the people. Thus, it looks at the public not only as audiences of their exhibitions and consumer products and services, but also from a perspective of particular research disciplines, such as ethnology, folkloristics and anthropology, where individuals and groups have been seen as sources – as

objects and subjects of study and as information providers for the collections. Online participatory options in the Estonian National Museum are more geared towards facilitating the dialogue with the users – asking them to comment and to add on digital collections as a complex body of knowledge. As an example the Estonian National Museum had a campaign which took place both online and offline, aiming to document everyday life at 2009 – "Give Museum a Day from Your Life". People were asked to document their April 14, 2009 which was hundredth anniversary of the museum and their contributions were included in the collections of the Estonian National Museum. The contributions to these kinds of initiatives need from people dedication and time. They know that the stories and pictures are being later part of the museum's collections and archives and that adds a sense of value and motivation to the audiences to participate. At the same time, the topic itself remained simple enough as everyone can claim to be an expert of their personal everyday life and their family traditions.

The Estonian National Museum also had a user-generated content experiment in the real exhibition space, where visitor's participation was made easy – visitors were given an opportunity to add free-form comments on the presented photos and there were post-it-notes and pens. Motivation for this experiment was provided through a promise of a prize draw where participants could expect to receive a particular photo as a print-out for their personal use. Eighty percent on the comments contributed were expressions of emotions – 'beautiful', 'great', 'I like', and/or 'I would like to have that too'. However, from the heritage institution's point of view, the more valuable were the remarks that indicated to new knowledge what people got from photos or where exhibited photos activated new interests or questions. Also, a few corrections were made to photo legends that museum had: "It should be Artur Vasiksaat, because the name Vasikraat is not existing in Muhu" (Example from the post-its on the photo exhibition). The discussions, which took place offline environment, indicates that in order to have user generated content, there is not necessarily need for high-tech solutions and expensive software.

Based on their previous experience, institutions bring similar dimensions of their relationship to the users to the online environments as well. Thus, museums often focus on collecting and adding the contributions to the museum collections and more attention is paid on the dialogue and added value of the user discussions. As Schweibenz (Schweibenz) argues, the idea of becoming virtual might not be pleasant for some museums, especially not for art museums who cherish the ideal of the "real thing" and its aura.

> "But this development is inevitable because of the increasing digitisation of cultural heritage and the demand to make collections more accessible. Eventually, these trends will blur the differences between cultural heritage institutions, and in the long run these institutions will merge into one memory institution. A memory institution combines digital surrogates of the collections of archives, libraries and museums in rich interactive environments and allows access to the content regardless of the nature of the institution. The goal of the memory institution is to preserve this content for future generations and support its use and management over time" (Schweibenz).

These interlinked memory institutions hailed by Schweibenz above, show that the important user motivation comes from the content itself. Especially national museums and ethnological collections can claim being a "living" museum where communities connected with that particular museum can add to the collection as they experience their everyday life.

There have been arguments (Carnall), which say that memory institutions have had significant obstacles which have stopped them from being online massively. These obstacles have included the genuine fear that people would stop coming to museums if they could access museum collections online (Carnall). Schweibenz (Schweibenz 3) comforts the museum workers for their fear of going digital: "The virtual museum is no competitor or danger for the "brick and mortar" museum because, by its digital nature, it cannot offer real objects to its visitors, as the traditional museum does. But it can extend the ideas and concepts of collections into the digital space and in this way reveal the essential nature of the museum." Also, he stresses that the virtual museum will reach out to virtual visitors who might never be able to visit a certain museum in person. However, in the future, one also may claim that the "brick and mortar" museum may never be equal to the online faces of the museums which enable broad access to the collections, digital participatory options and

other ways. As the experience of archives and libraries indicates, online services have the capacity to become more usable than those provided in the physical location.

5. Discussing the limits of participation

The openness of the museum should not be about visitor/user involvement only; otherwise the whole process can be seen as token participation (Arnstein). It still has to be discussed, how the content created by the visitors/users can be and has been included into what a memory institution offers back to the public and what kinds of content creation and storytelling tools could facilitate this process. In the digital environment, heritage institutions are still learning to interact and facilitate communication processes with users. More than until now, this should be based on how the users are negotiating the digital space, especially by learning more about their usage practices, related to (cultural) citizenship. Looking at the digital presence of memory institutions now, it is quite clear that much participatory functionality (where available) becomes 'token' rather than in-depth and meaningful. In order to move from one-sided engagements to fully participatory practices heritage institutions need to share some of their decision-making capabilities with the general public. As hybrid forms of democracy, containing elements of participatory and representative democracy, would seem a reasonable expectation for digital democracy (Hague and Loader), these digital technologies would enable memory institutions to open up. Opening memory institutions collections for more than viewing – sharing the responsibilities of collecting, educating and interpreting is part of democratizing the democracy. The key here is successfully motivating those who are less active in the traditional political arena.

One of the important problems of risk society is the unchallenged power of the experts. It seeps not only into the political domain, but also into the cultural domains. Cultural heritage institutions can traditionally be viewed as domains of expert power, where those who "know" gather the resources and decide on what is cultural heritage, how we should preserve it, who should access it, etc. At the same time, Corsane (Corsane) believes that heritage institutions, museums and galleries which present knowledge in a linear manner no longer hold the same authoritarian position that they traditionally had, and that it is now generally accepted that they provide only certain representations and interpretations of the world. The domain of this belief is still in the hands of experts. Only now the concept of expert power tied to a specific memory institution is opened up and can be viewed as des-institutionalized, though it is still tied to a concept of expertise. To put it simply – people still believe in experts and do not perceive themselves holding the power of interpretation.

The public's lack of participation thus partly originates from the issue of expert power, but here, rather than the institutions refusing to share it, the critical part of the participatory change is the agency of the audiences of the memory institutions: visitors and users of the online environments. The question is largely also, whether the user is willing to take on a share of the power and the accompanying responsibility. As a result it takes effort to actually show that visitors/users have became authors (and subjects) of their own heritage, and instead of consuming academic expertise and validation, communication is located also at the level of everyone's lived experience.

Audience involvement in reinterpreting and producing cultural heritage is changing the concepts of 'public', 'visitor' and the 'citizen' for memory institutions. When talking about the future of memory institutions, besides the consumption model, the partnership model between heritage institution and public becomes the most significant. Without applying this model to democratizing those institutions, they might become irrelevant for their stakeholder societies. Democratized memory institutions, on the other hand, have the unique opportunity to contribute to the broader social and political agendas, starting from citizenship to social stability – which means that these organizations will potentially have increasing social responsibilities.

The issues, outlined in this paper show, that the future research in this area becomes very important. Right now the knowledge about citizen and community involvement comes rather from the memory institutions themselves than from the research reports and discussions. As Burgess et al. (Burgess, Foth and Klaebe) stress that in order to capitalize on digital "lifestyle" products we need to understand what leads to

using the creative application of the digital technologies for the purpose of participation, education and innovation. Too much of the analysis done on the digital cultural heritage today focuses only on the technical aspects of the phenomenon, sharing the experiences and technological solutions and too little attention is paid on the individual, community based and social benefits.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

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Visuality

Trans/forming Museum Narratives: The Accommodation of „Photography 2.0" in Contemporary Exhibitions

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A hundred and twenty years after George Eastman launched his Kodak box camera with the now infamous slogan "You press the button we do the rest", the sweeping developments in the areas of mobile-phone technology and Web 2.0 have revolutionized amateur image making anew. In this digital universe the means of production and (micro) publishing have come to the hands of the people at the largest ever scale, enabling users other than professionals to overcome the obstacles of traditional analogue practice and standard editorial constraints and disseminate their digital imagery, potentially in real time. This current expansion of photography's field of operations in the non-linear environment of Web 2.0, what Fred Ritchin has most appositely called "Photography 2.0" (12), has introduced a whole new culture of making and consuming photographs breathing new life (and afterlife) into amateur practices. "Web 2.0, with its emphasis on the power of virtual community, on the lateral less hierarchical 'we' that collaboratively introduces information together", writes Ritchin, "circumvents the professional or artist's voice as if it were an old aristocratic ploy" (112).

Constituting the "defining other" of art photography (Nickel 11) and failing by definition to match the use value of genres like social documentary, amateur photographic practices had long been neglected or specifically excluded from the official history of photography, and the museum as a consequence. Even the term 'amateur' – often linguistically interchanged with the conceptually distinct terms 'vernacular', 'folk', 'popular' or even 'mass' – has historically been characterized by semantic ambiguity hovering between "praise and condemnation" (Green 3), between the joys of the pastime and the qualities of those artefacts/practices lacking in professional skill.

Considered part and parcel of the common idiom (vernacular), originating among the 'common' people (folk), adopted by, adapted to or reflecting the taste of the people (popular), a hobby and a cultural artefact lacking in professional sophistication (amateur) or relating to a large number of people (mass), contemporary amateur photographs as generated and published through social media applications have increasingly captured the curatorial imagination. So what is it that makes today's amateur imagery so appealing to muse-

ums? One might argue that the 'amateurism' of the immediate and accessible "photography 2.0" affords the museum with a more credible and authentic record of the real that mediates life in a manner that professional imagery cannot. It may, therefore, expand the dominant museological narrative by promoting what Andrea Witcomb calls "unstable museum interpretations" (161). This paper explores this hypothesis, focusing on the re-definition of existing tensions in the museum, such as the diffusion of boundaries between canon, centre and periphery and the renegotiation of authored discourse through the deployment of polyvocal narratives and participatory practices through the medium of photography.

In spring 2002, the Museum of Modern Art in New York held an "experimental", as it was termed, exhibition about the city of New York. On a par with the architecture, landscape and buzz of the city, the show aimed to also explore the diverse cultures and traditions of photography in New York. As such, the 156 exhibits that furnished the main part of *Life of the City* were drawn from the museum's masterpiece collection. Mostly black-and-white, matted and framed according to museological standards, the vintage photographs that were authored, in their majority, by a pleiad of renowned photographers—from Alfred Stieglitz, Weegee, Helen Levitt, William Klein and Robert Frank, to Irving Penn, Diane Arbus and Cindy Sherman—were sporadically intersected by newspaper photographs and other 'non-art' images, all of which were included in a modestly priced, homonymous publication (Hermanson-Meister).

On the facing wall featured, in a frenzy academy-style installation, colour photographs of every size, style and theme that were contributed by New Yorkers and visitors, amateur or professionals, who responded to the museum's open call "to express their relationship to the city".[1] "Unless it's something violent […] or potentially disturbing to a lot of people, we 're going to put up everything we get", Peter Galassi, the chief curator of the museum's Department of Photography, stated when the call was publicized in the press (qtd in Siedel). Unmounted and unframed prints up to 16x20 inches, hand-delivered according to the museum brief, would be stuck onto the wall with clear pushpins on a rotating basis depending on the number of submissions. Urban canyons and skyscrapers, subway ephemera and sidewalk dramas, window displays and kids at play, flags and views of the World Trade Centre, the hustle and bustle of the big city, some clumsily taken, others more skillfully composed referencing classic street photography (Holliday), these snaps constituted a very different type of amateur photography than the "meta-vernacular" (Langford 82) imagery that appropriated the language of amateur practice and which the museum had championed over the years showcasing work by Walker Evans, Garry Winogrand and William Eggleston.

Nonetheless, the arresting centerpiece of the show was the projection of a constant stream of professional and amateur photographs collected by the post-September 11 project *Here is New York*: *A Democracy of Photographs*. Initiated immediately after the attacks "as an alternative way of looking at and thinking about history" proposed "by the people for the people",[2] the project raised phenomenal momentum. Within days of their call, its instigators, Charles Traub, Michael Shulan, Gilles Peress and Alice Rose George, were stormed by thousands of photographs sent by renowned professionals, weekend snappers and camera users of 'every stripe', which were then showcased in a vacant storefront at 116 Princes Street in Soho, soon covering the small space from floor to ceiling. The exhibition opened on the 25th of September and hundreds of thousands of people queued on the street to view it. "Photography is the perfect medium to express what happened on September 11", explained Shulan and continued, "it is democratic by its very nature and infinitely reproducible".[3] In *Here is New York* display the "moral imperative to record" overshadowed claims of authorship as anonymity (no titles or names were provided) and the uniformity of presentation (all inkjet prints were printed at the same size, hang on a hardware-store washing line and sold for $25 each) levelled professionals and amateurs, denouncing the "master/mastery" discourse; an "ideal perception of a high-modernism type of democracy" (Olin).

Yet, it was not just this "democraticness" (Berger 41), which is in itself a debatable concept, nor its very unpreciousness, everydayness, immediacy, and ease of dissemination in material or digital formats that established photography in the public consciousness as a prime medium in the case of September 11 and

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1   "Life of the City", 2002, MoMA press release, MoMA Archives.
2   "About", *Here is New York*, web, 22 October 2009.
3   Michael Shulan, "Images of Democracy," *Here is New York*, web, 22 October 2009.

every traumatic public event ever since. "In order to restore our sense of equilibrium as a nation, as a city, and particularly as a community", stated the programmatic blurb on the website of *Here is New York*, "we need to develop a new way of looking at and thinking about history, as well as a way of making sense of all of the images which continue to haunt us".[4] Barbie Zelizer has claimed that the "ritual" practice that photography involves can help people caught in tragedies such as these to "establish moral accountability, move on from the trauma, and in so doing help return the collective to its pre-traumatic state" (698). And indeed, this is probably what brought such a varied crowd of people who were not the usual museum-goers or tourists to MoMA's doors. In the eerily quiet gallery, the projection installation stood in the middle of the room as a memorial monument with people gathering silently around and watching the bombardment of images, as a kind of "religious ceremony" as a New York Times reviewer noted (Boxer). This element of dealing with trauma, loss and memorialization was the almost tautological use/exhibition value and cross-purposes of the *Here is New York* and other similar projects that appeared in New York and all around the States at the time as well as the commemorative shows in the years to follow (Olin).

This may well be the original motivation here but it will be argued that there is a wider "discourse of reasons" (Danto) developing at the time that made an arbiter of taste museum like MoMA to exhibit unauthored photographs. It was in 1944 when Willard Morgan, a commercial photographer who was called upon to fill in the shoes of Beaumont Newhall while the latter was in the army, that an exhibition of snaps, "the folk art of the camera" as it was described, from the George Eastman Company's archive of public competitions would take place under MoMA's roof.[5] "Snapshot photography is the medium of the millions—an immensely flexible and expressive medium which speaks a universal language", the curator argued (Morgan np). All the same, the museum would need more than fifty years to fully indulge into what constitutes today another kind of "ephemeral sublime" (Smith 8): Edward Steichen turned to professionals and the mass media rather than amateurs for the notoriously populist *Family of Man* show in 1955; John Szarkowski's selection of unauthored images for *The Photographer's Eye* in 1966 had to meet his five "intrinsically photographic" criteria; and Peter Galassi's exhibition *Pleasures and Terrors of Domestic Comfort* in 1991 featured artists' rather than amateurs' takes of the familial.

The debates around the reinterpretation and re/de-contextualization of amateur photography in the art institution that have, with the advent of social networking media, acquired new urgency in contemporary art oriented and cultural discourse were not initiated by MoMA. In 1998 the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco presented the historical survey *Snapshots: The Photography of Everyday Life, 1888 to the Present*. Two years later the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York showcased *Other Pictures: Anonymous Photographs from the Thomas Walther Collection*. In 2004 two more private 'vernacular' collections were accommodated in the art museum: *In the Vernacular: Everyday Photographs from the Roger Kingston Collection* at the Boston University Art Gallery; and *Close to Home: An American Album* at the J.P. Getty Museum. All these exhibitions aimed to recontextualize the historical 'vernacular' in the museum not because of the scarcity of other vintage prints, or even of "an atrophying of vernacular ingenuity or inability to distance ourselves from more recent developments in photographic convention" (Zuromskis 439). As Martin Lister had professed in the mid 1990s, new image and information technologies may indeed be seen "in ways that revive and rework older visions for older technologies" (Lister 7).

More recently, in 2007, Bill Ewing, the director of the Musée de l' Elysée in Lausanne, introduced a grandscale participatory project suitably entitled *We are All Photographers Now*. Like the Baltimore Contemporary Art Museum's smaller participatory project *Snapshot: An Exhibition of 1000 Artists*, which displayed photographs mailed to the museum by a variety of lenders, *We are All Photographers Now* featured an impressive 50,000 entries from all over the world, which were uploaded on a computer that randomly selected one hundred images to be printed and displayed every week.[6] As such, this endeavour was the closer we have had so far to a liberal edit process.

4   "About", op.cit.
5   "Snapshots Exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art as an Important American Folk Art", Press release 44228-8, MoMA Archives.
6   See "We are All Photographers Now," http://www.allphotographersnow.ch, web, 21 October 2009.

Transforming culture in the digital age

This change in institutional direction reflects and is being shaped by emerging behaviours and practices in the context of social media and media sharing applications; as amateur, and indeed professional photographers looked at the Internet as a viable and promising platform for publishing and sharing photographs with their friends and clients, image sharing applications such as flickr were quickly populated, enjoying thousands of uploads per minute[7] and almost three billion photographs to date. Within the changing digital media landscape, which has given rise to online social networks, citizen journalism and knowledge crowdsourcing, museums in the US, Australia and the UK, but also in some other European countries, identify in social media as a means to increase their diversity of activities and to reach new audiences. This approach is supported by researchers in the field who characterise social media as "an exceptional platform from which to establish dialogue with and between users, to build relationships and bring together communities of interest" (Kelly and Russo np).

The motivation for the above, at least in the UK is often initiated by governmental agendas, which promote the need for social inclusivity and diversity, particularly in the 1990s, and more recently focusing on ideas of community empowerment, cohesion and participation (Crooke 43). Furthermore, according to the *Digital Britain* report, published in June 2009, digital creativity is promoted as a means for economic prosperity. The latter is also supported by an emphasis on a new approach to media literacy, which is expected not only to equip users with digital media skills but also enable the shaping of active citizens through participation in both the consumption and the production of culture in anticipation for the "economic and social benefits it can bring" (DCMS and DBIS 41).

In this context, museums such as the London Transport Museum and Tate Britain favoured the familiar and democratic medium of photography in combination with online image sharing applications to address these challenges and to increase their relevance to their target audiences. The exhibitions of *How we Are* (and *How we are Now*) in Tate Britain in 2007 and *Suburbia* (and *Show us your Suburbia*) in the London Transport Museum in 2009 have used flickr not to publicise their content but to enable a process through which everyday users were able to contribute to the exhibition. These contributions would also fulfil the additional institutional aims to make the exhibitions visible to non-traditional audiences and to update the existing collections with current imagery, and indeed both museums have (quasi)accessioned several of these user generated crowd-sourced photographs. In the case of *Suburbia*, the use of flickr was also expected to keep the otherwise "slow medium" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 60) of the exhibition "dynamic and fresh",[8] capitalising on the quickly updating nature of the Web.

As indicated by the Community Curator in the London Transport Museum in a recent interview,[9] this was not an easy decision for the curators in the *Suburbia* team. The integration of people's photographs with the *Suburbia* exhibition required a re-thinking of the balance between the urge for relevance and the need for curatorial authority, i.e. how much of the latter needs to be given up for the benefit of the former.[10] For example, a concern among the curators was the fact that the user contributed imagery would shift the emphasis of the exhibition towards the immediate *locale* of the London users making the exhibition potentially *irrelevant* to the wider British and international audience of the museum. A concern also reflected in the positive account of the *How we Are* exhibition by Sara Allen from Culture/24, who concluded that "the success of this exhibition is a lightness of touch, which is brilliantly democratic – no one is left feeling excluded from the cultural survey – without descending into cliché" (np).

From another point of view, the exhibition teams were also concerned with relevance of the material to the exhibited collections, i.e. the integration of user generated contribution with purposefully collected objects. Unlike the *Life of the City* in MoMA, *How we Are* and *Suburbia* were supported by a flickr group, organised and maintained by the respective museums, which invited users to contribute their photographs.

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7 On 24th of February 2010, 3602 photographs were uploaded on www.flickr.com between 12:35pm and 12:36pm.

8 "London Transport Museum, "Suburbia – Exhibition Brief", unpublished.

9 Interview with Jane Findlay, Community Curator, London Transport Museum, 21 October 2009.

10 This topic was most recently discussed in "The Museum of the 21st Century", LSE Arts and Thames and Hudson 60th anniversary discussion between Neil MacGregor, director of the British Museum, and Nicholas Serota, director of Tate, London School of Economics, 7 July 2009.

They additionally outlined both the desired themes and the terms of engagement. Subsequently, photographs were moderated for appropriateness and relevance and in the case of *How we Are Now*, a panel of experts selected 40 photographs, which were included in the final exhibition and website. In *Suburbia*, all photographs that met the moderation criteria are currently streamed in the gallery on a continuously updatable feed. Although one might argue that moderation of user contributed content is first and foremost necessary for the timely planning of exhibitions, it also raises the question whether user generated visual narratives should fulfil certain criteria in order to be integrated with the institutional narrative; does amateur imagery lose some of its "un-preciousness" and "freshness" in the process of being admitted in the institutional context? This tension was also picked up by Tom Suchcliffe of *The Independent* who in his review of *How We Are* expressed his surprise on the "remarkable consistency of tone" many of the selected 40 photographs displayed; this opinion was also echoed in the comments by one of the flickr participants who pointed out that the selection "didn't reflect multicultural Britain and the wonderful things it has brought about".[11]

Furthermore, the ideas around the authentication of the crowd-sourced content and everyday photographic creativity are further performed on the exhibit face. In the examples presented in this paper two curatorial and design approaches are in play: on one hand, *Suburbia* adopts and advocates a *seamless* integration of amateur practice and vernacular imagery in the exhibition; the photographs that are uploaded on the flickr group are divided into the three themes of the exhibition and are fully integrated in the relevant displays, through the use of unifying design solutions such as frames, casing and colours. The user generated imagery sits on equal terms with the museum's collections of historic postcards, bridging their content with a constantly updated present through a curated act of 'remediation' (Bolter and Grusin). On the other hand, Tate Britain adopted a *seamful* approach, presenting the *How we Are Now* images in a constantly changing slideshow outside the main, ticketed, exhibition space, free of charge.

The two approaches are not unproblematic: the positioning of the *How we Are Now* accentuated the distinction between amateur imagery authenticated by the museum through its inclusion in the curated part of the exhibition as opposed to the rest of it, which remained in the popular sphere; although the approach was greeted positively by a savvy amateur contributor: "I think the beginning room and the Flickr wall are great bookends to the exhibition. They show the evolution of photography, and in a way that contrasts the modernity and democratizing nature of photography in our everyday lives, against the beautiful but archaic craft of those amazing early photographers",[12] it also caused some disappointment to some of the selected participants who were expecting to see their photographs in printed format and the screens in full working order, which was not always the case. As the *Suburbia* exhibition is currently in progress, we do not have access to participant responses; the museum's effort and explicit intention to fully incorporate the flickr content in the displays as a way of "acknowledging its value", according to the Community Curator, runs the risk to 'frame' amateur photographs primarily as evidence in the museum's story (see also Phillips 202-214), striping them from their distinct creative and subjective context.

As museums are often entrusted with safeguarding and shaping our cultural memory, the above examples highlight institutional efforts to engage in curatorial and design terms with what David Harvey calls 'small heritages', i.e. personal, local heritage, in comparison to 'big heritage', i.e. official, national heritage; he goes on to suggest that: "with the present spread of blogs, podcasts and digital archives […] it is perhaps these small heritages that will form the basis of the material, the thoughts, practices and plans that we pass on to the next generation" (Harvey 32). In the case of the London Transport Museum and the Tate this certainly rings true as they have already embarked in the development of two forthcoming exhibitions, *Exposed* (2010) and *East London Line (2011)*, which will incorporate amateur imagery as a way of commenting on the "rights and desires of individuals"[13] regarding image production and transport connectivity respectively.

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11   Richard Thomson from *The Final 40: Announcement of Winners* discussion thread on *How we Are Now* flickr group, August 2007.

12   David Axelbank from *The Final 40: Announcement of Winners* discussion thread on *How we Are Now* flickr group, August 2007.

13   See Tate Modern, "Future exhibitions", http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/, web, 1 March 2010.

Transforming culture in the digital age

Areti Galani & Alexandra Moschovi

This paper suggests that it may be that the social media era accentuates "The Snapshot comes of Age" (Grundberg) and amateur photography has, most recently, been attributed novel currency as a more credible, "authentic" record of the real (Berger 44) that mediates life in a manner that professional imagery cannot. However, when it comes to the museum such unauthored imagery contradicts, by its very nature, the museum's traditional canons of connoisseurship and/or ownership. It is true that the lack of authorial presence and craftsmanship, the colloquialism of amateur imagery, its commonplaceness and popular, at times even vulgar, aesthetic did not exactly constitute monopoly qualities for museum objects. Yet, in the Zeitgeist of cultural liberalism and multivocality and in tune with the impulse of recycling, remediation, appropriation, and hybridization of all sorts of media and practices in art and culture, the re-invention of the amateur is not only a way of fusing the low and the high. Bearing the patina of today, it brings the contemporary and the non-canonized naïve into the museum in "a quest for a 'purity' untainted by market forces" which equally retains "aspects of the primitive fantasy of absolute 'otherness'" (Mercer 24). This paper argues that current museological approaches that favour the assimilation rather than the accommodation of user generated imagery in the museum can contribute to the formation of more inclusive museum narratives but in this process the very otherness and uniqueness of this content undergoes a transformation that often strips it of its spontaneous and subjective context. Striking the right balance between 'authentic' contextualization of user generated imagery and curatorial voice is the key challenge in transforming museum narratives.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Digitization – Accessibility – Long-term Digital Preservation. Creation and Maintaining virtuaalmuuseum.ee

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1. Background

This paper is about the digitization, accessibility and long-term preservation from the perspective of creation and maintaining virtuaalmuuseum.ee – solution to provide direct and reliable access to digital collections of Estonian state museums. Domain and VNS-software is developed in co-operation between the Estonian Ministry of Culture, MindBridge LLC and Conservation Centre Kanut (CCK). The first landmark to the accessibility of the museum items using virtuaalmuuseum.ee was 2006 when exhibition 'Estonian Modernism' was created. Since then have been made 6 exhibitions, in all of them CCK and MindBridge has been involved as a designers and half of the exhibitions' has digital images acquired by CCK. Domain can present different data presentation models, according to extract providers semantics and structure. Open source web application server Zope-based system offers secure, customizable and easily manageable environment to present unlimited number of collections as well as exhibitions and at the same time giving new trust-worthy access to see museum collections – all of it in same platform and domain. In addition for online access system offers also possibility to create offline version to distribute it on CD or other offline-media. This is one of main idea how to make digitized information accessible and disseminated to different user groups: the general public, historians, researches, students, pupils, tourism, publishers, local governments and institutions themselves.

2. The need of digitization

Digitization presents new opportunities for gathering materials and for the development of services, which applies across institutional boundaries, but because there is a very large quantity of different materials, digitization must be selective with clear selection principles and criteria. Some of digitization needs are: facilitate access to materials that are frequently used in analogue format, required or requested by several user groups, difficult to access, important current relevance, materials with national interest, relevant to an integrated services, to protect fragile original material, cost-effective to digitize, no other digitized material exist, digitization will simplify/improve the institution procedures and no legal limitations ("AHDS", Ooghe and Moreels).

Although digitization is based on international standards and good practice but at the present there the demand of accessibility is often ignored. There is little importance to the users whether certain materials have been digitized if they are not accessible to them – so it is crucial that the most important reason for digitizing analogue materials is to facilitate user access to them. There are different reasons why there is limited interest to create accessibility of digitized materials, but one of them is the lack of information about the possible users - it is essential to establish co-operation with users and other segments of society, especially the university sector and the sector concerned with conservation of cultural heritage.

In an ideal situation could be that all the materials that are potential interest should be digitized. However there are very large quantity of different materials and therefore realistically there is a need to be selective. At last but not least – the need of digitization can't be the reason to damage the analogue object – the digitization process should be carried out without damaging the analogue object and preferably with an equipment or system providing the best resolution currently available.

3. Accessibility

Access to information is important current issue for organisations, particularly those that are publicly funded. Compared with archives and libraries there is only a little amount of digital information generally accessible in museums and there is great potential for improved access. And even if there are powerful databases in museums they have usually restricted accessibility or completely inaccessible to the public ("*National Library of Australia*", Ooghe and Moreels). The effective accessibility to, and dissemination of digitized materials, through the use of new technologies can prepare the way towards extensive transparency and increased use of these materials.

Multilinguality is also one key to wider accessibility of the digital materials, emphasis should be placed on whether provision is made users with a non-Estonian cultural or language background and whether there is provision for international co-operation where appropriate.

Virtuaalmuuseum.ee is one working solution to improve accessibility and sustainability of digitized materials. Domain is built up to provide access to a broad range of different types of information, adapted to suit different user groups. Every collection can be designed separately – the information can be presented depending about the needs and there can be considered also some 'tailor work'-developments according to museum needs. In addition, depending about the exhibition, there is valuable specialist information provided by more in-depth media, e.g. longer (pdf) texts about conservation methods.

Domain has designed along the years an environment to present information after quality control procedures ensuring the relevance and accuracy of presented exhibitions. Co-operation with museum it is necessary to modify the materials to make them suitable for circumstances.

This initiative is related also to long-term preservation – all materials digitized in CCK are preserved locally and also at the Estonian Central Digital Repository (ECDR) managed by the Estonian Public Broadcasting.

4. Long-term preservation

The long-term preservation of large quantities of digital material is a new challenge which requires high levels of both competence and resources. Preservation is often considered as some additional value and usually neglected. A successful preservation needs a systematic and structured approach – not only to preserve the information but also to ensure that it will remain accessible and readable in the long term (Brown, Hedstrom, Kenney).

When deciding what data to preserve and how, many factors need to be taken into account. Formats and costs are equally vital and relate to many aspects, such as maintenance, legacy media, access, risk, compliance and audit. Therefore it is important to emphasize the need to start long-term preservation in the moment when starts the planning of digitizing. This gives certainly better possibility to create more sustainable workflow ("*Collection Development Training*", "Digital Preservation", "National Digital Forum", "Policy for Preservation", "Report of the working group"). CCK has always practicing systematic approach – all created digitized images and databases (virtuaalmuuseum.ee included) – should preserved in long-term perspective.

5. Conclusions

Digitization, accessibility and long-term preservation are alone and together very tightly connected and complex system which should to be followed and carried through as a complete entirety providing public accessibility.

Andres Uueni

Through virtuaalmuuseum.ee initiative CCK's aim is to ensure the accessibility and long-term preservation of the digitized materials and to facilitate their future use. The domain is offering to Estonian state museums to show collections and exhibitions. It is one example of co-operation of different institutions giving users direct access to the digitized materials and content increasing interest towards the cultural heritage. Access and further processing of digitized materials by users could create new content in the future. The goal of the virtuaalmuuseum.ee is linked to the hope that for users is needful permanent and reliable access to digital reliable and accurate information and it will be widely used, so that it will be of service to research by public at home and abroad regardless of location, directly to content relating to Estonian's cultural heritage.

Digital collections databases are being used around the world as a way of ensuring knowledge of collections can be preserved and shared. According to modern understanding is (static) linked data relationships – users are looking and searching information but also they need to be involved (Berners-Lee). Digital cultural heritage transparency and providing the understanding is essential to establish co-operation with users and other sectors of society. In further developments virtuaalmuuseum.ee will have also new features provide better access to content.

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Performativity, Interaction and Cultural Competence in Technologically-mediated interactive art exhibitions

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1. Introduction

Contemporary art exhibitions are facing the challenge of attracting more visitors to enjoy the arts as part of their leisure time activity. As art institutions have become more accessible to wider visitor groups (Kolb 2000) and the visitor groups have become more democratized (Falk & Dierking) the art institutions' ethos has became more visitor-focused (Kolb; Vom Lehn). In recent years the amount of hands-on and interactive exhibitions has increased largely, not only within science museums and natural history museums, but with art institutions when the digital technology and interactivity is used as a tool for the artists' expression. The transformation from object-centered museums to interactive hands-on exhibitions causes different types of challenges for the whole institution, for its staff and for its visitors. Previous research within museum studies and cultural sociology has largely investigated the educational impact and the learning outcomes of museums and galleries (Falk & Dierking) and evaluation and assessment of exhibitions (Hein). However, the studies have focused on the experience of museum/gallery visit's affect, but the actual perception of art works has not gained the attention it requires. This paper intends to describe how the transformation from object-centered museum to hands-on digital exhibition has changed the visit to arts institutions. A sociological standpoint will bring a theoretical perspective which is focused more on social interaction and cultural competence.

Museums and galleries have been of sociological interest for a relatively short time but their importance as a subject matter to sociological analysis is becoming more stable. Museums and galleries are indeed *cultural*, due to the things they contain, and *social*, as a space for visitors, curators, staff and exhibitions. Therefore this work will discuss art institutions mainly as social spaces with the function to accommodate people's leisure time activities, leaving the educative or consumerist perspectives outside. Technology has also remained as an interesting focus within social theory, however some definitions should be done before entering to the discussion. Generally speaking, technology refers to all the functional objects such as doors, walls or computers (Latour; Bennett & Silva) and within the context of this work I will continue to use the same definition that the technologies are functional objects with the difference that their function is to generate artistic experiences. In other words, digital art exhibits will use computerised technologies in order to deliver the artists intention and to be perceived by the visitors. This paper is informed by social theorists such as Erwin Goffman and Pierre Bourdieu, and their works have been revisited with reference to the contemporary art institutions and digital social environments.

I will discuss the role of a visitor in contemporary digital exhibitions and galleries with the intention to highlight the elements of transformation in the visitor's role in reflection to increasing technological interventions in artworks. These elements provide insightful information in the transformation of art institutions in cultural and social contexts. This research will critically explore the new forms of interaction enabled by

(pervasive) technologies as reflected in both human-to-human interaction and the interaction with artwork. Museums and galleries offer the potential for exploring the visitor's role and engagement with exhibits that bring the interactiveness and technology into arts and cultural experiences. Technological interaction in museums and galleries is infused with performativity. In this work I suggest that the ability to perform is related to the cultural and social competence of the visitors. However, I highlight the role of interactive technologies in not only enabling visitors to engage and perform but also creating performative dilemmas amongst them. It is often assumed that there is a 'correct' or 'fulfilling' way of experiencing such exhibitions, usually through some kind of performative action (directed towards the exhibit and/or other visitors to the museum or gallery). In order to gain a 'fulfilled' experience the visitor's role has been transformed from passive observer to actively engaged participant.

1.2 Background

This research can be contextualised within museums and art galleries' responses to the changes in Western society. Technologies, customer-orientation and marketisation are said to have brought about new challenges for cultural institutions in terms of adapting and participating with society outside of the cultural sphere (Knell). Museums and galleries have had to face increasing competition in funding and public interest, in order to maintain their locus where 'art worth' is proclaimed and the history of art materialised into public view. To respond to these challenges museums and galleries have been driven into a situation where they have had to move away from more traditional, object-centred places to more innovative and experimental directions. Subsequently museums and galleries have understood the importance of their relationship to their audiences. Designing the sites so that they are more accessible and introducing new ways of attracting wider audience groups have made art and culture part of contemporary public life.

The growth of 'hands-on' exhibitions and digital participation in exhibitions has been remarkable in the past decade with almost every new exhibition today incorporating interactive element for visitors. The reason for this transformation is twofold; first, the recognition of museums and galleries contribution to the learning and understanding process and their role as educational 'tools'. Secondly, museums and galleries have gradually transformed into leisure and experience-based centres instead of strictly high-culture centred in order to attract the general public's interest. In short, these art institutions are transforming to serve greater audiences and in order to do so they are no longer developing primarily the assembling and exhibiting new collections but increasingly developing new forms to participate in and experience art and culture (Caulton, Bradburne).

1.3 Methodology

This paper is inspired by the preliminary findings made from empirical research conducted at Fabrica gallery in Brighton, South East England. At the time of research Fabrica hosted an interactive art exhibition by Tina Gonsalves entitled 'The Chameleon Project'. The art work consisted of nine computer screens with images of human faces, and the screens were equipped with face-recognition technology in order to capture visitor's facial movements, which then imitated face-to-face interaction between visitor and the art work.

The research design followed the ethnographic tradition in order to capture people's instant reactions to interactive art work. The data derived from this work led me to realise that the visit to such exhibition bares large scale affects on the social interaction and performativity in social spaces.

2. Social interaction and performativity

Social interaction refers to the micro-sociological discussion of the human-to-human interaction. However, the focus with the hands-on exhibitions and interactive exhibits, the interaction between the visitor and the artwork becomes relevant as well. As mentioned earlier, museums and galleries are social spaces where the visit is embedded with culturally determined norms and rules. According to several studies (for example Falk & Dierking; Rosenfield) most of the people who attend the art institution do so as part of the group,

and a large part of their attention towards exhibits and artworks is experienced in collaboration with their fellow visitors. Falk and Dierking (Falk & Dierking) have broken down the museum experience to a personal context, meaning their private agenda, history and knowledge; the social context which refers to the visitors companion and their dynamic at the exhibition as well as the presence of the staff and volunteers and physical context, meaning the comfort and convenience of the physical environment. These components together combine the elements of the museum experience. Social interaction in museum and gallery environment plays important role in forming the experience. According to Van Lehn (Van Lehn) social interaction underpins individual experiences and perceptions of the exhibition, particularly the element of sharing the experience is important in the art institution context.

Individuals perform social roles that are determined by the social environment or setting they are in. The museum visit is embedded with these culturally determined rules and norms that the visitors and the staff have to take into account when performing their roles. Erwin Goffman's (Goffman, "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life") classic sociological study is called *dramaturgical approach* as it adopts concepts from theatrical settings: we are 'on stage' in our everyday life but moving between front and back regions in order to create an impression of our selves to others. During the museum and gallery visit the visitor retreats to the back region in preparation for later 'performances' before audiences in the front region. In these back regions, the performer collaborates with team members in the preparations for the front region. Art institutions are good examples of social locations where certain rules and norms apply and where performance is taking place amongst visitors and staff. In traditional museum and gallery, the performance requires only limited amounts of participation and the visitor can easily stroll around the exhibition areas without engaging with artworks. Interactive and digital exhibitions, however, are encouraging people to engage. The performance becomes more important part of the experience and perception.

Following symbolic interactionist approach, social interaction is embedded with the performativity and the enactments of social roles. In this case 'others' become the audience and the performer is acting the role out for them. Abrercombe and Longhurst (Abrercombe and Longhurst) suggest that contemporary society is characteristically performative and that there has been spectaclisation of place and person, in the sense that people themselves become the spectacle. The work of Kershaw (Kershaw) offers an interesting approach as he claims that society is becoming more performative and that we are living in a *performative society.* This is a result of theatre-like settings of most of the public spaces such as shops and libraries and its affects on people's everyday interaction. Drawing from Bagnall (Bagnall) the performativity is essential part of the perception and it is embedded in emotional response to the exhibits. Performance requires notions of social roles and identity negotiation within the social space as well as within interaction with other people. Within the context of digital art and installations it will reveal an interesting dilemma as the expectation of human behavior in museum visits changes but the culturally determined behavior codes remain.

The aforementioned dramaturgical dilemmas arises from the situations where the audience penetrate those back regions and become aware of the preparations, the front region performance loses some of its credibility. The fear of losing the credibility will affect of the individual's self -conscious which can then become a self fulfilling prophesy. The experience of frustrated performance and interaction will thereafter have further consequences on the art perception. In the traditional object-centered exhibition the barriers are erected to control communication/interaction. In Goffman's work these tend to be physical barriers such as doors or curtains. Cultural codes are also acing as a barriers for individuals to not reveal their back regions. As mentioned earlier the museum and gallery space is designed purposefully for one-dimensional interaction within artwork, when the space is transformed into digital the whole pattern and learned interactional code changes. The surprise element from digital art installation and the personalized interaction with artworks creates new dilemmas for the audience and visitors which crucially affects on the individual's art perception. On the one hand, such interactivity has the potential to create a truly deep and enduring experience: being a part of the artwork in itself. On the other hand, it can cause feelings of self-consciousness or shyness that distract the visitor or make it difficult for them to relax and enjoy looking around.

3. Cultural Competence

So far I have discussed social interaction and performativity as a part of a museum visit. The concepts mentioned are inevitably playing important parts in understanding the transformation of museum and gallery visits. In this section I will discuss Bourdieu's work on *habitus* and *cultural competence* (Bourdieu, "Distiction"). Habitus, in short, is an individual's being, disposition and schemata in response to social conditions and structures. Cultural competence is a concept which follows from this: the contemporary visitors to museums and galleries are possessing sums of *cultural* and *social capital* that constitute their habituses. In traditional museums the visitors with cultural competence have the appropriate forms of social and cultural capital. This leads Bourdieu to an exclusionary analysis whereby inequalities in access to the instruments of arts translate as inequalities in the ways in which art works are comprehended (Bourdieu, "Distiction"). Viewing and experiencing art, according to Bourdieu, is highly related to the class stratification and 'gaze' of the viewer. The approach on this paper, applied in the contemporary context, requires more flexibility than Marxist-inspired connotations of social class. The museums and galleries attempt to attract more visitors has lead to increased marketisation, blockbuster exhibitions and experience-led exhibition designs (Hein). Museums and galleries see themselves as social spaces which are open-to-all and the visitor surveys indicate an increase of different ethnicities, age groups and social classes in visitor groups (MacDonald and Fyfe). Art exhibitions are hosting visitors from diverse groups and making taxonomies around concepts of race, gender or social class. This may create an epistemological problem as the individual experience does not always match that of their presumed represent social classification. Experiencing art is coded: the meaning and understanding is dependent on one's social and cultural capital but also on different levels of competence. The 'correct' way of appreciating arts and experiencing cultures are stratified and can be seen with logic of structural disparity.

Contemporary digital exhibitions are to be enjoyed and understood in ways intended by curators and/or artists. Particularly in art museums, the pressure of interpreting artwork in the 'right' way has had great value. In contemporary museums, interpreting objects does not require vast knowledge of the arts, as museums and galleries usually provide background information on their collection and artworks. However, I suggest that there is still a presumed 'right' and 'wrong' way of approaching digital exhibits if they require interaction of any kind. This is because the interactive museum experience requires social competence to perform and technological competence to use/understand devices. Although, individuals endure experiences individually, they are not immune to the experiences of others and are believed to partake of shared and common experiences. Institutions that guide individuals' thoughts collectively therefore also affect the individual experiences. In short, although experience is a personal and subjective event, it is inscribed by social conventions and forces and expressions in communally meaningful forms.

As mentioned above the performativity is important part of the art experience and perception. The symbolic interactionist approach suggests that the performance is a negotiation within individuals back and front regions (Goffman). Following Bourdieu ("The Love of Art -European Art Museums and their Public") the perceiving arts is highly related on the cultural capital of the visitors. Combining cultural capital and performativity will present the ideal way to visit and perceive the art in the ways the artist and the curators have intended i.e. right way. However, the digitalisation of the exhibitions and the democratisation of the visitor groups will raise new challenges for the 'right way' of perceiving arts, as the visitors do not share similar habituses and the visit itself does not present a passive stroll around the exhibition area.

Museum and gallery environments are bound to be perceived in a way that there is a certain culturally-determined code of conduct. This gives an impression that there are visitors who are aware of that code and will judge anyone who does not follow it. Museums and galleries are also perceived as authoritative public spaces where one's performance is monitored. The requirement for participation and performance will bring new challenges for visitors who have previously enjoyed their subject/object experience in cultural centres. In order to achieve maximum satisfactory experience from culture institution one has to be able to participate fully within new technologies provided. This will thereafter rise a questions about the different levels of competences. As drawing from Bourdieu the 'love of art' was a privilege for 'cultivated classes'

whose cultural capital guided through the arts perception, however it can be argued that the competence of using technologies are becoming equally important value for the Bourdieusian 'gaze'.

4. Conclusion

Museum/gallery visits are 'coded' which means that culturally determined rules apply and dominate the visit. These rules also control the levels of interaction within other visitors and museum staff during the visit. The museums and galleries can be seen as somewhat hierarchical and authoritative institutions in their social organisation; the visitors shuffle along the space under the surveillance of the museum/gallery staff (Prior). The visitor is, particularly in traditional object-centred museums, expected to stroll around and stop in front of the artwork, observe it and move on. Their interaction with others is conducted verbally but quietly to avoid causing a 'disturbance'. It is evident that the traditional object-centred museums require very little or no interaction from its visitors and the perception of art remains as an individual's personal experience. The current trend seems to be moving towards giving an increasingly interactive character to the museum experience, particularly through technologically mediated interaction. This proposes a great challenge for the museum and gallery staff and artists, let alone computer scientists and engineers, but what has been left unnoticed is their impact on social interaction and the roles expected of the visitor. The core of the contemporary museum and gallery is to offer new ways to experience art and culture. This experiential aspect is seen as a departure from a more traditional object-centred museum towards an interactive museum (Hein). This paper has intended critically approach to the digital exhibition from the sociological perspective. The role of the performativity and social interaction plays in technologised exhibitions are crucial for the art perception.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

"What's on your mind?"

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1. Introduction

Currently "In everyday experience we visit a website or consult a CD-ROM almost as if we have visited the Louvre, we find images like the Louvre, no doubt it has become metaphorical, as is now done on a couch in front of a screen and using a pointer (the mouse) that transmits and stops the operations of the operator also facilitating the speed of his charge" (Deloche 23).

As defined by Deloche, the metaphor of which museums are part of today is the idea of a new stage of interaction. Internet access, multimedia, user autonomy in his choices in the network and the natural characteristic of this knowledge management through links, generate a new concept of a museum visit, which is this new space.

The website of each institution, in its most global sense, involving the domain and the tools of Web 2.0 (Social Web), allows it to interact with the user, generating a certain closeness and warmth. This image is due to the realization of graphic design and texts that have to access the web, including values, ideals and skills that give character to the institution. In other words, we can see a personality (profile) of the museum through its narrative on the web.

In this sense we can identify on the website the power of museums as opinion leaders. This is because they concentrate knowledge, works and studies, which are rhetorical arguments of the speech. In the world of social web, which is based on the opinion, these sites have the credibility and support of those who share an interest about their subjects. These characteristics denote them as cultural by nature.

"The Economist" made a study of social networks on 2010, where Facebook is listed as the second most popular website after Google. The study probed the hours that people spend engaged in social networks. According to the survey, in October 2009, the first in the list were the Australians, who spent a minimum of 7 hours connected to the page, beating Japan, which had 4 hours and the tenth position ("The Economist").

Here we find a type of user you call "cybervisitor", who decide to "visit" or to participate independently and voluntarily in the navigation of a website (in the case of leisure time). It also participates in social networks which are embedded in museums. This is converted on the network's knowledge of museums, with technology and personal choice of a user and generates an instance conducive to learning and media literacy.

The digital ecosystem is composed of a scenario and participants of the interaction on the Internet (Lopes Garcia) that show new forms of language, typical of Web 2.0 that carries a multimedia culture, from the hypertexts to users profiles.

2. "What's on your mind?"

We belong to the Web 2.0 and social network era: interaction between users and those with the tools advocated by this new stage of technological development. As says Santiago Tejedor, "the static conception of

traditional web sites evolve to other, marked by constant change, in many cases, managers should be aware of it (website) and users who purchase the roles of publishers and even generating content" (Tejedor 19). An era marked by the value of opinions, where institutions and individuals embody their spirit by writing their profiles using the network's own language and organization of knowledge.

Twitter was born in March 2006 and became a famous microblogging network that only allows 140 characters interaction, conceived from the idea of communication of SMS messages or mobile, in this case for the Internet. The user must answer the motivational question "What are you doing?" Over time, the website generated a closer call with the question "What's happening?", but with the same idea of inviting the user to write.

This quality is rescued by Facebook, called "status window", a space in which a person should sum up the mood, goals, interests or tasks of people involved in the web. (See example in Figure 1). The call "What are you thinking?" opens possibilities for communication beyond lecture on the tasks at hand at any given time.

Figure 1: Windows of Facebook

People use this web space and begin to realize their ideas. In this context emerges a new way to communicate on the Internet that converges into different realities or visions that may arise against a phenomenon. This scenario evidences the way in which each individual gives meaning to the world and the contemporary disciplines. As a result of this diversity, we find Internet from a website of supply and demand, as a museum with its pieces of art and visitors.

On February1st, 2010, Jim Richardson, (blogger at www.museummarketing.com), motivated the first international day of museums twitter (# followamuseum). One of the cybervisitors of this public space created by Richardson generated a new list (# followavisitor), driven by the view that museums should be closer to the people, and her list had this objective, that museums can follow people, rather than the contrary (Richardson).

Beyond the critical (see Figure 2), the feedback generated by a new type of visitor demonstrates the necessity of people to be heard, particularly those that actively pursue the topics that interest them, creating another kind of relationship with the institutions (based on direct dealings or personal self-satisfaction).

The conversation may lead to a rational aspect but can also be accompanied by excitement over what is published. Nothing more specific than a positive finger which means "I like" on Facebook or even the accompaniment of emoticons.

Figure 2: Twitter post international day of museums

Another characteristic of Web 2.0 is the use of pseudonyms by anonymous users, which, paradoxically, require to be treated like "somebody".

In conclusion, being on the network means access to a relationship with others through online conversations in which we can identify certain characteristics, as detailed below.

2.1.1 Synthesis

Concentrate the whole message in a nutshell consistently implies a new way of conceiving language, where ideas must be expressed clearly and succinctly, so that it is possible to say much with few words.

The message consists of new codes, is faster and more comfortable to draw an emoticon with a sad face to say "I feel sorry". Moreover, in the case of the examples of new literary genres denotes not much the use of emoticons, but new graphics based on the challenge of writing in 140 characters.

The most obvious example of the genre comes from Japan. Adolescent prose literature from Keitai Shoshetsu was born on mobile phones that have romantic stories made by authors that don't exceed 27 years. So great is his popularity that also has stories in anime, manga and other genres of Japanese pop culture.

From the western side we have the microstory, which is gaining more adherents. Twitter has a list (# historias_renfe - Figure 3) so that people using Renfe, the train service in Spain, may tell their stories of travel. Anyone can write from his iPhone while travels.

Example:
@microcuentos (www.twitter.com/microcuentos)
Gritó con todas sus fuerzas - Tóquenme, tóquenme, soy de verdad. Pero el resto de los maniquíes permaneció inmóvil.

However, the greatest example is the synthesis twiterature challenge is to summarize the great classics of history in 140 characters.

An example of graphic art on twitter: (Figure 4)

2.1.2 Hypertext

In digital literacy classes, the greatest concern as a teacher to teach students who associate the animal to the "mouse" hardware, is how to explain what a link is. For the student, the question arises, What is a link? Simple would be to say a link leads to deep into the content that the web offers and can be found in the pages as images, videos or texts in general. The next question is: did he understand?

Hypertext revolutionizes the way you view the world. What once was static becomes a systemic and holistic vision of a world full of connections. The saying "seeing is believing", which appeared to be as ruthless and trenchant, it is now taken to another level, since the concrete to the abstract idea web of relationships between concepts.

I choose to see a report of cars while searching for information on the different models. It's the new idea of obtaining content, choose and deepen it. Hypertext gives us more background on a generic idea.

The famous property hypertext link today has mutated as other network features.Huge web addresses can be transformed into a code with short url tools, thus supporting the transmission of data on the web, which may occur from the spaces of 140 characters in social networks to new tabs.

2.1.3 Interaction

It refers to the ability of feedback between people, institutions and the different topics. People can say and are interested in doing so. They have friends and followers who become aware of their opinions, adventures and misadventures by the network by accident.

Interaction is the ultimate expression of power for the views, where you can discuss with others about topics of interest or contingent, including some momentous things. Friends and followers are transformed

into a network and working groups, correspondents allied news of the day, even as they are called today by marketing a brand prescribers.

2.1.4 Immediacy

Times handled by Internet are the "here and now", there are no manufacturing or distribution times. What is meant to be concrete and almost automatically to the sound of a click.

2.1.5 The Election

The information at the speed of the network presents various options within minutes, synthetic and a constantly renewed supply of information. To choose reflects the skills of discernment to make a satisfactory decision. In other words, I can see something and deepen as appropriate. I create the content I want in a space domain by me. A single person with a computer is able to choose independently the amount of time devoted to their visit and their travels on the web. If we add this feature that most people surf the Internet for their own entertainment and enter to certain websites voluntarily, there is a willingness to that one person become interested and interpret the contents as he wishes.

As presented above, one could say that the social web tools are an opportunity to transgress the cultural content since it merged with new technologies, intellectual and leisure, creating a new way to conceptualize the writing and design.

In this sense, the small window of 140 characters, concentrated at the level of treatment of content, while summarizing and drawing a link, builds an information system related to an abstracted idea. It creates a user awareness for life, built on multiple realities and also gives rise to the opinion of the other.

3. What am I thinking ... I can not say

Juan Faerman, Argentine publicist wryly says about the possibility that no one can tell what is really thinking about when you type the phrase at Facebook status (Faerman 35). "What are you thinking? Give to say from "a coffee and a muffin" a "in my neighbor on the 4th floor"

If we think of a museum, MOMA for example, what would they say in 140 characters to more than 78 200 fans?

In this sense, the question asks how people use their language and the spaces facing the network, how we think of Internet use: if we consider it as an interactive tool where you can comment on topics of your interest and your friends and if we consider it as a space for debate, among other alternatives.

According to research, there are two types of users: those considered digital natives (Garcia Portillo and Romo 2), who have been raised regarding the use of technology, and the digital immigrants, those who are gradually inserted into the daily life of technologies. To the last ones, this world appears alien and disturbing. Although most recurrent question for anyone who surf the web or elsewhere is: is this place safe? Security and privacy are different things, but often come together on the Internet.

Regarding this, we offer an example. If your boss sees in your Facebook that you do not like his new orange tie, he can be offended. Or if he sees your photos of past holidays, he can fire you. The issue of social roles in different realities comes back. And it express concern over what and how someone express himself on the Internet, even finding people who have more than one profile on the network.

On previous years, Paola Facusse, Professor of Communication at the University BLABLABLA, told some stories of her family travel and related the pleasant surprise of the slogan of the Palm in New York, "internet is not a baby anymore ... PALM walk now."

Under this analogy we could say that the Internet now is learning to give its first words, and that social network is the first word it's composing. Phrases based on opinion and dissemination of monitoring institutions, where museums are also inserted.

Andrea Salinas

In an interview with Marcos Cuevas, creator of Layers, nodded that currently people online are babbling about the content they are presenting the network and they need tools to talk with 140 characters or more.

> "People on the Internet are responding emotionally to the content that exposes them to social networks and say I like this link, you must see it... But rarely find ways to generate rational conversation or a little more elaborated on the contended that is presented on the web" (Cuevas).

In this sense, the idea of social network based on the web where you can cross directly discuss the content you see on screen with your friends, of any page on which you want to create debate. For example: we want to present a picture of Superflat, Murakami art. On the same page where we post the picture we add one interview, find the opinion of an art critic and give ours and even start a discussion with some ideas of depth, since the concept of Layers allow this type of interaction. The slogan of the application is "Layers add to your conversation."

We find here a new form of conversation on the site, closest to the idea of cultural space. The visitor, in this case, has a new addition to the experience of visiting the museum, which happens to be just as informative and formative time of cultural treatment. We continue talking about a museum as a space that facilitates communication with the tools on the web. I find the content and I can grasp, make it my own.

This new form of conversation called layers that enables the convergence of different media and different people around the themes that concerned the network.

4. Conclusions

The advertising has worked for decades on the concept of insight into the relationship between the consumer and the brand (now known for its image, values and missions). In the Internet world, this relation is constant and present to the consumer, or as Lopes Vazquez (Lopes Vazquez) says, "is the ability of an emotional relationship in the treaty of Creative Strategies". The visitors are in contact and the message components, emotions and arguments become evident.

Whoever, who controls the social networks know what kind of relationship people have with the museum and what they expect from this. The interaction between them is not as distant as a reference can be customized in minutes and get straight to the visitor's screen. In this context, we put in discussion the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" because in 140 characters one expect to find the codes needed to decipher a narrative and form an opinion about it.

Insight is in the conversation of a social network and can be felt in various sections of the museum's website, phrases and creative pieces and also by the site usability and institutional communication with the user.

The possibility of knowing the views on the website and meet specific user needs in terms of cultural content opens two possibilities both for fans of museums, who will support and disseminate the material and create web discussions tuned to the institution ideology and issues, as for those interested in informal education through social networks on the different topics presented.

140 characters told in a public way imply certain capabilities on the part of individuals so they daily develop self-taught. It is expected, above all, that they can conceptualize a message in 140 characters.

The reality is conceived as expansive as we can see and access it via links that relate concepts to each end.

On the web, the museum as an institution and as a public space converges, similar to the outside reality. The museum profile differs from the original domain, where there are different areas or sections within it. The profile is presented more human, like someone you can access. Its total capacity is achieved with the merger between the tools of Web 2.0 and the first version, building an image that departs from the idea of a cold buildings and frames.

At the level of communication model we denote the interaction in small nodes; almost anyone can be so pervasive sharing in different places at once, if their interests and capabilities enable them to develop it.

This means an attempt to make sense of the world as a whole, where one person can represent many nodes at once. A reality is constructed by the various joint accounts on the web, in community and individually.

On a cultural level, new forms of expression generate new proposals for art. Andy Warhol said that supermarkets would be the greatest art galleries in the future, perhaps because he was unaware of the potential of Youtube.

Literature and art found the rhythm of the 140 characters. In addition to viewing the global possibilities of social networks as artistic constructions, build art from conversation.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

What Do We Know about On-line Museums? A Study about Current Situation of Virtual Art Museums

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1. Introduction

Admittedly, the increasing investment in R&D concerning virtual museums (VM) in the last years attests a concrete interest of the cultural market to enlarge and promote the offer of innovative museum services using ICT. Clearly, the conjunction of real and virtual world practices into integrated cognitive ecologies is not exceptionally original; e-learning has already left a legacy of promising issues; and it was not the only one. No matter: by invoking ICT in the conception of museum services, we affect the technological paradigm that underlies the cultural and/or patrimonial and/or educational intention of the museum. Indeed, through ICT, the museum material and role espouse new forms and functions insofar as not only objects but also representations of objects and even virtual creations can nowadays be considered as an exhibition material. The notion of visit is altered and extended to digital material. More generally, the massive diffusion and the domestication of new technologies lead to novel practices, and, correlatively, to profound changes in what we understand for and expect from a VM.

In a VM, semiotic production (museology schemata) and reception (reading strategies of the visitor) are both modified. The virtual visit, even if largely metaphoric, points out the importance of electronic documents, as far as visiting a VM turns into consulting a series of electronic documents. Thus, the first notion of VM became rapidly uncertain and somehow explosive: consecutive superposition, bridging, hybridization, mutation, associations, etc. of traditional museum practices, semiotic modes, market tensions and technological possibilities make today of the VM a complex notion that escapes from intuition and of course, from a shared definition.

Our aim in this paper is to contribute to a better understanding of the diversity and the evolution of VM. We use classic structuralism principles in order to outline a state of the art of today's VM. Clearly, as VM is a means of web display of almost any collection of objects, some limitations were necessary: our focus is on virtual art museums. The ultimate objective is to provide a more systematic and comprehensive vision of virtual art museums as well as the way in which they identify and see visitors. We have analyzed one hundred virtual art museums paying attention to their design, the type of information given, how this information is presented, some ergonomic aspects, and the specific uses of ICT that do enrich them with a real added value. We also discuss how all these aspects work together to give to visitors a global vision of the museum and to establish links with them.

2. General Classification of Virtual Museums

VM seem to escape from a universal definition. But a generic classification is perhaps still possible. Our basis for the proposed classification is a meticulous study of a corpus made up from one hundred on-line virtual art museums. Astonishingly, there are few comparison sources on this subject. Possibly because the

notion of VM seems intuitively clear. On the other hand, early 2000's and nowadays VM, due to technological advances and installed novel practices, are not the same.

In a previous study (Vidal) suggested three main categories of VM: showcases of real museums, websites of on-line resources, and virtual museums. The analysis in this work was conducted by considering, unfortunately, only ten websites; thus, the VM case seems to function as the category "others" classifications. (Bernier), in a series of studies, also develops her arguments over a small corpus of museums (also around ten); she is, mainly, concerned by real museums websites, even if she incidentally envisages "imaginary" museums as equally possible and motivating. We also, more or less, validate such categories. But a large corpus analysis allows some interesting refinements; it reveals, furthermore, the structural principles underlying the relationships between the categories. Definitely, we propose the following basic categories for VM:

- Real museums websites: They are the virtual counterpart of real museums, presenting information about the museums, and their collections and events. Their general purpose is the advertisement. The cultural information is rather limited (only a part of collections, restricted documentation, images of low resolution…); nevertheless, in most cases, the information allows to have an idea about the content of the museum. This category is the most important in terms of quantity of on-line museums (currently, nearly 80%). It comprises the category "museums showcases" in (Vidal) as a subcategory.

- Thematic museums: This group of museums comprises all websites (not related to a real museum) that exhibit real artworks under a thematic argument. The artworks are real but, in opposition to the previous category, the unity of space is not mandatory; in other words, the artworks are distributed over a more or less large geographic area. The virtual thematic museum offers a place where visitors can access to a collection abolishing physical distance constraints.

- Conceptual museums: They refer to art collections that are possible to visit on the Internet but not in the real world. They represent a concept of museum that it is possible to turn into reality thanks to ICT; in other words, artworks are ontologically dependent on ICT mediations. Their collections are essentially made up from digital artworks; but we also find some museums where the artworks are real but not accessible (e.g. coming out from private collections). This category is close to the category "virtual museums" in Vidal's classification.

- Meta-museums: This last basic category represents "museums of museums": its collections come out from collections of other museums (that generally, but not exclusively, are of the first category). Therefore, a meta-museum allows visits through several museums, not necessarily related between them. Meta-museums can offer special virtual exhibitions that are not possible to find in other museums. That is to say, meta-museums work somehow as portals or libraries of VM. This category generalizes the Vidal's "websites of on-line resources" category.

- The above classification gives already issues for transitional VM possibilities. They occupy some position between the types suggested. Three seem to be typical:

- The first concerns real museums branches; it circumscribes the area between real museums websites and thematic museums. It consists of websites of real museums that work as branches of a particular group of museums (e.g. Tate museums or Guggenheim museums). In the real world, these branches work as independent museums but they contain some common information. They present, therefore, some common characteristics with those of real museums websites and of thematic museums as well. But they conserve their own, distinct, characteristics.

- The second category includes reconstructions; it rises between thematic museums and conceptual museums. These reconstructions are based on ruins of real sites, generally archaeological, or fragments of real artworks which are taken as starting point for reconstructions by means of advanced image techniques. Still today, the number of such on-line cases is rather small but we can find interesting examples of art reconstructions in art DVDs and inside some VM (e.g. Eternal Egypt). Such reconstructions cannot be considered neither as thematic museums nor as conceptual museums, but as an intermediate step.

Transforming culture in the digital age

- Finally, the third intermediate category contains museums that can be found on Second Life (SL). Museums from this type lie between real museums websites and conceptual museums. In most cases, these museums are real museums that, apart from their own website, use SL as a complementary space of activities (e.g. the Louvre museum or the Frank Lloyd Right museum). These museums draw advantages from the possibilities offered by such virtual environments. Their collections consist of classical artworks (paintings, photographs, contemporary collages) or even digital creations (sculptures or videos).

3. Relationships between Different Categories of Virtual Museums

The four main categories and the three intermediate categories of VM addressed in the previous section present some interesting characteristics. They are related to each other according to the nature of their artworks, the use of ICT in presenting artworks collections and the ambition they reveal as cultural institutions. Four relationships seem paramount:

- Real museums websites and thematic museums are both based on presentation of real artworks which are accessible to the visitor.

- Real museums websites and conceptual museums are commonly based on the nature of the exhibited artworks (in both cases they are real, in the sense that they physically exist) and their wish of being considered as important cultural institutions. The difference between them has to be searched in the museum architecture.

- Thematic and conceptual museums are associated by the particular use of ICT. In both cases, ICT allows to exhibit their whole collection in a single (virtual) space.

- Finally, meta-museums and the rest of the VM categories (prime and intermediary) are associated by the "meta" function. Indeed, as meta-museums are also museum libraries, it is possible to find indexed any type of museum. Clearly, meta-museums are somehow artificial, but their category plays a central role in the VM topography insofar as they are unreservedly linked to all other VM categories.
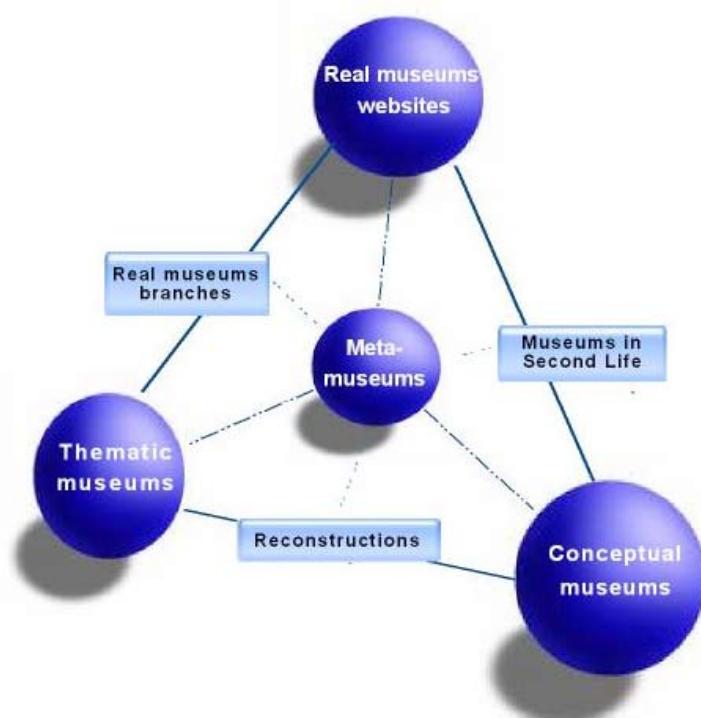

Figure 1: Complete representation of VM categories and links established between them.
Once done the description about each type of VM, let us see closely the main categories and particularly, their particular use of ICT in order to engage an interaction with visitors.

4. Real museums websites

A real museum website is the typical image that people have about VM today. This is certainly due to statistical data (almost 1 over 5 VM is of this type); but it is perhaps due to habitudes inherited from traditional practices: people imagine VM in terms of their experience through real museums. Most of the real museums websites use ICT in a similar way (the data base logic is prevailing; the image techniques are rather common, Web 2.0 applications standard etc.). But there also some key differences, noticeably in the Web design, the use of ICT to improve the visualisation of the pieces, and the educational tools included. On these differences, we may split real museum websites into:

- Museums showcases: In this case, it is even possible to distinguish between public museums websites (e.g. the Pergamon museum), museum websites that belong to small museums created from private collections with limited economic resources (e.g. the Museo Thyssen-Bornemiza), and museums that use the Internet as an advertising and tourist attraction tool (e.g. the Galleria Borghese or the Vatican museum). Websites of this subcategory present a simple and, in some cases, unpleasant Web design. The cultural information, usually scarce, is organized as a tree. The development gives the impression that their main purpose is not to open their collection to visitors but to attract more public to the real museum by advertising it over the Internet.

- "Sophisticated" museums websites: Museums within this subcategory are presented with a more sophisticated web design and are organized as a graph, which sometimes makes more difficult to find the information the visitor is looking for. The use of ICT is not standard; but most of them apply Flash or JavaScript in presenting their collections. It is also common to find museums that use tools like Quick-Time to offer virtual tours inside the real museum that may be sometimes spectacular (using tools like Shockwave). We notice, however, that these applications are only used for introductions (of the building and/or the collection) and not in the objective to offer new possibilities to explore the artworks (e.g. the Galeries Nationales of the Grand Palais).

It is a fact, real museums websites keep a total control both on the information offered and on the visit scenarios; visitors have to obey to the imposed logic if they want to discover the museum. Sometimes innovative, often impressive and even spectacular, the ICT seem to fail to offer a real added value to the cultural information. Indeed, almost all museums websites we visited offer rather poor information about their collections. The information provided is usually reduced to a picture accompanied with some technical information; sometimes the user can manipulate the proposed images, but the resolution is rarely high. The fear of loosing control over artworks and their interpretations seems to be a general rule. The emphasis is rather on the web design and on the announcement of special events by using attractive designs and Web 2.0 gadgets. The objective is clearly different: the core interest of such websites is not to satisfy cultural needs using internet but preferably to create a centre of attention for the real museum. This is also readable in their form of communication: in such cases the communication is almost unidirectional; the communication from the user to the museum is usually limited. Some Web 2.0 functionalities, generally weak from a cultural point of view, try to remediate to this lack. We notice that the idea of allowing users to share museum images and creating virtual communities inside the museum website using tools such as Facebook, Twitter or Flickr is more and more exploited (e.g. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Wikipedia_Loves_Art). Web 2.0 tools are, in fact, used more and more to encourage visitors and allow them to create their own collections. These initiatives seem to be well received by users and allow curators to know the opinion and the art preferences of the virtual visitors.

5. Thematic museums

Thematic museums are defined as websites presenting a collection of real world artworks organized by a common topic. Their significant characteristic is that they do not exist in the real world; but the artworks do exist physically somehow. In a certain sense, they correspond to the practice of thematic exhibitions of real museums. Their existence is Internet founded and, therefore, they seem to make a more ingenious use

of ICT than other VM. Surprisingly, thematic museums seem more concerned by detailed visions of the artworks. It is possible that this is because the advertising effect is not preeminent in their case. They often give the opportunity to the visitor to organize in different ways the proposed material and, consequently, to have different visions and interpretations about the presented artworks. We can further classify them into three subcategories:

- Database museums: They refer to websites that work as huge catalogues of artworks. They are not part of a real museum database but work as such. An emblematic case is the Web Gallery of Art, that presents a collection of more than 22 000 images of European artworks from the 10th to the 19th century that can be found in real museums from all around the world. Within this subcategory, visitors can access to information about artworks from different periods and schools, learn about their authors, compare pieces and themes, etc. Such websites can therefore be seen as fairly educational tools (for users looking for complementary information about particular artworks or as resources of images).

- Discovery museums: They are characterized by a particular use of ICT to present rich cultural information under high exploration flexibility. They present a collection of artworks that can be found in a more or less large geographical area. This area can be a country (like in the Eternal Egypt museum), an archaeological area (like in the Pompeii sites) or some continent(s) (like in the Museum of the Annunciation). They commonly propose an interactive map to visitors in order to identity the emplacement of the artworks (native or Google Maps based). Discovering and navigation are more open than the ones in the other subcategories and seem to correspond to parallel touristic peregrination. Such museums allow cross-category jumps between artworks; indeed, visitors may establish original connections between artworks independently of the objective criteria under which they are indexed; they can, thus, build up there own interpretation of the artworks that may be quite different from the official one, if any (see Figure 3). We find also thematic museums with a standard navigational flexibility but with an emphasis to the information about the artworks allowing a multipoint of view vision of their collections. In both cases, discovery museums put the accent on a culturally refined presentation of the information (images and/or additional text information).

- Cultural websites: Museums from this subcategory are like discovery museums but instead of being limited to artworks, they also allow to discover other cultural aspects of the geographical area where the artworks are located. An example is given by the Virtual Museum of Japanese Arts. In this museum, curators have considered important to present not only art pieces but also traditional aspects of the Japanese culture (e.g. the tea ceremony, some martial arts, or elements of the art of gardens). Under the acculturation argument, we discern here more clearly the touristic target.
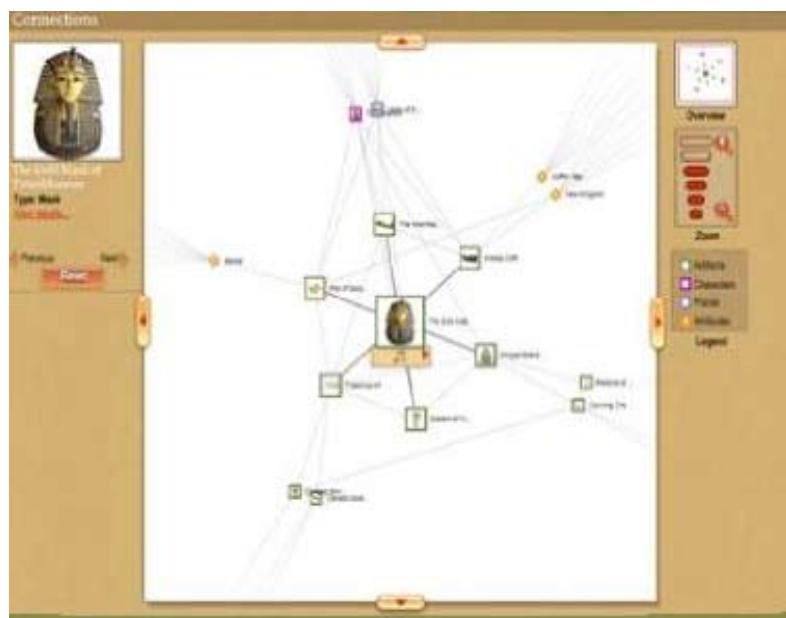
Figure 2: A snapshot of an application which connects several artworks allowing personalized visiting paths when discovering the resources of the Eternal Egypt museum.

6. Conceptual museums

The term "conceptual" seem appropriate, insofar as the artworks are not accessible for such museums. The term "concept" is not used here with the same aim as in psychology or philosophy, but to designate some materialization of an idea. A conceptual museum can be seen as a representation of a concept of museum which can be turned into reality only by means of a specific use of ICT.

Conceptual museums can be classified into two subcategories, based on their objective:

- "Classical" museums: These are conceptual museums that exhibit a collection of real artworks in a virtual building. They are conceived as if they were real museums. Two clear examples of conceptual museums are the MUVA and the Gabon Art museum. In the first case, curators explain that the museum (virtual) building was conceived by a team of architects with the aim of creating a good environment to present the collection. For instance, the floor plans and the preliminary architecture studies of the museum are even provided. The result is that while visiting the MUVA the visitor can easily imagine that he/she is inside a real museum, with its information desk, its exhibition rooms, the hall, etc. (see Figure 4). In the Gabon Art museum, the collection is distributed in several virtual rooms, miming a real museum. We discern a clear wish to take part in an institutional concurrence (by virtual means), and the will to preserve some traditional museum practices. In both cases, the collections consist of real artworks of national artists which are not exhibited in a real museum. Conceptual museums are also similar to real museums in two other important features: (i) the way they present their collections (which changes from one museum to another) and ii) the course of the visit (which is pre-determined by the museum curators). In this sense, the Gabon Art museum is a very good example because the visit is fully conditioned by a guided tour and it is not possible to modify it. Even if somehow different, this loss of freedom in the way to visit the museum collection is also evident in the MUVA; ICT are not developed in order to offer a real freedom to visit the museum and to relate artworks of different exhibition rooms; they are exclusively used to build up the 3D museum and to offer the information given by curators, artists, and professional critics of art.

- Experimental museums: Similarly to discovery museums, experimental museums also present a new concept of museology: they are conceived as places of reception and creation. In fact, even if these museums usually have a simple Web design and a simple way to present information about the collections,

they offer to visitors the opportunity to directly participate in the museum collection by incorporating new artworks or by allowing participations to open discussions (e.g. the Museum of Contemporary art). It is also possible to find information about their projects (e.g. the Alternative museum) or they give the possibility to interact with their digital artworks (e.g. the MOWA). This subcategory opens to a very new concept of "virtual museology".
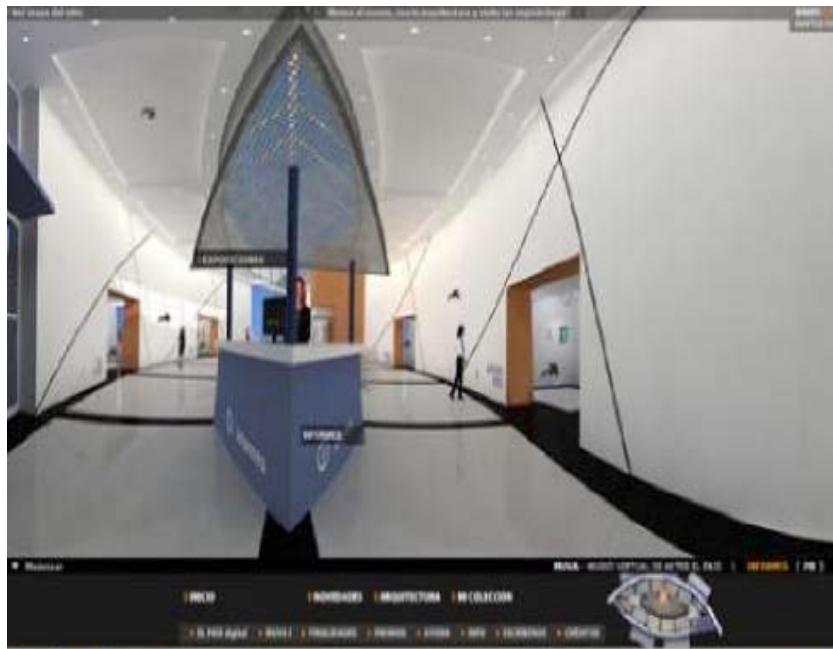

Figure 3: A snapshot of the MUVA museum

7. Meta-museums

We saw that meta-museums are websites that work as libraries of virtual museums. At the same time they can also work as museums by themselves, offering virtual exhibitions that are only possible to visit on their websites. In our long-term research, we found only one meta-museum: the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC). As a meta-museum, the VMC presents a huge quantity of information about all exhibitions, collections, educational activities, etc., from all Canadian museums (art, history and science museums). But it also possesses its own virtual temporary exhibitions (see Figure 5). The vast quantity of information offered, which is, generally, of different natures, makes of meta-museums an important source of information. They function as real museums portals. However, the navigation coherence becomes delicate if not complicate. This difficulty comes, probably, from the different logics that underlie each referenced museum. In principle, meta-museums give ground for intensive application of ICT. Nevertheless, a global/local regulation needs more attention from an ergonomic point of view. Thus, the VMC works, for the moment, as a big library of websites and databases that are not coordinated each other. The idea is smart, but the ICT are still not fully exploited insofar as the meta-museum has no control on the referenced museums and their conception.

Figure 4: A snapshot of the image gallery of the VMC. In this gallery it is possible to visit artworks coming out from different museums from Canada

8. Discussion

Our analysis of today's VM makes apparent that even if it is possible to classify them in different categories, they are not present in the same proportion over the Internet. From the one hundred VM visited, we found seventy-six real museums websites, seven thematic museums, six conceptual museums and only one meta-museum. The remaining ten belong to one of the three intermediate groups (see Figure 5).

This major disproportion between the different categories may be explained from the fact that VM were initially born as showcases of real museums and rather as an advertising tool. The market was thus quickly occupied from institutional logic. But the idea of VM has since considerably evolved, sometimes against the influence real cultural institutions exert at the virtual environment. Still today, the dominance of traditional visiting practices in the conception of VM is still obvious; it discretely shapes the way users or researchers use and study virtual museums. In fact, when talking about VM, we typically tend to think about real museums websites. This influence has limited the creation of other types of VM, in the sense that real museums websites have "imposed" a pre-established vision about the way the collections have to be exhibited and the information has to be presented. They also imposed a definite economical model, based on well-identified institutional targets that, for long, restrained alternative developments of the idea of VM.

Real museums websites
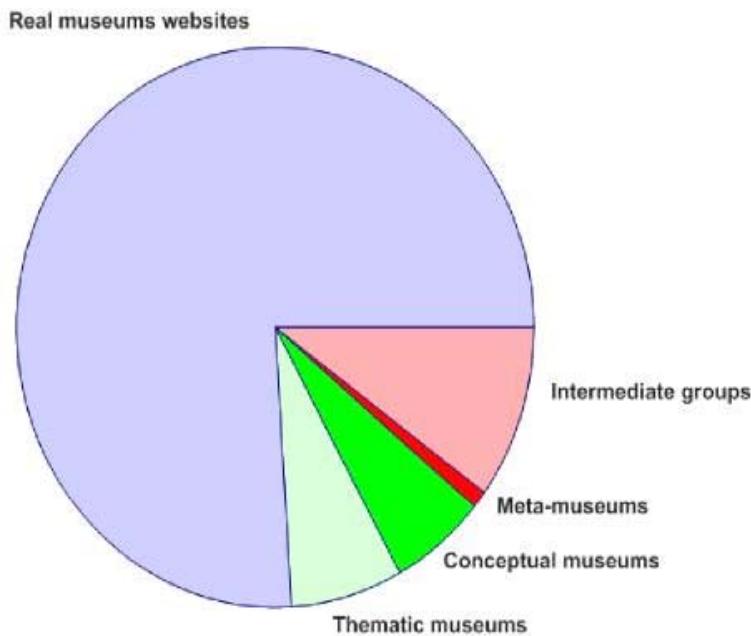
Figure 5: Pie chart of Virtual museums

9. Conclusion

A general classification of virtual museums is not an easy task. We find nowadays a huge number of VM on-line. The exceptional cases are rather rare; what may appear exceptional are some local features or aspects (a function, an educational game, some traits of the design, the quality of images or of the associated textual material, etc.). But we assist to a constant evolution of VM; not only because ICT evolve, but also because of a shift of cultural market, that gradually incorporates new intellectual and social practices. It is, perhaps, possible to predict that the realm of real museums websites will decrease in the following years. Our study gives issues to understand the reasons, by exploring the concept of VM in an integrated manner. Moreover, it allows visualising the research challenges, the developmental opportunities and the structural oppositions that legitimate them. The only regret is to see how DB conception imposes constraints on the allowed visits.

We believe that thematic museums, and more particularly discovery thematic museums, are the category of virtual museums that present an authentic added value from the point of view of the cultural offer. Conceivably, because they can liberate the notion of visit from traditional constraints, offering more refined reading strategies.

10. Museums

Real museums websites

Museums showcases

BENAKY MUSEUM (http://www.benaki.gr)
DAVIS MUSEUM AND CULTURAL CENTER (http://www.davismuseum.wellesley.edu)
GALLERIA BORGHESE (http://www.galleriaborghese.it)
GOMENTEE MUSEUM (http://www.gemeentemuseum.nl)
IVAN (http://www.ivam.es)
MUSEE DE L'ORANGERIE (http://www.musee-orangerie.fr)
MUSEE RODIN (http://www.musee-rodin.fr)

MUSEE ROYAUX DES BEAUX-ARTS de Belgique (http://www.fine-arts-museum.be)

MUSEII CAPITOLINI (http://www.museicapitolini.org/)

MUSEO MURAL DIEGO RIBERA (http://www.museomuraldiegorivera.org/)

MUSEO SOROLLA (http://museosorolla.mcu.es)

MUSEO THYSSEN-BORNEMIZA (http://www.museothyssen.org)

MUSEUU NACIONAL DE BELAS ARTES (http://www.mnba.gov.br)

NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF ATHENS
(http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/1/eh151.jsp?obj_id=3249)

PERGAMON MUSEUM (http://www.smb.museum/smb/standorte)

REMBRANDTHUIS (http://www.rembrandthuis.nl)

THAILAND MUSEUM (http://www.thailandmuseum.com/)

UFFIZI GALLERY (http://www.uffizi.com) and (http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it)

VATICAN MUSEUM (http://mv.vatican.va/3_EN/pages/MV_Musei.html)

 "Sophisticated" museums websites

ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO (http://www.ago.net)

ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (http://www.artgallery.sa.gov.au)

ART INSTITUT OF CHICAGO (http://www.artic.edu/aic)

AUCKLAND ART GALLERY (http://www.aucklandartgallery.govt.nz)

BEAVERBROOK ART GALLERY (http://www.beaverbrookartgallery.org)

BRITISH MUSEUM (http://www.britishmuseum.org)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM (http://www.brooklynmuseum.org)

CENTRE POMPIDOU (http://www.centrepompidou.fr)

FUNDACIO MIRO (http://fundaciomiro-bcn.org)

GALERIES NATIONALES DU GRAND PALAIS PALAIS (http://www.grandpalais.fr)

HERMITAGE (http://www.hermitagemuseum.org)

HONG KONG MUSEUM OF ART (http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/Museum/Arts/index.html)

ISTAMBUL MODERN (http://www.istanbulmodern.org/)

KYOTO NATIONAL MUSEUM (http://www.kyohaku.go.jp)

LOS ANGELES COUNTRY MUSEUM OF ART (http://www.lacma.org)

MACBA (http://www.macba.cat)

MNAC (http://www.mnac.cat)

MANCHESTER ART GALLERY (http://www.manchestergalleries.org)

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM (http://www.metmuseum.org)

MOCA SHANGHAI (http://www.mocashanghai.org)

MOMA (http://www.moma.org)

MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINES ARTS (http://www.mbam.qc.ca)

MUSEE DU LOUVRE (http://www.louvre.fr)

MUSEE MAGRITE MUSEUM (http://www.musee-magritte-museum.be)

MUSEE D'ORSAY (http://www.musee-orsay.fr)

MUSEE FABRE (http://museefabre.montpellier-agglo.com/)

MUSEE NATIONAL EUGENE DELACROX (http://www.musee-delacroix.fr)

MUSEO DE ARTE DE LIMA (http://museoarte.perucultural.org.pe)

MUSEO DEL PRADO (http://www.museodelprado.es)

MUSEO FRIDA KAHLO Casa Azul (http://www.museofridakahlo.org)

MUSEO NACIONAL DE BELLAS ARTES (CUBA) (http://www.museonacional.cult.cu)

MUSEO REINA SOFIA (http://www.museoreinasofia.es)

MUSEU DALI (http://www.salvador-dali.org)

MUSEU DE ARTE BRASILEIRA (http://www.faap.br/museu/museu.htm)

MUSEUM DE ARTE DE MACAU (http://www.artmuseum.gov.mo)

MUSEUM OF CAPE TOWN (http://www.iziko.org.za)

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART (SYDNEY) (http://www.mca.com.au)
MUSEUM OF FINES ARTS BOSTON (http://www.mfa.org)
NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF CHINA (http://www.namoc.org)
NATIONAL GALLERY (http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk)
NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA (http://nga.gov.au)
NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA (http://www.gallery.ca)
NATIONAL GALLERY OF SCOTLAND (http://www.nationalgalleries.org)
NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA (http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au)
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART (http://africa.si.edu)
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SINGAPORE (http://www.nationalmuseum.sg/nms/nms_html/index.asp)
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART (http://www.nmwa.go.jp)
NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY (http://www.portrait.gov.au)
PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART (http://www.philamuseum.org)
PUSHKIN MUSEUM (http://www.museum.ru/gmii)
RIJKSMUSEUM (http://www.rijksmuseum.nl)
ROYLICHTENSTEIN FUNDATION (http://www.lichtensteinfoundation.org)
SILICON VALLEY ART MUSEUM (http://www.svam.org/index.html)
SFMOMA (http://www.sfmoma.org)
TEL AVIV MUSEUM OF ART (http://www.tamuseum.com)
VAN GOGH MUSEUM (http://www3.vangoghmuseum.nl)
VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM (http://www.vam.ac.uk)

Thematic museums

Database museums

FINES ARTS OF HUNGRARY (http://www.hung-art.hu)
KING PADIBASTETS'S TOMB MUSEUM (http://www.virtual-egyptian-museum.org)
WEB GALLERY OF ART (http://www.wga.hu)
Discovery museums
ETERNAL EGYP (http://www.eternalegypt.org)
MUSEUM OF THE ANNUNCIATION (http://www.annunciation.gr)
POMPEI SITES (http://www.pompeiisites.org)
Cultural websites
VIRTUAL MUSEUM OF JAPANESE ARTS (http://web-japan.org/museum)
Conceptual museums
"Classical" museums
GABONART (http://www.gabonart.com)
MUVA (http://muva.elpais.com.uy)
Experimental museums
FUNDACION TELEFONICA GALERIA VIDA
(http://www.fundacion.telefonica.com/arteytecnologia/certamen_vida/galeria_vida.htm)
MOWA (http://www.mowa.org)
THE ALTERNATIVE MUSEUM (http://www.alternativemuseum.org)
THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART (http://www.museum-of-temporary-art.com)
Meta-museums
VIRTUAL MUSEUM OF CANADA (http://www.virtualmuseum.ca)
Real museums branches
PAUL GETTY INSTITUTE (http://www.getty.edu)
GUGGENHEIN (http://www.guggenheim.org)
MUSEE PICASSO (PARIS) (http://www.musee-picasso.fr)

MUSEU PICASSO (BARCELONA) (http://www.museupicasso.bcn.cat)

TATE (http://www.tate.org.uk)

Museums on Second Life

BAYSIDE BEACH ART GALLERIA MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART (http://slurl.com/secondlife/Flyingroc\%20Chung/72/124/35/\%20?title=Bayside\%20Beach\%20Galleria)

FRANK LLOYD RIGHT MUSEUM (http://slurl.com/secondlife/DiLemma\%20City/60/241/22)

KIKU ART GALLERY (http://slurl.com/secondlife/Amatsu\%20Shima/125/165/22/?title=Kiku\%20Gallery\%20at\%20Amatsu\%20Shima)

LOUVRE MUSEUM ON SECOND LIFE (http://slurl.com/secondlife/Tompson/153/96/100/?title=The\%20Second\%20Louvre\%20Museum)

SIGRAPH SPACE TIME CREATION (http://slurl.com/secondlife/BGSU\%20Creation/164/180/28

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Re-Creating 'Natural' Heritage: Landscape Perception and Outdoor Tourism in the Web 2.0

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1. Landscape or recreation of environment

Landscape is a very complex phenomenon. Under a geomorphological view landscape is the result of years of progressive and deep changes. Forces of nature are sometimes abrupt and unexpected but the most of the geomorphological transformations are too slow to be appreciated at a simple glance. This view and knowledge of landscape must be done as an expert knowledge, supported with scientific techniques and procedures. Under a historical, economical, cultural, political views landscape can also be explored scientifically as a transformation of territory consequence of human activity. In fact landscape seems to be more the result of a infinity of forces working in a plastic material. But landscape is also much more than a product composed of several layers, it is an aesthetic experience, that what we appreciate as landscape is a view – a cut – of different parts that have some meaning for us (Simmel 270; Turri 218). In short landscape can be defined as "all the visible features of an area of countryside or land, often considered in terms of their aesthetic appeal" ("New Oxford American Dictionary"). Thus we can talk about beautiful (a birch wood), terrifying (a run down city), spoiled (a dried lake) landscapes, keeping in mind that there is some kind of ideal image being used as rule for comparison that leads to aesthetic canons given by social and cultural values. In other words, we could say it as the following, what has value is seen and what is seen has value. Alain Roger says that landscape is not neutral but a social construction, a way of viewing and experiencing a territory that acquires sense to the person by using some artistic patterns socially given (Roger).

Landscape is a way of seeing, a way of recreating environment. The way we see is socially given landscape is a political question ("Foro do Instituto de estudos das identidades"). How a piece of land (water – sea, lake – or sky, I would add) gains an aesthetic value, which patterns are socially reproduced, which institutionally, which belong to minorities or specific groups and which belong to mere individual taste is involved into power forces between social actors.

2. Touristic multi-landscape in the Era of Internet

The aim of this paper is not to discuss and create a theory of perception and landscape but to approach to the perceived value of landscape and to identify what elements give and subtract value to a landscape. Images of landscape are one of the main resources used in the touristic promotion of a place. Tourism is an experience with a deep aesthetic component, and specially for outdoor tourism landscapes plays a central role, thus many outdoors activities such hiking, skiing, hang gliding, etc. are the way of enjoying landscapes: the view can be the reward or at least a very important part of the experience.

A landscape photo is not a neutral representation, it is a socially given view of an environment, taking a picture is not a mere physical procedure; someone takes pictures. A picture of a landscape for touristic promotion is telling us something not only about the environment itself and where the photo was taken, but also about what has value for the touristic promoters.

Nowadays tourism is a wide extended practice in developed economies. Tourism is becoming worldwide a powerful economic activity where touristic consumers have the opportunity to choose between a huge number of destinations. And in recent years we have also seen how the Internet has been entering in our lives and changing the rules of the touristic market. But Internet doesn't mean only new ways of buying products and more access to information; the birth of the web 2.0 (usage of web technologies and not the technologies themselves) (O'Reilly) has changed the ways touristic destinations are represented, or how landscape is recreated. The fact of sharing information on destinations and photos between visitors in on-line services (like Panoramio, Flickr, Spottedbylocals, Qype, etc. plus internet forums or private blogs) is transforming the access to information and the origin of information. Institutions and touristic services are still providing the ground representation of destinations, even marketing campaigns are the more important tool of creating and transmission of landscape as consumer product, but visitors are adding layers of information to these institutional or promotional images of destinations. And landscapes are becoming more complex, richer in meaning and given information. The implicit values of the representation may correspond or vary between images. Let me present a typical example. A photo of a Malediven Beach with the characteristic attributes: sea, palm tree, sand and no trace of civilization or human presence (see Photo 1).

Photo 1: Malediven Beach by KingKurt22, 2008 (Creative Commons)

This photo was taken by a visitor and uploaded at Wikimedia Commons which defines itself "a media file repository making available public domain and freely-licensed educational media content (images, sound and video clips) to everyone (Wikimedia Commons)." In spite of this photo being non-commercial and having no promotional purpose, it represents the common image of a paradise island, very common in touristic advertisement. Another photo (see Photo 2), also taken by a visitor and uploaded at Wikimedia Commons show us also a 'cut' of a beautiful Maldivian Islands but from a different perspective, in this case a photo to the back (not to the front) in which we can see more human trace.

Photo 2: Photographs from Maldives by Nevit Dilmen, 2008 (Creative Commons)

It is true that the last two photos could be used for promotional purposes; they transmit the 'feeling' of the Maldives Islands as touristic destination. But it is possible to add more and more visual layer and more meanings that sometimes will be in harmony with the iconic image of a paradise destination. The next photo (see Photo 3) is also a landscape, but not a picturesque one; a plane crosses the sky over the island. A piece of information is given that would not be normally presented as interesting for visitors.

Photo 3: Photographs from Maldives by Nevit Dilmen, 2008 (Creative Commons)

In short, the values underlying the representations of environment (landscape) lead to different meanings, some of then will be used in institutional representations of environment (i.e. landscape for touristic promotion) and/or in no institutional representations of environment. Depending on the purposes of the social actor (institutional, non institutional) some 'cuts' (Photos 1, 2, 3) can be chosen as iconic images. Some of these images can be common for both purposes or the same values and meanings found in the same images, but sometimes the same values and meanings may find a visual representation through other icons ('what represents paradise, a palm tree or an airplane?'), other times same icons are linked to diver-

gent values (beach: relax or tediousness?) or different values and meanings are relevant (local people at the market or me at the beach?) (see Figure 1). The web 2.0 creates a multilayer representation of environments with crossing values.
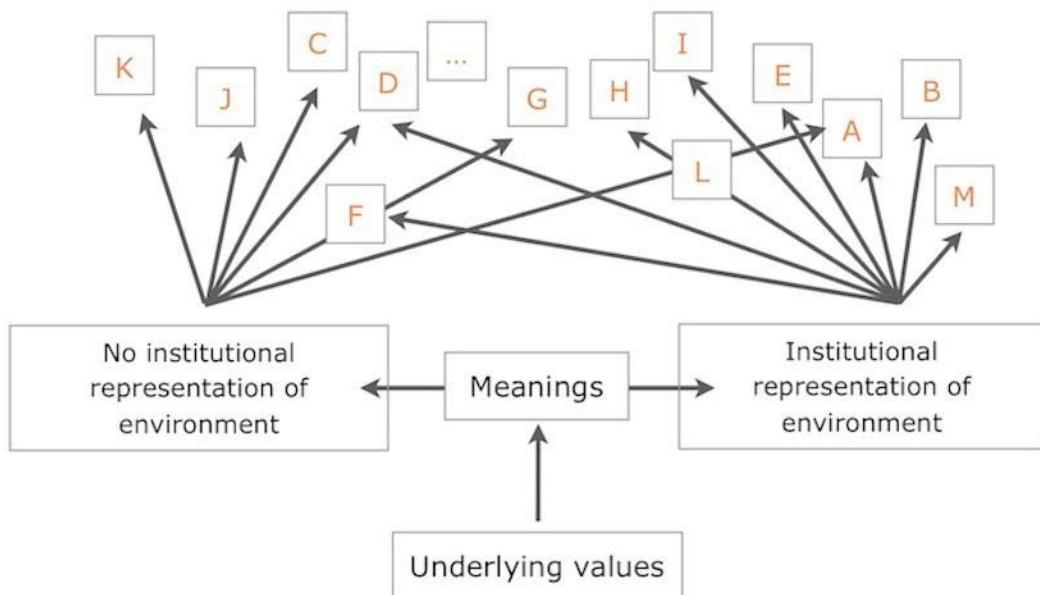

Figure 1: Images with meaning for no institutional and institutional representations of environment

Some years ago photo sharing was limited to small groups and audiences. Due to the explosion of possibilities of sharing information on the web, the repository of images from particular in progressively growing and with it the different meanings given to the element chosen to be part of the landscape. My hypothesis is that the richer (more full of meaning) a place is the more interesting it would be for more people – even in the case the underlying values were the same – from the landscape to the multi-landscape. An environment can become a landscape or many, in a single landscape only a voice is talking, in a multi-landscape many voices are constructing it. The tourism industry may profit of it, and we'll find a way of saving natural and cultural heritage making environment deeper in meaning.

3. Applying multi-landscapes concept to outdoor tourism

In March 2009, an organized group of hikers were asked to take some pictures of the nicest, of the most unpleasant and of the most typical images during some outdoor walks in Galicia (Northwest Spain). The aim of this project was to document how hikers perceive landscape in order to research the touristic possibilities of this region.

One of the destinations was a protected area at the border between Portugal and Galicia. In fact this area is comprised of two natural parks at both sides of the border (National Park of Peneda-Gerês with 702.9 km² at the Portuguese side and Natural Park Baixa Limia-Serra do Xurés with km² at the Galician side with 297,6 km²). The park is a highland area with massive granitic outcrops, poor vegetation and with a small population traditionally living off of raising cattle. Granite and water (used also for construction) have played an important role in the image and representation of this area, these two elements being the icons in the images of landscape (see Photo 4, this photo is very similar to one use by the local tourism agency for promotional purposes):

Transforming culture in the digital age

David Casado-Neira

Photo 4: View of Albufeira da Caniçada – Vila do Gerês – Terras de Bouro
by Own Work the author, s.d. (Creative Commons)

After analyzing the photos of landscape used by the tourism agencies (Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e da Biodiversidade – in Portugal – and Turgalicia – in Galicia–) for promotion some patterns were found:

- There are three main characteristics: animals, villages and mountains in the distance.

- Animal motives: A limited serial of animal portraits from the common fauna (like Aquila chrysaetos, Vulpes vulpes, Rana perez, Lutra lutra…) and photos of cattle herds in open spaces are the third motive attending to the number of cases.

- Human motives: The images play a mayor attention to 'cuts' without human presence. If some trace of human presence or civilization is offered it is always with photos of vernacular architecture (in a mystification of folk culture) without human figures. In this case we can find far photos of villages at the mountains or photos of irrelevant singular buildings (stone granaries, bread oven…).

- Mountains in the distance motives: Perhaps the most present and important motive of all three. Due the granitic nature of the ground and the poor vegetation, granite outcrops are the most characteristic element in landscape. Peneda is internationally known as an important rock-climbing destination. Curiously, no climbing mountains are showed, the mountains are always presented as scenery where only the distance plays a role. These images are presented like the paintings of the romanticism, where the forces of the nature can be felt, granite playing the main role.

These are the main motives in the representation of the natural park(s), no significant differences were found between the Portuguese and the Galician landscapes. One thing is true the elements to play with are limited and a cultural similarity can be found on both sides of the border. The institutional landscape is a visit card to visitors, but for us the question now is if the touristic promotion of the region is based on images and

representations with sense, emotionally exciting for the visitors. Our aim is not to detect what elements can be taken in consideration for future promotion campaigns, but to show that it is possible to create a multi-landscape with the same elements gaining in meanings. Thus the web 2.0 makes possible the diversification of representations and spreading then to potential visitors further over the institutional promotions.

Our group of hikers was asked to take some pictures at the natural park under three categories: nice, un-pleasant and typical. The intention of using these categories was to detect first, which elements have a more positive and pleasant incidence (assertive icons), which have a negative connotation (no assertive icons), and which are considered the representation of the most characteristic – in some case photos of typical items were also included under the category nice and even unpleasant (reinforcer icons).

Some similarities but also divergences were found between visitors images and institutional ones. This experience showed us that the way territory is perceived and represented (landscape) by the touristic pro-moters wasn't the same that the 'ones' given by the hikers. Hikers were paying attention to elements, in some cases, also used in touristic promotion, for example in local museums, but, in other cases, to other ones. Initially it was expected that the participants would reproduce the same aesthetic patterns present in the promotional pictures, thus beautiful landscapes according to some ideal images based on common values: pure nature, views with skyline or distance, vernacular architecture and the kind of elements associated to a idealized rural non-urban environment. It is true, some of the images could fulfill the pattern of the existing promotional images and even with a higher artistic intensity, but a majority of the others are introducing not only new and complementary elements on the 'cuts' but also different views.

- Nice (assertive icons): This is the most interesting category for the purposes of promotion, under nice people take the pictures the thing better transmit the esprit of the place and would be more likely shared with other. People like to show the pleasant (nice) and genuine (typical) aspects of the visited place as evidence of being there. Critical images are not very common as souvenir. Under the category nice we can found the conventional pics when photographing mountains in the distance, but not when photograph-ing other motives like other land views, vegetation, or human presence (no animals were photographed, perhaps due to the difficulty of taking these kind of pictures when hiking). If the motive are mountains it reproduces the same schema that the promotional images. Perhaps it is the most archetypical icon, where the socially given images are stronger, due the impact of media, national education and artistic canons. Or in other words the impact and persistence of romanticism in contemporary societies when see natural and/or rural environments. In Photo 5 we may appreciate an example of an conventional image, similar to the ones used for promotional purposes in the use of elements (granite an water) but with regular light conditions.

David Casado-Neira

Photo 5: Serra do Xurés by Juan Carlos del Carmen García, 2009 ©

Photos 6 and 7 are two examples of new elements introduced: vegetation and people as main motives, other motives like water, rivers or fields are also taken into consideration. The visitors are offering a wider view of the park by introducing all these new 'cuts'. It is possible that they are not showing the most characteristic parts of the park, but they provide a more complex image of the environment by introducing complementary elements, not necessary specific of the park, which enlarges our visual experience, and power of landscape evocation. In Photo 7, it is difficult to know if the nicest is the backdrop of the buildings, the idea of sharing a day of walking with other, or both.
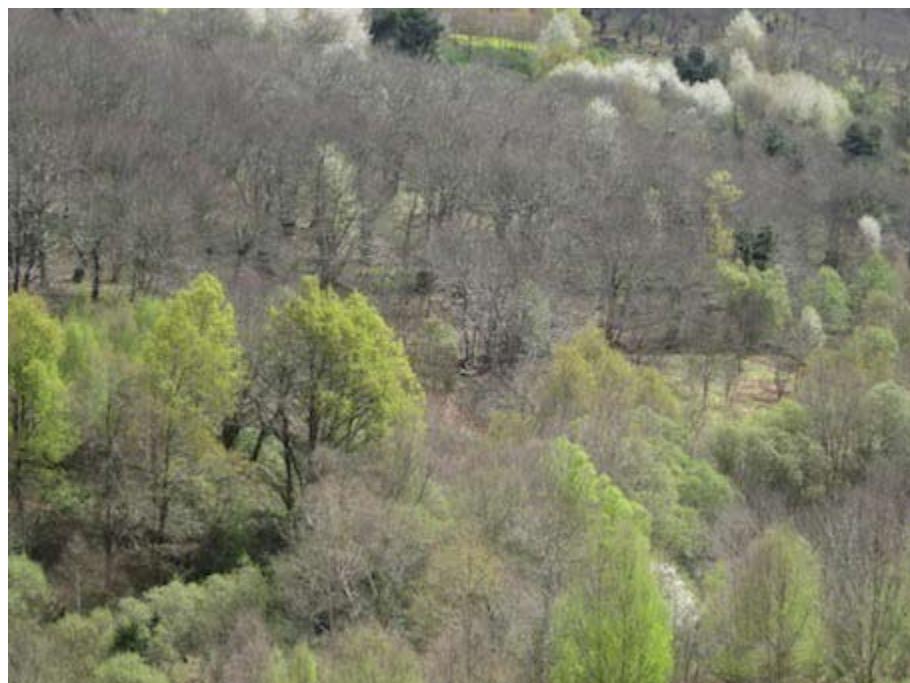
Photo 6: Multi-chromatic forest by Marco Quintas, 2009 ©

Photo 7: Salgueiro by Eiras, 2009 ©

- Unpleasant (non assertive icons): The reason for including this atypical category is to detect the items that should be in short corrected in the park. As said before photos showing disapproving opinions are seldom shared, if not used specifically for critical purposes. This category gains its entire sense in connection with what is typical; can be something disgusting typical? The unpleasant has to do with destroyed nature (forest fires), trash and junk in fields (see Photo 8), buildings in bad condition or the use of non-traditional materials (like granite, tiles and wood) in construction. It is very easy to find these kind of images all around the country in Galicia (and less in Portugal). The ideal image of the countryside based on the consecution of a harmony between humans and environment is here visually broken with a very pragmatic use of material: recycled and cheap construction materials are often used with a logic that denies the aesthetic values behind perception of rural landscape. In fact we would say, for local inhabitants this image reproduces nature in production, and beautiful is that what produces some tangible good. All the unproductive things, in these terms, have no value. Landscape representations in touristic are definitely based on the romantic perception of rural landscape.

Photo 8: Junk and gate to the field by Eiras, 2009 ©

David Casado-Neira

This use of environment without ideal aesthetic value is considered one of the typical characteristic of Galician mentality, in the last years a neologism was created to give name to this phenomenon: *feísmo* (uglification) (Baamonde). Due its impact in tourism and rejection of this practice by part of the population, uglification is subject of research, Internet forums, publications and diverse initiatives ("El feísmo en Galicia"; "Consello da Cultura Galega"). Initiatives like the one lead by the most important regional newspaper, La Voz de Galicia, has a section in its online publication where readers can send photos showing examples of uglification.

- Typical (reinforcing icons): Typical is not the same than picturesque, because uglification plays an important role in the construction of Galician identity (Gondar) Typical can be either nice or unpleasant, as blend of positive and negative perceived elements. Under this category the images can be placed into these two main lines, but in some examples without a clear splitting line. Now animals are again present, but not as evidence of the biodiversity and biological interest of the park: common cattle (cows, goats and donkeys) gain the attention of hikers. They are animals easy to find, to photograph and normally they are contextualized in a surrounding environment with other elements that compose a wider landscape view. They are common animals in common situations, an image of the role of in everyday rural lives; it seems that more that the animals themselves, interesting is their evocation of farming and rural ways of living. Furthermore, architectonical elements are also taken into consideration: examples of vernacular architecture (houses, granaries, fountains, stone walls…) in use or abandoned but full of romantic land; vernacular buildings with additions of new or recycled materials (uglification); photographs of fields as samples of humanized environment but in harmony with nature (in these photos there are no traces of uglification); close views of vegetation, in many cases of wild yellow gorse – *ulex europaeus* – used in traditional farming and very common at the mountains, and very appreciated as wild flower, specially in spring when the country side is covered with it yellow flowers; stone walls, widely used to divide the small slots for agriculture; junk (pieces and refuse of clothes, engines, construction materials, empty cans, etc); and wind farms. Wind farms have become in the last century a symbol (quasi a brand) of our mountains, in many areas of highlands (a big portion of the country) the top of the hills are crowned with windmills along kilometers. Thus the wind parks can be seen from very far distances, dominating the landscape. In short, with exception of cattle, all the other motives could been found in the other two categories (nice and unpleasant).

Photo 9: Wind farm by Marco Quintas, 2009 ©

Photo 10: Granery by Pamela Pérez, 2009 ©

Promotional landscape is here enhanced with complementary visions, values, meanings and photos of environment, other or richer landscapes are created. Visitors offer their personal interpretation of the canonical landscape, giving us an evaluation of its aesthetic value and showing us a more complex and useful view of the park, moving from landscape to multi-landscape.

4. Further application in outdoor touristic promotion

Some months after these photo-taking actions we have used this initial experience to elaborate a plan of outdoor tourism promotion based on the web 2.0. Some contextualization is needed here: hiking in Galicia is characterized by three facts: (i) as a popular outdoor activity that is relatively new in Galicia due to the lack of a walking tradition (or the rejection of this tradition till nowadays), (ii) the existing hiking routes have a shortage of maintenance and of information, (iii) visitors are often giving a different value to the territory (creating a landscape), and sometimes it is contradictory to the value attributed by the touristic promotors.

The basic ideas are: (i) to move the information on the hiking routes to a web accessible to the general public, (ii) to turn the visitor into the main generator of representations of territory (from user/touristic consumer to creator) by sharing photographs, avoiding institutional promotion and representations, (iii) to create a feedback service between users, inhabitants and touristic promotors in order to redefine landscape. The tools used for those purposes are: Wikiloc, Panoramio and Wikipedia.

Our goals to contribute: (i) to build between visitors and touristic promoters a hiking culture and route net in Galicia, (ii) to redefine landscape to be attractive as outdoor touristic resource helping to the preservation of heritage (what elements of the 'natural' heritage – forests, historical roads and tracks, peasant architecture, etc.) are in danger due the lack of perception of their value, (iii) to the creation of a tourism with low environmental impact, and (iv) to detect whatever may be newly considered heritage of interest and what elements of actual perception of landscape and heritage may be in risk of extinction.

David Casado-Neira

Note

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Cultural memory: knowledge environments

Cultural Heritage and Literary Memory: Constructing the Estonian Cultural Historical Web

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The Estonian Literary Museum is a memory institution, collecting and preserving national cultural heritage, and managing huge archives of Estonian culture. The Estonian Cultural Historical Archives of the ELM is a *central* institution storing archival materials concerning cultural history (collections of manuscripts, correspondences, photos, art, audio and video recordings, memories and life stories). The Estonian Folklore Archives of the ELM is a *central* archive storing Estonian and Finno-Ugric folklore (collections of manuscripts, photos, sound and video recordings), and the Archival Library of ELM is a central library storing *all* Estonian printed documents (books, periodicals, pamphlets, maps and bookplates). At the same time, the Estonian Literary Museum is a national research and development centre, aiming at the study of cultural history using its archival sources. This is a rich and semantically meaningful environment that has had an effect on the subject and focus of the current paper. The digital environment and the web have opened up new directions for memory institutions preserving the cultural heritage. When they start creating digital collections, they first have to answer the main question: how to make a selection among millions of memory objects and how to represent these objects?

The main focus of my research is on the interpretation of literary history as a part of cultural memory. More specifically, I shall pose the questions, for whom and how could we construct and mediate the past and memory in the digital space? I am going to introduce an Estonian experience in solving this question. In the second part of my paper I try briefly to introduce some of our cultural historical web projects that have been created as the "laboratories" for discussing the representation of our cultural past in the digital environment.

Marin Laak

1. The habits of the users

Digitalisation of cultural heritage is closely related to memory institutions that can also be seen as the mediators of cultural memory. In this context we can raise the question, to whom could/should we present our digital collections?

The users' habits of new media consumption in Estonia have been studied in the survey *Me. The World. The Media* by the Media and Communication Institute of the University of Tartu (Runnel, and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt 147-148). The representative surveys were conducted in 2002, 2005 and 2008, based on the sample that consisted of 1500 respondents in the age range of 15 to 74. The results enabled to make some generalisations about the current Internet usage practices.
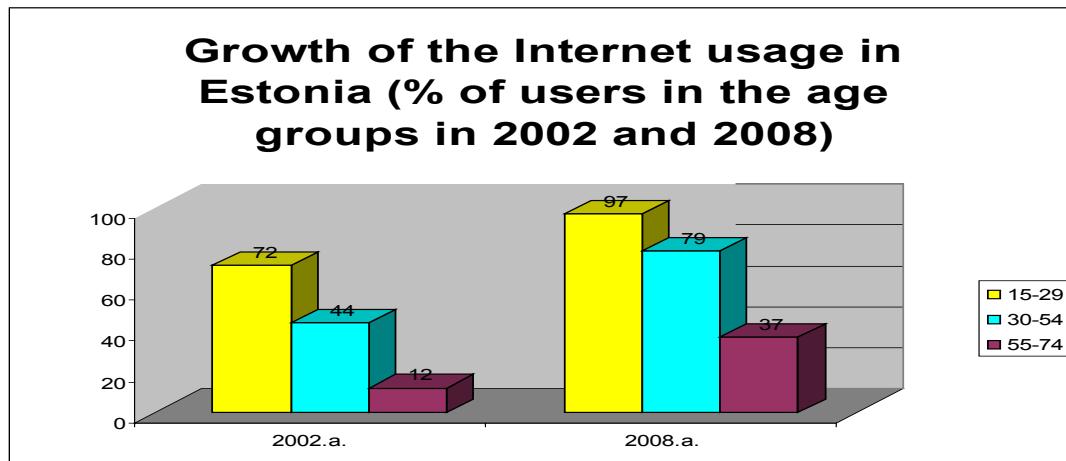

Figure 1: Growth of the Internet usage in Estonia (% of users in the age groups in 2002 and 2008)

We can see that during the last 6 years the level of Internet usage has increased in every user group. It has reached almost 100% among the youngest population groups, and doubled among the middle-aged and older groups. The average level among the entire population of Estonia at the end of 2008 was 70%.

Using cluster analysis, six basic Internet user types have been outlined according to their usage purposes: database usage, entertainment, social networks, work and studies, virtual arts and uploading the photos. Remarkable age differences can be seen here. For the youngest groups, work and studies and also entertainment are equally important, but they are actively contributing to the online content as well: uploading photos and participating in social networking sites. For them, the Internet has become a multifunctional environment. The middle-aged user group is just the opposite, mainly work-oriented and focused on practical activities. Their online communication is considerably non-personal. Qualitative interviews with the specialists of memory institutions (34 people) and focus groups of high school and university students (20 people) confirmed the data of the large surveys (Laak, and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, "Re-Writing" 168; and "Literary Past").

In order to analyse the expectations of the young user group, in 2008 we conducted two focus group interviews and asked the recipients to describe an ideal web environment of a memory institution. From their discussions, 5 main principles can be summarised. I found the first and the fourth principles the most impressive.

1. The physical experience of seeing the originals in a museum is clearly not so important for the youngest

groups, digital collections should be sustained as online representations:

> A memory institution must have a presence on the Web along with all of its content, as it is often not possible for users to visit the institution.

2. Secondly, we can see the concept of various user levels, all the database users are not equally able to give

their own interpretations of the objects:

Multifaceted information should be structured pursuant to the user profiles, so that it would be possible to distinguish between information that is relevant for researchers and meant for users who just try to find interesting things.

3. The other principles were related to semantic relations between the digitalised objects:

a) *A database must contain an introduction to its structure and data, abundant illustrations, video materials and interviews.*

b) *The data (list of sources, digitized sources etc.) must, in addition to links/references to other related databases, also include interpretations, contexts and background information that would help create associations.*

4. The super-database of all cultural heritage materials seems to be a common dream for all:

Various cultural heritage databases should be consolidated in one environment and the structure should be unified.

The young generation belongs to the group "The active, versatile users", which we often call the new media generation. This concept focuses on young people who have been growing up with digital technologies. We could ask, do the memory institutions need a proactive focus towards the future and be ready to work with this new generation?

2. Specific features of the digital environment

However, from the historians' viewpoint we can see here one more aspect besides the preservation of digital collections and the users' habits. In order to maintain the coherence of cultural memory, my approach on the digitalisation of cultural heritage is based on the concept that the opportunities offered by a new media also have their effect on the history narratives – the commonplace practices of representing the past. So far, they have for centuries been dominated by traditions. A historical narrative has been a subjective story by one or several authors and connected with continuously changing contexts, ideologies, interpretations etc. These aspects have all revealed the need for periodic rewritings of literary histories, similar to other historical narratives. Particular characteristics of new digital media have made it possible to rewrite and remediate the story using the new tools. We can represent the past through its objective, unchanging and authentic sources. To solve this problem we can look for the universal structure and canonical elements of literary historiography. On the example of Estonian literary history, I could say that traditional literary history narratives contain certain macro elements: periodisation, biographical and bibliographical data, literary works, metatexts (e.g. reviews), literary scene, socio-cultural background etc. (Laak, „Non-linear models" 317-322). I should stress that we can conceive literary history as an integrated system, an "umbrella" concept, not only the reception of single texts of single authors. In this system, a literary text (a work) is only one media object among others.

3. The new media features in constructing knowledge models

Speaking about rewriting and remediating history, we should take into consideration the distinctive characteristics of new media and the web environment.

- The newest term to be used is "participatory culture", which means that we have to take into account the active participation of every user in the creation of both the content and the meanings.

- The second characteristic could certainly be the increasing visuality. The users of the electronic environment have naturally adopted visual, not verbal logic. The pictorial and visual representations have become central headwords. We could add that besides the illustrative materials, the screen is also treated as an image. This claim has been confirmed in several surveys by the new media researchers.

- The third distinctive characteristic treatment is the transformation of the notion of "writing" (Laak, "Beyond digital labyrinth"). The digital era has opened up paths to a new type of text creation. Its most important feature is the breaking of the linearity of the text – the narrative proceeding from event to event and the causal reason-result chain – and replacing it with non-linear models of the text.

Marin Laak

The constructing non-linear narratives in the digital environment has been influenced by George B. Landow's exalting socio-cultural knowledge environments (*Postcolonial Web, and Victorian Web*) and hypertext theory in the 1990s (Landow, "Hyper/Text/Theory" and "Hypertext 2.0"; see also Bolter 19-20). We tested the possibility to use the hypertext model of literary history with the Estonian Tiger Leap (Runnel et al.) project *ERNI* (*Estonian Literary History in Texts 1924 to 1925*) (1997). This is a network-like model of literary history, based on the theoretical ideas of reception aesthetics and history (Laak, and Viires, "Digital Environment"). The conception of this model was mainly based on a hypertextual network of critical texts of one short period, and it opened literary history by highlighting a synchronous reception level – interpretation by the literary critic as a reader. In practice, it embodies a large complex of interlinked critical texts written in 1918 to 1926, and reflects the literary scene of the 1920s. Biographical data of the authors has been added because of the need to explain the position of a particular author in the cultural field of the time (Laak, "Literery History"). Principally, *ERNI* does not strive to offer its users a ready-made linear narrative; it contains a number of small stories. Its reader/user is offered the opportunity to participate in the process of the reception history and to write his personal interpretation of literary history, using different genres. Today, such models like *ERNI* that were constructed in the end of the 1990s have become a little outdated. Hypertextual networks are being replaced by special software for creating large content environments where it is possible to construct the relations between the objects more systematically.

- The other question is how the new technology influences the creation of knowledge? The theoretical considerations for the construction of the proposed model, connected with the text of the Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg* (Kreutzwald; Laak, "Beyond digital labyrinth" 58-59). The study of *Kalevipoeg* in the digital environment and by means of appropriate computer software required an approach that totally differed from the previous research tradition. In order to visualise intertextual relations, the full text of the epic (32 000 verses), had to be split into motifs and small segments. During this work we discovered that:

  a) various motifs are gradationally repeated on the intra-textual level of the epic, and they start forming small independent stories, e.g. the Harp, Virgin, Sword, Father, Journey, Sleep, etc. (Laak, and Viires, „Intertextuality" 301-306; Laak, and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, "Re-Writing" 171).

  b) The second discovery was that *Kalevipoeg* was found to be intertextually related with archetexts of European culture, as well as with the newest textual levels of contemporary Estonian culture, especially poetry. We could claim that computer technology allows the representation of new types of knowledge models - intertextual threads (Laak, and Viires, „Intertextuality" 301-306).

The project *Kalevipoeg* is completed, because we could use the special software only during the EU 5th FP project "Cultural Units of Learning – Tools and Services" (*CULTOS*)[1]. These intertextual threads created during the project have been saved and are accessible in the html-format. However, the experience to construct the semantic threads of the cultural sources has had a great influence on our next project *Kreutzwald's Century,* started in 2004 and still in progress.

4. Constructing *Kreutzwald's Century*

Kreutzwald's Century. Estonian Cultural History Web was intended as an interactive environment joining a new user-friendly interface and the content-based selections of cultural sources. For this project, we digitised the sources held at the archives and library of the Estonian Literary Museum and also added a lot of supplementary information. The results of our 6-year-work and the complicated architecture of the Estonian cultural historical web can briefly be introduced with the help of the slides.

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1   IST-2000-28134
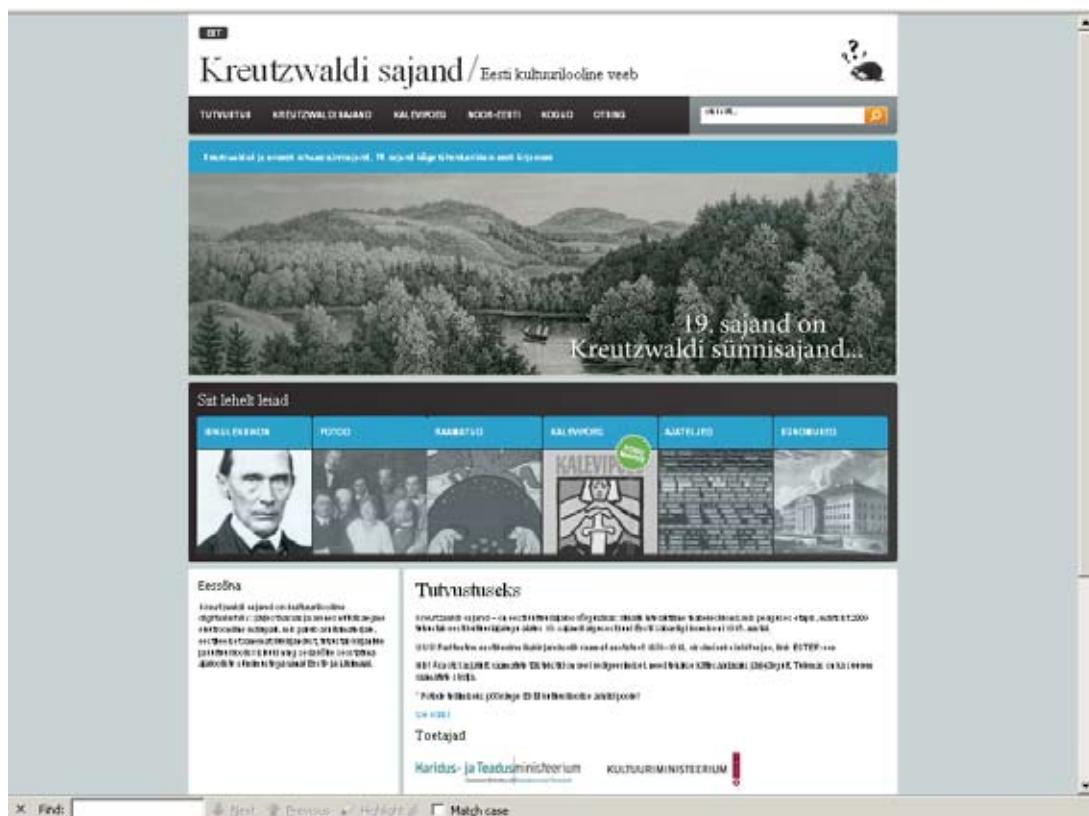
Figure 2. The main page of the Kreutzwald's Century. The Estonian Cultural History Web –
"The 19th century is the century of Kreutzwald's birth …"

Kreutzwald's Century represented Estonian cultural history from the 19th century up to the beginning of the 20th century. With the help of the five dynamic time axes we can see how the Estonian writing culture quickly developed after the era of Enlightenment and Estonian national awakening. Canonical Estonian and European writers were introduced into the context of Estonian social and cultural history on five parallel temporal axes: "Kreutzwald's life and books", "Estonian socio-cultural history", "European literature and the canonical authors", "Estonian literature and the canonical authors", and „The story of the creation of *Kalevipoeg*". The digitised cultural sources have been linked with biographical data of the writers. The user can read a writer's texts and also to browse his books, manuscripts, documents and photo collections (Laak, "Representation"). The aim of the project was to construct a cultural historical space based on the macro elements of cultural history narrative.

5. Practises of memory institutions *vs.* content-based models

Estonian experience in digitisation of cultural heritage is not confined to two-three content-based projects of the ELM. Estonian archives, libraries and museums have a number of other digitisation projects, some of them are related to the Europeana and other EU projects. Some examples of the largest projects currently being digitised at the Estonian National Library, the University of Tartu Library, and the Archival Library of the ELM are as follows:

1. project "Red Book" - the rarest Estonian books since the 16th century;

2. project DEA - the oldest newspapers from the 19th century;

3. project GRAFO - the oldest calendars and rare books from the 18th century

All these cultural heritage collections have been chosen and digitised according to the priorities of the memory institutions, e.g. usage, condition, and they are meant for long-time preservation. The user can find

Transforming culture in the digital age

the images of digitised books only if she/he knows the exact title/author of the work, publishing data, etc. If we compare digitisation practices of the archives and libraries to our ideas of using the digitised sources for writing history in the new format, we could see the big difference.

6. Digital historiographical turn?

Today, much is talked about the need for a radical change in cultural and literary historiography (Burke; Dolinar, and Juvan). We can assume that the increasing accessibility of digital resources can be seen as one of the reasons for such a historiographic crisis (Laak, and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt 169). At the same time we can see another side of this question: will the computational media become the new basis of the 21st century historiography? For example, in the digital environment we can visualise and, via semantic relations, display archival sources of cultural heritage (e.g documents, manuscripts, literary texts) which could play a meaningful role in the creation of literary memories in different periods. We can conclude that rewriting the literary past in the digital environment requires

(1) deconstruction of the traditional linear image of the past in order to show smaller units, such as events, objects, persons, texts and others;

(2) by using these units, representation the past in a new way, integrating the possibilities offered by special software and/or a hypertext;

(3) integrating of large digital collections made at memory institutions.

Thus, the digitisation processes can be influenced by the needs and requirements of memory institutions, as well as those of the cultural and literary history writer(s) to meet their objective of constructing cultural and literary history knowledge in electronic environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, when modelling Estonian literary history in the digital environment, we have to consider a two-way axis: 1) texts of the digital culture that have already been created in a digital form, and 2) digitisation of literary historical source materials at memory institutions. Digital literary history writing positions between these two developments, being flanked by digitally created literature and multimedia artefacts, and a digitised corpus of traditional literature and archival sources.

Based on the three applied literary historical projects, we could conclude that the non-linear model of literary, and in the wider sense, cultural history in the digital knowledge environment could be a semantic space-time of different types of cultural heritage sources. It forms a unified and open literary historical environment, where intertextual relations are defined, described and argued with respect to their contents. Thus, the digital environment offers several answers to David Perkins's rhetorical question, "Is literary history possible?" The vision of a modern literary history as a gallery or a museum with many entrances, or even as a virtual "memory institution" could be realised just in the digital environment of new media.

If we compare the interpreting processes with the translating processes, we could say that the newest challenge is to "translate" the historical linear narrative into the non-linear form using the digitised sources from memory institutions. Although the past has not changed, every generation has to rewrite history so that the past remained understandable for the changing present. The medium is the message – wrote Marshall MacLuhan already 50 years ago .

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Marin Laak

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Gender and Migration Issues in Relation to Intercultural Identities: A Digital Archival Inquiry for European History

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Introduction

The world is in motion: people and ideas, cultures and identities, families and persons are travelling between regions and continents. The last two decades of the 20th century witnessed a major increase in academic as well as political and popular interest in migration flows in Europe reflecting the substantial quantitative and qualitative changes in migration. The directions of migration flows have become more complex and now involve countries formerly untouched by immigration as, in the case of Greece, receiving countries. Alongside permanent migration there are increasingly diverse forms of long-term temporary migration including substantial numbers of refugees, low-skilled migrant labour, undocumented migrants already working in low-skilled sectors etc., with women an increasingly important element in all these flows.

"Thematic Web Collections for Social Sciences and the Humanities: The Oral History Project "Migrant Women in the Greek City of Thessaloniki, 1990s-2000s" (short title "Thematic Web") in progress (migrant-women.jeromeDL.org) envisions a thematic web collection of selected materials, mainly based in archival sources focused on gender and migration, with quality of the semantic description online access. In the course of the presentation we introduce the concept of thinking globally before acting locally in the context of the construction of our thematic web collection. The concept reflects the importance of considering very carefully at the outset of the project the requirement for "reusability", meaning the content reuse that can take several forms, ranging from a presentation to resyndication of collected objects in the form of a new collection for all different types of users.

Thematic Web project is built on e-learning 2.0 (based on Web.02), assuming that knowledge can be socially constructed in a multilingual/multicultural context, in a multidisciplinary case study. The project has set out to provide informal learning opportunities for migrant communities with the formation of key hypotheses (i.e., economic sociology, sociology of the professions, gender (in)equality, social inclusion and cohesion). Comparative evaluation of innovative digital storytelling methodologies is used to contribute to learning, creativity, mutual understanding and social development (Innovative Lifelong Learning Programme).

Thematic Web, as a case study, weaves personal experiences into the fabric of time concerning migration history in the Balkans, as part of the European social history. The project, as a thematic web one, adds value to the oral history collection by using the Social Semantic Digital Library platform. The core philosophy here is that information technologies in archival collections are being touted as the means to create a dynamic interface and intersection between raw historical knowledge and learning engagement.

Triantafillia Kourtoumi

1. State-of-the-art and objectives

Although there are a great number of oral history web sites, they generally provide basic search features, access to transcripts and audio files[1]. They are not supporting semantic annotation, bookmarking or blog creation possibilities. Thematic Web, is a socially-driven project with the support of state-of-the-art digital archiving technologies that allows enhanced searching, bookmarking and semantic annotation.

Within the social-driven aspect, the target is to create an archival data base by documenting the experience of migrant women of current flows in the city of Thessaloniki, Northern Greece, a city with a long multicultural history, now becoming a new home for migrants primarily from East Europe and the Balkans. Insofar there is a lack of, and a need for, extensive, qualitative, academic and interdisciplinary research undertaking on the specific subgroup of female migrants in the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural city of Thessaloniki with its specific Balkan strategic position, e.g. the type of the project proposed here. Almost all references to the status of immigrants (especially women) in Greece in general and in Northern Greece in particular are dated post 2000, mostly in the last five years. They consist primarily of reports by Amnesty International, the Human Rights Watch, the International Helsinki Federation as well as responses to such reports by the Greek government and NGOs. Equally few are the studies (usually book chapters or journal articles) regarding the economic aspects of women migrants as domestic workers throughout Greece as well as theoretical approaches to gender and immigration (Petronoti, and Triandafyllidou).

The main objective in the social aspect is centred, but not limited, on the archival database derived from research questionnaires with a minimum interviewing of two hundred migrant women, under respect for the ethics codes of the Oral History Association (OHA). The central, but not single, focus of the questionnaires is on the members of the NGO called the 'Network of Women Migrants in Northern Greece'. This archival database, as an oral history strategy, when built, enables both the research and the learning communities to understand the plans and motivations of migrant women. Based on the analysis of the questionnaires, research is then enriched, grounded on the following criteria: literature review on the relevant issue, official statistics of governmental offices on the numbers and status of women migrants in the wider Thessaloniki region, all to be used as relevant links in the thematic web collection.

The Thematic Web, adds value to the oral history collection also by using the JeromeDL platform, a Social Semantic Digital Library, developed by the National University of Ireland, Digital Enterprise Research Institute (DERI) (http://www.jeromedl.org/). JeromeDL, as a digital library, supports a variety of document formats and allows storing and querying a rich bibliographic description of each document. To find relevant documents in JeromeDL users can use searching and browsing features [http://library.deri.ie/resource/qRYPto81], using mobile devices as one of access channels [http://library.deri.ie/resource/ifQAJDfR]; JeromeDL builds upon communities to deliver better exchange of knowledge [http://library.deri.ie/resource/5e68d6a6] and browsing experience [http://library.deri.ie/resource/UTO6lfsr].

This digital library allows users to ask questions using natural language query interface [http://library.deri.ie/resource/JyWYJN6o]. With JeromeDL's social and semantic services every library users can bookmark interesting books, articles or other materials in semantically annotated directories. This is actually one of the most important features of the JeromeDL platform: users can allow others to see their bookmarks and annotations and share their knowledge within a social network. JeromeDL can also treat a single library resource as a blog post. Users can comment the content of the resource and reply to others' comments and this way create new knowledge. JeromeDL offers advanced searching; browsing, e-learning services to users, that other digital library systems don't (DSpace, DLibra, EPrints, Greenstone).

The innovative characteristic of JeromeDL is that is the only social library available incorporating advanced e-learning features (integration with *Didaskon* [http://didaskon.corrib.org/] and IKHarvester [http://library.deri.ie/resource/y82VWWrZ] components and MarcOnt ontology integration with SCORM concepts) that other digital library systems may acquire in posterior experimental extension projects.

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1   CHORAL; *Center for Jewish History: Digital Collections; Archive of Turkish Oral Narrative; Leo Baeck Institute,* „Austrian Heritage Collection"; „History of the Spanish Civil War", „Oral Histories of the American South", Youngstown State University Oral History Programme, Spanish Civil War Oral History Project, etc.

2. An oral history collection for Social Sciences- The social aspect

In the context of migration basic insights are incorporating in the Thematic Web with powerful social or mental significance, such as culture, economic sociology, sociology of the professions, gender and social (in)equality, historical sociology, geopolitical economy of borders and flows, migration in the European Union as a global actor, comparative urbanization or identify formation. However, questions of identity and identification in relation to gender and migration and their cultural implications are among the most important evolving concerns of this project.

Suggesting the central place of oral histories as a qualitative and quantitative method in supplementing the formal record, the project proposes one entry into understanding the migratory movement through the eyes of participants, to stand alongside other more traditional sources. Thus, it enables to eavesdrop on events, feelings, attitudes and ways of life, and thus create a more vivid and accurate picture of migration patterns, demonstrating a range of issues: the diversity of migrant experiences from a "history - and -her story" point of view, the ongoing connections with the homeland that are not severed by migration, and particularly in light of gender debates, the importance of finding the social aspect of migrant women presence in modern Greek society.

The extended questionnaire of about 100 interviews so far – to be extended to 200 – deals with the experience of coming to a new country, learning a new language and trying to gain recognition of qualifications and experience. Migrant women are asked about their decision to migrate, their networks, journeys, employment, and experience of legal and other institutions in their host country, relationships, customs, and aspirations for the future (Vonk et al.). The strategy of oral history enables us to understand the plans and motivations of women migrants (which would exceed the scope of a purely statistical analysis). Furthermore, since many of the women migrants are illegal, the strategy renders a more informed and direct representation of the situation than official statistics would provide.

Specifically the scope of our study, as part of the above-mentioned analysis, seeks to answer the following questions:

- Which are the specific circumstances related to the group's migration stories (i.e. networks, journeys, status, relationships, customs, aspirations etc.)?

- How does the parameter of gender (public, private, political, social) influence their lives (i.e. the status of women in their respective countries and if this influences their decision to migrate, and the cultural representations of the host country, regarding specific aspects of women migrants lives, such as women trafficked for prostitution or as domestic workers, which are gender specific activities).

- What is the legal framework in which immigrants operate and which are the usual administrative procedures/services that immigrants have to follow in Northern Greece?

- What are the economic aspects of their lives?

- What is the overall social status of the women migrants in the region under study?

Furthermore, a comprehensive and thorough insight in these matters asks for a study of their long term development, and thus for a multifaceted historical perspective (Green). Dedicated to a combined historical approach of social and cultural memory, archival practice and urban heritage, based on a specific historical case, the project seeks not only to address but also to go beyond exclusively cultural diversity and societal complexity gender issues about migration, integration, assimilation and (inter)cultural implications. This striking neglect obviously ignores many of the most crucial aspects of the experience of cultural transition, not in the least as seen from the perspective of the migrant women themselves (Byrne et al.). Consequently, a rightful place for the cultural dimensions of the migration process and the way migrant women are related to intercultural identity construction and its corresponding cultural expression and embedding within the urban space of Thessaloniki, a European center with a long multicultural history, is called for. The acknowledgement

Transforming culture in the digital age

of this necessity forms the starting point and scientific backbone of this case study in its social aspect. Additional research questions may relate to the following topics:

- the contribution of migrant women to the development of the socio-cultural life by means of commercial and cultural corporations, associations, etc.

- the material, visual and historical culture of migrant women

- the relevance of the concepts of "nationality" and "post-nationality" for the construction of identities among migrant women

- the appropriate or promising heuristic- analytical approaches within "history - and- her story" interviews of migrant women, including self-representations of migrants and migration

In its social aspect, the research project contributes to tracing the living and working conditions as well as the patterns of social relations of migrant women living in and around the city of Thessaloniki, Northern Greece. A chief outcome will be the introduction of general and specific recommendations for the Greek state, the NGOs, educational institutions and local authorities in the region aiming at changing attitudes and approaches regarding the integration processes of women immigrants in the local (and, broadly speaking, Greek) society within the European community.

3. An oral history digital collection – The technical aspect

From the very beginning in the construction of the project, the emerging concern is how the introduction of advanced information technologies into archival applications can spurred both an influx of undocumented learning with collections and a wave of pedagogical activities created in isolation to increase "archival" research and learning by users. The core philosophy in this phase in the project is that information technologies in archival collections are being touted as the means to create a dynamic interface and intersection between raw historical knowledge and learning engagement. Two main parameters are being considered:

1. Archival collections on the web are seen by a spectrum of user types emerging, ranging from the inexperienced, novice user, to the highly proficient and advanced user of digital resources;

2. Although many cultural institutions have embraced digital archives to make their collections more accessible to support learning and research as a social experience, few have joined in multi-state efforts to combine resources concerning a specific topic to explore the medium's pedagogic potential.

Within this core philosophy, JeromeDL, as presented by DERI, is being selected in our case as a digital library for our thematic web collection, mainly for reasons <c> and <d> (Kruk et al.):

a - it allows institutions to easily publish documents on the Web, supporting a variety of documents, storing and querying a rich bibliographic description of each document;

b - it supports searching and browsing features of relevant documents, as a whole or as singe fields of the document description (*context description*), (i.e. by dates etc.), or by browsing content of subject categories and keywords (*content description*), (i.e. by age, by nationality, by profession, by religion, by language, etc.);

c - it allows users to bookmark interesting material in semantically annotated directories, allows to see others bookmarks and share, and protect if required, their knowledge within a social network;

d - it treats a single library resource as a blog post, giving the chance for users to comment the content of the resource and reply to others' comments.

Registered readers are able to annotate, evaluate and classify resources stored in the JeromeDL database of the project. Electronic bookmarks are popular on the WWW. Everyone can organize already examined resources the way he perceives the world. To identify categories a reader is interested in information on previously

read books, electronic bookmarks, annotated resources and highly evaluated resources, are automatically collected. Each resource is described by some categories. Based on the collected categories JeromeDL identifies the categories a reader is interested in.

The target then is to combine reusability of resources concerning the specific topic to explore the medium's research potential by a wide spectrum of user types, ranging from the inexperienced, novice user, to the highly proficient and advanced user of digital resources. Thematic Web needs to be considered from the vantage points *<a>* of the semantic annotation in archival and secondary sources' content, and *<b>* of the reusable functionality it is providing, as well as *<c>* of the context of the activities it is intended to support in the e-learning and e-research process.

In using "e-learning" and "e-research" as the frame to observe and evaluate Thematic Web, our gaze focuses both internally and externally (Innovative Lifelong Learning Programme). Internally there is a concern to ensure high quality, innovation and flexible researching and learning which highlights the needs of diverse user worldwide, individual learners and multifaceted academic, professional or social groups. Externally there exists an emphasis on helping to ensure semantic content access and reuse by a range of constituencies to socially and economically relevant education and research opportunities presented by this thematic collection.

4. The archival aspect - Challenges of including oral silences of migrant women

When seeing the systematic recording of experiential material documenting the migrant movement in Greece as part of responsibility archivists can assume to retain valuable information for future generations, archivists see themselves as those best placed to decide what records need to be retained to document what can best reflect current social society. From the archives of governmental institutions in Northern Greece (i.e. Hellenic Police-Ministry of Public Order, Greek Manpower Employment Organization, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Greece, etc.) as acquisitions in the General State Archives of Greece, Historical Archives of Macedonia, it has been observed that the governmental institutions want for a human rights-oriented

approach in managing the migratory phenomenon particularly lack gender mainstreaming analysis in their development[2]. Within their activities, they focus on their policies under the law (public and state security policy, general policing duties, social policy and security, promotion of employment and training, social inclusion, etc.), presenting the official view (see also: Pedros et al.).

Suggesting the central place of oral histories as a qualitative and quantitative method in supplementing the formal record, we propose one entry into understanding the migratory movement through the eyes of participants, to stand alongside other more traditional sources (Leh). The "Oral History of Migrant Women in the Greek city of Thessaloniki, 1990s -2000s", as a thematic collection in a case study, weaves personal experiences into the fabric of time concerning migration history in the Balkans, as part of the European social history. The project envisions emerging as a powerful means of recording and preserving the unique memories and life experiences of the target group, whose stories would otherwise have been hidden from history (Alexander).

Thus, the perspective offered by the government institutions and the official data can be enriched in a unique way from the information transmitted by NGOs and migrant women themselves. The latter can give us first-hand information not only on their migration patterns, their everyday lives and the difficulties they face in terms of their civic participation, employment opportunities and integration in Greece, but, hopefully, also deep reflective comments.

4. The archival aspect- Ethics concerning the interviewee

With full respect in the Principles and Standards of the Oral History Association and in accordance with the Oral History Evaluation Guidelines we have drafted our project guidelines (*Oral History Association*). For the purpose of creating archival records to make the interviews accessible to the community, our oral history project is conducted in the spirit of critical inquiry and social responsibility and with the recognition of the interactive and subjective nature of the enterprise. At this early stage of methodology we recognize certain principles, rights, technical standards, and obligations for the creation and preservation of source material that is authentic, useful, and reliable (Edmondson). From the archival perspective, these include obligations to the interviewee, to the profession, and to the public (Ward).

In accordance with the social aspect of the paper, at this stage we will focus on the interviewee. For the interviewee the transition of the interview into the archive means that her life history is "opened" to strangers in the data bank of the archival institution, or in an open access digital media of storage (Mruck). She does not know who will use the interview, and for what purposes it will be used for. For this reason an interview can be archived only if the interviewee has explicitly given permission. Either the interview agreement already contains a passage about the possible further use in the form of the archiving or the permission for this must be obtained during the course of the archiving (Mottier). With our own project the later archiving is always already a part of the agreement with the interviewee.

Using case studies of migrant women as part of our interview questions to increase the richness of data, we take in consideration several elements: increased need for privacy due to vulnerability of our target group; fear of compromising immigration process; additional time required to explain the study and obtain consent; unfamiliarity with research and the process; allowance of verbal consent; use of short phrases and simple language; providing introductions to questions on sensitive topics and avoiding "culturally taboo" words (Clausen).

With respect to all the above, the numbers of migrants in the cohort we are using in the project is a limited sample in comparison with the total population of the city of Thessalonica (1.600.000 citizens). The migrant women are going to be explained the modalities and purpose of the research and the project in all aspects. Only those who give their consent are to be included in the sample of the research. An interview is going to be conducted with each one migrant woman with the use of an interview form in accordance with

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2   See the content of the acquisitions in the General State Archives of Greece, Historical Archives of Macedonia, from the Hellenic Police-Ministry of Public Order, and the Greek Manpower Employment Organization- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Greece (*General State Archives of Greece*).

the UNHURT Interview Form, designed in the analogous way as the UNHURT Questionnaire for Asylum Seekers. The questionnaires, then, should be under anonymous data, so that nobody could trace the person's identity from the data. For that reason special notice is going to be given so that their identity cannot be traced back from the generic information on race, ethnicity, language and age to an individual person.

Being conscious of conducting our research with multilingual, multiethnic, migrant populations, it is essential to consider a number of challenges: cultural validation of questionnaires and the research protocol[3]; using diverse perceptions and interpretations while developing the protocol and questionnaires; providing clear explanations of words that may not be easily understood; keeping interviews and questions to a minimum; structuring questions so that they do not influence responses, etc.

This process, then, requires also a multilingual group of qualified interpreters who will be able to conduct the interviews preferably in the migrants' native language (primarily Balkan and Eastern European languages) so as to maximize the level of comfort the migrants would feel during the interviews as well as the level of understanding and expressing themselves freely.

5. Conclusions

Doing qualitative and quantitative interviewing for migrant women in a case study takes in consideration a number of processes, issues and challenges. The objective of the presentation at the moment is to provide a better understanding of what really constitutes the cultural value of oral history focusing on the interviewee, from the archival aspect of oral history; and thus, contribute to enhance researchers' knowledge on archival inquiry for gender and migration history in Europe.

The Thematic Web is a multi-layered digital environment. It is an archive, a website, an oral history project, a communication tool, a research data-base, a store of the migrant women's stories and an open space in which people and users' community can interact. The Thematic Web is therefore more than just a repository – a passive store of archival objects. It is a facilitator, an interpreter in its own right. This of course raises the deeper questions of perspective, attitude and propriety around the migrants' experiences. We believe that the immediacy and interactivity of the digital project will allow for an open-ended, engaged and participatory space. One of the advantages of this is that it will allow for many interpretations and versions of the migration and gender history to develop.

The growing interest of researchers in using qualitative and quantitative methods has resulted in us, as practitioners and academicians who equate using qualitative techniques, such as interviews and questionnaires, to creating archival data for interdisciplinary research and collaboration. Using a historically and geographically specific example of oral history we intend to engage in a more generalist discussion of how oral reflection, especially when shaped by material evidences, can be an especially effective tool for preserving the dynamics of culture and memory that often remain undocumented. That way, we participate in the established cross-disciplinary forum assessing the evidential and cultural significance of orality and oral history. Hopefully, the convention will also enable us to present the results of our work soon, as well as to discuss more issues and challenges involved in the processes of research inquiry in gender and migration European history.

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3   In this case ECLG is a useful procedure, see: Commission Proposal.

Triantafillia Kourtoumi

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Archival Education: Data Trails And The Culture Of Learning

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1. Introduction

The use of new technologies for educational purposes has grown in recent years as the Internet has become an increasingly comfortable and indispensable element of daily lives. As students (and educators) spend a significant amount of their leisure time online, it only makes sense to integrate online virtual learning environments (VLE) into teaching. But as the novelty factor fades and the use of VLEs become more customary there emerges a need to step back and evaluate how the learning process has been altered by their use. While strongly in favour of exploring how technology can be implemented in the learning process this paper presents a few words of caution. As the learning process is now converted into data creating an ever growing archive of interaction, we suggest that this aspect of VLEs lead to significant changes in the 'classroom' discourse. First, students, rather than feeling encouraged to express creative ideas, strategically script their behaviour to avoid conflict. Likewise, educators are increasingly restricted as this medium challenges the traditional power relationship between teacher and student. Fundamentally, these changes are reflective of a broader societal shift where the embrace of new technologies, often despite best intentions, results in increased surveillance and has a potentially detrimental impact on the openness of interactions.

2. Virtual Learning Environments And The Student

There are numerous well recognised advantages of incorporating Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) into taught modules. Online discussion forums provide students the opportunity to extend discussions beyond class time. Time constraints are removed as students can discuss a topic as much as they like whenever they like. Additionally, students can benefit from having the time to consult resources before contributing to the discussion. Following on, they can embed these resources directly into the discussion through the use of hyperlinks, images, video clips, etc in order to reinforce their argument. Ideally, a discussion online can facilitate greater interaction allowing for simultaneous posts and without the need for the conversation to be governed by turn-taking conventions (Guiller et al. 130). A virtual environment can also benefit shy or less confident students giving them an opportunity to voice their opinions as they may be more inclined to type their contribution in a visually anonymous environment, than speak up in front of a class (Brunet and Schmidt, 708; Roberts et al. 136). Generally, as students are increasingly comfortable interacting online in their private lives and as these technologies become a ubiquitous factor in our daily lives, it seems logical and in keeping with the educational aim to expand this embrace of new technologies into the (virtual) classroom.

However, despite the many advantages, a great concern with VLEs is that they create a permanent record of the interactions. Thus, they are another component of our broader culture where we find that our lives have an ever expanding data trail contributing to an ever increasing archive. This emphasis on data storage is of concern as it is often used for purposes of monitoring and control. (Lyon 20) These concerns apply in the educational context. Online discussions can be a useful learning exercise but, with this permanent record, student development can also be tracked. Many VLEs include tools where instructors can not only view the posts the student has made, but they can also view how the student has interacted on the VLE. Hara et al. (2) claim this is an advantage of the VLE, and in some ways it is, in that it facilitates assessing student progress in the VLE. However, we would argue that this ability to closely monitor the students use of the site is of limited benefit in terms of understanding how much the student is benefitting from the site. Rather, this data trail created by the student through interactions with and via the VLE, potentially creates an Orwellian-style situation where the student can constantly be monitored by the instructor. Research (cited below) finds that students are acutely aware that their use is monitored and they employ a number of strategies to adapt to this. Our concern in this paper is how these strategies impact upon the learning process.

Students may choose not to participate or to participate minimally. With this, they are leaving a light record behind them. Perhaps there will not be much to commend them for, but, conversely, they may feel that this is taking the safe option in that, at least, there will not be much opportunity for them to make mistakes. The less they contribute, the less they can be held accountable if they write something that is either incorrect, controversial or doesn't fit with either the opinions of their peers or the agenda of the module in which they are participating. This occurs particularly when their interactions are assessed as part of their module grade.

Assessing interactions online is problematic in itself. On the one hand, it becomes a vital aspect of the module and learning process. It also provides a motivation for students to contribute. However, in this sense, the conversation will become more controlled by the student as they are more aware of being monitored and assessed. The conversation becomes a performance or a presentation rather than a natural exchange of ideas if the students are conscious of being assessed. As So (147) points out, this approach may then be in conflict with the notion that the discussion should function to foster and explore new ideas. The environment becomes less democratic and the autonomy of the student is compromised when the student may feel that their opinions are being assessed. Furberg (407) similarly concludes that such practices are often at odds with a desire to stimulate scientific enquiry. As VLEs are so often riddled with the residues of these institutional practices such as frameworks of assessment and academic discourse, it is very tempting for students to police their behaviour in accordance with these practices (ibid).

It is, therefore, of concern when reports show low occurrences of disagreement, conflict and counter-claims and show, instead, that students seem to prefer to agree with each other in VLE discussion forums that are used for both social (Clarke 2336) and educational purposes (So, 145; Coffin et al. 87; Hara et al. 24; Guiller et al. 136). A plausible reason offered for why reports show low occurrences of conflict is that the students have a 'desire to create interpersonal harmony' (Coffin et al. 87) within the student group. In So's (157-158) interviews with students that participated in VLE discussion forums, responses indicated that they preferred to negotiate conflict in face-to-face situations rather than in the online discussion forum. The removed physicality and asynchronous nature of the VLE discussion forum means that there is no instant confirmation of how the intended audience has interpreted the author's post. In addition, as there is no guarantee that each post will receive a reply there is also no guarantee all conflicts may be resolved on the discussion forum.

Some researchers account for this by suggesting that it is merely the case that students just lack the skills to argue. By this argument, the students do not argue purely because they do not now how. Coffin et al.'s (95) proposal to give students these metaphorical tools of argumentation in order for students to be able to argue does not address the fact that linguistic behaviours are dependent on the context. Also, by assuming there is a framework to argumentation that can be learnt and used will more likely lead to stilted argumentation rather than authentic debate. As a result, this method may not actually achieve the depth of discussion that the instructors are striving to elicit. Rather, it may further exacerbate the problem of students scripting their contributions.

In contradiction, Coffin et al.'s (92) interview data actually shows that the students do know how to argue saying that when claims are made, they need to back them up with evidence. Pomerantz (607) explains that 'requesting, giving, considering and evaluating are practices which are within the repertoire of social actions that are performed by competent people within a culture'. We would argue that it is probably not the case that university students do not understand at least the basics of constructing an argument. We can assume that to have reached that level of education they would be somewhat comfortable with this. Instead, we find that students do not feel that it is the appropriate behaviour for the VLE discussion forum. What is of interest is why they do not feel comfortable arguing and we would account it to the fact that their interactions are monitored. As Foucault (56) discussed in relation to the panoptic prison, the student in this case, is constantly aware of the overseeing gaze of the instructor. The gaze is internalised and the individual, either intentionally or unintentionally, conforms to expectations. In this case of discussions on VLEs, this seems to include carefully scripting interactions and striving to avoid confrontation or disagreements.

This is one of the difficulties which needs to be considered. The instructor is co-opting a forum that students are more accustomed to using for social purposes. And, in most cases, their discussions are with their peers. There is a certain coherence to this situation that is then challenged when the educational aspect is thrown in. Students struggle to adopt the conventions of an academic discourse in a setting that, in many ways, keeps the conventions of a social discourse. There may be a sense of solidarity with fellow students which leads to an emphasis on creating harmony rather than discord through argumentation. They may refrain from calling out the weakness in a peers argument in hopes that it will be reciprocated. Additionally, the students may avoid contentious claims in order to preserve face amongst peers.

Ideally, conversations from the classroom would be moved over to the online environment without a change in tone or context. The online discussion would be a safe space where students feel able to ask questions and present new ideas and opinions without the fear of being 'judged' by peers or instructors. However, this is not what is happening in practice. Particularly in the American university system, students are accustomed to their participation in the classroom being a component of their overall mark. However, it is understood that they are being assessed for generally being engaged and contributing to the conversation. There is no concern that the specific content of the contributions is assessed but this change when the discussion is moved to the online environment. With a permanent record of participation, the student is now self-consciously planning contributions and spends more time thinking about what to write than what to say in the classroom setting. In a study by Michael Beaudoin (150) he found that 25% of students felt uncomfortable expressing their ideas online. Additionally, the students observed that their contributions were more 'formal and premeditated' as opposed to the more 'spontaneous' interactions of the classroom (153). Beaudoin also commented on the stifling influence of the archive in this situation. Strategies are now employed to most effectively deal with this situation where there is now an acute sense that it is not just participation that is being assessed but now the content will be as well.

In Anderson's (114) research, he found that students would 'groom' their messages, writing and editing the messages carefully before posting. Students in his study also complained about the authoritative gaze of the lecturer and expressed how they felt it stilted conversation. Related to the discussion above, they also strove to 'go with the flow' rather than challenge the consensus of the whole group. They were acutely aware of the presence of the lecturer and often gave the responses that they felt would be desired by the lecturer. As we move from synchronous to asynchronous 'classroom' discussions, the students now, on the one hand, can scrutinise over their words. On the other hand, they have the strong sense that the lecturer is also scrutinising over their words. They strive to obtain a certain institutional normality in their writing by mimicking conventions. Again, returning to Foucault, it is this sense that they are internalising the norms of the situation. On a positive note, we can consider how CMC can be used as a tool to develop writing. On the downside, it may be a poor tool for developing ideas. Interestingly, this is counter to the idea surrounded by the rhetoric of Web 2.0 that the Internet enables collaborative thinking and the development of new ideas (Gane and Beer 77). The difficulty for educators is to figure out how to foster innovative and creative collaborative work from students even when the gaze of assessment hovers over the interaction.

Furberg's study on responses to 'prompts' on a VLE used by secondary students also identified certain scripting strategies that the students used in order to answer prompted questions on the learning materi-

als they had been working on in VLE (404). The instances of scripted language were described as 'short, non-argumentative, declarative formulations with a strong resemblance to formulations and text passages in [the VLE]' (401). Furberg termed these as 'copy and paste' strategies, as if the students were trying to appropriate and emulate the style of the language in VLE. In deciding how to formulate their answers, they will look towards the type of language used within the discourse of the VLE and model their answers on their findings. Emulating this style is seen as a safe way of assuming and performing appropriate behaviour and therefore the responses they give seem scripted rather than natural or free-flowing. By this means, the VLE becomes a structuring resource. As previously stated, VLEs embed residues of institutional practices that do not necessarily correlate with ideal practices of academia.

One aim of education is to equip students with the necessary skills needed for living in contemporary society. A concern here is that, potentially, educators, through the use of virtual learning environments, are merely grooming students for living in a society of ubiquitous surveillance rather than equipping the students with the skills to critically evaluate and challenge these processes of monitoring. There is also the concern that this form of learning is merely another factor which normalises surveillance and further embeds the practices in the daily lives of young people who increasingly accept that the will, throughout life, constantly be assessed through their ever extending data trail. Barry Wellman and Milena Gulia see online communities as aiding "self-expression, organisational attachment and generalised reciprocity" (174). Educators need to focus on how these ideals can be carried over to the educational forum online and to overcome the stifling influence of the gaze and the data record.

3. The Virtual Learning Environment And The Educator

What appears to be missing from much of the literature around Virtual Learning Environments is the impact upon the educator. We would argue that there are similar concerns for the educator as for the students and that this as well demands consideration. The general discourse around this topic relies upon the perception that the surveillance in the educational context is a form of panopticon, again borrowing from Foucault (57). The gaze of the lecturer is all seeing, and it is through this that the student is normalised into the educational expectations. While we do not disagree that this is an effective paradigm for understanding control, we would argue that it is too simplistic. Throughout education there appears to be a crumbling of this rigid understanding of power. This traditional relationship between educator and student is constantly being challenged. The use of VLEs is one manifestation of this broader culture.

In this educational context there is mutual monitoring and there is the acute sense that both actors are somewhat uncomfortable with their roles in this new domain. Rather than this top down framework, surveillance is often more 'horizontal' (Albrechtslund) and 'lateral' (Andrejevic 481). Albrechtslund focuses on the enjoyment that individuals experience in many surveillance situations. In essence, rather than focusing on the negative aspects of being the observed, individuals embrace and enjoy this form of exhibitionism. Social networking sites like Facebook would be emblematic of this. In this sense, visibility becomes a powerful tool. And this is a tool which students are much more comfortable using than educators. Students are normalised to this new understanding of privacy where the power is in controlling how the information is released rather than vainly trying to build walls to protect privacy. As discussed above, students, though uncomfortable with the setting, are acutely aware of being watched and can articulate their strategies for managing the gaze of the observer.

The use of virtual learning online is a development and all forays into this area are somewhat experimental. The user, the student, is knowingly active in the development of this educational method. And as the student is often more comfortable using these technologies than the educator, this is a challenge to the traditional power relationship. Students are empowered by their cultural familiarity with this setting as educators often awkwardly struggle to maintain control in an unfamiliar setting. One should not give too much emphasis to this empowering aspect of visibility and comfort as, in the end, the participation in the educational context is still mandatory. While the relationship and the activities are certainly more fluid, this aspect can not be ignored. And it is this which leads to the low participation and scripting mentioned above.

Danah Boyd in evaluating the four properties of online social networking lists persistency, searchability, replicability and invisible audiences. (3) These can also be applied to VLEs. The first three relate directly

back to this notion of data trails and the fact that the interactions are logged. This has many benefits but also some concerns. It is an issue for both students and lecturers. While lecturers are assessing the student contributions, the students are, likewise, evaluating the lecturers' performance. Because of the ease of posting information online, there is an increasing demand for material from students. There is pressure for extensive documentation of the learning process as students demand that the physical classroom be replicated and documented online. Lecturers are expected to put up detailed handbooks, powerpoints, handouts, reading lists, notices, and, increasingly, mp3s of lectures. While there are benefits of this trend, materials are accessible, etc, there are also negatives. First, the learning becomes a tangible product. Learning is a number of files rather than a process. Second, it creates unrealistic expectations on the part of the student who expect more to be given to them. This leads to a shift in responsibility and thus a shift in the traditional power structure. Keeping up with the class used to be the responsibility of the student. In the past, a student who missed class was expected to get notes from a friend, now they will expect all of the necessary material from a lecture to be easily accessible online. Increasingly, it seems that it is the responsibility of the lecturer that the student has all the necessary material and information needed. The student becomes the observer and evaluates the material given and expects the lecturer to produce the learning as a product rather than a process where the responsibility is on the student. Students scour the online documents for loopholes or gaps in order to raise those as explanations for poor performance. This is a radical shift in attitudes and online learning seems to exacerbate the problem.

As mentioned above, the online environment is one where students, more comfortable with the technology, thus have more power. On the surface, trying to appeal to students by mimicking technology that they have already embraced seems like a decent approach as they potentially would have more impetus to participate. Virtual Learning Environments borrow heavily from the model of social networking sites. Students are encouraged to create a 'profile' complete with a photo and a list of interests. There are e-mail functions, group discussions, and live synchronous chat functions embedded in most VLEs. All of these functions contribute to the ever growing archive of student interactions. Whereas surveillance has been embraced as entertainment through social networking sites it is then possibly inappropriate for educators to adopt a similar framework. First, there is a danger of trying to frame education as 'entertainment' as this inevitably leads to educators as 'entertainers'. Again, the power shifts to the student who evaluates not on how much they have learned but how much they have been entertained. Second, educators are then potentially guilty of further normalising surveillance and sending the message to students that this day to day monitoring of each other which Andrejevic (482) presents as commonplace, is acceptable and to be expected.

Beyond the issues with students, educators also need to be concerned of their own invisible audience in Boyd's list above. With a shift towards an increasing 'bureaucratization' of universities, Frank Furedi suggests that there has been an 'erosion of professional autonomy' of the lecturer as processes of incessant auditing increase. While scripting is an issue for students, it is likewise for lecturers. Because of the intensity of university scrutiny, lecturers also, according to Furedi, become formulaic as a method of risk management. Now that teaching increasingly takes place online there is ever more data to be analysed and monitored. Every semester lecturers create electronic archives which can be easily monitored by these invisible audiences. The concern here is what impact this has upon the learning process. This damages the quality of the material but also the relationship between the student and lecturer as it moves from an informal relationship to a 'contractual' one. Any semblance of breaches of this contract can then be referred through the complicated bureaucratic processes thus further undermining the lecturers' authority. The VLE enables an easier connection between students and the university administration and this significantly alters the power relationship where it is often the lecturer as the observed subject being scrutinised both above (by administrators) and below (by students). As a result, lecturers must also adopt strategies for managing this situation and these strategies are often at the expense of an open and creative learning environment.

4. Conclusion

Virtual Learning Environments are still a relatively new phenomenon. The technology is still being developed and the ways that it can be used are still being explored. Even in light of the concerns that have been

identified here it would be foolish to dismiss online learning. This technology will improve and develop and so must our ideas for how to use the technology. Instead, this merely highlights the need to challenge and develop the pedagogy for online learning. Every day there are examples of how innovation has emerged from collaborative use of online tools, the benefits are certainly there and educators just need to reconsider how best to harness them. Sujo De Montes, Oran and Willis (269) suggest that educators need to explore how they can make online environments a safer space for the free exchange of ideas and that educators need to consider how to overcome some of these obstacles in fully utilising online spaces for creative thinking and learning. Both educators and students need to develop more productive ways of addressing the data trail that is inevitably created. Ways to explore how this can be utilised positively demand attention in order to overcome the negative aspects. Quoting Zygmunt Bauman, "The art of living in a world over-saturated with information has still to be learned. And so has the even more difficult art of grooming humans for such a living" (25).

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Estonian Language University Digital Textbook Collection

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1. Introduction and Research

Digital textbooks have not been thoroughly researched. Many specialists claim this to be a market that publishers protect strongly. Between January 2008 and January 2009, UK's Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) researched the usage of digital textbooks in Britain in a National E-book Observatory Project. 36 higher education e-books were made available throughout Britain. The main aim of the project was to research students' actually usage of the e-textbooks and how that influences publishers and libraries. 127 universities and half a million users participated in this research. The results showed that majority of students and professors used e-books at some point. The results also show students mainly look to the library to provide necessary e-textbooks. The research should also encourage publishers because it demonstrated that e-books are not used to replace printed books – students still borrow and buy printed books. (Estelle et al. 381-391) There have been various other free e-textbook initiatives; however, they were primarily among students of one certain university and with the main goal to reduce the cost of textbooks for students.

Estonia has never done formal research about the necessity and usage of e-textbooks; however, Tartu University Library questioned various professors about the need and interests in Estonian e-textbooks and the results were mainly positive. Based on this feedback, the Library decided to initiate the Estonian language textbook collection for Tartu University students, faculty, and staff.

Tartu University students and professors have used foreign language books for year; unfortunately, these books are written by foreigners without consideration of Estonian unique cultural background and needs. When starting the Estonian language e-textbook collection the main goal was not to bring students away from printed textbooks, but rather to fulfil the lack of availability of these textbooks. The Estonian textbook market is very small because of the characteristics of Estonia (population is 1.34 million). In addition, the authors encounter funding problems. Usually, only one edition of a textbook is released which will quickly sell out of print and the second edition does not appear until years later. Meanwhile, students heavily depend on library funds which tend to cover around 20% of the need. Fulfilling students need for textbooks which are sold out textbooks is the main goal of Estonian language textbook project.

1.1 Tartu University Library Estonian language digital textbook collection work process

Tartu University Library discussed various options of how to provide Estonian language textbooks to students of Tartu University. The option of building a proprietary platform was considered where the collection would be clearly separate and easily accessible. This option was omitted due the time constraints and financial considerations. Use of a third party platform helped to save the time of testing and developing as well as money. Tartu University Library chose to use the Ebrary platform where books are displayed page-by-page and additional security requirements can be applied. Tartu University Library textbook collection is only available inside Tartu University computer network or by using a university's user name and password. The

library asks professors to fill out a questionnaire where they can mark copy-paste limitations to their books and if necessary financial contracts are signed.

Currently there are over 30 Estonian language textbooks in the collection that is available for Tartu University students, faculty, and staff. E-textbooks are from different categories. These books have copy-paste limitations which are different for each book based on the wishes of the authors. The statistics of the first full year of e-textbook usage has shown that certain highly popular paper books that have been constantly borrowed are also in the top of digital usage. Most popular subjects are economy and psychology.

1.2 Cultural and social value of the project

Besides the need for Estonian language e-textbooks, this project has additional cultural value. Throughout the project it became clear that a small language can be a benefit as opposed to an obstacle. Though, the following reasons are only assumptions and observations, it seemed that the authors liked the idea that there is one collection which is concentrating on their mother tongue. It would have probably been much harder to convince authors to give their books to the collection if these were in English and could sell all over the world. Now a small language limited textbook market became a bonus rather than a minus. So in general, this type of projects would be good for countries with small languages (like Iceland, Latvia etc.). It seems that authors are more willing to share their materials if they know it is going to a smaller group or audience.

The other reason behind it could also be national pride. The authors could have felt that it was their obligation or duty to contribute to the preservation of the Estonian language academic materials. Tartu University Library has guaranteed in a contract signed with authors that the long term preservation of their textbooks will be guaranteed, which also means that authors can be sure that even if their own version of their work is not accessible or lost over time, they have a place where they could retrieve their work.

As more digital material is made available, copyright issues are becoming more a daily topic. Until this project, many people in the library had very vague knowledge about copyrights and the same could be said to most textbook authors. This project has made the copyrights a daily matter that both the library and the university professors as authors have to deal with. We are hoping that this project has and will continue to educate the university staff about these matters.

We are also offering our authors an opportunity to receive feedback if any readers desire to suggest ways to improve the study materials. Many professors have shown an extreme interest to publish first edition of their book in our digital database and then based on the comments and feedbacks enhance their second paper edition. We are offering professors also statistics about the usage of their digital study materials. In addition, by publishing sold out textbooks in a digital format, the Library is guaranteeing that every student can receive access to study materials that they need on daily basis. In general, we are willing to help university authors in order to make their textbook publishing more effective and successful and through that improve the higher education of Tartu University.

This project has also brought up an Open Access matters. It has shown that this could be beneficial if this closed institutional collection could be developed to a nationwide Open Access collection. Tartu University Library strongly believes that if a university funds publishing of textbooks, these should be digitally available to the entire university body freely and with no limitations. Additionally, if a government funds publishing textbooks, these should be Open Access to the entire country. The Estonian government is currently still developing its position towards Open Access. Yet, it would be helpful if quantitative research about usage and attitudes towards Open Access could be carried out as it was done in Great Britain through the National E-book Observatory Project.

This project has helped to raise awareness of digital study materials as well as digital preservation among the university staff as well as informing the public.

2. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that Tartu University Library's Estonian language digital university textbook project has come to a successful end of the first year. This year has taught and given us ideas how to make

our own project better, but not only. This project has given us a chance to offer a valuable resource for university authors not to just publish their Estonian language textbooks, but also to improve and preserve their study materials. Additionally, we are hoping to continue to educate the public about digital preservation, help our government to establish an official policy towards Open Access textbook publishing, and enrich Estonian higher education.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

Libraries

Digital Memory and Common Sense

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In each country, the national library collects, preserves and provides access to documents published in this country – it is an institution safeguarding texts which are important to the society. For national libraries, the tasks of collecting/preserving and providing access are like two sides of the same coin: one cannot exist without the other. Collecting and preserving are activities which build the potential availability – ensure sustainable access to texts. However, as the practice of national libraries increasingly features digital texts, it is time to view possible changes in the working principles of national libraries that make cultural heritage available. Have these principles undergone any changes in the present 'digital era'? What has been changed and for what reason? Which organizations experience similar changes?

The centuries-long practice of national libraries put in a nutshell would be the following: each national library has collected and permanently preserved the possibly exhaustive print production of the country managing this library. This means that the national library collection includes each publication printed in this particular country. The corresponding conceptual initiative came from François I, the King of France, in 1537: a desire to create an exhaustive library of all books published in the Kingdom of France. The means for creating such an exhaustive library has been the legal deposit copy – known in the practice of national libraries from the times of François I until the present day. It means that a national library gets at least one copy of each book published in its country. Collecting publications by means of deposit copies is all-inclusive: all titles are collected and preserved, there is no contents-based selection. Which categories are to be collected – books, serials, journals, newspapers, maps, printed music, etc. – is at the discretion of each country and is thus specified on national level. Such all-inclusive approach to the acquisition of publications could also be interpreted as a principle of economics: it avoids the necessity to select national publications according to their contents, to develop the relevant rules and regulations, to hire staff. Collecting all titles of publication types designated as deposit copy objects is a general practice of national libraries, followed universally. Speaking of born-digital publications, the all-inclusive acquisition involves only off-line publications, e.g CDs and DVDs. The practice of national libraries regarding the collecting and preserving of materials and making them accessible – based on the legal deposit system – has undergone a substantial change due to

Transforming culture in the digital age

the appearance of born-digital online publications, but also due to the digitisation of printed matter and other publications on analogue carriers for ensuring better access to information and for updating it. This is also an area where national libraries have been following the principle of economics which means selecting the material to be collected and preserved – on the basis of formal qualities (i.e technical details) and/or contents. The establishment of collecting and preserving categories on the basis of formal qualities and/or contents rests on economic reasons – the technology used for digital preservation is expensive. It can thus be maintained that today national libraries follow two parallel principles for preserving publications of their home country – one aiming at maximum exhaustiveness, and the other one being selective. Both the two acquisition principles and the activities related to digital content constitute a cultural change in national libraries. The selection practices in national libraries for collecting/preserving are somewhat similar to the appraisal of archival records in public archives. This similarity rises the question whether national libraries should formulate internationally accepted selection principles for acquisition. Of what assistance for them could be the assessment principles of archival records used in public archives?

As mentioned above, national libraries preserve born-digital publications and digitise printed matter and other documents on analogue carriers in order to make them accessible over the web and thus give this information wider availability. However, the digital curation of documents is expensive and entails certain unpredictability: despite all efforts we do not know how many of these e-documents survive, for example, another 20 years or more. Yet we do know that paper produced for writing/printing since the industrial revolution of the 19th century is prone to brittle due to its chemical properties. National libraries have several means for solving this problem, but the use of those means for ensuring the long-time preservation of information – part of national memory – is expensive. Public expectations are high and favour digital use – are these expectations in conflict with the condition of 19th-20th century prints, the improvement of preservation conditions and making of preservation copies? What are the choices for national libraries, considering that there is not enough money for everything that should be done for preserving national memory and making it accessible?

One factor influencing the decisions made by national libraries is the dominating preference of digital technology in relevant public discourses. Even some expert positions in memory institutions prefer digital technology without the slightest critical reservations. In addition to the growing expenses of digital content preservation, another problem is the preservation risks – imperfect technology and the ephemeral nature of digital preservation. What do we conceive as 'long-time preservation of digital material'? Does the corresponding expert discourse define 'long-term' as the time frame of about 15-20 years? Yet, when speaking about the long-term preservation of paper materials, the same time frame is defined as a period of 75-199 years, and in case of extra slow decomposition – over 200 years. Digital technology is an excellent method for disseminating information, yet, regrettably, not the most reliable means for long-term preservation of information – at least not today. Why do we tend to idealise digital technology and to eliminate any possible criticism towards it? Memory institutions presently use combined solutions for preserving information in order to manage risks and ensure the providing of sustainable services; should they also contribute to protecting those technological solutions by providing explanations in public discourses? The question is – how to ensure sustained and sufficient financing for the long-term preservation of the national memory?

In the 20th century libraries started to use different technologies for preserving printed publications, and to implement combined technological solutions for risk management in preservation and access. Libraries started to neutralise acid paper and to conserve publications on acid paper which had been used for printing since the 1850s. The national libraries of large and prosperous West-European and North-American countries have used the mass deacidification method for conserving printed matter on acid paper. Along with improving original carriers, national libraries have also practiced the renewing of information. In order to reproduce publications for preserving the information and making it accessible, they have been microfilmed; for significant improvement of accessibility, the best solution has been digitisation. A national library thus preserves the information contained in national publications in 2-3 parallel forms: as print publications, microfilms and/or in digital form. Although microfilming has been considered as the most reliable reproduction method for preservation, there are several practical reasons questioning the feasibility of investing in this

technology. Libraries have been facing the problem of unusable microfilms, the reasons for that being different – unsatisfactory quality of film developing, the incompatibility of older standards and standards regulating digitisation, or other. That has lead to a new wave of reproducing. If something has happened to the copy – a microfilm or digital file – it is not easier than previously to make a new copy of a print publication whose paper has not been improved by treatment. In the course of drafting "The strategic development plan of the National Library of Estonia 2009-2013" we recognised the necessity to foster both long-term preservation of print materials and the preparation of digital copies as two reciprocally supplementive/supportive methods. In our opinion, the importance of digital copies lies in the fact that making the document conveniently accessible constitutes the best way of protecting the original on paper. Digital technology enables to multiply the information on paper in twice less time and with twice less money than required by microfilming; digital copies are easier to transport to a duplicating preservation space in order to manage risks. However, the development of technologies also entails certain disadvantages - reproducing information from print materials by microfilming or digitisation enables us to spare physical space, but we lose in the resistance to failures in ensuring stable preservation conditions, and in the resistance to *force majeure*. Printed publications have a better chance to preserve than microfilms and digital copies, e.g in conditions lacking uninterrupted electricity supply and the preservation climate dependent on it. Comparison between digital copies and microfilms indicates that the identified deterioration of digital copies develops more quickly (Reed).

On the other hand, the advantage of digital copies over microfilms is the possibility to use technical equipment for convenient monitoring of the preservation of information – the actual readability of the text. Another advantage of digital copies is the possibility to use OCR and create search options based on it. Also, digital copies enable to retain and provide easier access to the colours of the text and paper. True, we can also make colour microfilms but they are more expensive than black-and-white ones. Considering all these factors we have to admit that digital technology, despite its certain disadvantages, is more functional and entails more options than microfilming.

In collecting and archiving online publications, the National Library of Estonia takes into consideration the selection principles for archiving online publications worked out under the project *Web Cultural Heritage* of the European Commission programme *Culture 2000*. The selection is governed by the general principle that the material should contain important information from the viewpoint of cultural heritage. Another factor to be taken into consideration is the specific character of natively digital material. Upon determining selection criteria for collecting and preserving digital material, priority should be given to publications which lack a parallel print version. The majority of online newspapers and magazines are also published as print versions, but there are titles which exist only online. Studying the content of the Estonian web, in particular online publications, it appears that all major newspapers with large circulation, both national and local, are represented with online versions. The archiving of online daily newspapers for long-term preservation is still a topic for discussion, the people involved with the issue try to find answers to the main questions: which would be the most expedient way for organising the archiving, and who should be responsible for it.

Another question is – which part of digital information do we consider important, how significant is the format of text material. Considering how simple it is to change digital information and to create different versions, it is essential to determine what is the object of digital preservation. One of the problems related to digital material is the actual possibility of adequate preservation. The technology used to transfer digital information is becoming more and more sophisticated. Five years ago online newspapers consisted of static HTML-files; today they are compiled dynamically. The advertising banner on the newspaper's margin is constantly changing. A search in the newspaper's archive would produce an old article with today's advert on the screen. It is impossible to restore the screen image of the day when the article was actually published. Which of these versions is the one that should be preserved?

In recent years the collecting of pre-print files from Estonian publishers has been a positive experience for the National Library of Estonia. We have reached an agreement with a number of publishers that in addition to the print edition they also supply us with the original file which is sent to the printing house. For the library such cooperation enables notable savings in resources – the immediate archiving of the digital version eliminates the necessity for subsequent digitisation or microfilming of this publication in order to preserve it.

Janne Andresoo & Mihkel Volt

In 2004 the National Library of Estonia started to create a digital archive for long-term preservation purposes. This was possible due to the library's participation in the project *reUSE* of the EU framework programme *E-Content*. The main goal of the project was to create a digital archive environment and collect print files from publishers. As a result the archive DIGAR (respository) was created on the basis of software Fedora 2.0 for collecting, managing and long-term preservation of electronic publications (digar.nlib.ee).

Under the national principles of bibliographic registration of Estonian publications, the following national publications are archived in the digital archive DIGAR:

· online publications published on the Internet, including books, newspapers, journals and magazines, serials, maps and printed music documents;
· digital copies of electronic documents published on physical carriers (e.g. floppies, CD-ROMs, etc.);
· digitised copies of analog carriers, except audiovisual documents and pre-print files of print publications.

The digital archive collects Estonian online publications pursuant to the Legal Deposit Copy Act, acquiring publications through web monitoring or receiving them from the publishers; electronic publications on physical carriers are archived during processing. All electronic publications that have been submitted to the library as legal deposit copies are also archived retrospectively (Sundeksemplari, 1997). Each title is archived as one digital copy in the following preference:

· pre-print file;
· online publication;
· electronic publication on physical carrier;
· digitised copy of analog carrier.

During the drafting process of "The strategic development plan of the National Library of Estonia 2009-2013" we discussed the options of combining different technologies. One non-canonical idea was to create synergy by uniting the technological experience of the era preceding the industrial revolution with the experience of the digital era. If research has supplied us with knowledge that the deterioration of publications on cotton paper is slow or extremely slow, would it be possible to use print-on-demand technology for printing the digital text on cotton paper? (*Rahvusteaviku säilivuse tagamine*)

Would it be possible to provide a combined service of digitisation-on-demand and print-on-demand?

A hint from the past helped to find the answer to these questions. At the beginning of the 1920s the Estonian Ministry of Internal Affairs submitted a proposal for the draft Printing Act to print on cotton paper 8 deposit copies of each publication issued in Estonia in order to ensure their better preservation.(*Trükiseadus I*). The shorthand records of the session of the *Riigikogu* (Estonian Parliament) where the draft Print Act was discussed reveals that the said was not included in the draft Act on the proposal of Aleksander Veiler, a Member of Parliament and owner of a publishing and printing company at that time.(*Trükiseadus II*)

The reason was obvious – in the 1920s it would have been difficult to execute this task both technically and organisationally. The digital era, however, has made it possible.

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For those Looking for Information and Experiences: The National Digital Library of Finland

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1. Introduction

The National Digital Library is one of the research, innovation and creativity environments, the development of which is among the strategic policies of the Ministry of Education of Finland. It implements national culture and science policies by means of increasing the availability and preservation of the electronic information resources of libraries, archives and museums, and by means of establishing a significant research infrastructure and strengthening electronic learning environments.

The National Digital Library project is a part of the development of national electronic infrastructures and customer-oriented electronic service entities. It is one of the public administration projects defined in the Ubiquitous Information Society action plan that implements the third national information society strategy "A renewing, human-centric and competitive Finland" (2007–2015). Measures performed by the National Digital Library project are also a response to the joint objectives of the European Union Member States on digitization of cultural materials and scientific information and their electronic availability and long-term preservation.

The mission of the National Digital Library is to improve the prerequisites for general access to information as well as for educational and research purposes, to support the arts and creative activities. The project focuses on common services, operational models and solutions. The most essential, prioritized materials of libraries, archives and museums will be digitized and made available for information searches via the public interface. A plan for long-term preservation solution for cultural heritage materials will be created.

2. The operating environment and project organisation

Several simultaneous change processes are under way in the operating environment of libraries, museums and archives. Essential factors include the varying needs and expectations of users, new possibilities provided by information and communication technologies and national infrastructures as well as changes in the demographic structure, service structures and operational practices. Modern society, being exposed to the total impact of the change factors, is called an information and knowledge society and is characterised by increased exchange of intangible resources and changes in the production and use of information.

Libraries, museums and archives are responsible for the management and preservation of data resources as well as for making them available to the public. The changes in their tasks and role have been affected

by the cross-societal increase in electronic data resources and the emergence of the Internet as the essential environment for information retrieval and learning.

The Ministry of Education of Finland launched the National Digital Library, NDL (2008-2011) project to improve online accessibility of information and usability of the digital cultural heritage material held by libraries, museums and archives, and to develop long-term preservation solutions. The National Digital Library is an exceptional nationwide project and first of its kind in Finland, since it is a co-operative under-taking and will provide the combined services and collections of the Finnish museums, archives and libraries for everyone through one versatile user interface.

A total of 35 organisations are involved: ministries, national institutions responsible for preservation and distribution of cultural heritage, scientific and public libraries, museums, archives and representatives from other key interest groups. The Ministry of Education has appointed a Monitoring Group and a Steering Group which supervise the Availability and Long-term Preservation sections as well as a group of technical specialists.

In addition to these groups and sections, the project has established various co-operative working groups, such as the working group preparing the enterprise architecture of the project or working group for the us-ability issues. Each working group consists of experts representing different sectors, which has ensured the consensus within the project. Novel and interactive working methods have been introduced to the project in order to ensure active participation of the sectors: such as using common wiki as a project tool, cross-sector expert groups, several workshops and learning from each others´ practices. The formation of a shared will among organisations and determining the added value of the planned products and services has been the key issue in the early work of the project.
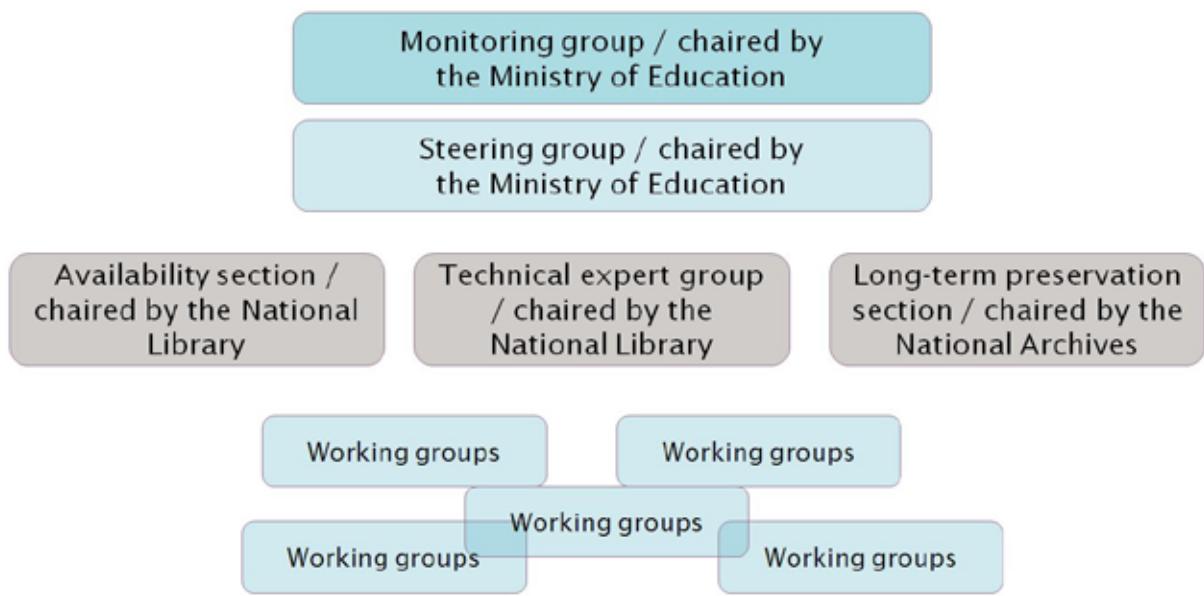

Figure 1: Project organization

3. Aims

The National Digital Library project develops and implements a public interface for information retrieval of the most essential electronic information resources of libraries, archives and museums. A plan for long-term preservation solution for cultural heritage materials will be created in the project. Simultaneously with the NDL Public Interface project, the digitisation of essential, prioritised materials held by libraries, museums and archives will be continued and boosted by additional funding. Competence in the related areas will be also enhanced by providing increased level of nation-wide training and workshops both dur-ing and after the project.

As a result of the implementation of the National Digital Library, the information resources of libraries, archives and museums will merge across organisational boundaries into a versatile and integrated national selection of information resources and services which will be actively used in society as a source of information for both the general public and for education, research and creative sectors. The joint infrastructures and services bring the practices of museums, libraries and archives closer, decrease costs and consolidate cooperation.
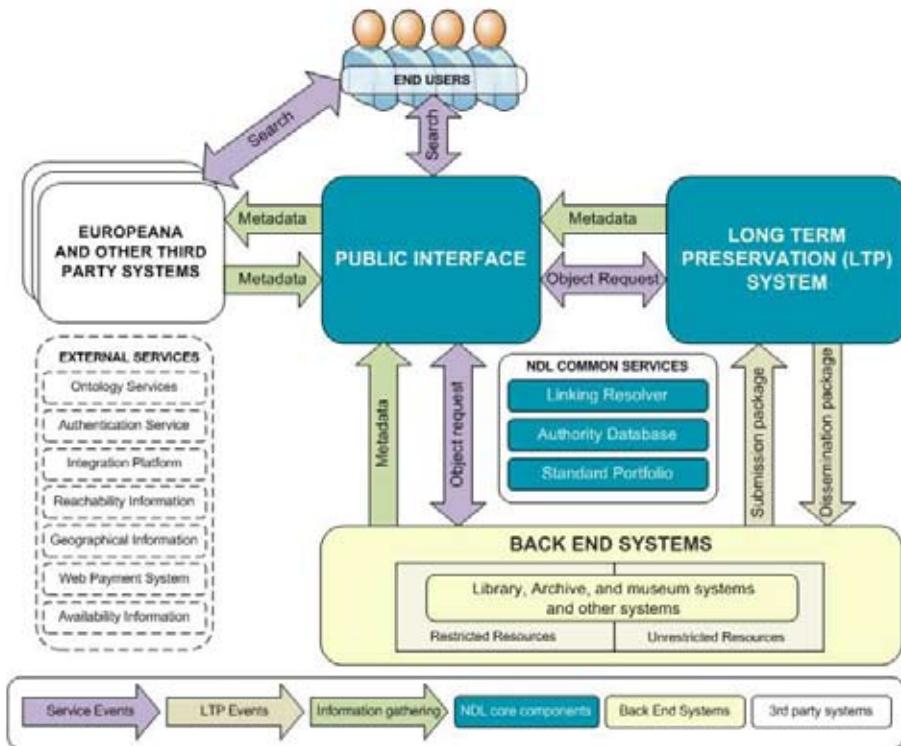

Figure 2: Enterprise architecture of the National Digital Library

4. Public interface

4.1 General

The Public Interface will be an easy-to-use and efficient one-stop shop for the digital resources of libraries, museums and archives in Finland. All digital resources on cultural heritage, research and teaching will be supplied to end-users as a single service. The service will be based on end-users' needs and will constitute a comprehensive and versatile user interface, meeting end-users' expectations on fast and successful browsing for information. The projected end-user-groups include, for example: general public, researchers, other professionals, educational sector, artists, authorities and media. Authenticated end-users will have their own personalised services available anytime and anywhere.

Currently, the end-user has to use several different services when searching for information, and to be able to choose the right service it is essential to know which organisation is providing the information and which collection holds the desired resources. The Public Interface is intended as a replacement for current interfaces to enable users to find the information they need through one interface, irrespective of which organisation is providing the information. Instead of using several parallel interfaces, it will be possible to adopt a single front-end user interface to back-end systems and their services. Such back-end systems include library systems, archival systems and museum collection management systems, long-term preservation systems, a metasearch service and digital archives.

4.2 Operating principle

The Public Interface architecture is based on the idea of separating the user interface from back-end systems. This will make it possible to develop the front-end service independently and regardless of the development of the back-end systems. The operational principle is to keep cataloguing data and documents in the back-end systems. Organisations will continue to be responsible for the production, cataloguing and management of their own digital resources. Metadata is automatically harvested from the back-end systems, normalised and indexed in the Public Interface to enable easy, efficient and fast retrieval of digital resources.

Services provided by back-end systems (e.g. image and hold requests) will be integrated into the Public Interface through separate APIs on the back-end systems. Other external services can also be integrated into the Public Interface. Other external third party services can also be integrated. Records can be enriched, for example, via book cover images from Google Books and LibraryThing and users can create reference lists with a reference management tool (RefWorks, Zotero etc.). Records and record lists can also be exported to virtual learning environments.
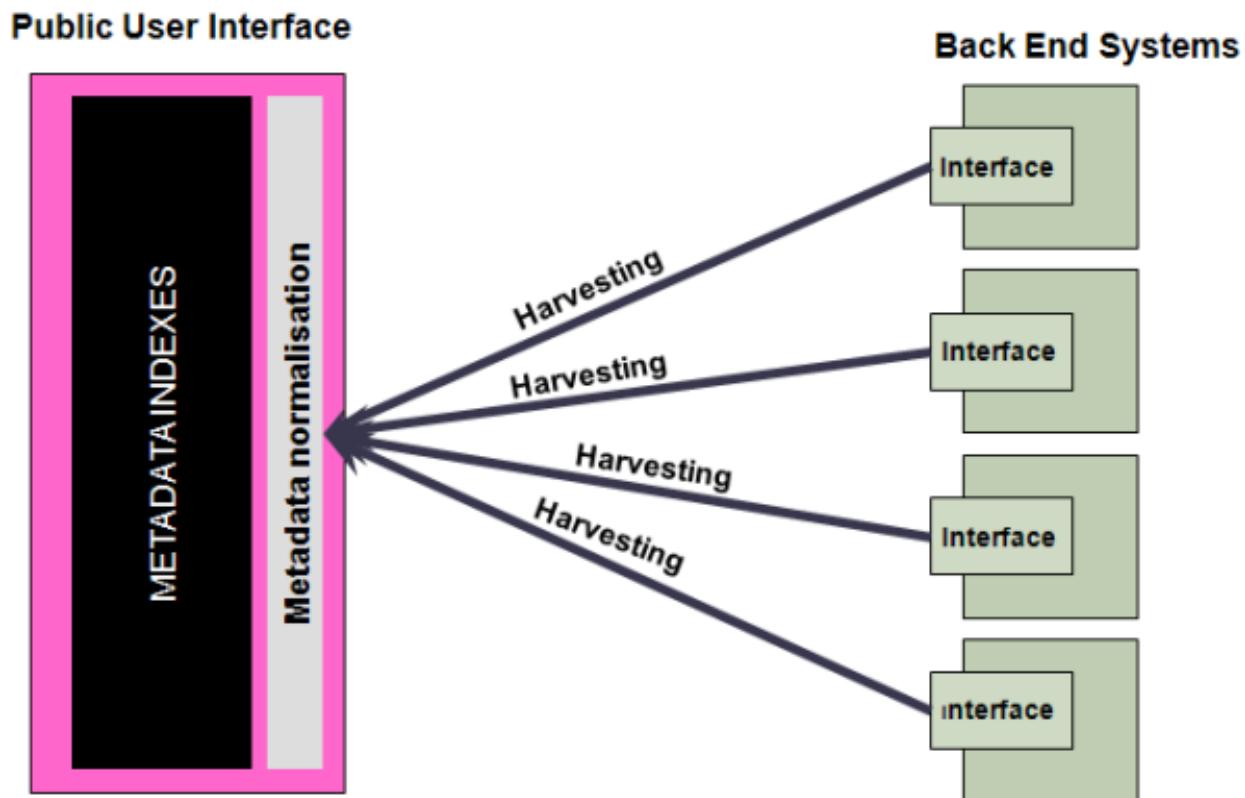

Figure 3: Indexing and harvesting

There will be a single installation of the software with institution-specific views. Organisations will be able to customise the Public Interface for their own unique requirements by highlighting their own resources. Organisations will also be able to create default views for different user-groups. The user interface will also be customizable by end-users and can be integrated to their everyday working environment.

4.3. Contents and services

The content that will be available through the Public Interface consists of the digital resources of libraries, museums and archives. Content can be digitised or born-digital objects (images, texts, sound files, video clips, e-publications) or reference data on physical objects (e.g. artefacts, museum objects, books, works of art, geographical locations) or other reference data stored in databases.

Transforming culture in the digital age

The Public Interface will provide unrestricted material for all users. It will also provide restricted access materials subject to user authentication, such as licensed materials (e.g. e-journals), archive materials with restricted viewing and use, legal deposit copies and other materials subject to copyright. Each organisation will be responsible for ensuring that the materials made available via the Public Interface are used in accordance with intellectual property rights.

The Public Interface will provide direct access to multiple services that have traditionally been accessed through separate user interfaces in different organisations. In libraries, these services include the renewal of loans and holds, and fee handling. In museums, the corresponding functions could be the electronic purchase of a permission to use a copyrighted photograph. As for archives, the end-user could, for example, submit an electronic request to gain access to and retrieve restricted archive material. With one login and single authentication throughout the Public Interface the end-user will have access to several accounts and services in different organisations.

4.4. Web 2.0 features

The Public interface will support web 2.0 functionality and principles such as information sharing, interoperability, user-centered design and collaboration. It will be possible to integrate the Public Interface with the everyday working environment of the end-user such as web browser, intranet services, Facebook, virtual learning environments and other web applications, so that it will become a natural element of the work environment.

End-users will be able to enrich the metadata in the Public Interface by adding comments and tags to a metadata record (of an object). Such social metadata can be used to support the retrieval functionality and selection and recommendations of references. By analysing end-user behaviour, the Public Interface service will be able to provide suggestions and alternative references in search results. Through the Public Interface end-users will also be able to provide the organisations with additional information and feedback on organisations' cataloguing data concerning possible defects or errors in the metadata. This social data production will provide continuous improvement to the reliability and value of the metadata. It will also be possible to use the metadata of the public interface in other services, and to import social metadata from other systems. In the future The Public Interface can also be integrated with the semantic web ontology services.

4.5. User needs and usability plan

The end users of are not satisfied with our current library, archive and museum systems and services based on questionnaires, interview studies, usability tests and statistics conducted in recent years in these fields. Currently the end users have to use several different user interfaces and they actually have to know which organisation is providing the service and resources. In addition, several search services in use actually require the end-user to take a training course before they can even use these services efficiently. Thus, commercial search engines are preferred to library search services, since the former are usually easier to use.

Due to heterogeneous user-groups, the Public Interface users will have varied expectations and needs. They will also share some common expectations, such as usability, reliability, wide range of content and relevant search results. However, individual user-groups have specific needs that are not necessarily relevant to other user-groups. These may include, for example, easy integrability of commonly used network environments and social media applications to the Public Interface, customisation of the service to meet their own preferences and the opportunity for social content production and interaction with other users.

End-users may also have different information needs or motives to use the Public Interface. These include, for example, searching for specific information, looking for experiences, getting a comprehensive picture of a given theme, or a desire for social interaction. A single user may use the Public Interface simultaneously in several roles: between scientific searches, a researcher may get acquainted with materials relating to his leisure interests.

The basic idea behind the Public Interface design is to attain maximum accessibility and usability for end-users. Enhancing the electronic resource services will make the content easily approachable for the

general public and improve the prerequisites and the quality of research. The goal is to provide maximum accessibility through high usability and integrability. To this end the National Digital Library has formed a usability experts group with the task of deepening the understanding of user requirements and needs by user interviews and usability testing. The group will be active throughout the project to assist in the usability engineering of the Public interface to ensure maximum end-user friendliness and cement the user-oriented design approach.

5. Europeana and the national digital library

Europeana, The European Digital Library, is a joint project of the European Union Member States and the European Commission. Europeana constitutes a common view of European digital cultural heritage. Europeana version 1.0 is being developed and will launch in 2010 with links to over 10 million digital objects.

At the moment, national digital libraries are developed simultaneously in many European countries; in the future their content will also be available through Europeana. There are also other ongoing projects in Europe promoting digitising and the availability of materials and supporting Europeana. Of those projects financed by eContentplus programme, Finnish organisations are participating in the Athena, Apenet, BHL-Europe, EuropeanaLocal, EuropeanaTravel and European Film Gateway projects.

The National Digital Library project participates actively in the development of Europeana. In the future, Finnish content will be exported to Europeana via the National Digital Library: The Public interface will serve as the national aggregator. For aggregation and conversion of metadata a format converter will be developed as part of the architecture. This system converts metadata to the format used in Europeana (ESE, and later EDM) and provides that metadata to Europeana via OAI-PMH harvesting protocol. Centralised aggregation enables shared technical infrastructure, coordinated processes and prevents the export of duplicate (Finnish) objects into the Europeana.

6. Long-term preservation

During the last decade, actors throughout the world have become conscious of the fact that without a sustainable realisation of the long-term preservation of electronic resources our collective memory is in danger of becoming damaged or lost in the course of time. At the same time, we will lose the strength of evidence included in these culturally invaluable materials and their potential as a source for education, research, creative activities and general access to information, and as an object of economic utilisation and the social environment.

The National Digital Library project plans national long-term preservation solutions for the electronic resources of organisations responsible for the preservation of cultural heritage. The project will also develop organisations' readiness to ease the transition into an electronic operating environment, for example, by increasing know-how in digital preservation and management of resources. The operating principle of the future long-term preservation system is based on the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model, the functions of which include ingestion, archival storage, data management, administration, planning of preservation and access.

The long-term preservation system under development will offer interface services both for receiving material from the organisations' collection management systems and for distributing the stored information to back-end systems. The basic task of the system is to offer digital information delivered for storing to the target audience in an accessible form. Another aim of the development of the use and preservation of digital content is to make the use of resources more efficient.

Plans pertaining to long-term preservation will be completed in the summer 2010. It is, however, up to the next government to set guidelines and schedule for its implementation and future funding.

7. Conclusion

Besides creating common solutions, the implementation of the National Digital Library requires harmonized practices, continuous interaction, and a commitment to co-operation on national level within the

memory organisation sector. The National Digital Library will recommend standards and best practices for the memory organisations to ensure interoperability and interaction.

The services, practices and procedures generated by the project will have a substantial impact on the entire library, museum and archive sector. With the creation of the National Digital Library, the common utilization of infrastructures, as well as access to heterogeneous national information resources, will become more efficient and widespread. To maximize the benefits of these new solutions, organizations will be updating their processes, working hard to build interfaces, and committing themselves in the future as well to joint R&D work.

For the end-users, the National Digital Library's Public interface will ensure that they will have an efficient and easy to use access to the rich national digital resources and services of the Finnish memory organisation sector through a common user interface. The Public interface service can be localised to suit the varying needs of heterogeneous user groups. Available views of the user interface can be tailored to provide desired services, resources and automatic functionality for handling and analysing the search results and related services. The aspect of social media and the users' desire for interaction has also been taken into account by providing the users the possibility of improving the content by adding social metadata.

Understanding the end user needs and expectations has played a major role during the design process. Thus, the goal of the Public interface is to enhance the accessibility of resources through high usability and integration of services. Accessibility and high usability improve information retrieval and the use of personal working environment of researchers, students and the general public while integrated services and digital resources will enhance the access and visibility of on-line cultural heritage materials.

Currently, the National Digital Library project is preparing for the pilot phase of the Public interface which will start after the procurement of the Public interface software. The National Digital Library has received tenders from software providers and is currently negotiating on the terms of the procurement. After the pilot is complete, the Public interface is expected to be fully implemented and go live on 2011.

Transforming culture in the digital age

Large-scale Aggregation of Metadata from Distributed Digital Libraries in Poland

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1. Introduction

History of studies and work aimed to create easy to use and robust digital libraries platform in Poznan Supercomputing and Networking Center (PSNC) goes back to 1999. It was a dawn of the dLibra framework which later became a base for the creation of distributed digital libraries in Poland (http://dlibra.psnc.pl/). In 2001 digital libraries were included as a part of PIONIER - Polish Optical Internet – Advanced Applications, Services and Technologies for Information Society (http://www.pionier.gov.pl/) program. The main goal of PIONIER program was the development and deployment of an advanced infrastructure together with tools, services and applications available to the entire scientific community and eventually to society in general. This program resulted in creation of broadband optical network which is the base for research and development activities in computing science, telecommunication, computational sciences and other services. Besides the construction of a network infrastructure, one of the main aims of the PIONIER program was the creation of pilot services and applications for the information society. As was already mentioned, one of such services, in the e-Content area of the program, were digital libraries.

In October 2002, the first dLibra-based regional digital library, the Digital Library of the Wielkopolska, was made publicly available at http://www.wbc.poznan.pl/. It was the result of cooperation between PSNC and Poznań Foundation of Scientific Libraries. Currently this library holds around 100 000 digital objects and is the largest digital library in Poland. Its creation was the beginning of the Polish platform of distributed digital libraries in the PIONIER network. At the moment this platform consists of 50 regional and institutional publicly available digital libraries. Those digital libraries are created by hundreds of institutions including academic and public libraries, archives and museums. Together they give access to over 350 000 digital objects.

To provide one access point to those resources in June 2007 PSNC started a new service based on the network of Polish distributed digital libraries: PIONIER Network Digital Libraries Federation (PIONIER DLF), which is available at http://fbc.pionier.net.pl/.

In this paper the PIONIER DLF will be used to illustrate key concepts of the large-scale metadata aggregation. We will briefly explain what benefits are coming from metadata aggregation to end-users, external network services and metadata providers (digital libraries who are providing metadata).

Since 11th of December 2009 resources from Polish digital libraries has been available in Europeana (http://europeana.eu). Further we will briefly describe the role of PIONIER DLF in this process and show how crucial is metadata aggregation for Europeana development. .

PIONIER Digital Libraries Federation

Aggregation is an act of collecting things together. This general definition was refined in Europeana Content Strategy where entity which performs aggregation - an aggregator, is defined as "an organization that collects metadata from its group of content providers and transmits them to Europeana, helps content providers with guidance on conformance with Europeana norms and converts metadata if necessary. The aggregator also supports the content providers with administration, operations and training" (Heijink, "Europeana Content Strategy"). This definition gives a quite good overview of possible roles of metadata aggregator. Europeana is just one example of a service built on the metadata aggregation idea. OAIster (http://

oaister.worldcat.org) is one of the oldest and most popular in this domain. This project was started in 2002 and was aimed to collect academically-oriented digital resources and make them freely available. OAIster is now a part of WorldCat.org and it harvests more than a 23 million of metadata records. There are also other services focused on aggregation of resources from particular thematic domain e.g. medieval manuscripts (http://manuscriptorium.com/) or electronic theses and dissertations (http://www.dart-europe.eu/).

Europeana as well as OAIster are efforts aimed to facilitate access to digital resources. Initial goals behind the creation of the PIONIER DLF service were in general similar to mentioned projects and were expressed in the PIONIER DLF mission. According to this mission, the Digital Libraries Federation will work to facilitate the use of resources of Polish digital libraries and repositories (1), increase the visibility of Polish digital resources in the Internet (2), give Internet users and digital libraries creators access to new, advanced network services based on the resources of Polish digital libraries and repositories (3).

Various factors important for comprehensive implementation of this mission includes getting metadata from digital libraries into PIONIER DLF portal. This raises several issues related to technical and semantic interoperability and formal agreements between PSNC and participating digital libraries. Last but very important factor of mission implementation is the promotion, which is inevitable in order to attract end-users and increase the visibility of aggregated resources in the Internet.

Organizational foundation was based on few additional assumptions. Participation in the PIONIER DLF is free of any charge, so any Polish digital library can participate. There is no deposition of digital objects from participating digital libraries in the PIONIER DLF service. PIONIER DLF is a metadata aggregator, so only metadata of records is harvested. To enhance the interoperability open standards are used as the base for communication for all PIONIER DLF features and mechanisms.

The technical foundation of PIONIER Digital Libraries Federation service is build upon Open Archive Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH). It is a lightweight protocol describing a communication framework for metadata exchange between various services (e.g. digital libraries and aggregators). OAI-PMH support is in fact the main technical requirement for digital libraries which are willing to join PIONIER DLF. As there is a lot of tools which allows to expose metadata from digital repository through OAI-PMH, this requirement is easy to satisfy. Besides, in Poland most of digital libraries are created using dLibra software and thanks to this software functionality, the OAI-PMH support is available out-of-the-box without any additional efforts.

Last but not least element of the PIONIER DLF mission is the promotion of Polish resources. The big success in this area was the inclusion of the PIONIER DLF OpenSearch plugin into the Polish distribution of the Firefox 2 web browser and its later versions. It almost doubled the number of visitors coming to the PIONIER DLF portal. Users and DLF's participants can also easily embed a mini search box in their websites. It allows to execute search in DLF's portal directly from these websites.

Another very important aspect of the promotion of Polish resources is associated with provisioning of aggregated Polish metadata to other metadata aggregators like Europeana or DART-Europe. Such services very often have the potential to attract new international users not yet aware of the PIONIER DLF existence. The connection between the DLF and external services requires special support in the DLF architecture. This is outlined in the next section of this paper.

2. DLF Services architecture

PIONIER DLF architecture is depicted on Figure 1. The bottom layer of this architecture consists of OAI-PMH compliant repositories, exposing metadata of stored objects to the DLF harvesting service. The OAI-PMH protocol allows to expose metadata in any schema, but its specification states that at least Dublin Core Simple (15 basic elements) should be supported. Because Dublin Core is widely used in Polish digital libraries it was also used as a base for PIONIER DLF - in order to achieve the minimal semantic interoperability between heterogeneous distributed digital libraries. Gathered metadata is stored in relational database and indexed to optimize the search process. End-users get access to harvested resources through various mechanisms offered by the PIONIER DLF applications layer, e.g.: simple and advanced search, locating of digital objects. Metadata might be also circulated further through a set of communication interfaces which may be used by different external services (e.g. Europeana).

Adam Dudczak, Agnieszka Lewandowska & Marcin Werla
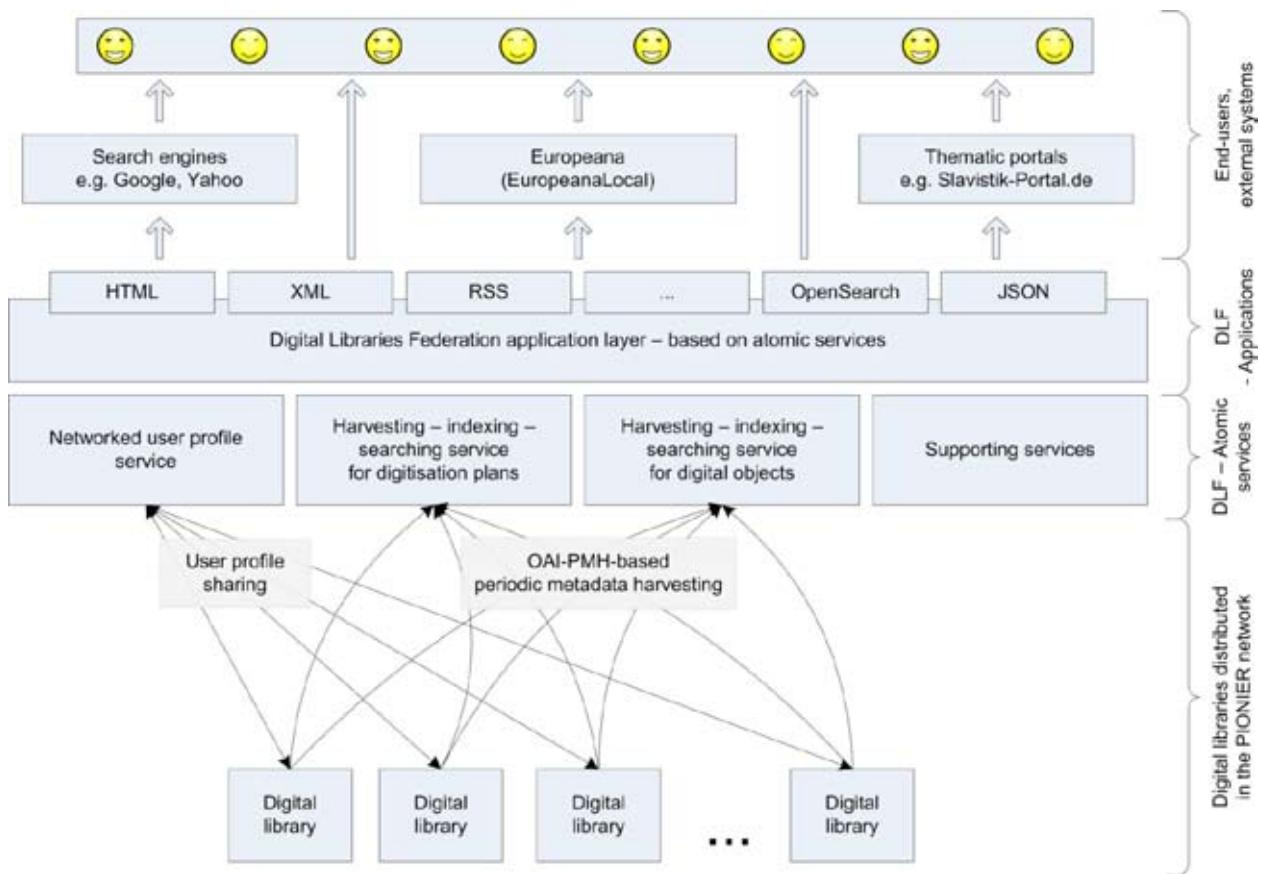
Figure 1. PIONIER DLF technical architecture.

An exceptional feature of the PIONIER DLF is the automated gathering of information about digitisation plans. Most digital libraries in Poland expose metadata of objects planned for digitisation in the nearest future. Thanks to such information end-users know what will be available on-line in the nearest future. On top of those information PIONIER DLF also provides a search interface for digitisation plans. As the information about digitisation plans is exposed via the OAI-PMH protocol, the model of aggregation of this metadata is analogous to the model developed for already digitised objects.

PIONIER DLF is also integrated with a common authentication platform used by Polish digital libraries. This platform extends Shibboleth model and allows to share information about users profiles among federated/trusted services. More information about mechanisms and deployment of this platform can be found in our previous paper (Dudczak et al., "Extending the Shibboleth Identity Management Model with a Networked User Profile").

3. Advanced network services based on Large scale metadata aggregation

Mentioned building blocks are used to create some basic and more advanced functionalities available for end-users through PIONIER DLF website. Having all metadata in one place simplifies development of basic mechanisms (like searching in all Polish digital libraries, statistics) and allows to create advanced services on top of this huge amount of information. In this chapter we will briefly describe two examples of such an advanced services. More detailed explanation can be found in our previous papers (Lewandowska et. al, "Enrichment of European Digital Resources by Federating Regional Digital Libraries in Poland"; Mazurek et al., "Selective Harvesting of Regional Digital Libraries and National Metadata Aggregators").

The first example of more advanced service, which may be offered by an aggregator, is a potential duplicates detection mechanism. This mechanism is based on searching for objects with similar metadata (title, create, publication date...). Such an information is available in form of a report with all potential duplications and as a matrix showing number of duplicated objects between all pairs of digital libraries. Described feature is also available as an XML-based web service which may be integrated with any digital

library software. This web service is used in dLibra-based digital libraries while metadata of objects are created. Editor's application asks PIONIER DLF if object with exactly the same or similar metadata exist in any Polish digital library. As a response it receives a list of links to potential duplicates. This information is exposed to a person who is preparing digital objects metadata. At this stage person can decide if he or she will publish this resource anyway or expend effort on preparing other object. At the time of writing the list of potential duplicates contained 514 titles (0,14% of all resources).

Planned publications and detection of potential duplicates together create a framework which allows to coordinate digitisation process at country-level without any additional central institution.

Persistent identifiers are another important feature which simplifies usage of resources from digital libraries. Each digital library may be built using different software, some of them may use dLibra but it is not required to use dLibra in order to join PIONIER DLF. At some stage digital library may wish to change its existing digital library software to some other solution. In that case it is highly probable that after migration, old links will no longer work. To avoid such a situation PIONIER DLF introduces persistent identifiers. PIONIER DLF holds a registry which maps persistent identifiers to current location of objects. This information comes from records aggregated using OAI-PMH, so even when software will change publications URLs but identifiers will remain unchanged, PIONIER DLF will be able to direct users to up-to-date URL to digital object. There are different types of persistent identifiers e.g. DOI, URN, but OAI-PMH specification recommends its own OAI identifiers syntax. These identifiers are very simple, each is built from namespace prefix "oai", followed by domain address of digital library and a string which identifies this object in the context of its digital library e.g. oai:kpbc.umk.pl:9806. Together with the address of PIONIER DLF object registry users have a persistent, valid URL to object e.g. http://fbc.pionier.net.pl/id/oai:kpbc.umk.pl:9806.

Other benefits coming from metadata aggregation will be described in the following section dedicated to creating connection to Europeana.

4. Resources from Polish digital libraries in Europeana

On 11th of December 2009 Europeana finalized a process of ingestion of 257 000 of object from Polish digital libraries. Thanks to this, total number of objects in Europeana exceeded 5 million, with 5.5% of objects from Poland. According to current plans in June 2010 Europeana should reach 10 million of objects and this number should be doubled in 2011. If those objectives will be realized Europeana has a unique chance to become the most important access point to European cultural heritage.

General approval for actions performed by PIONIER DLF among Polish digital librarians resulted with wide utilisation of open standards like OAI-PMH or Dublin Core. Thanks to this the only barrier which was blocking Polish digital libraries from submitting data to Europeana was the compliance with Europeana Semantic Elements metadata standard.

Europeana Semantic Elements (ESE) consists of 15 Dublin Core attributes extended by using 22 Dublin Core qualifiers/terms and 11 Europeana-specific elements. Some of these additional elements may be extracted or mapped from other existing elements but in fact it depends on the metadata standard which was used in particular digital library. Detailed description of ESE and guidelines for metadata mapping and normalization can be found in documents published by Europeana (Europeana Semantic Elements Specification, Metadata Mapping and Normalisation Guidelines for the Europeana Prototype).

After profound analysis of metadata gathered by PIONIER DLF some transformations were automated but also some additional steps were necessary. Below one may find detailed description of three most important issues which had to be solved in order to obtain ESE compliant metadata in Poland.

First problem was associated with normalization of values stored in dc:language field to RFC 4646. To do this all values used for this element were analysed and mapped to standarized values e.g. "polski", "polish", "Pol"or "Polnisch" were replaced by standard two-letter language code "pl".

Language is an element of description which was already present in metadata. In case of europeana:type it was necessary to derive this value from other elements of description (in this case dc:type and dc:format). Europeana:type may have one out of four different values : TEXT, IMAGE, AUDIO, VIDEO and it is used to determine the way in which object description is presented at Europeana website. It is necessary to stress

Adam Dudczak, Agnieszka Lewandowska & Marcin Werla

that this value should indicate type of original object, so for example if digital object consists of JPG images representing scanned textual document, it should be classified as TEXT.

Third issue worth to mention was related with the presentation of the aggregated metadata in the Europeana portal. ESE defines an element europeana:provider which in case of an aggregator should hold its name in original language, so in case of Polish digital libraries it is "Federacja Bibliotek Cyfrowych" (Polish name of the PIOINER DLF). As any aggregator is just an intermediary, in order to show the original source for given object, after consultations with Europeana staff, we have added one additional value to dc:source element containing the name of source digital library. This practice is now a part of Europeana mapping guidelines but it is a workaround rather than a good practice. Fortunately Europeana office is aware of this fact and this issue will be probably fixed with the new Europeana Data Model developed for the purpose of future versions of Europeana.

After those initial analysis, mappings and enrichment the metadata from PIONIER DLF were validated using Europeana Content Checker. After fulfilling this stage (27th of November 2009), Polish metadata was harvested (8th of December 2009) and ingested into the main Europeana portal.

Thanks to the fact that all Polish digital libraries are connected through PIONIER DLF whole mapping and normalization effort is done only in one place – in the DLF. It is also remarkable that this approach is recommended by Europeana. If an organization wants to join Europeana, it should find a suitable metadata aggregator (with a help of the Europeana office) and pass its metadata through this aggregator.

5. Conclusions

Metadata aggregation introduced various concepts which enabled development of new network services. This leads to improvement in the area of user experience and metadata quality (through normalization and open standards). Tools and services offered by a metadata aggregator can simplify the process of integration with external services and facilitate the use of aggregated resources. PIONIER DLF is a good example of such a metadata aggregator. At the moment it forwards Polish metadata to Europeana and other services like i.e. DART-Europe portal.

The software package which is a base for PIONIER DLF will be released as an Open Source software package.

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Changing Users of the Digital Library

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Alongside constant changes in the postmodern society the libraries as a part of the informational infrastructure are also in transformation. It is not only the format of information that elicits this change but also different discourses that have an impact to everyday-work in libraries. According to the definition of discourse of Norman Fairclough we can dissert it as "language as social practice determined by social structures" (14; ed. 2). Thus, every language act is contributing to society, culture and reproduction of power relations (23; ed. 23). Besides traditional roles such as preserving cultural heritage, collecting and making information available for the community there is also an issue of marketing the informational products and services. So, as long as the tasks are changing the essence of the library and its visitors is also in transformation.

The aim of the paper is to take a glance at the change of essence of the visitors of a digital library. A particular case, namely of University of Tartu Library has been selected to illustrate the dynamics as so far in Estonia the bigger research libraries have managed to find sufficient resources in order to afford themselves creating a digital library. First, the external organizational network of a university library will be visualized from the perspective of the institution itself. Then it will be mapped in order to explore its circle of users. Additionally, a word will be given to faculty members and librarians to reveal the perceptions about the roles of a university library and its users. Eventually, issues that concern studying digital library and its users will be discussed.

So, who is actually the visitor? How to name *The One The Library Is Created For*? It appears that recently Vivian Reed has also paid attention to these definitions but in the current paper the borders will be pushed a little further. In most scientific publications (published in English!) we meet "the patron". According to Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary the patron is "a person chosen, named, or honored as a special guardian, protector, or supporter". In Estonian there is "lugeja" or "reader" instead of the patron as first of the documents offered by libraries were for reading (not so much for listening or watching as it is today). When creating statistical reports on the number of visits the readers pay to a library, the latter turns into "visitors". But if the visitor visits any application of a digital library then s/he becomes a "user" of it. Of course, there is also a marketing discourse, carefully but gradually sneaking into libraries, talking about services in the context of libraries. In a traditional marketing discourse it could take us to "clients" or "customers". In fact, even librarians who maybe do not care about notion of marketing itself, use a German word "Stammkunde" to refer to these patrons who enjoy visiting library frequently and who offer a generous feedback of their experiences in libraries. In communication studies we can speak about the "audiences" of a library as the agents to whom library can address its messages: from narrower sense about its opening-closing times, availability of new books to broader sense about its functions, *i.e* collecting, storing and making its collections accessible. Last but not least it would be also worth to mention the proposition of Reed, the "member", although it might be as a sword with two edges implying privilege and commitment but also suggesting exclusion (Reed 184).

Due to the themes discussed in the current paper the notion of "users" will be used. Of all those names mentioned above it is probably most neutral. At the same time it is also referring to "using" that assumes that the user, to certain extent, is an active person, being able to search, choose, use, save and disseminate the information s/he is obtaining from the library. On the other hand, when creating any kind of digital

application it is meant to be "user-friendly". There is another good reason for choosing "user" of all those names but we will return to it later.

Although there are plenty of definitions for digital library, for the sake of clarity one of these has been chosen to briefly describe the environment the users of a digital library are operating in. According to Neuhold & Niederée "digital library is an information system targeted towards a specific community, where content from different sources is collected and managed, content is structured and enriched with metadata, and a set of services is offered that makes the content available to a user community via a communication network, typically the Internet." (562)

Methods applied for the paper include concept mapping on the basis of different strategic documents and laws concerning directly the performance of University of Tartu Library (the statute of University of Tartu, the statute of University of Tartu Library, the obligatory copy law, the law of University of Tartu). 12 semi-structured expert interviews with faculty members and 7 with the personnel of University of Tartu Library have been conducted in 2009 and 2010. When analyzing interviews concepts of critical discourse analysis were taken into account. Statistics from the University of Tartu Library's yearbook have been included as well.

1. Mapping the users

We might ask from ourselves why to map the users of a digital library, in the first place. Literally speaking, the user can be anyone in the world as the library as a democratic institution *is* open to anyone. Nevertheless, as stated in the definition of a digital library it is an information system targeted towards a specific community. So there are several reasons for mapping the users even in a library. Having a clear picture about the users and applying it, for example, when writing some project for funding or developing a new online service would be a practical reason. Expert interviews from the library confirm it as building up a collection of digitized materials takes place under the aegis of different projects that usually are not compatible with each other: "there is no uniform politics by the state that would help combine the projects" (library staff)[1]. Another "raison d'être" could be called "organizational": it is not sufficient if the "map" exists only in the heads of some members of institution. If a colleague leaves the institution (no matter what the reason could be) what would be left is a huge pile of different documentation that takes too much time for the others to read it through. A holistic look at the stakeholders would also be useful for those novice librarians who start working at the memory institution and who cannot know the map just by default. Although most librarians have a general idea of the users of their library there could be gaps waiting to be filled.

In case of a university library the "specific community" seems to be obvious. The most common categorization of the user is usually "there are students… faculty members and other staff of the University" (a reply re-occurring in many expert interviews). Sometimes also "students, faculty members and staff from other universities, researchers, citizens of the town and "other visitors" outside the town" (library staff) are mentioned. The statements of experts are in accord with statistics of registered users as the number of members of University of Tartu have formed 53% or even more during last 4 years of total number of readers.

A "tag cloud" (see figure 1) created on the basis of strategic documents of university library and laws concerning its activities[2] is a simple tool that helps us to sort out explicitly articulated groups belonging to library's external organizational network. The bigger the word or phrase is the more it is mentioned in the documents. "University of Tartu Library" and "University of Tartu" are excluded from these tag clouds as these words were presented very often and thus would turn the other words' sizes too small.

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1   The interviewed experts are quoted with reference to their institution.
2   Strategic documents of university library used in current paper: the statute of University of Tartu, the statute of University of Tartu Library, University of Tartu Library Strategic Plan 2010, and laws concerning the university library's activities: the obligatory copy law, the law of University of Tartu.
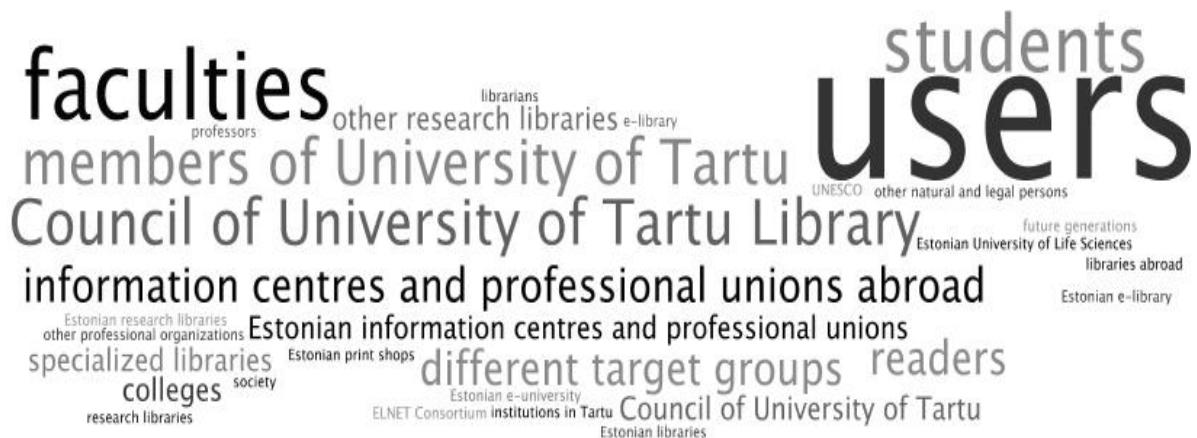
Figure 1: Tag cloud on subjects according to strategic documents

According to strategic documents (that also follow certain rules of strategic management discourse) the external organizational network is comprising evenly different members of University of Tartu: faculties, students. Cooperation ("other research libraries", "information centers and professional unions abroad" *etc.*) and management ("Council of University of Tartu Library" *etc.*) are included in order to provide a holistic picture about university library's functioning. While looking for a common name of different visitors of the library the "users" of the library are dominating. "Different target groups" (impact of marketing discourse) and "readers" are also mentioned. Reference to university library as a preserver of cultural heritage is represented by "future generations".

As a comparison, another tag cloud about the external organizational network of University of Tartu Library has been extracted from the expert interviews held with representatives of the university library (see figure 2). According to expert interviews the notion of "users" of the university library (not just the digital library) is dominating. Probably due to relatively informal nature of speech acts performed during interviews the concept of "people" attending library is also on an important position. There are "readers" of course, but both in strategic documents and interviews they were often paired not only with books or other *readable* materials but with services as in Estonian libraries "reader service" instead of "customer service" is widespread and officially recognized term (Raamatukogusõnastik). Unlike strategic documents the "visitors" are also mentioned in interviews. A library has traditionally been an institution where people can *borrow* books, so the notion of "borrower" is represented. Alongside, the aspect of digital libraries or digitized materials is brought on stage. As if talking about Library2.0 (compared to Web2.0 where the users can add their own content such as blog posts, comments, photos *etc*) the "comment leavers" are mentioned. The "future generations" are still there. This time they are sometimes mentioned more particularly though. In the nearest future (*i.e* in a time span of a year) pupils from gymnasiums will graduate and hopefully start their studies at University of Tartu. Therefore, in the context of e-learning course about information literacy the pupils and secondary schools are also on the agenda. Since a small daycare center is opened during the examination sessions (as there are plenty of parents among students) the children are also paid attention to. This is a supporting service for the university library but probably has also a positive impact to library's public image.
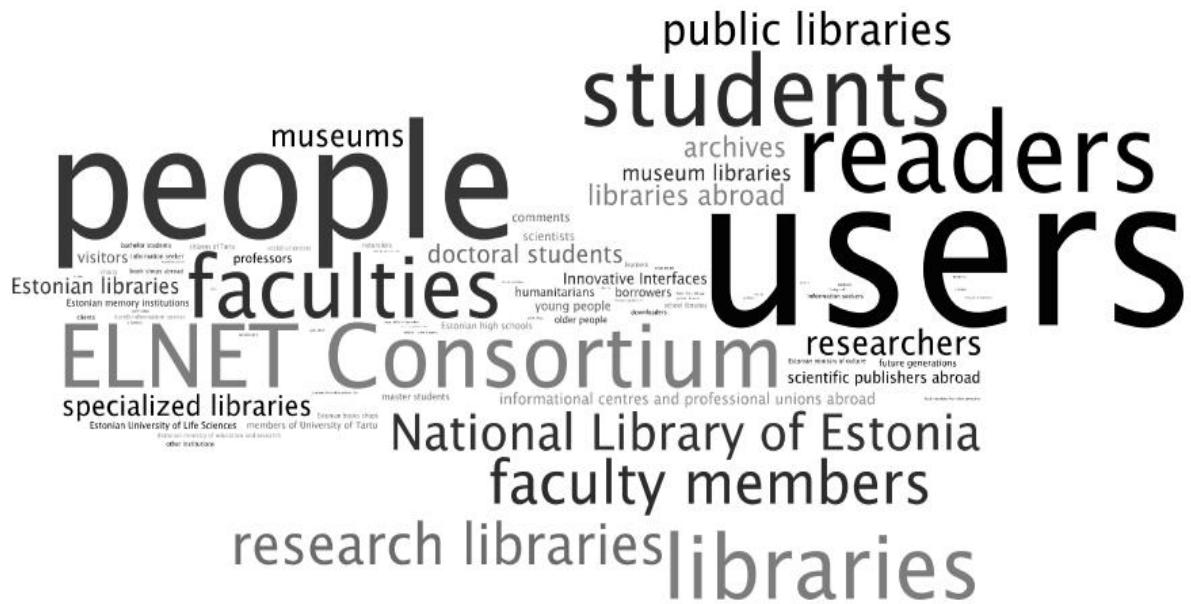
Figure 2: Tag cloud on subjects according to expert interviews held in the University of Tartu Library

Figure 3 is presenting the external organizational network initially created on the basis of strategic documents. Additionally, some groups that are not present in strategic documents but are mentioned in expert interviews are included. These are the groups that are known from daily work in the university library but that have not yet occupied a permanent place in the "collective memory" of the university library. Therefore it looks more like a jigsaw puzzle where different pieces are fitted together according to statements of different representatives of the library. The groups that comprise Estonian schools and teachers, publishers, book shops *etc* may be too recently included to the network or their role is not seen so crucial from the aspect of organizational development. Nevertheless, they are out there. On the other hand, partners such as other memory institutions or book shops may have stronger bonds with certain departments of the university library but are not interacting with the library as a whole entity. The cooperation with institutions not present in the strategic documents might as well be too arbitrary in order to mention them but most likely this issue concerns particular institutions not entire groups such as donators, publishers *etc*.
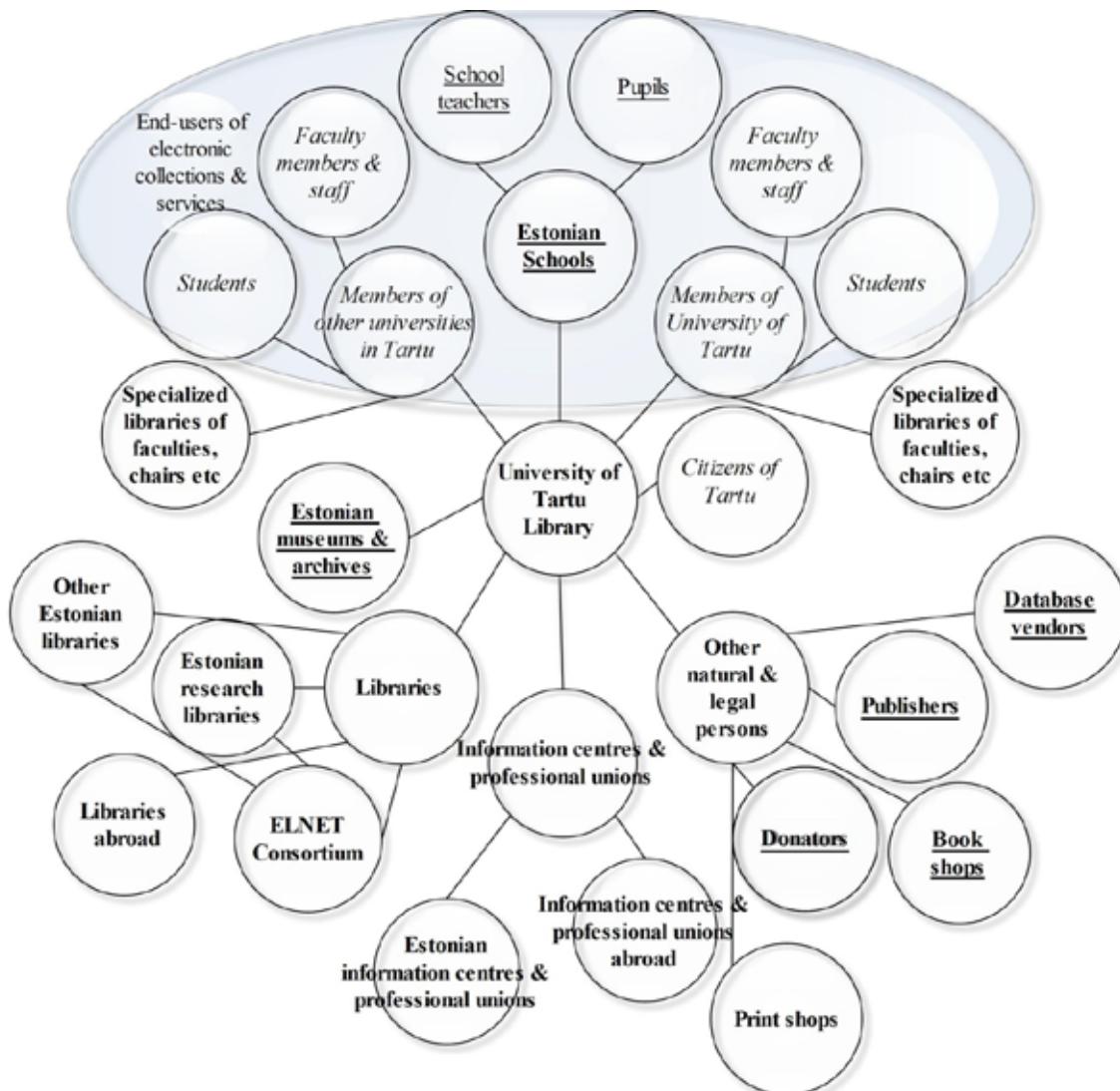
University of Tartu Library - institution(s) represented in strategic documents

Faculty members - persons articulated as target groups in strategic documents

Database vendors - institution(s) not represented in strategic documents

Pupils - persons not represented in strategic documents

Figure 3: Map of the external organizational network of University of Tartu Library

2. Changes in the university library

In the context of University of Tartu the university library is perceived as an important supporting facility – in this point the representatives of the university library and faculty members agree with one voice. When a faculty member has had some kind of contact with any research fellow from university library, s/he also paid some attention to university library as a research & development facility.

The main building of the library is seen as a studying and meeting place, but mostly as useful for students (Lepik 4). This has probably a great deal to do with developments in the ways the students are taught at the university. As an addition to behaviourist approach, social constructivist learning methods are applied, therefore students are not only meeting each other or learning side by side but are also working in teams. „Looking for spaces for working in groups has been so active here… As you can see, we have a renovation works downstairs and things are not there where they are supposed to be. But as soon as we had brought any piece of furniture inside the groups started to form there. It was the time of exam sessions, too. And

Transforming culture in the digital age

the big hall was full of groups. These places are occupied by users very quickly, they work in groups pretty often." (library staff)

In 2004, director of services Mare-Nelli Ilus stated the need for special strategy for working with potential readers *i.e* faculty members and students who are not registered users of the university library (Ilus 47). Her concern was reflecting a trend quickly spreading all over the world: that faculty work is done anywhere in the campus or at home, whereas comparatively little time is spent in the library (Christiansen et al., Anthony). The expert interviews held with faculty members confirm this trend. Some faculty members had lots of nostalgic memories about university library as a place (from times they were students of University of Tartu) but today they have mostly remained at a distance from the main building (Lepik 4). Beside the students, "also humanitarians and social scientists who need to work with original texts" (library staff) tend to visit the main building of the library. However, the specialized libraries either of faculty member's faculty, chair, institute or research centre are used often (due to proximity, specialized collections, librarians familiar with same research area) and university library is seen as an invaluable access provider to databases of scientific, technical, medical and social science literature. The newest statistical data about the usage of remote scientific databases through the network of University of Tartu is revealing that during last 8 years the number of downloaded has increased over 5.6 times (figure 4). At the same time the number of visits paid to University of Tartu Library's main building has slowly dropped (although, in some years this motion could also be caused by the renovation of some of the reading rooms of the main building).
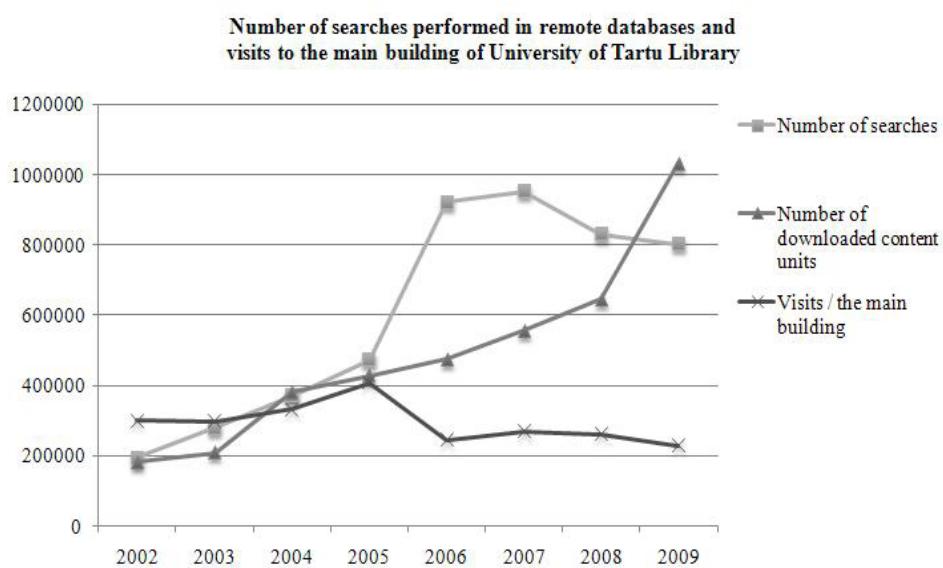

Figure 4: Number of searches performed in remote databases and visits to the main building of University of Tartu Library (based on the yearbooks of University of Tartu Library 2005 & 2008 and statistics in print).

While conducting and analyzing the interviews, an issue of the extent of following marketing rules in a university library became important question. On one hand, university library should be an active "service provider that pays attention at different target groups" (academic staff) and "acts as a meeting place rather than sanctuary" (academic staff). But there's also the "status of a university library" (academic staff) as universities have always had libraries. It may happen, as one of the faculty members claimed, that "if the library is seen among faculty as a customer service provider rather than equal partner with mutual goals, this concept may start spreading also on the university as a whole as in some sense the students perceive the university library and university as an integral whole" (academic staff) (Lepik 6). The latter statement confirms the initial idea how the way of naming the users of the library may have an impact to the image of the university library as well as to its home institution.

The university library is not existing just as an information provider but it also has information needs that can only be satisfied by its community. There are faculty members who have been partners of librarians for several years. A remarkable deal of collection development is basing on the cooperation between librarians and faculty members: the latter can obtain publications they really need, the library can add to its collections the books that are relevant for its users. Some faculty members have been perfect „information sources" „when the books were reorganized in open shelves according their content" (academic staff), some have been „consulted by librarians when creating thesaurus for OPAC" (library staff). These relations are referring that faculty members are not always mere consumers among other target groups but they can also act as the stakeholders of an university library. Through active cooperation with the stakeholders the librarians can have more ideas how to serve the needs of the target groups better. Of course, any idea may not be appropriate due to spatial, financial or temporal constraints but a good idea it is always worth considering.

3. Discussion

Just as the essence of the visitors of the university library is in transformation the institution itself is also changing. Technical aspects of the library are probably most easily noticeable as the catalogues have at first moved „into the computers" and then to the Internet. Vast array of services provided by (university) libraries have leaped directly to WWW. Providing access to remote scientific databases (instead of browsing updates on CD-ROM) has been one of the biggest leaps, especially for the faculty members – saving their time and the money their department would otherwise spend on electronic resources. Development into digital library has its benefits for students as well as the issue of availability of reading materials becomes less and less problematic.

Due to technological deterministic approach described above it is possible that the users are also seen through the „technical goggles". It is hereby important to note that it does not mean forgetting the user as the subject the informational products and services are provided. Still, it may lead to leaving aside the real identity of the user of digital library and taking into account the users'„technical parameters" from statistics – such as social status, visiting times and frequencies *etc*. The problem is that these characteristics are not revealing what expectations may the user have (Falk) when s/he is using the (digital) library and whether the information needs were satisfied. The main reason *why* digital library of university library is used is usually determined by the nature of its parent instution, the university, though.

Just as there are ethical issues when using patients' data for scientific research it is worth to ask from oneself: in case we *would* have more sophisticated tools for analysing the profile of user of the digital library, where would the thin red line be between researching and „spying"? As a result, sometimes it is annoying when an online application (Facebook or Amazon, for instance) appears to know so much about its users that it is proposing potential friends or recommending books that we are not interested in. What makes the recommending tricky is that the zone of tolerance of users can be very different. Some may want to use the application for just a particular purpose and wish to be left alone. Others are exploring different options the application is providing for them and are very open-minded to new possibilities. Additionally, there are many people between those two sides.

If a researcher would favor the online questionnaire there is no guarantee that the users are willing to reply to it. Choosing an inducement and communication channel for promoting the questionnaire is, again, the task that needs to be discussed. For example, what would be a treat for the users of the digital library? Most of the informational products and services are free for the end user. The ones that are priced are usually provided in the offline environment but does the user of a digital library need these?

What is waiting for us in the future? When a library is going to use Web2.0 applications, such as Facebook, Second Life *etc.* the essence of the user may transform again. For example, if there are „friends" and „fans" in Facebook does this mean that the relations between library and its user are becoming more informal than ever? In this case: to what extent can any institution communicate with its users informally without losing its credibility? A very similar issue is the impact of marketing concepts in university library: is it downgrading or upgrading its imago in the context of university, in the eyes of its members.

Krista Lepik

The dominating discourse in a university library is not something fixed, in fact „discourses are open and hybrid and not closed systems at all; new sub-topics can be created, and intertextuality and interdiscursivity allow for new fields of action." (Wodak 66) The variety of different names referring to the user of the library is clearly indicating this notion. Now there's a task for the librarians: to decide *whether* at all, *when* and *how* to react to this interdiscursive game.

4. Conclusions

Since a library has moved beyond the walls of the library building and the collection of its books the vision of a simple reader has evolved into more complex „user". As a result a discursive uncertainty seems to be natural, covering different aspects of the user. The role of the user is now embracing the „reader", „borrower", „comment leaver", „member of a target group" *etc.* and might also include the notion of the „stakeholder". None of these concepts is dominating. The vision of „user" according to strategic documents is influenced by strategic thinking, focusing more to the development of the institution, thus using the general term „user". It is complemented by the statements provided by library staff that help to pay attention to different roles of the user.

Acknowledgements

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Digital Preservation of Manuscripts in Rampur Raza Library in India: A Case Study

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1. Intoruduction

The Rampur Raza Library is one of the World's magnificent, unparallel repository of cultural heritage and treasure-house of knowledge built up by successive Nawabs of Rampur State. It contains very rare and valuable collection of manuscripts, historical documents, specimens of Islamic calligraphy, miniature paintings, astronomical instruments and rare illustrated works in Arabic and Persian languages besides 80,000 printed books.

Conceived and personal collection of manuscripts, miniatures specimens of Islamic calligraphy in the last decades of the 18th century, the founder of Rampur State, Nawab Faizullah Khan who ruled the state from 1774 to 1794, established the library with his personal modest collection kept in the Tosha Khana of his Palace. As all the Nawabs were the great patrons of scholars, poets, painters, calligraphers and musicians, the Library occupied the pivotal place of all Library and publication activities. With this humble beginning, the library grew by leaps and bounds and notable additions were made to the collection during the rule of Nawab Ahmad Ali Khan (1794-1840).

2. Preservation of Manuscripts in India

Even under the best possible conditions, the physical preservation of manuscripts is a difficult task. The cultural heritage of India, in the form of manuscripts has to be conserved, preserved and documented. With this motivation, from ancient times preservation of manuscripts is done by indigenous methods like wrapping the manuscripts in silk cloth. Some times oil extracts of some natural products, sandal wood powder, black pepper, clove oil etc. are used for preserving palm leave manuscripts. Chemical treatments like, fumigation chambers and Thymol, Chloromate solution are also used to protect the manuscripts.

The Photographic methods, like microfiche, microfilming, photocopying are very important techniques of preservation and access. This method not only may damage the originals but preserve them only for a few decades.

The invention of Scanners has revolutionized the input of data to computer media, which can also damage the manuscripts. Then high-definition film scanner is used to digitize the manuscript as image, which is an expensive method. Before 1998, digital cameras were used, which could copy only a few pages and turns out to be quite expensive.

From 1999, improved still cameras are used to meet the needs of in-house digital copying. National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) used this method by digitizing Bhagavad Gita into two CD-ROMs.

2.1. Manuscript Resources of India

- Total number of Manuscripts in India 5,000,000
- Indian Manuscripts available in European countries 60,000
- Indian Manuscripts in Asian countries 150,000
- Percentage of manuscripts in Sanskrit 67%
- Percentage of manuscripts in other Indian languages 25%
- Percentage of manuscripts in Arabic /Persian/Tibetan 8%
- No. of manuscripts recorded in catalogue 1,000,000

3. Initiatives in Digital Preservation of Manuscripts in India

Thinking the importance of digital preservation, in India numbers of projects are taken by different organizations for the preservation of these valuable manuscripts in digital format.

In July 2000, a pilot project for digitization of rare manuscripts was initiated by National Archives of India, collaboration with Department of Science and Technology and National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore. Under this project, rare manuscripts, viz. Bhagwadgita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, etc, are digitized and stored in CD medium.

One of the major functions of the National Library of a country is to collect and preserve nation's intellectual and cultural heritage. Therefore National Library has taken several steps to preserve this heritage as well as to increase the accessibility and awareness of these records. National Library of India, Kolkata is the apex body of library services India. This National Library has about 3600 rare and historically important manuscripts in different languages. These manuscripts are preserved separately in the Rare Books division. This Library has initiated a digitization programme, known as 'Down the Memory Lane', to digitize these manuscripts along with other rare books and documents are archived on CDs. Between the year 1999 and 2001 approximately 6601 books and manuscripts containing 2.5 million pages were scanned and archived in 548 CD- ROMs.

Established in 2001, Nanakshahi is a registered trust at Punjab for creating a comprehensive Digital Sikh Reference Library. This trust introduced a Project named" Virsa "under which one hundred fifty manuscripts of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and other manuscripts available in the Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh and Kurukshetra University are digitized.

In February 2003, the Department of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Government of India Lunched a national level mission for the preservation of the manuscripts India's real treasure of culture. The Mission has laid emphasis, on digital preservation of rare manuscripts all over India and already a number of manuscripts are captured in digital form.

Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA) was launched on 19th November, 1985 by the late Prime Minister of India Shri Rajiv Gandhi and registered at New Delhi on 24th March 1987. This Centre has taken a nation wide project for digital preservation of manuscripts. This Centre is digitizing a number of manuscripts in Assam also.

Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library located in Patna, Bihar has taken a pilot Project of Digitization of Manuscripts since October, 2005, which has a mighty collection of about 21,000 manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Turkish, Hindi and Sanskrit written on Palm-Leaves (Mazumdar).

The Oriental Research Institute was established in Mysore by His Highness Sri Chamaraja Wodeyar, the then Maharaja of the erstwhile State of Mysore, in the Year 1891. Then the name of the Institute was Government Oriental Library. The purpose of establishing the institute was collection and preservation of important manuscripts and publication of rare valuable works. ORI considers the amalgamation of ancient wisdom and the modern technology as a key to success in sharing knowledge worldwide. Hence, ORI is experimenting in digitization, image enhancement, computerization and archival database of its huge collection of manuscripts. At present, with its limited digital laboratory, ORI has successfully done some experiments and has got some fruitful results, which will be implemented on large scale after the establishment of a well-equipped laboratory in the proposed National Centre for History of Science (NCSH) building.

The Library of the Asiatic Society is the grand stay, glory and honour of the Society. Its importance lies not in numerical strength but in its rich and unique contents. The collection has been built up mainly with gifts received from the members. The Society moved into its own building in the early part of 1808 and the Library was thrown open to the members and the public in the same year. The library has started digitizing of manuscripts and rare books from 2009.

4. Manuscripts Collection in Rampur Raza Library

Oxford English Dictionary defines manuscripts as 'a very old book or document that was written by hand before printing facility was invented.' Etymologically, the word manuscript has been derived from the Latin word 'Manus' that means hand and 'Scribe' to write i.e. written by hand. Hand written documents are called manuscripts.

Manuscripts in India have a long tradition that was produced in all part of our country in different languages and in scripts. These manuscripts were regarded as rare commodities, produced with hard labour and cost. A sense of religious sanctity and reverence were associated with them and they were worshipped like holy relics, which are now stored in different temples, Madras, museums, universities as well as in personal custody etc.

Famous for its varied collection of manuscripts, the library has 17000 such specimens of artistic creation which include 150 illustrated ones with 4413 paintings in them. The subjects of the manuscripts are related to History, Philosophy, religions, sciences, art, literature, medicine, astronomy, astrology, mathematics, geology, fine arts etc.

In addition to them, there are 205 hand-written palm-leaves, 5000 miniature paintings, nearly 3000 specimens of Islamic Calligraphy. The miniature paintings represent the Turko-Mongol, Mughal, Persian, Rajput, Pahari, Awadh and Indo-European schools of art which are of great value for the researchers. The rich collection also includes art objects and astronomical instruments.

The Library has a collection of about 75000 printed books. The printed book section has a unique importance as thousands of rare Arabic, Persian, Hindi, Urdu and English books which are now out of print, may be trated as aon important material for research work. Such books have been carefully preserved and are being regularly treated in the Conservation Laboratory for safer and longer life.

4.1 Arabic Manuscripts

Some of the Arabic Collections may be considered as the oldest pieces of handiwork in the field of Arabic Calligraphy. Among them is the seventh century A.D. Quran written on parchment in early Kufic script attributed to Hazrat Ali (d. A.D. 661).

Arabic manuscript "Sharhal-Kafia of Razi" is also a unique asset of library. It bears the marginal notes by Nawab Sadullah Khan, the Prime Minster of emperor Shah Jahan. This manuscript also contains a note by emperor Shah Jahan in his own hand writing and bears a seal and signature of Sadullah Khan, Inayat Khan, Itimad Khan, Muhammad Salih Khan, Aurangzib Alamgir etc.

4.2 Sanskrit & Hindi Manuscripts

Among the notable Sanskrit manuscripts, mention may be made of Probodh Chandrika, a work on grammer. It was written by Baijnath Dev Chauhan Vanshi and scribed by Girdhari lal Mishra. There is an important but incomplete commentary on Jyotish Ratanmala written by Shri Shripati Bhatta. An interesting work entitled Natrajan Dipmishada on Karma Kanda or Stuart, also contains certain mantras for brightenning the eyesight. The Mahinma Statures is a very famous work with commentary compiled by Pushpa Dutta with commentator Madhusudan Saraswati.

Another striking aspect of the collection of Raza Library is the holding of hundreds of Hindi Manuscripts written in Persian script. The complete book of Madhumati of Malik Manjan, recently published by the library, is also preserved besides Padmavat of Malik Muhammad Jaisi with Persian translation is a valuable work in the library collection.

4.3 Urdu Manuscripts

The collection of urdu manuscript is lesser number as compared to Arabic and Persian one. The library possesses the Dewan of Shah Hatim, Kulliyat-i-Mir, Jurat, Hasan, Dewan-i-Soz, and very important manuscript of Dewan-i-Ghalib which contains the correction and modification in the handwriting of Ghalib himself. There are two rare copies of Insha's Rani Ketki Ki Khani. The Dewan of celebrated poet Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan 'Nazim' the Ruler of Rampur is highly embellished in gold. It contains the potrait of the Nawab too.

4.4 Turkish Manuscripts

The Turkish language bears a notable impact on Indian politics under the Sultans of Delhi and the early Mughals. Several words of Turkish are commonly used in Hindi, Urdu and other Indian regional languages. The Mughal Emperor Babur was a prolific writer and poet in Turko-Uzbek language and was accepted as an inventor of a particular style both in prose and verse. The library has a distinction of collecting 50 rare books and manuscripts in Turkish language.

4.5 Palm-Leaf Manuscripts

The Raza Library has many palm-leaf manuscripts as its valuable asset. Most of them are in Telugu, Sanskrit, Kannarh, Sinhali and Tamil languages. They are generally religious in character. A Tamil script mentions the rules of preparing images and icons and the mode of worship; another leaf manuscript informs us about the medicinal properties of several herbs which cure diseases. One such manuscript in Sanskrit language written in Grantha script; consists of important epic Ramayana. .It eulogises Ramayana as Bhahmavachakam. A Kannarh manuscript is a treatise on music yet another manuscript is Periyatine Vaimoli sacred hymn of the Vaishnavas.

4.6 Pushto

The Raza Library is distinguished for its rare Pushto manuscripts and printed books as compared to the holdings of other oriental libraries in India. Besides commentary on Quran in Pushto, the library has two rare volume collection of Diwan of Khushhal Khan Khatak which is decorated immensely in gold in Nastaliq characters. The rare illustrated Diwan of celebrated Sufi poet Rahman Baba is also one of the notable collections of the library. Mention may also be made about the work which was done at Rampur and the Pushto manuscripts of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, hero of the Rohila Afghans in India who laid down his life fighting against the British.

5. Digital Preservation

Encyclopaedia of Information Technology defines the term digital reservation as "The process of maintaining, in a condition suitable for use, materials produced in digital formats. Problems of physical preservation are compounded by the obsolescence of computer equipment, software, and storage media. Also refers to the practice of digitizing materials originally produced in no digital formats (print, film, etc.) to prevent permanent loss due to deterioration of the physical medium." Digital preservation has the two dimensions i.e. preservation of materials that are born in digital form and another is digitization for preservation of printed documents and the manuscripts which are touched by the hand of deterioration. Digital preservation facilitates the global accessibility of any form of documents.

For the digital preservation, two processes in generally are followed; one is creating image file of the documents and second is scanned the documents and then using the OCR process for making the text file error free. These files are then stored in different secondary storage devices.

6. Manuscripts Digitization Process

The digitization process at Rumpur Raza Library is yet to start. In this library digital camera is the only

possibility in case of manuscripts. It is nothing more than a picture of printed page in digital form. Digital imaging technology convert manuscripts into digital images and can be made available over CD- a digital image is composed of set of pixels. The text can be retrieved, printed and modified using appropriate software. The Library are preparing for scanning of manuscripts.

The digital images can be captured at varied of density or bits pixel. Simple binary scanning in black and white is not always complete in digitizing manuscripts as colour illustrations are also valuable with texts. Light and darkness of document is to be considered before digitization. Colour images are more complex because they need encoding of shades.

Resolution of image is measured in dot per inch (dpi). Higher dpi leads to better resolution and quality of image but larger image file. 300 to600 dpi are recommended for better resolutions.

The library have digitized around 5 lack pages manuscript by digital camera and stored them on 3000 DVD.

7. Conclusion

Some people believe that if the manuscripts are digitized and made available on web, then they are easily accessible from every nook and corner of the entire world; the manuscripts users will not come to those places where the manuscripts are physically preserved and in such situation the organizations will lose its glory and also lose an amount of revenue from which those organization are getting financial support. The importance of digital preservation cannot be ignored. The digitization should be the supplement for the electronic access of such manuscript collection and these digital forms of manuscripts should not be made available on open access, if the custodians of such manuscripts refuse to do it.

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Is digital enhancing cultural experience?

Between Technology and Teleology: Can the Digital Age Embrace the Analog Experience of Culture?

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1. Introduction

Cultures stand at a critical junction in history. Although the power of technology has been influencing cultures and civilizations since the beginning of time, our digital age brings unprecedented challenges that human beings have never encountered before. Technological innovation has taken place in almost all aspects of modern society, integrating technology into everyday life such that human systems of interaction become virtually and physically interchangeable. In effect, the digital seems to have swallowed the real.

Modern society confronts the burden of both the gifts and curses of digital technology, where the lines between real relations and virtual relations become blurred, and interconnections between cultural objects and their respective signs become trivialized. Since the beginning of the 19th century, blind faith in technological progress and rationality has led to a widespread belief that technology alone can provide human beings with a sense of purpose. Such belief in technology has been colored with the fulfillment of a different new god. Ironically, a sense of purpose would hardly be an issue in assessing technological progress as long as the idea of progress remained a vague mixture of "shallow empiricism and hollow optimism" (Jaki 12).

There are several distinctive characteristics of our digital age that have far-reaching but unintended consequences. One of the most interesting characteristics is that the idea of culture is becoming less connected to geographical location. The relationship of cultural identity to physical place has gradually weakened as mass digital communication extends beyond cultural boundaries. Another interesting feature is that the young now teach technique and, in turn, lead the old instead of the other way around[1] (Kanter). Consequently, the ideas of "tradition" and "legacy" in this pseudo-social life have become negative terms, implying an archaic cultural worldview that ignores technological innovation and hinders progress. For instance, Internet economic tendencies appear to be anti-historical, promising a premium for new ideas that have been deliberately

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[1] This observation was originally made by the anthropologist Margaret Mead who asserts that America is the first culture where the young children of immigrants learned the new language first and taught the old. See Rosabeth Moss Kanter. *Evolve!: Succeeding in the Digital Culture of Tomorrow.*

removed from cultural traditions. Since the time of Aristotle, technique has been viewed as synonymous with epistemology; consequently, technology has become the "new science" that must be taught by the masters of technique (Dunne). This view of technology as science-to-be-taught, which is inherently an American phenomenon, is an indication of the trend to disregard history and overlook the wisdom of the ages.

The emphasis of societies on technological novelty and the value of change for its own sake, in conjunction with a high regard for rationality and individuality appears to foster idiosyncratic ideals that ironically work against themselves, since novelty and individuality can become meaningful solely as parts of the social constructive discourse. Individuals in the digital culture seems to be superficially interested in what is *new* and what is *next,* with little attention to or regard for purposeful interactions or meaningful interpretations. Consequently, the world we see is the world of the commodity, where social space is blanketed with ever-new layers of technological commodities.

The heart of the matter seems to be not only the tenuous separation of technical knowledge from practical and purposeful knowledge, but also the tendency of our digital age to regard the technical knowledge as superior to practical wisdom. It is not a surprise to observe that a Western conceptual model has driven much of our understanding of the digital age. And, as we shall see shortly, this model, which has its roots in Greek philosophy, has inexcusably overlooked the idea of intention and purpose.

The above observations raise several questions that are helpful in organizing our discussion and seeking more sensibility and understanding: In what ways does the digital age endanger cultural reality? How can the information age help to preserve the identity of cultures in our ever-changing and homogenizing digital world? How do we capitalize on the power of virtual reality to maintain cultural memory? What fundamentally different ways of thinking and interacting with the digital world are there that might enable us to not only sustain but also transform cultures? What roles do digital communications play in moving beyond the so-called "pseudo-social life" to authentic cultural practices? These questions dig deep into our consciousness of and challenge our cultural practices. Before attempting to answer these questions we need to assess the recent debate over the digital age.

2. Assessing the Debate Over the Digital Age

The debate among proponents and opponents of digital technology and its role in the transformation of culture seems to lead to confusion and frustration — confusion about the means-end framework, and frustration with our inability to reach a sensible understanding. As stated earlier, the digital age has created the most challenging and paradoxical situation in human history. We have become infatuated with digital technology as a means of communication, which has made it easy to overlook the significance of the analog experience of reality. Digitization is becoming our addictive path to maximization. But this is the antithesis of the nature of life, because "*life tends to optimize rather than maximize*" (Hawken 183).

Granted that social networks provide unprecedented resources and support for professional development and emotional needs; however, they also foster new social predicaments and they lack authentic dialogical relationship. It has been observed that with unlimited resources and far-reaching mass communications, the digital technology has become the new untamed beast that causes an avalanche of wicked social and cultural problems. The digital age has even empowered a few individuals to mobilize large populations to affect gigantic corporations and influence governments of nations. The World Wide Web has grown to be the new town-hall meeting for the global village, where conversations determine the fates of nations and corporations. Digital technology lends itself to "guerilla tactics" such as the rapid spread of unconfirmed reports and leaked confidential documents (Kanter). Equally critical, while the use of technological innovation offers unlimited access for sharing values and human rights, it brings with it a moral dilemma; that is, how to protect the underage and juvenile from inappropriate access and Internet predators and parasites.

Moreover, the digital age exemplified in the Internet can empower and connect people within a culture and across cultures, but it can also segregate and marginalize them. The Internet can certainly encourage communities to form and grow, but it can also provide a powerful medium to deny, attack, and destroy other communities. Moreover, the community of the website is really a mere vague analogy for potential interaction rather than emotional reality. "Community" is sometimes a distorted analogy because many so-called

communities are just excuses for making money; while charming people into viewing, they are "monetizing" their "eyeballs" (Kanter 2001). And despite all efforts to close it, the gap in the digital divide has expanded in recent years. Certainly, these inequalities among world populations suggest serious ethnic divides.

Before the term globalization was popularized, Guy Debord, in his book *Society of the Spectacle*[2], offered an important critique of the mass media and technological consumerism that contribute to alienation of social life, cultural homogenization, and dilution of cultural identity. Not only does the spectacle produce a pseudo-social life, but it also directs society's attention to the *lure of technique.* The spectacle, Debord writes,

> . . . obliterates the boundaries between true and false by representing all directly lived truth beneath the *real presence* of falsehood maintained by the organization of appearances. Individuals who passively accept their subjection to an alien everyday reality are thus driven toward a madness that reacts to this fate by resorting to illusory magical techniques. (Debord 118)

These illusory magical techniques have affected our entire set of cultural practices—exemplified in global exchanges of information, freedom of expression, and the unprecedented sphere of choices. Almost anyone anywhere is able to participate and be included in the benefits of the global information society. Many critics believe that the "real" world seems to be replaced by images that make themselves the epitome of reality, where technology is viewed as a factitious god, making its own rules and aims for nothing but itself. Whenever the real world is distorted as mere images, mere images become real beings, a kind of self-motivated figments for a hypnotic behavior. And since the spectacle's task is to use a range of mediations in order to show us reality that can no longer be directly grasped, "it naturally elevates the sense of sight to special pre-eminence once occupied by touch," writes Guy Debord. He goes on to say:

> But the spectacle is not merely a matter of images, nor even images plus sounds. It is whatever escape people's activity, whatever eludes their practical reconsideration and correction. It is the opposite of dialogue. (Debord 11)

Debord's argument echoes my graduate students' complaint about online discussions. For nearly two decades, graduate students have favored the analog experience that often occurs in face-to-face conversation over online discussions. Although online learning has reached beyond the classroom experience through teleconferencing, chat rooms, and the like, creating virtual learning communities for lifelong learning, it has also opened the floodgate for trivialization and what can be perceived as "hit-and-run" intellectual activities; consequently, it has often missing real scholarly acumen. In-person communication is particularly significant for engaging in dialogue. There is no such thing as real dialogue through online interactions. Dialogue is more than thinking together, it is imagining together; thus, the so-called "online dialogue" is only an illusionary cultural space in a shallow virtual environment. Online discussion, as it now stands now, is characterized by serious limitations and shallow communication. Making an insightful connection between communication and community, Rollo May writes:

> Communication presupposes community which, in turn, means a communion between the consciousness of the persons in the community. This is a meaningful interchange which is not dependent upon the individual's mere whim, but is a built-in aspect of the structure of human intercourse . . . Understanding is possible, specifically by *the structure of language*, and more generally by *the structure of human relationships.* (May 156)

The mass rush to digitization comes with imaginative results but also with a high price. For example, Mark Poster argues that "the media transform place and space in such a way that what had been regarded as the locus of everyday can no longer be distinguished as separate from its opposites" (Poster 211). As indicated above, although the nature of life favors optimization over maximization, effectiveness rather than efficiency, digitization continues to be our path to efficient maximization. And because of our habit of convenience, it is neither impossible nor undesirable for our technologically advanced society to resurrect cultural practices

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2   Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* was first published in French in 1967. There have been several translations into English. The version cited here was translated by Ken Knabb and has no date.

Transforming culture in the digital age

of the good-old days.

Considering these habits, and according to many proponents of the digital age, the technology that many fear will harmonize or dilute cultures may, in fact, encourage the opposite by serving as a vehicle to give voice to local cultures and indigenous populations by preserving their identities and restoring their cultural memories. Technology, then, is neither a constraint nor a limitation, since digital services, networking, wireless connections, instant communication, and knowledge management tools are sufficient to satisfy human needs, according to digital age proponents. However, as one of these proponents, Alfredo Ronchi asserts:

> The challenge now is how to take advantage of these tools by channeling their use into creating true innovation. We must work out how to positively influence society by making use of new opportunities, and how to reverse the *digital divide* in order to create *digital opportunities.* (Ronchi 437)

Digitization, while it is an advantageous technological achievement in speed, accuracy and efficiency, seems to have impoverished the role of the analog mode in simultaneously capturing whole and seamless cultural experiences. Unlike the digital mode, which represents the complexity of life by breaking information down into discrete bits or packets to be easily compacted, stored, and mass-produced, the analog mode consists of direct representational or analogous systems of continuous undifferentiated whole experiences. An analog mode represents a continuous flow and undifferentiated movement of human experience. So the nagging question remains, can the digital age embrace the analog experience of culture?

The process of reversing, or rather reframing the challenge at hand and therefore creating digital opportunities depends on our ability to acquire a deep understanding of *sense of purpose*. We need to keep in mind the overarching notion of teleology—to develop a clear understanding of the appropriate distinctions as well as connections between means and ends, techne and teleos. More specifically, we need to recognize that the realms of techne and teleos are partly coinciding.

3. The Interrelationship Between *Techne* and *Teleos*

The term *techne* denotes technical knowledge; it reached great significance in Aristotle's writings. Because of the intimate connection between techne and rationality, the likelihood of the techne ends up in a clearly definable and concrete product, it becomes attached to the concept of *teleos*—purpose and intention. Expanding on Aristotle's two forms of knowledge, Joseph Dunne (Dunne) draws a close connection between techne (technical knowledge) and *phronesis* (practical knowledge). And in doing so, Dunne coincidently makes helpful remarks regarding the long-held belief that techne and teleos are more intimately linked. But, as we shall see, techne and teleos are interrelated in the Aristotelian sense in what seems to be a peculiar way.

Techne itself is not a useful thing; rather it is a generative cause of useful things, argues Dunne (Dunne). In the Aristotelian sense, techne is a kind of habitual skill of the craftsperson through which he or she can produce and reproduce practical things. Undoubtedly, there is a fascination with this kind of activity simply because the craftsperson is likely to produce clearly definable and tangible products, with the least ambiguity and where success can be achieved and measured (Dunne). Although this fascination with techne, the art of making, has dominated societies for centuries, it has reached its pinnacle in our digital age. Often good judgment about the outcomes of technological innovation and the awareness of intentionality seems to have escaped human sensibility. The gap between technical knowledge and intentionality demands a critical examination.

First, let us explore further the concept of intentionality. Intentionality is the structure of meaning that makes it possible for us not only to perceive the world but also to make meaning of it. Arabic philosophers introduced the specific concept of intentionality in early medieval times, conceiving it as a significant principal in the thought of the Middle Ages. At that time intentionality meant epistemology—how we know reality. Intentionality was twofold: knowing particular existing things or objects, and knowing the relations of these objects and things to general concepts—that is, knowing by conceptualization (May). Thus, intentionality is revealed through conceptualization, which is at core of contemplative reflections through the process of making. Intentionality is also associated with vitality, aliveness, and the intensity of experience of the mak-

ing. And since meaning is one of the most significant aspects of intentionality (May), human beings are not merely rational animals; rather they are "semiotic animals" (Deely), capable of engaging in the process of meaning making. John Deely writes:

> A semiotic animal is not an animal merely capable of knowing that there are signs . . . The semiotic animal emerges only as *realization* of the capacity of the rational animal for "perceiving the relation of signification." (Deely 114)

I believe this capacity of semiotic animals to perceive the relation of signification is intimately linked to what has been called "cunning intelligence." Joseph Dunne tells us, "the Greeks prized very highly a talent for making out against the odds of greater strength" (Dunne 257). And the French scholars Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant name this talent as "cunning intelligence." They describe this talent as that which integrates

> . . . flair, wisdom, forethought, subtlety of mind, deception, resourcefulness, vigilance, opportunities, various skills, and experience acquired over years . . . [and] is applied to situations which are transient, shifting, disconcerting and ambiguous, situations which do not lend themselves to precise measurement, exact calculation or rigorous logic. (Detienne and Vernant 3-4)

The above assertion about cunning intelligence is essential for our understanding of the interrelationship between techne and teleos. Since this kind of intelligence deals with uncertainty and ambiguity, it requires human beings to develop a great deal of perseverance. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, the value of "perseverance" and the notion of "design" are beautifully connected beyond any expectations. The Arabic word *tasmeame* means perseverance or design. Design through perseverance embodies both techne and teleos; it is the way we deal creatively with the paradox of technological needs and human values. To engage meaningfully in the design of technological innovation, one must develop a cunning intelligence and a capacity for perseverance in order to thrive despite all odds of the challenging situation at hand.

4. Teleological Interpretation for a Technological World

Technology has been blamed for nearly everything: moral challenges, homogenization of culture, exploitation of nature, loneliness, ugliness, and many others. This view triggers conflict between technological needs and human values. However, the way to deal with the conflict between technological needs and human values is not to run away from technology. That is impossible. "The way to resolve the conflict is to break down the barriers of dualistic thought that prevent a real understanding of what technology is—not an exploitation of nature, but a fusion of nature and the human spirit into a new kind of creation that transcends both" (Pirsig 291).

Even those who question how the digital age sustains cultures may have overlooked the idea that "tradition may be thought of as what is *underneath* us, continually exercising a kind of gravitational pull. Not that it necessarily makes for a deadweight; for the ground to which it connects us by a thousand invisible filaments, in our thought and in our being, can be a sustaining one, making possibilities substantial and actual" (Dunne 359-360).

Transformation of cultures in the digital age is neither unavoidable nor inevitable. In fact, a culture that ignores experimentation with technological innovation is destined to decay over time. Indeed, new innovative ideas contain the familiar past and the permanent. Innovation may be the emergence of something utterly new, but it is also the rekindling of something always true (Grudin). On the one hand, cultural innovation is essential for social systems because technological innovation functions as a negative feedback loop in social systems for adjustment and renewal. On the other hand, stability and consistency are fundamental if society is to prosper and develop (Hall; Mumford; Seif, "Social Change").

While social constructionists view change as essential for human improvement, they overlook the fact that stability and continuity are needed for change to be recognized in the first place. Seeking novelty as an expression of economic progress, an idea inherited from Social Darwinism, has led social constructionists to believe that technology offers solutions to social problems. Based on Gebser's work, *The Ever-Present Origin*,

Transforming culture in the digital age

change does not surpass the past; the "new" presumes the "old" through integration. And this integration can permeate the intersection of nature and culture, and the diaphaneity of techne and teleos.

To initiate an action for a technological invention one must be clear about its driving intention. Note, however, that intention conveys a tendency to move toward something (May); and therefore, intention is a journey not a destination (Seif, "Social Change"). In our digital age, the pressing matter is to develop theological clarity about what technological innovation is for. As I mentioned earlier, there is the lure of, and infatuation with, the idea of technique for its own sake, which encourages a predetermined technological action without awareness of the unfolding teleological process. As Jean Gebser reminds us, "nothing that exists for its own sake; it exists for the sake of the whole" (541).

Perhaps the most critical, but unnoticed forces of the digital age are widespread individualism (Kanter 2001) and obsession with rationalism. These hidden forces obliterate the potential for teleological interpretations of technology in transforming and maintaining cultures. Human beings are more than rational animals, and such being the case, John Deely asserts:

> In the semiotic animal, the modern experiment has passed its limits with the realization that rationality is by itself not yet reasonableness, "for reasonableness is the capacity to respond to the attraction exerted upon the self by the other" not the isolation to the self from the other. (116)

Only through the meaningful integration of human systems and more-than-human systems forming a semiotic web can humans, as semiotic animals, make the appropriate distinctions between wise use and reckless abuse, realizing that unintended consequences may extend well beyond social and cultural interactions (Deely). This principle is at the heart of "semioethics" which transcends the notion of "semiosphere," originated by Yuri M. Lotman (Lotman), into a co-evolutionary process of meaning making.

The self-evolutionary process that Erich Jantsch (Jantsch) talks about is diametrically opposed to the tendency to use technological solutions to mitigate social and cultural problems, encouraging individualistic attitudes toward social change as autonomous human affairs (Seif, "Social Change"). Transformation of culture in the digital age hinges on the intentional interaction between technological innovation and cultural practices. In other words, cultural transformation depends on our ability to recognize that the realm of techne and the realm of teleos are diaphanously coinciding. More specifically, engaging authentically in the process of technological innovation and the art of making (techne) brings forth a desirable cultural transformation, which in turn reveals purpose and intention (teleos).

5. Conclusion: Implications for Cultural Transformation

It is nearly impossible for our present societies to judge their own time in history. The nagging question about whether the digital age can embrace the analog experience of culture remains unanswered. Perhaps the answer not only hinges on our perseverance through paradoxical tension but also depends on our sensibility to overcome the duality of techne and teleos. This sensibility has the potential to foster an eco-humanistic understanding and can lead to an unselfconscious engagement in the transformation of culture in the digital age.

There are constant opportunities in the experiences of any society to begin to look at the familiar in new ways and to notice the unfamiliar that has been ignored. The challenge for social change agents is always to uncover the potential in the legacy of the familiar, perceiving with diaphaneity and simultaneously, fully engaging in the cosmic dance between the desire for change and the comfort of hanging on to the existing.

The discussion above suggests the need for cunning intelligence, or what ancient Egyptians once conceived as the "intelligence of the heart." On the one hand, we can view digital technology as a means to an end, where the means and the end reciprocate purposefully in an integrative circularity. On the other hand, persevering and feeling comfortable with the paradoxical and tensional relationship between techne and teleos can bring forward a sustainable and desirable future that transforms the virtual digital reality into an authentic analog experience and enhanced cultural reality. This is what I believe our digital age needs to

consider for cultural transformation. Teleology is not the point of departure, nor is technology the destination of our making.

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The Shape of the Paper Book to Come

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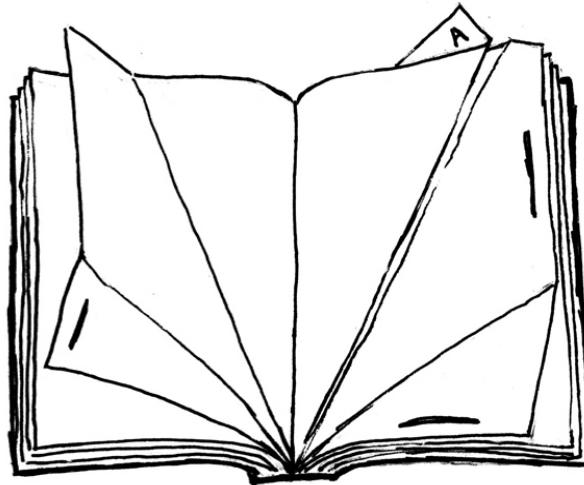
Introduction

As a medium, the book in paper has long been the most significant information vehicle. In present society, which to a large extent is dominated by other, digital media, the book has lost a great deal of its status and appeal.

Although the digital media we use on a daily basis offer many possibilities, they (still) cannot and do not replace all aspects of the actual paper book. However, they certainly do raise the question whether the current book form, which has already lasted for 2000 years, is still accurate. The paper book still has unique characteristics which cannot be translated to modern digital media, but for several reasons it no longer fulfills all the modern user's needs. In his 1958 essay The Form of the Book Jan Tschichold (1902-1974) claims that "book design is no field for those who desire to "mint the style of today" or to create something new, but a new impulse is certainly necessary" (Tschichold 8). The main objective of this practice-based research is to create a new paper book format, inspired by how the use of digital media can be translated into the traditional codex. The aim is to reconstruct the paper book into a new form, involving both a visual and a tactile restructuring, intended to give the current codex a more performative function, besides its main function as an information vehicle. Or, as artist Bruno Munari, puts it: "Can a book as object, regardless of the printed words, communicate anything? If so, then what? (…) Paper is usually used to support the writing and pictures and not to 'communicate' something" (Maffei 23).

In order to define what an actual paper book is, we will deconstruct it to its essential elements. UNESCO defined a book as a bound, non-periodical publication of 49 pages or more. The bound character gives the book a dimensional aspect which distinguishes it from a poster, or other single-plane media. Accordingly, Kenya Hara speaks of the book as an "information sculpture" (Hara 200).

From a graphic book designer's point of view, the elements to research are (I) the contemporary user, (II) – at the level of the book designer: the (graphic) design and the material aspect, and (III) the content and the relational structure within the book. Since my research is practice-based, the second aspect will be emphasized: the formal design elements, i.e. the digital visualization of the content (graphic design) and the material aspect (paper and binding), all in a continuous relation with the user.

1. The paper book versus the contemporary user

The paper book is of no use without its reader. The main senses we use in retrieving information, on digital devices as well as in paper books, are touch and sight. Due to the ever increasing digitalization of information, us readers have learned to handle information differently. The new(er) media and electronic texts, that have come to largely dominate our daily lives, have also led us to handle information in a non-linear manner. By ourselves, we copy-paste, "sample", and determine when to consult which specific information, which we first seek specifically. The role of the user therefore becomes increasingly important. He/she wants to interact with, and to a certain extent, assist in the creation of the information he/she reads or processes. He/she is thus not merely a producer or a consumer, but becomes a prosumer, for whom terms such as modularity and interactivity are essential.

Ellen Lupton states in her essay "The birth of the user" that "the users today expect to feel "productive", not "contemplative". They expect to be in search mode, not processing mode. Users also expect to be disappointed, distracted and delayed by false leads. These screen-based behaviours are driving changes in design for print, while at the same time affirming print's role as a place where extented reading can still occur" (Lupton 23).

A main factor in usage is the recognition of and the identification with the medium. Digital imagery always used to aim for a certain transparency. The desktop computer with its user interface was launched in 1984 and replaced the textual interface which consisted of lines of code. This user-focused screen-based interface was conceived as a metaphor for the actual desktop. Stacked documents open in layered window frames and are controlled by clicking a mouse. The device itself has evolved from a big desk-operated machine controlled by a computer mouse to an online tablet-shaped handheld device controlled by touch. The resemblance to a paper book is striking though. An excellent example is Apple's latest creation, the iPad. This tablet-shaped device is operated with a single stroke on the screen giving the illusion of turning a page.

Figure 1: Apple Ipad (www.apple.com, 2010)

These changes however entail much more than the comparison of the digital versus the analog aspect. We have left behind the era in which digital media are items we have under control because they were made by people. At this point, digital media create their own worlds, in which we spend our daily lives (Oosterling 6). These new digital (handheld) devices define the way in which an entire generation handles media and

entertainment. This is why research is required of what defines this usage and how these features can be translated back to "older" media in order to be repurposed.

2. The contemporary (graphic) book designer

Contemporary graphic and book design is clearly searching for a new meaning/structure. Although the main function remains transmitting information directly, there are other media assuming this role too. This creates opportunities for new visual ways of expression, to a large extent influenced by today's digital society, in both a positive and a negative way. There are two concepts that characterize contemporary graphic design: digitalization and materialization.

2.1 (Digital) graphic design

The digitized information we come into contact with daily is often regarded as a replacement for the traditional media. The essential function of printed media as newspapers, magazines, books and posters – providing information – can easily be overtaken by the internet, through its blogs and newsfeeds. But as the invention of photography in the 19th century was regarded as the possible replacement for realistic painting, it also gave birth to a new way of painting, Impressionism, with its subjective perception. In the same way, analog media and graphic design, which shape current digital media, will fulfil different roles in the current phase of transition (Klanten 7).

The designer's personal input in current graphic design is visualised in different manners. Driven by individual (digital) experiences, the designer searches for new ways of communicating information. Even though we all have this technology within our reach, the present-day reader can still process only one message at a time. Graphic designers can help them to make the right choice in from this large amount of information, and navigate through it in an efficient way.

Digitalized text, which is freed from the relation with the book as an object, consists of database-driven data that can only be analysed (read) by digital devices. New reading forms – other than the classic linear one – like hypertextuality, deconstruct the text and focus more on text features that before remained unnoticed. Graphic designers, or the contemporary communicators, have to accentuate and therefore increase the legibility of these text features. Thanks to the material surface of the book the formless digital text data become readable, driven by structures and visual codes (Visscher 14).

In graphic language these structures are called 'grids'. They can be considered a sort of visual metastructure which takes both the micro- and macro-typographical aspects of the printed paper book into account. Where the classic and modernist approach to book design is one of classical symmetrical geometric grids, the actual graphic design focuses more on layering and framing. Inspired by the theory of deconstructivism of Jacques Derrida (1930-2004), designers took giving form to information to the next level. Deconstructivism already warned for the idea of one possible interpretation of a text and predicted that more or opposite meanings were possible (Bhaskaran 230). Visual layering creates a dimensional structure, which in return provides possibilities to create multiple information levels and therefore give the user more reading and interpreting possibilities.

Regarding this idea, interesting formal experiments have been carried out by the Russian avant-garde movement. The Prouns of El Lissitzky (1890-1941) were his own personal explorations of the Suprematist visual language. Introducing spatial elements, like shifting axes and multiple perspectives – which were uncommon within the Suprematism movement – he created a new visual language in which the dimensional aspect played the main role. Or, to quote El Lissitzky: "the station where one changes from painting to architecture" (32). In his Prouns he wanted to define a space in which there would be no clear orientation of or within the space. This allowed these paintings to be "read" from different viewpoints and to be given various meanings.

Transforming culture in the digital age

Figure 2: Proun 30T, 1920
El Lissitzky, 1890-1941, architect, schilder, fotograaf, typograaf
(Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 1990): p. 106

But the paper book object takes it one step further. It is dimensional. Although it is designed completely digitally, once produced, it is translated to its tactile form as we know it, the printed paper book object. At exactly this point two interesting worlds converge: the digital (the design process) and the analog (the output).

If we talk about the book as an object, it has – since its creation – undergone few fundamental changes, neither in material nor in form. Starting from a clay tablet, the book evolved from a papyrus role to the current bound codex form. Every successive adaptation presented a specific solution to a specific problem.[1] The format evolved from a large heavy manuscript to light portable octavo-sized pocket books, all in favour of the usage. The fact that the book is still used today confirms that it still has many valuable qualities. Where digital objects evolve visually in a way that is no longer related to tactile functionality, the book continues to offer an efficient user interface. Apple's iPhone for example reduces all its functionality to a single screen and has lost any visual similarity with the initial telephone object.

Since the human brain functions in a visual and dimensional manner, the paper book points the user in a visual and tactile way to where he/she is situated, merely by referring to the position in the book object. Although digital imagery can have an infinite amount of layers, these will always be reduced to one image, the one displayed on the screen and with limited tactile sensation.

2.2 Materialization: paper & binding

This true sensing of the printed paper book is made possible by the use of paper. The tactile, visual and olfactic sensation given by this material is a welcome change in our present world dominated by bits and bites. Materialization is therefore one of the main aspects and key elements in this practise-based research. Material and space cannot simply be translated into one's and zero's. The use of a tactile material creates an aura of craftmanship, authenticity and has an overall realness to it (Klanten 8). The printed paper book is created in a digital way, but cannot be copy-pasted.

This also gives the book a sustainable character, in content as well as in material. The fact that the information is printed and bound in a book, still gives it more credibility and makes it more difficult to throw it away. Over the last ten years we have regularly changed our desktop computers or mobile phones, but we have kept and collected books since our childhood. A noble thought in a "throw-away" culture?

Paper, the material that books continue to be produced with, is a lightweight bendable tactile material which is printable. Its structure ensures printed inks are distributed properly, which makes it the ideal carrier for printed visual and textual material. The mat surface moreover offers an optimal light shade, which is preferable for the eye when reading. Paper is a natural material and its name is derived from the papyrus plant, as the earliest examples were made by the Egyptians from papyrus strips which were sliced, layered and pounded together in order to obtain a uniform sheet (Kilgour 28).

Transforming culture in the digital age

The Chinese, however, invented the paper form as we know it today. Made from wooden fibre mixed with water, once dried, the pulp becomes paper. The frames which contained the pulp were to be carried by people, reason for which the format produced had to be limited to the length equivalent of two arms. Therefore, format was already an issue in that era.

Once production has been finalised, the flat layer of paper can be written on, folded and then bound, to become a book. In essence, it doesn't have any levels, it is just the starting material, the two-dimensional base, ready to become a shaped form.

At this level we will research whether we can attribute another dimensional level to the flat paper itself. The large piece of paper – which will be printed on – will contain a sub-structure that, once folded and bound, will provide new possibilities to the act of page turning.

As paper is made from a fibre structure, certain parts of the spread pages can contain more or less structure in order to create a different tactile sensation. These new formal elements create new grid structures which can be accentuated by graphic design. Similarly to the way in which content gives the book object a meaning, graphic design can give meaning to this new formal (tactile) structures. The fact that a book is made from a large folded and then cut plane sheet of paper gives this input a modular character.

As a graphic designer I can attribute printed information levels to each substructure for the reader to be able to follow his/her own chosen path. By using these hidden sub-levels, I can determine the degree to which these structures are persistent and mandatory. The graphic designer gives directions or suggestions for use, but it will always be the reader who decides whether or not to follow the suggested path.

Binding enables us to speak of a spread, by which we mean two adjacent, faced pages. It is the result of another main character of the codex, the fold. The thin structure of paper makes it easy to be processed. The first bound (and folded) books date back to the early Christian period. None of the precedents, the papyrus rolls (Egyptians) and the clay tablets (5000 B.C.), presented folds. This makes the codex a unique folded object, with a portable and compact format when closed. When it is opened, its structure is one of mirrored symmetry (Hochuli and Kinross 35).

The spine is the axis around which the pages are turned. This kind of structure, inherent to the physical object a book is, also contributes to the kinetic movement when turning a page. The act of page turning is only made possible by the fold. Most books that are produced, start from a large plano sheet of paper. This is folded in a half (folio) which then is folded into two again (quarto) and again (octavo). With every fold, this process of folding creates a new relation of page versus page. Different ways of folding create different page relationships. Once folded, one or more sides are cut in order to retrieve a quire.

The folded sheets are called 'quires' and form the first step in the dimensional aspect of the codex, where the plano sheet becomes a structured package of pages. Because of the limitation in paper sheet size, the page quantity of a quire till present has not been infinite. However, the ability to bind quires together opened a wide range of possibilities and created the codex, a high-technological object at the time. The quires were cut in the fold and bound together with flaxen thread. This technique made the book a well and firmly constructed object that could be easily used. The thread made it possible for the spread to easily open up, without breaking the spine. The glued paperback examples we know today lose their strength with usage, therefore the binding with thread opens a variety of further possibilties.

Contemporary books are mostly bound, but initially the quires (pecia) were sold separately. This system can be seen as an early example of modularity, because the book was part of a non-mechanized mass production process with interchangeable parts (Kilgour 75). The classic book bounding gives it a pre-defined structure, which the user cannot modify. In the second part of this practise-based research, we will focus on the aspect of folding and binding. Besides the one mentioned before, there are other folding techniques that give the reader or user more possibilities. Japanese binding for example, where the folds are on the opposite side of the spine, hides within each spread another one. A spread which is only accessible if the right fold is cut. The book is read with two separate information levels.

3. Content & the relational structure within the paper book

Although we deconstructed the book into its essential parts, the paper book always has to be considered a combination of these elements, each depending on the other. The form of the book functions as a dimensional projection of these relations, based on formal systems and their interpretations. These are the objects of study in what we call metalogics, which has to be seen as a study of the metatheory of logic. Within most books, these metalogics embrace this relational structure, in logics as well as in form. This makes the book a template for performance as Joanna Drucker states. "A scene of continually reinvented meaning, a conditional situation in which configured relations between a graphic and a semantic fields interact. At the level of the letter, space, line, page, volume, text and infinitely expandable subtext, a book contains 'instructions for reading" (Drucker 1).

The content itself is however not neglected, it's playing a crucial role in the paper book. It gives the book meaning and makes it more than merely a dimensional tactile paper object. But in this research, the graphic designer is seen as the author. Even more so because lately we see an evolution of the graphic designer himself, becoming more and more important in the book design process. In some cases, where a close collaboration of book designer and author took place, his contribution is equally important.

Therefore, the design of a book is not only the formal and organizational processing of information, with the sole purpose of ensuring legibility, it also contributes to creating this information. By 'authorship' we mean that the graphic designer is in charge of the elements that structure the object (index, page numbers, head-notes, etc.). He/she suggests new ways of navigating through the information en indicates multiple reading-paths. He/she gives form to the paratext and becomes the co-author to a certain extent. In short, the graphic designer positions himself within the socio-historical context of the book (format, paper, binding) and its textual semiotics (Visscher 14).

4. Practise-based research

This research focuses on the formal character of the book rather than on its textual semiotics. The goal is to attribute different tactile levels in the basic structure of the current codex in order to obtain secondary information levels. As mentioned before, the first phase of the research will be focussed on the plain sheet of paper. Searching for a new formal and (sub)structural pattern integration, the tactile exploration of the sheet of paper will experience new meanings. Meanings which will be enlarged by the attributed printed information and the way the reader uses the book.

Secondly, experiments with alternative folding and binding methods will deliver new navigating structures which allow the user to create a non-linear reading path. We fold in a rectangular way, starting from a rectangular sheet of paper to obtain a rectangular-shaped book. But if within this process a single parameter is changed, for example a diagonal fold, we create a whole new dimensional structure and page sequencing.

The rectangular shape or grid is the most important visual formal element related to the current codex structure. Both the initial large printed sheet of paper and the folded quires show this formal character. Even the lay-out programs which are used to design current books mainly use square shaped grids or horizontal or vertical guide lines.

In order to create a formal contrast, the use of the diagonal is one of the most interesting within this research. The codex will be reconstructed based on the idea of dynamic rectangles. These diagonal structures will be integrated in all levels, from the sheet of paper, the binding to the actual printed information.

The results obtained will be confusing, certainly within the well-proportioned rectangular shape, which we all automatically allocate to the book. Breaking the formal rectangular sequence booking book reading is an interesting path in the search of new meanings for the tactile book spread.

Another important element that will be integrated into this research is the modular character of the whole paper book concept. Every book is different although in essence it always remains unchanged. Therefore, the attributed material (sub)structure cannot dominate, but has to have a modular character. The graphic designer defines the format and therefore creates the reading possibilities. The format defines how the design is allocated to the plane sheet of paper and the way of folding will create new diagonal structures. Starting

Geoffrey Brusatto

from a uniform sheet of paper the different reading structures will be defined by the designer. Accentuated or neglected by the graphic design, the reader will obtain a more dynamic reading experience, based on tactile sensations.

Within the genre of "Artist books" a lot of artistic experiments have already been carried out. They have to be seen as works of art but realized in the form of a book. These books allow their content to be disconnected from the formal aspect and give the artist or designer the absolute freedom to experiment. This disconnection can, on the other hand, restrain the artist in his possibilities.

Artist Bruno Munari's (1907-1998) books intended to use the material as a visual language. The abstract forms obtained not only fulfilled a visual role, they could also be used and handled by the reader.

The dynamic spreads opened up to new sensations and rhythms, clearing the path for as yet unexplored options in terms of readability and knowledge. The very act of page turning actually satisfied the need for accessibility to all cultures and fully involves the reader in the works of art, here translated to the book structure (Maffei 23).

Figure 3: Bruno Munari, Libro illeggibile MN1
Giorgio Maffei, Munari's books (Mantova: Corraini Edizioni 2009): p. 164.

This and other structures conceived as an experiment in the "Artist book", are a great resource for the actual restructuring of the current paper book. Thanks to the mechanization of production techniques, many of these experiments can find their way into the actual mass-produced paper book in order to create a tactile, metalogic sensation.

5. Conclusion

The paper book still offers a lot of attractive characteristics and interesting possibilities for the contemporary user. Thanks to its main material component, paper, the graphic designer can easily work with and on the material. Furthermore, the binding enables experiments which will introduce new formal and metalogical structures. The paper book will, within this practise-based research, bereconstructed into a new form, where a visual and tactile restructuring takes place, all with the intent to give the current codex a more performative function, besides its descriptive one.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

DIGITAL LITERATURE

From the Gutenberg Galaxy to the Internet Galaxy. Digital Textuality and the Change of Cultural Landscape

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In my talk I will address the ongoing cultural change through the prism of digital textuality. The invention of hypertext, initially by Vannevar Bush, and later further developed by Douglas Engelbart and Ted Nelson, gave rise to a wholly new conceptualisation of what we understand by 'text'. The emergence of the Internet and the World Wide Web, combined with the hypertext mark-up language took hypertext to a global level. As a consequence, the cultural logic based on the forms of print text, the Gutenberg Galaxy of Marshall McLuhan, is gradually giving way to the new digital logic of what Manuel Castells has termed the Internet Galaxy.

In what follows, I'll give quite a personal account of how that cultural process has looked like from the perspective of a participant in hypertext and cybertext communities, the former being centered around the ACM Conferences on Hypertext and Hypermedia, the latter one around the Digital Art and Culture Conferences.

1. Vannevar Bush - The Prophet of Hypertext

It is now commonly agreed upon that the "father of hypertext" was the Director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, Dr. Vannevar Bush, who published his highly prophetic article "As We May Think" in *Atlantic Monthly*, July 1945. The article contains a wide range of speculation about future technological advances, and only a couple of pages are directly connected to the issue of hypertext (a word not yet existing then). As the article was written just before the time of electronic computers (in the modern meaning) and the machine Bush imagines, *Memex*, is mainly mechanical in function, the innovation soon seemed hopelessly outdated. The idea behind *Memex*, however, was a sound enough description of hypertext as it was later developed. To give credit to Bush, it should be noted that he makes this assertion himself already in the article: future technology may very well develop to directions impossible to predict, and thus the realization of *Memex* may be quite different from his sketches, but what is important is the idea.

The motivation for Bush in his article was to find a new project, a new direction, wide and important enough, to direct the huge potential of scientific research left unused after the great war time effort had ended. His main point was: the body of knowledge, scientific and otherwise, is growing so fast that something has to be done if it is to be useful at all. He first acknowledges the potential growth of information, and the need to find a proper mass storage means for it. Microfilm seemed to please him well, and additionally he already foresaw the possibilities of magnetic data storage, so actually the storage question was not so acute for him. What Bush saw perfectly clearly was that the main problem lies in finding and using the information necessary at any given moment. In 1945 Bush already took up the topic that has become widely acknowledged only after Internet was popularized: "Mere compression, of course, is not enough; one needs not only to make and store a record but also be able to consult it."

Indexing had been in use in book format and libraries for centuries, and Bush also saw indexing as necessary but not satisfying alone. His addition to information retrieval was the introduction of recordable traces, paths, or links to the database. The user of *Memex* would have been allowed to make connections between different kinds and types of data and name those connections; a bunch of similarly titled connections formed paths. He also would have been able to add his own notes to the database and those own additions could naturally have been added to existing paths. Thus, returning to the database, the user could follow his previous associative path through the materials. If we assume that the reason for the data gathering in the first place was to do research in a certain field which was then to produce an article, the *Memex* database contained the devices with which the author himself (or some other person, for that matter, as the *Memex* databases were to be transferrable) could return to the structure of the associative think-work which produced the article. Bush uses a lawyer as his example: "The layer has at his touch the associated opinions and decisions of his whole experience, and of the experience of friends and authorities."

The possibility to link together different documents, to gather links to named paths, to add new documents to the database/ paths, and finally, to return to the database and follow the previous paths, are the key issues in any hypertext environment today. The strong role of the book form is quite obvious here. "It is exactly as though the physical items had been gathered together from widely separated sources and bound together to form a new book." This use of book metaphor has stuck to hypertext practice and theory to the present day, as witnessed in the highly confusing use of "page" in the World Wide Web terminology.

2. Ted Nelson - The Visionary of Hypertext

Theodore "Ted" Nelson was the man who coined such terms as hypertext and hypermedia. In his book *Literary Machines* (first published in 1981, several revised editions since that) Nelson gives a thorough description of his grand idea, "A program intended to make possible a new unified electronic literature […] a computer program intended to tie everything together and make it all available to everyone", known as the *Xanadu* (the name is borrowed from Keats' poem "Kubla Khan" - but Nelson also mentions the connection to the great *Xanadu* in Welles' *Citizen Kane*).

Nelson makes clear his indebtedness to Vannevar Bush: "I say Bush was right, and so this book describes a new electronic form of the memex, and offers it to the world." *Xanadu* was a plan for an electronic form of *Memex* - database with user defined links, paths and notes - but it was also something much more. While *Memex* in principle was a local machine (although the records might have been transferrable), *Xanadu* was a global system ("a unified concept of interconnected ideas and data"). While it is now possible to argue that "*Xanadu* never shipped", Nelson's ideals were still concretized in all their global, unifying aspects, in World Wide Web.

Nelson defines hypertext as "non-sequential writing":

Well, by "hypertext" I mean non-sequential writing -- text that branches and allows choices to the reader, best read at an interactive screen. As popularly conceived, this is a series of text chunks connected by links which offer the reader different pathways. (2)

He also states that "Hypertext can include sequential text, and is thus the most general form of writing" and adds in a footnote, "In one direction of generalization, it is also the most general form of language." The improvement of writing in hypertext means that authors can write more freely, more flexibly, hypertext writing bending better to accomodate the forms of the topic in question. Also the readers may more freely follow their interests when reading hypertext.

Nelson's grand idea was to build a global network, where individual hypertext documents could be linked to each other when necessary – in his own words, to make "instantaneous electronic literature" possible. His definition for "literature" was a very general one, literature for him meaning "the information that we package and safe". I would claim that there was a logical mistake here: while we may consider literature as "the information we package and safe", it does not necessarily entail that all packaged and saved information could – or should – be considered "literature". Networked computers were seen as platform for the most

general form of writing – hypertext – thus, he termed computers as "literary machines". There is also the stress on the essential referentiality of literature which comes very close to the poststructuralist text concepts of Jacques Derrida and, especially, Roland Barthes:

> In this ideal text, the networks are many and interact, without any one of them being able to surpass the rest; this text is a galaxy of signifiers, not a structure of signifieds; it has no beginning; it is reversible; we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively declared to be the main one; the codes it mobilizes extend *as far as they can reach,* they are indeterminable (meaning here is never subject to a principle of determination, unless by throwing dice); the systems of meaning can take over this absolutely plural text, but their number is never closed, based as it is on the infinity of language.

What to Barthes was simply "text" is for Nelson the docuverse. Docuverse is the grand total of all documents in the global network, "a single great universal text and data grid". *Xanadu* the vision (as described by Nelson) in many ways seems to be superior to the World Wide Web we know, but it clearly has its drawbacks too.

All in all, Nelson is clearly following in Bush's footsteps what comes to the enlightening role of the docuverse:

> "electronic publishing will mean lower-capital entry (and thus smaller publishers), constant revisability of all documents with linked version update, and finally *open hypertext publishing* -- the growing-together of a great jungle of interconnections among symbiotic documents, under separate ownership, becoming inseparable from the greater whole. […] the most sophisticated readership and usership civilization has yet seen."

> The system… may or may not work. But some system of this type will, and can bring a new Golden Age to the human mind. Imagine a new libertarian literature with alternative explanations so anyone can choose the pathway or approach that best suits him or her; …; imagine a rebirth of literacy."

Comparing this to the reality of Internet today gives us quite a lot to think about.

The main principles of publishing will not change much from the old ways. The document, the author, the writing, all will still be essential factors even though the document and the writing be slightly modified. The author as authenticator of the document, as well as the integrity of the document, are as essential properties as ever; this Nelson makes clear. He goes as far in stressing the continuity rather than discontinuity with the old forms as stating:"we consider that this system may best be considered as the printing press of the future". Insofar as this comparison, or use of old terms, restricts the docuverse mainly to previous models of print, this statement seems odd, and even misguided. All of the current real-time participatory writing forms in socal media simply cannot be justifiably grounded in the model of the printing press. On the other hand, the greatest novelty in the brave new literature for Nelson is its "instantaneous" accessibility, which, without a doubt is something remarkable in the WWW today.

The first *Hypertext* conference was in 1987 – and Ted Nelson, naturally, was present. Around the annual conference a hypertext community was formed. Along with the technically oriented scholars and interested persons, there was also a fair amount of "literary" persons present. This strong relation to technical interests heavily influenced the early hypertext literature theorizing. George P. Landow wrote about the "rhetorics of hypertext" and stressed the importance of giving enough information concerning links (departure & arrival information etc.). While Landow wrote extensively about the close relationship between hypertext writing and deconstructionist ideas – especially how the reader becomes an author – his point of view was clearly to teach people write good hypertext documents. Landow's role in introducing hypertext to literary-humanist audience cannot be overestimated, but the occasionally simplifying (and even misleading) comparison between hypertext and deconstruction is kind of a burden to hyperliterature theory even today.

As powerful a tool as hypertext is, it does not cover all the features inherent in digital media. For a better grasp of this potential, I will introduce the concept of cybertextuality. As defined by Espen Aarseth, cybertextuality refers to programmed texts, which involve computation and which behave in various dynamical ways. Cybertexts are machines, which need to be operated by the user. This operating may take the form of

navigation, modification, or participation. These are exactly the main modes of action we are witnessing in the contemporary digital culture. For a wider applicability, it is necessary to widen the idea of cybertextuality to a more general notion of cybermediality.

3. Cybertexts and ergodic literature

Cybertextuality, as Aarseth defines it, is such a perspective on all texts which pays close attention to the ways they function. Texts in cybertextual scrutiny are understood as machines, not in a metaphorical, but in a very concrete sense. Cybertextuality is by no means limited to digital texts only – also print texts have their kinds of functioning. Through a convincing statistical analysis Aarseth shows how the oft-used division between print and digital literature is misguided – "make your own adventure" type of print books (based on several storylines read according to luck in rolling dices) are in many ways much closer to *Afternoon*-style hyperfiction than other print literature. Thus, in principle, cybertextuality as such does not acknowledge any fundamental difference between print and digital literature. On the other hand, in practice, the digital form enables much more flexible ways to design textual functioning, which inevitably means that the focus, after all, is clearly on digital texts.

Another important thing to note about the concept of cybertextuality is that it is not only about "literature", not even in the broadest sense of the word. Cybertextuality includes forms like computer games which should not be violently made to fit into the category of literature, if we want to understand them fully. Computer games, MUDs etc. are cybertexts, but not literature. When dealing with literature, Aarseth introduces another new term, ergodic. Ergodic literature requires "non-trivial effort" to traverse a text. Following the lines by eye-movement and turning the pages are classified as "trivial" efforts, anything additional as "non-trivial". Thus, books like Raymond Federman's *Double or Nothing* (1972), in which text is occassionally printed to circle around the page and thus force the reader to turn the whole book a full 360 degrees in her hands, can be seen as an example of ergodic literature. Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* (1962), in which the reader has to jump between the poem "Pale Fire", the "Commentary", and the "Index", is a case of ergodic literature etc.

> […] I believe in 1969, I arranged permission from the publishers of Nabokov's *Pale Fire* – a brilliant poetic hypertext – to use it in the demo. But the IBM people rejected this as "too far out." Thus progress must wait for the halt and the lame to catch up." (Nelson 1/31)

Once again, as these examples should clearly show, there is ergodic literature in both the print and the digital format.

The functioning of texts may be located either in the production phase (procedurally constructed texts), in texts themselves (programmed texts), and in reading (ergodic literature). These may also occur simultaneously. While hypertext is just a sub-category of cybertexts and even though its functioning is strongly limited (especially if we think of "pure hypertext" in Aarsethian terms) I still want to emphasize that hypertext - pieces of writing inter-linked - is "the most general form of writing" (quoting Nelson) and as such, an essential basis for the multitude of cybertexts.

In describing ergodic literature we need the concepts of *textons* and *scriptons*. *Textons* are the "building blocks" of a text, the deep structure. *Scriptons*, in turn, are the possible combinations of *textons*, the surface level as seen by the reader. With any given hypertext, all the individual *lexia* (nodes) together are the *textons*, all the combinations of them, as chosen by any individual reader, are the *scriptons*. Or, with print texts like Marc Saporta's *Composition No. 1* (1962) and B. S. Johnson's *The Unfortunates* (1969) where the text is printed on loose pages meant to be shuffled and read in random order, each leaf is a *texton*, all the orders in which they happen to be read are *scriptons*.

Taking into account the different ways *textons* and *scriptons* may behave, and all the ways in which the reader has to participate in the meaning production of any text, Aarseth has formed a typology for possible text types, comprising seven variables:

1. 1*dynamics*: static (*scriptons* are constant), intratextonic dynamics (the number of *textons* is fixed, the *scriptons* may change), textonic dynamics (the number and content of *textons* may vary)

2. *determinability*: determinable (the same response to a given situation will always produce the same result), indeterminable (the results of responses are unpredictable)

3. *transiency*: transient (mere passing of user's time causes *scriptons* to appear), intransient (*scriptons* appear only through user's activity)

4. *perspective*: personal (requires the user to play a strategic role as a character in the world described by the text), impersonal (reader not involved as a participant)

5. *access*: random (all *scriptons* are readily available to the user at all times), controlled (some *scriptons* are available only when certain conditions are met)

6. *linking*: explicit, conditional, none

7. *user function*: explorative, configurative, interpretative, textonic (see below)

Naturally, this classification isn't necessarily "definitive", there may be other (even better) ways to do this mapping, and certainly there are limit cases and hybrids which do not easily suit these categories. Nonetheless, this is not a purely theoretical-speculative classification but one based on an analysis of a set of real texts – thus, it has a solid empirical backing. What's most important, though, is the heuristic value of this model. From the seven variables and their possible values we can construct 576 different genre positions, of which only a dozen at maximum has been used so far (a basic model for print literature being: static, determinable, intransient, impersonal perspective, random access, no links, interpretative). Even though we may assume that some of these genre possibilities remain purely theoretical, there is still plenty enough room for experiments with text-only modes of cybertext.

   User function category in Aarseth's typology is of special importance. Basically, what it comes down to, is to seriously think about the meanings of the term "interactivity". As should be evident, at least since Roman Ingarden's writings, all literature is interactive – the literary work of art is not completed without the active participation of the reader. There are many ways in which the reader may participate in the literary meaning construction, and Aarseth has divided these into four basic user functions. The functions and their relations to other related concepts are illustrated in the following diagram (figure 1):
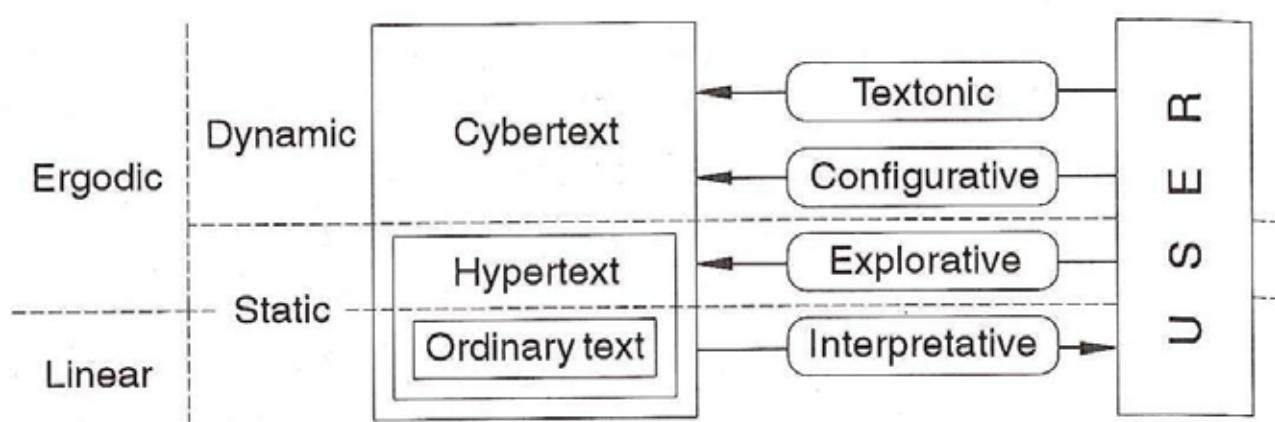

Figure 1: User Functions and Their Relation to Other Concepts (Aarseth 64).

Interpretation is the most basic user function, all texts require interpretation. *Explorative function* means choosing one's path through the textual materials available (or, in other terms, constructing scriptons from

Transforming culture in the digital age

textons available). *Configurative function* means the reforming of the textons or their relations (linking) in the personal document. *Textonic function* means the possibility to actively participate in the writing of the texts – by writing additional text, changing pre-existing text, or by deleting it; writing, it should be noted, may also include programming. In the popular usage of the term "interactive" the explorative (or, selecting) function seems to prevail. In the previous discussions of hypertext literature usually the textonic function has been foregrounded – with hypertext literature "the reader becomes the author" has been a popular phrase; but as the diagram above illustrates, the textonic function (which allows the concrete co-authorship) does not belong at all to the domain of hypertexts! As Aarseth writes, "confusing the power of a hypertext reader to that of the author, is like confusing the power of a tourist guide to the power of a city architect".

One remark should be made, concerning the temporal aspect. Aarseth makes it clear that the temporal dimension, the possibility to manipulate temporal elements in texts, are greatly expanded in digital form. This is, however, the one undertheorized aspect in his otherwise groundbreaking study. Stressing the temporal aspect more strongly might have resulted in a clearer difference between print and digital texts. While it is true that cybertextuality in itself does not provide a cut between print and digital texts, it possibly should be articulated more strongly that there are things print text can not do, while they are possible, and even easy, to do in digital texts. Markku Eskelinen has mapped these temporal possibilities in his Doctoral Thesis "Travels in Cybertextuality" quite exhaustively.

Cybertext theory is most of all about the cybernetic production of signs and the unique dual materiality of that production. This uniqueness stems from arbitrary relations between two separate material levels (the storage medium and the interface medium) and leads to a heuristic typology of texts into which Aarseth is capable of situating every textual object from *I Ching* to MUDs based on how its medium functions, but independently of what that medium is. Cybertext theory is more interested in what a medium does than what it is and instead of more or less accurate ontological descriptions it gives us a continuum of media positions. This kind of approach could be called a functional theory of media.

By applying the functional media theory we don't have to know exactly how some medium works, or where its limits or most useful constraints lie now or in the future; we just have to describe how it functions as a machine producing signs (of whatever kind). Obviously that's not enough in itself, as we also have to connect this side of the medium to more or less media-independent cultural forms of expression, like games, stories and performances for starters, without assuming everything is or should be reducible to them. It is good to keep in mind that cybertextuality is a perspective not only on computers, or the Internet – the traditional media like print book and television offer us a huge variety of textual and audiovisual practices, the understanding of which requires this functional perspective.

Through examples of a set of digital texts, I'll illustrate the characteristics of various phases of the transitional digital culture. These Waves of Girls by Caitlin Fisher is a prime example of hypertext fiction. *The Impermanence Agent* by Noah Wardrip-Fruin et al., combines biographical writing with software agent technology monitoring the reader's online activity, and creates collages of found online materials. It reveals some of the fundamental features of writing (and reading) in a networked environment, especially various forms of citation and collaboration, both between human authors, and human and machine. *The Google Poem Generator* by Leevi Lehto, employs a search engine for poetical composition. It highlights the utmost importance of search engines in negotiating the vast universe of online data.

4. These Waves of Girls

These Waves of Girls by Caitlin Fisher won the first prize in the fiction category awarded by the Electronic Literature Organization in 2001. Thus, it should be an exemplary case of electronic literature. Exemplary both in the sense of being a piece of true electronic writing, and also in the sense of being of very high aesthetic value. As such, it is a work well worth some critical attention.

In the category of electronic literature, Fisher's work can be further characterised with such labels as web fiction, hypertext fiction, and multimedial fiction. *These Waves* is published in the Internet, and it is available through Internet connection and a web browser. As such, it situates itself in the huge docuverse of the Internet - even though there are no links from the work reaching outside of its self-contained whole,

through the web browser functionality it is always just one click away from other documents in the Web. The work employs the basic web site solutions like a menu based navigation and a page split into separate frames. It doesn't require any installation (as most hypertext works distributed on discs do) and it is as easy to browse through as any other web site – there seems to be a tendency towards this kind of web works instead of stand-alone hypertexts, and this may turn out to be the decisive step in making hypertext fiction more familiar to the reading audience.

These Waves is hypertextual, it consists of dozens of text chunks (ca. 100 in all) connected to each other with links (some 350 of them), which offer the reader various paths to navigate her way through the work. It is a pure link and node hypertext - the nodes themselves and the links are all static, the links are all visible and indicated using the standard WWW formatting, and, all the links are determined (clicking a certain link takes the reader always to the same target page).

The so-called (auto)biographical pact dictates that in biographical narration the events are recounted honestly -- of course, the capabilities of human memory set limits to truthfulness of the facts told, and also, there are certain things which may be omitted, but still, there should be no intentional forgeries, and definitely no lies, there.

Even if it is a question of fiction, as with *These Waves*, if it uses the autobiographical form, the readers suppose that the narration is truthful *in the fictional world*. But the narrator deliberately makes this assumption questionable. At one point she teases the audience by asking herself, if things really happened the way she tells them.

> The desire to write is the desire to fool you, seduce you. Here I am - again - always getting the girl, saying the right thing or (toss this in for effect) something deliciously, winsomely wrong. Look over there - that's me, at four... (desire_to_write)

> I write, but it doesn't need to be my life, exactly. It lets me fill in the parts I forget. One name. One moment. A hand on my thigh that reminds me of all the other hands. Of yours. (hand_on_my_thigh. htm)

The narrator asks if it is believable that she really was that successful in her courting with other girls. Wouldn't it rather be that she tells *how she hopes things would have been*? Thus we as readers have to decide, if we want to read the story as realistic narration, where the things mainly have happened the way they are told, or if we treat the set of small stories as figment of the narrator who is just making it all up as she goes. This is a class-room example of unreliable narration, as it forces us to ponder about the reliability of text we read.

It is quite common these days to subscribe to some sort of constructivist perspective on life writing; one's life story is always, to some extent, constructed in the act of writing. Raymond Federman, an author who has used (and misused!) autobiographical form and written extensively about it, takes more radical approach, however. Referring to Ferdinand Celine, he claims that "one's life is something one invents afterwards". It is not only a question of "filling in the parts I forget", but conjuring up a whole life, an act so creative by nature, that there is no use for the distinction between autobiography and fiction. As readers we get to ponder about the nature of remembering, of telling stories about one's life; how does it change our reception of a story if we believe it is about the author's own life, or does it really matter? One of the genuine accomplishments of Fisher's work is to bring forth these questions in a tangible, and still discreet, way.

What is more relevant for our discussion here, though, is the way how this whole thematic is buried deep in the hypertextual structure of the work.

It is quite possible that the reader never faces the question about the reliability of the narrator, and in fact, it really requires quite a lot of patience to ever find the two nodes explicitly posing the question. If one goes through the labors of systemically charting the hypertextual structure of These Waves, one quickly sees that the network of nodes and links pretty well follow the basic principles of non-directional network – there are certain nodes which are multiply linked to other nodes ("Mr_Andersen", and "Vanessa", for example, both have more than ten links leading out from them), the majority of the nodes have much less, but still several links leading to and from them, and then there are some nodes with only one link leading to them.

Both "the_desire_to_write", and "hand_on_my_thigh" belong to those almost isolated nodes. When reading These Waves, one is frequently finding herself faced with "Vanessa", wants she that or not, but it requires the reader to stumble to the one link out of "Butterfly", in order to visit "desire_to_write" even once. Here we are facing a situation whole different compared to reading traditional print fiction where are pages and paragraphs are similarly available.

In print fiction, the underlying assumption is, that a story is read in a linear manner from start to finish, and everything in between. In hypertext fiction this assumption does not hold. The whole idea of hypertext is, that there is no linear text, but a set of interconnected text chunks. Thus, it is problematic if there really are such things as a beginning and end, but also, it is quite seldom the case, that the reader really reads all of the text contained in the work (in many works it is actually impossible to read all of the text, as some text chunks may be made mutually exclusive, reading one makes the other unavailable). This means that there may be readings, where this teasing about the reliability of the narrator does not figure at all. This, in its turn, takes us to the concept of dramatic irony, to a situation where a part of the audience is totally ignorant of something (the doubts the narrator casts on her own reliability) and reads the narration at face value, and another part of the audience does notice this modifier, and simultaneously gets a richer understanding of the text and of the narrator, but also gets the extra pleasure of knowing that there are also ignorant fellow readers who never did get it.

In print fiction dramatic irony mostly depends on sophisticated techniques, where foreign languages, complicate reasonings, references to other works of art etc. make the division of the readership to those getting the joke, and to those not getting it (Vladimir Nabokov being one of the masters of this practice). While all these techniques, naturally, are available also to a hyperfiction author, she may additionally use the hypertextual strategy, hiding something in the hypertextual structure of the work. It may happen quite simply as here (a text node with only one link leading to it), so that only a superficial reader is left out of the revelation (and even she can accidentally get to the crucial text fragment), or in a more complex manner, where, for example, a certain set of text fragments has to be read in certain order to get there (as in Michael Joyce's *Afternoon*).

This quite clearly demonstrates how the hypertextual structure (how the nodes of a work are interconnected with links) may be used as a device for a narrative trope like dramatic irony. Hypertextual structure and narrative structure, however, are two separate levels of hypernarrative, and the former is the basis for the narration, and sets certain limits to it; it does not, however, determine the narration in any way. Thus, in order to analyze a hypertextual fiction, the analysis of the hypertextual structure is necessary (in order to understand how it works), but it is not enough, as the narrative components in the work cannot be reduced to the hypertextual infrastructure.

5. The Impermanence Agent and Critical Technical Practices

The Impermanence Agent by Noah Wardrip-Fruin et al. is a very interesting piece of digital literature, which highlights several important aspects of cybertextual writing. Described very shortly, *The Agent* is a combination of a narrative text with illustrations and an agent-programme monitoring the WWW traffic of the machine where the piece is run. The narrative is a biography, the memoirs of Wardrip-Fruin's grandmother written down by himself and illustrated with pictures taken from the family album. This memoir is shown in a small window supposed to be open on top of a web browser and possibly other running applications. The text is proceeding automatically in a quiet pace, new 'pages' appearing after a set interval. While the programme is running and the text proceeding, the agent-programme is continuously scanning the WWW traffic of the computer. According to a certain procedure, the programme selects some of the web pages the reader/user has recently visited, cuts parts of those pages (fragments of either text or images) and pastes these fragments on the memoir text. Thus, the longer *The Agent* has run, more and more of the original memoir is replaced by materials borrowed from the web pages visited by the reader. At some point, then, all of the original materials appear erased, a collage of borrowed web materials having taken their place.

We may observe here some quite obvious intentions. First, there is the issue of memories, how they are gradually fading away, more recent impressions taking their place. Also, we can see a juxtaposition of two

representational logics, the narrative story giving way to 'sampling', or cutting and pasting, as a dominant mode of digital media communication. And further still, there are the traditional photographs which refer to a certain reality, serving to witness the once-existence of certain persons and events (Roland Barthes has finely discussed this in his *Camera Lucida*, 1981) contrasted with the pixelated digital images, often totally without a referent in the physical world. *The Impermanence Agent*, then, may not be the current world's *Remembrance of Things Past*, but rather the opposite, a demonstration of how the world gone by is quickly being replaced by new cultural formations.

There is another dimension to the work, however, about which its authors have written extensively in an article (Wardrip-Fruin et al ""The Impermanence Agent. Project and Context"), where they take up the notion of critical technical practices (CTP), a design principle advocated especially by a Swedish designer movement. In CTP it is taken as a central task to make the users of a certain technology aware of the technology itself. *The Agent* is employing the CTP approach in at least two ways. First, it makes the reader/user aware of her Web browsing routines. It is quite common that much of our daily web browsing is routine-driven, almost unconscious; we are visiting certain news sites and such without paying too much attention to them, not really registering what we are seeing, unless we encounter something specifically interesting. But when *The Agent* cuts fragments out of these pages, and pastes them in a new context, on top of its own original materials, we may pay attention to them in a new way – we may start pondering, for example, where is that fragment really coming from, from what page is it taken from, to what topic it is really connected. Thus, it may make us more conscious of our own web browsing habits and so, in a sense, aware of our own unfolding 'biographies' and the materials by which our memories are being constantly replaced.

The very functioning of the agent-programme, on the other hand, is apt to show us that the monitoring of our web browsing is technically possible and, actually, quite simple. This is something most of us know, in principle, but it is very easy to forget in practice, or at least to comfort ourselves with the notion that nobody would care to spend all the energy required to monitor us, out of all the millions of web users. Experiencing *The Agent* forces us to face the fact that, whatever we do in the Web, we always leave traces of our actions in various servers and caches and it doesn't take more than a relatively simple agent-programme to monitor and filter that data. Here it is used for artistic purposes, just visible to ourselves, but it should help us to recognise the control potential inherent in networked media.

Furthermore, *The Agent* is also connected with the tradition of Dadaistic, surrealistic and other avant-garde art procedures. This cybertext may be seen as a kind of automatic writing, a kind of semi-automatised 'exquisite corpse', a technological collage, or even as a variation of procedural text production along the lines of the Oulipian strategies, or a descendant of the earlier computer-based story and poem generators (such as the Racter by William Chamberlain). Finally, we may see it, following N. Katherine Hayles (1999), as an instantiation of post-human condition, literary production and meaning-making in a complex of human and technological agents. The final product is not the work of Wardrip-Fruin et al., nor of the user/reader, nor of the agent-programme, but of the combined efforts of all of them, with the addition of the unknown authors, designers and illustrators of websites from which fragments have been cut, and even further, of all the technologies required to make the WWW tick. In Deleuzian terms, the author of this work should be seen as an *assemblage* of several actors, some of them human, some technological.

6. *The Google Poem Generator*

The Google Poem generator by Finnish poet, translator, editor, publisher etc. Leevi Lehto is, at first glance, like any poetry generator. It has a set of lyrical forms you can choose from (for example, a couplet), and then you can type in a "seed", a word or phrase. The generator then employs Google search engine, and according to its own algorithm, constructs a poem in the requested form, based on the search results. Here are some examples:

> Stockard Channing puts on six different accents and sticks candles on your
> head
> You're forced to gild kumquats

Transforming culture in the digital age

and bay leaves and string
them on a wire
...beats anything I've come up with myself recently.
Posted by Sonny Jim at 4:33 PM on August 20, 2004

of years of people who have promised
9,041. Time: 19:37. Zone: Heightened
unworkable devices analyzed to expose
Green and Ugly Trouble in Paradise
over time, and mass. The staff
Motion - An Ancient Mystery
machine). This is a very short notice
of an isolated mechanical device
Motion is an internet-only radio show
and the Perpetual Motion Roadshow
motion machines has long been
Heightened Reality. Meanwhile, on
motion machine). This is a very short
and clubs stage sports words art
of people who have promised free
logged in you would be able to see
Speeding Through the Night. Click
to achieve perpetual motion date back
of years of people who have promised
9,041. Time: 19:37. Zone: Heightened
posted by SteelyDuran at 6:26 AM on August 20, 2004

What is interesting here, as I see it, is the way how Google Poem Generator harnessed the grand total of the WWW as its source material. The generator is not limited by the materials pre-loaded in it by the author, but the ever changing and expanding contents of the online communication channels bring it fresh materials each moment.

David Wall was the first to write about the WWW as a cyborg author, and I'd see the *Google Poem Generator* as an excellent instantiation of that idea. Even though the algorithm of the generator stays the same, it avoids the common problem of text generators, repetitiveness of forms and contents. They tend to be too predictable to be aesthetically pleasing. Predictability is a direct consequence of their predetermined functioning, where everything is fixed in advance (even though the amount of possible outcomes may be huge). In comparison, we could claim that the *Google Poem Generator* has an unconscious, or preconcious, provided by the global, collective data stream of the Internet. True to the spirit of the cyborg author, the WWW itself takes part in the creative process. The interest here lies wholly somewhere else than the hyper-textual of cybertextual structures and processes, it is the emergent meaning arising from the phenomenon of the 'noosphere' in Teilhard de Chardin's terms, or, "the Earth clothing itself with brain". Of course, the *Google Poem Generator* itself is rather a banal work, but its implicatiosn are huge. It winks to the direction of the creative potential of the emergent forms of social and semantic web.

7. The cognitive discrepancy

Adalaide Morris has made an important claim: 'what we do and see does not match the inscriptional or representational conventions through which we think'. That is, we are dealing with the new digital technology in our daily lives, especially in communications and media use, and that is what we 'do and see'. On a practical level, then, the new media technology is with us in a very fundamental sense. At the same time, however, our conceptual categories and theoretical ways to try and grasp the world, 'the conventions

through which we think', are borrowed from the era preceding the digital age. The best way to try and get in terms with 'what we do' is to turn our attention to the programmed, software based works, which reflect, in their digital form, the everyday experience of the digitalised and mediatised world. Turning our attention to works which do not operate on the premises of 20th Century (or earlier) text oriented theories is required before we can hope to remodel our conventions of thinking so that they will fit with our current experience in the Internet Galaxy.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

The "Open" Ideology of Digital Culture

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With the development of the digital economy, the contradiction between what the productivity of labor makes possible and capitalist property relations which confine all possibilities to the profit motive has never been sharper. In the heightening of this contradiction, capitalism increasingly divides "knowing"—asking *how* things work—from "understanding"—asking *why* they work the way they do—privileging the first over the second. This is because, on the one hand, the complexity of living and working in the digital economy requires the development of knowledges which prepare the labor force with the conceptual skills needed for working in a system of global production and exchange. On the other hand, the growing division of labor serves as the basis for an expansion of the negative knowledge theorized by Marx as "commodity fetishism," in which the social relations between people appear as the social relations between things (*Capital I* 81-94). In this context, what has emerged in the academic institutions of the global North as most effective for capital is a highly sophisticated but local and historically empty discourse that displaces the understanding of social relations and replaces it with a mode of knowing that can maneuver in the global economy without having any need to understand why it works the way it does.

The division between "knowing" and "understanding" is central to emerging theorizations of the "digital text." In the most basic sense, the digital is the binary logic in which all actions are reduced to one of two positions—"on" or "off"—and serves as the language of all computing. In contemporary cultural theory, however, new technologies of reading and writing are taken to mean more than what the digital makes possible in the ways in which information is written, stored, and transmitted. The "digital," in this context, is no longer defined as the difference between "on" and "off," but between as "open" and "closed." As the editors of *The Literary Text in the Digital Age* argue, in the "twilight of the Age of the Printed Book" (ix), "we *are* at the beginning of a time of profound change, one that will forever alter our notions of 'literature'" as "fixed, linear, noninteractive, and, most restrictive of all, essentially confined to a single medium" (ix). In this sense, the ability to "digitalize" the text has become a sign for historical difference—the idea that present is unlike the past and, furthermore, that the complexity of the present makes both itself and the past unreadable. The digitalization of the text does not eliminate the binary, but in declaring the "openness" of culture renders the binary indecipherable and makes this indecipherability the space of pleasure. According to the work of prominent literary and cultural theorists working within digital textual studies, such as N. Katherine Hayles (*Writing Machines*), Avital Ronell (*The Telephone Book*), George P. Landow (*Hypertext 3.0*), Alan Liu (*The Politics of Cool*), and Jerome McGann (*Radiant Textuality*), the cultural "opening" represented by the digital text means nothing less than a fundamental transformation in the very structure of social life, requiring a move from an analytics of "depth" to a post-analytic, post-referential play of "surfaces" that complicates all binary relations, including the relation between writer and reader, past and present, inside and outside, production and consumption.

In literary studies this break has come to be defined as the shift from a culture based around the logic of print to that of a post-print culture of the screen. According to this reading, "print" represents not just the material means by which information is transmitted, but the broader cultural logic that reduces writing to

the recording of reality, and thus a pale copy of the real. In this sense, print is defined as that which seeks to "fix" the play of meaning by situating the objective as the source of meaning and the subjective as the site of passive reflection. As such, the logic of print culture is said to be the effect of the metaphysics of presence spanning the history of Western philosophy from Plato to Hegel in which the text is assumed to be "merely a pure and simple 'copy' of *another* existence, situated in an extra-structural field, the 'real'" (Barthes *Rustle* 138). Print here is understood to signify a stable relation between text and reality in which what is "inside" the text is an unmediated reflection of what exists "outside" of the text. In contrast, the digital text is said to represent a turn away from what Derrida describes in *Paper Machine* as "a certain totality" of the book (5), towards what Peter Lunenfeld outlines in *The Digital Dialectic* as "an era hostile to meta-narratives, a climate that resists the urge to totalize" (xiv). Or, put differently, the digital text is what in the contemporary "resists" conceptualization and exceeds all attempts to finalize the meaning of any narrative. It is understood to be the expression of a culture of surfaces: a culture which is post-historical, post-political, and post-analytical and which can no longer be understood as shaped by any meta-narrative of progress, class struggle, or social transformation that is claimed to take place "outside the text."

It is on these terms that the digital text is said to require a new mode of analysis that, according to the editors of *Digital Media Revisited*, is detached from the "grand narrative of modernity" (Liestol et. al 2). Robert Markely articulates the logic of this argument when he writes, "To historicize and theorize virtual realities…is to enter into a wide-ranging investigation of technology, mathematics, economics, gender politics, and psychology that resists any simple narrative or conceptual closure" (299). Similarly, Mark Poster argues that "the art of network computing brings forth a culture that highlights its future transformation" and "rather than confirming the completeness of the real…insists on the virtuality of the real, its openness to possibility" (*Information Please* 127). In these arguments, the digital text is taken to be the sign of an "open" culture that resists the "closure" of materialist analysis and ideology critique. It is, in short, a culture of tissues, traces, and "ghosts" without any determination.

However, I argue that what is necessary today is a different reading of the digital, one that begins not in terms of the surfaces of digital culture, but, following Marx, "from the contradictions of material life" ("Preface" 21). While theorists such as George P. Landow argue that with the digital text "we must abandon conceptual systems founded on ideas of a center, margin, hierarchy, and linearity, and replace them by ones of multilinearity, nodes, links, and networks" (1) which have "no primary axis of interpretation" and "no center" (56), I argue that the relationship between the emerging digital economy and its cultural representations can only be understood by connecting what is "inside" the digital text with what is "outside" of it. That is to say, what is necessary if we are to understand the relation between the virtuality of digital representations and the actuality of class inequalities is a non-mimetic theory of reflection which approaches cultural developments not simply in terms of their overt forms, but their underlying social logic. It is on this basis that I propose that by employing a cultural theory of non-mimetic reflection we can understand why the argument that culture has become "open" and "post-referential"—that is, not anti-referential, fictional, or illusion, but always plural, renewable, and without any determination—is itself a *reference* to both the possibilities of digital culture and the contradictions that capitalism finds itself in today. Whether culture appears "open" or "closed" is not determined inside the text, but outside it in class struggle over the relations of production. By rendering indecipherable the connection between the economic relations of society and its cultural representations, I argue that the dominant theories of the digital text actually "fix" history rather than open it to the plays of language by reducing the contradictions of reality to a narrative without materiality and thus work to extend the economic relations of exploitation rather than challenge them.

One of the most influential books in cyber-theory on the status of the relation between representation and the referent "after print" is David Jay Bolter's *Writing Space: The Computer, Hypertext, and the History of Writing*. What has made it particularly popular is its adaptation of the postmodern attack on understanding for the digital age. According to Bolter, "The shift from print to the computer does not mean the end of literacy…but the literacy of print" (2). Whereas "in the age of print, it is permanence and fixity that is valued" (55), the digital text differs because, "electronic writing is the first text in which the elements of meaning, of structure, and of visual display are fundamentally unstable" (31). What this means, for Bolter, is that the

text is no longer ever singular, but always already plural. He writes, "An electronic book is a fragmentary and potential text, a series of self-contained units rather than an organic, developing whole" (9). Here, the digital text is understood as marking a break with past structures of referentiality—in which the signifier could be traced, even if contingently, to an outside—into a new moment of "post-referentiality," in which signifiers can never be traced to any stable referent but instead are always already linked to a plurality of possible interpretations without conflict or resolution. The digital text is said to usher in a new mode of representation in which it is no longer an issue of engaging with reality but rather re-figuring reality itself through the play of signification.

The impact of "post-referentiality" on the production of culture is particularly evident for Bolter in the ways in which it has changed the function of the author. He argues that the definition of digital culture is marked specifically by the shift from an "analog" author bound to the age of print to the "digital" author of hypertext. He argues,

> The conceptual space of the printed book is one in which writing is stable, monumental, and controlled exclusively by the author. It is the space defined by perfect printed volumes that exist in thousands of identical copies. The conceptual space of electronic writing, on the other hand, is characterized by fluidity and an interactive relationship between writer and reader. (11)

It is necessary to point out that the concept of the "author," in this context, is not only conceived of as the source of meaning but becomes also a code word for the possibility of causality and for connecting the meaning of a text to a structure of determinacy. Bolter argues, "the traditional view of literature as mimesis (imitation) is also troubled by electronic writing and for the same reason, the active participation of the reader. Because the text changes with each reading, the electronic author cannot simply capture a replica of nature in his or her text and offer that replica to the reader" (155). Instead, "no single definition can triumph at the expense of all others" (238). The idea of tracing the "meaning" of a work back to an author operates in Bolter's account not only as an expression of the mimetic mode of textual interpretation, but also to the possibility of relating a text to *any* "outside." There is no "reliable" reading because there is no possibility of determining what relation exists between reality and representation. The digital text, on these terms, is taken as the becoming of Derrida's famous declaration "there is nothing outside of the text" ("…That Dangerous Supplement…" 158). If there is one concept to define the digital text, he concludes, it is that "there has never been anything behind the text, the process of reading and interpreting has always taken place in front of the text—in the eye and the mind of the reader" (198). The text, in turn, is forever left "open" to endless future reinterpretation and reappropriation in (supposed) contrast to the "closed" readings of the past.

That Bolter's theory of post-referentiality is not just a theory of representation, but a theory of society itself is evident in his proposals for the broader implications of digital textuality. He writes, "just as our culture is moving from the printed book to the computer," there is also "a powerful leveling force is at work in our society" (232), in which, Bolter continues, "The only great hierarchical force left is money, and today the possession of money creates and depends upon no other distinctions…we use money to play at class, at hierarchical organizations that no one now takes seriously" (232). For Bolter, in the digital age the "outside" of society ("class") is defined by the playful possibilities made possible by the increasingly availability of money ("consumption"). On these terms, the idea that the digital text does not position people in any sort of "fixed" relation is based upon the presupposition that it can no longer be said that who we are—what "class" we belong to—is anything other than a fluid and temporary lifestyle defined more by the culture we consume than where we are located in the division of labor. Class, according to this argument, is a differential relationship among consumers—or what Weber calls "life chances" on the market (182)—rather than a structural division between those who sell their lives "piecemeal" to "secure the necessary *means of subsistence*" and those whose wealth comes from the exploitation of this labor (Marx, "Wage Labour" 204-205).

In contrast, the theory of non-mimetic reflection starts from the position that "culture" is shaped by the ways in which the social forces of production have developed. As such, the study of culture is also a study of the ways in which production in society is organized to meet the needs of its members. In *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels establish a framework through which the study of culture can become a material

force for understanding the complexity of the contemporary by connecting the development of culture to the totality of social relations. History, they write, is the dialectical process by which "definite individuals who are productively active in a definite way enter into these definite social and political relations" and these definite social and political relations in turn "are continually evolving out of the life-process of definite individuals" (35). What distinguishes Marx and Engels' analysis from Bolter's is that it seeks to begin the investigation of all social phenomena "not as they may appear in their own or other people's imagination, but as they *actually* are, i.e., as they act, produce materially, and hence as they work under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will" (35-36). This is one of the central tenets of historical materialism and why, I argue, it remains the most effective means of studying digital culture; analysis begins not at the level of how society views itself (at the level of "ideas"), but in the objective way in which social production is organized.

The relationship between ideas and the material conditions in which they emerge is a dialectical one, in which ideas are understood as a reflection of the material conditions. What this means for the study of culture is a mode of analysis which assumes neither the transhistorical and universal referentiality of the humanist theory of culture, nor the "post-referential" slippages proposed in most digital theory, but rather a dialectical theory of culture which seeks to uncover in cultural practices the unseen laws of motion that shape them. In his essay "Art and Objective Reality," Georg Lukács provides a useful example of how the theory of non-mimetic reflection approaches the relationship between culture and reality. Lukács argues, "The artistic correctness of a detail has nothing to do with whether the detail corresponds to any similar detail in reality" (43). In fact, he suggests, "the artistic truth of a detail which corresponds photographically to life is purely accidental, arbitrary and subjective" (43). Instead, Lukács writes, "The detail in a work of art is an accurate reflection of life…when it is the accurate reflection of the total process of objective reality, no matter whether it was observed by the artist in life or created through imagination out of direct or indirect experience" (43). What Lukács is proposing is that the "reality" depicted in a cultural text is determined not by the more-or-less mimetic qualities of the text, but by the extent to which the text has been shaped by the totality of social relations. A picture, for instance, might be a mimetic reproduction of the real, but it tells us nothing about the history of what it depicts. If taken as a substitute for actual conditions, it becomes a one-sided representation that naturalizes the existing. At the same time, the fact that the meaning of what the photograph depicts changes, as Bolter is arguing, also tells us nothing except that throughout history the semiotics of meaning change. Again, what matters, I argue, is an examination of *why* meanings change and, further, that the reasons why such changes take place must be sought in the roots of society; that is, in the relations of production.

From this framework, it is not coincidental that what is now represented as the "newness" of the digital text actually begins to emerge in the 1960s, at a time when the economic structures which had been established to regulate the global economy in the post-WWII period began to conflict with the need for capital to expand globally. The Bretton Woods agreement, which pegged international currency rates to the US dollar so as to stabilize currency rates as the European and Asian producers recovered from the war, no longer made sense in a world in which the economies of Germany and Japan had not only recovered, but began to outpace manufacturing in the United States, while at the same time offering cheaper sources of labor resulting in a higher rate of profit (Brenner 93). The decline in profit rates by 40.9 percent and 29.3 percent in the manufacturing and private business sectors in the United States during the period 1965-1973, combined with the desire of capital to move to areas with more profitable rates of return—marked by fifty-percent faster growth in international investment by the U.S. corporations as opposed to domestic investment in the period 1958-1965 (Brenner 62)—brought Fordist ways of thinking about the organization of production in conflict with what had become materially possible with the advances in labor productivity that had only begun to be realized during the "long boom." What begins to emerge at this time are new ways of thinking about the economy as needing to be more "open" and "flexible" than the "closed" economic structure of Keynesian economics had allowed. The "open society" philosophies of Henri Bergson and Karl Popper, in which it is argued that the "closed" social and philosophical systems that are "collectivist" and place the needs of the group over the needs of the individual (Popper 190) need to give way to "open societies" in which

"individuals are confronted with personal decisions" (Popper 190) and "strive to rise socially, and to take the place of other members" (Popper 190), begins to return to prominence in the form of the monetarist policies of Milton Friedman. At the same time, one sees at the level of cultural theory the beginnings of the postmodern logic in which the contradictions of society become the restrictions between "closed" and "open" readings of the text and the focus is on examining the processes of reading rather than the conclusions of analysis. In other words, capitalism had reached a historical limit that needed to be overcome. It is in this context that theories of "openness" and "fluidity" become useful as ways of making more effective (i.e. profitable) use of technological developments as well as for thinking globally as the economic markets in Europe and Asia rebound.

In the contemporary moment, the theory of the digital text has become the way to make sense of the renewed global expansion that begins to take place in the 1990s, but which first started with the restructuring of capital during the 1970s and 1980s in response to the crisis of overproduction that led to significantly lower rates of profit and economic growth. Once again, the conflict is defined as the end of the "closed" society (the binary "Cold War" world) and the emergence of the new "open" social order ("globalization"). Just as in the theories of the "open society," what underlies this "new" theory, in which the digital becomes text and therefore indecipherable, is the broader assumption that we have entered a fundamentally new moment in history in which concepts such as "class" and "production" can no longer account for the informational realities of digital capitalism because digital capitalism operates on a new economic logic in which knowledge replaces labor, thereby displacing the binary conflict between owners and workers.

In the supposedly "open" society of the post-print, digital culture of global capitalism, what is established through continual representation across all sites of culture—from television, music, the internet and film, to the social structures of education, church, and family—as "open" and "possible" is what Marx calls "commodity fetishism;" namely, those ideas which take as their starting point the logic of capitalist production—that the exploitative relation between capital and labor is really "free" and the basis of all possible future "freedoms"— and represent this as the boundary of all discussion that cannot be crossed. Culture, in this context, takes on the dimensions of class struggle because it is the space in which people become conscious of their class interests in the conflict over the means of production and the organization of society and begin to "fight it out" (Marx, "Preface" 21). For this reason, it is not an "accident" that cultural theory more generally has taken the position advanced by Bolter that digital capitalism represents a fundamentally new social relation in which (to name a few common mantras), "[a]nti-capitalist oscillations have lost their grounding in the once clear opposition between capitalism and socialism" (Hitchcock xii), "new identities and social movements cannot be reduced to class" (Callari and Ruccio 7), and there is "no longer an outside to capital" (Hardt and Negri, *Multitude* 102). What is represented as "open" thinking in refusing to "believe that all forms of power can be explained by capitalist relations" (Grossberg 12) is in actuality the argument that there is no alternative to capitalism, that we must accept the existing property relations, and that the enjoyment of consumption and culture is a "fair" substitute for ending the exploitation that occurs under wage-labor. That such arguments can be represented as evidence of new cultural "openness" or as committed to a critique of existing power relations in any sense of the term would be laughable if not for the fact that capitalism requires such "critiques" in order to constantly eliminate ideological concepts which no longer assist in the organization and accumulation of profit, while continuing to represent an exploitative system as "open," "fair," and "just." True openness is neither a textual effect, nor something that exists spontaneously as a result of new technologies. It is "the *positive* transcendence of *private property* as *human self-estrangement,* and therefore as the real *appropriation* of the *human* essence by and for man" (Marx, *Economic* 296). This is another way of saying that only when the "right" to private property, which capitalism formalizes into law because it is the basic structure of capitalist economic relations, is eliminated and no one has the right to exploit another person can a truly "open society" be developed. If the full potential of new digital technologies are to be realized and not just put to use in the interests of profit, what is necessary is a mode of analysis in which the study of culture is a study of the ways in which our "sense" of the world is not natural but historical and, in a class society, the site of a conflict which has its basis in the relations of private property.

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Digital Poetry and/in the Poetics of the Automatic

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1. Introduction

Automation is one of the key figures of operation in digital technology. It takes place both at the "deeper", programmed functional level of the coded action, as well as at the cultural or perceptual level of computerized action. Respectively, automation is a general mode of operation in the works of contemporary digital poetry. Very often automatized and programmed procedures are used to generate or perform moving or changing text. As we shall see, the rhetorical and conceptual figures of 'machine' and 'automatism' are figures of poetic parlance in the history of literary ideas, especially in the 20th century avant-garde movements. Since then, poetic machines and automata have – obviously – transformed and intensified in the programmable textual media of digital technology.

Later in this article I will examine digital automatics that take place in programmed poetry, by two examples, *Little Mermaid* by Marko Niemi and *Overboard* by John Cayley. Both of them use common operational and structural trait of digital poems: an automatized, real-time manipulation of a source text. Both use encoded algorithm that is the fundamental base of the works' action. Accidentally, these two works share the same thematic facet: the opposition of surface/depth. That particular feature I will treat as subdued or concealed commentary on the material functioning of the works themselves.

I try to ask, how digital poetry relates to the former ideals of (more or less metaphorical) automatized making of poetry. In other words, as well as concentrating in the contemporary literary phenomenon, I am also interested in viewing it from the older tradition of experimental writing, its concepts and ideals. As a by-product I ponder on the (cultural and literary) concept of the 'automatic'.

2. Literary automata – concepts, histories, transformations

What actually is the essential content of the terms 'automation', 'automatic', 'automatized', and 'automaton'? How are they connected to 'machine', and what is the relationship between the concrete and the metaphorical range? What is their linkage to writing and literature?

While 'automaton' generally means self-acting device, the most salient and useful meaning of 'automation' is *externalized mode of production*. Its conceptual connection with *machine* seems also clear: when something is automatic or automatized, some kind of *machine* and / or *technology* (artificial, material, purposeful man-made structure) is posited. Still, we must hasten to add that 'automatic' as a cultural semantic cluster has undeniable metaphorical extensions that seem to contradict the whole core of the concept. As dictionarys tell us, beside such meanings as 'mechanical', 'robotic', and 'self-acting', the term 'automatic' is commonly – and counter-intuitively – thought to carry such implications as 'instinctive', 'natural', 'spontaneous', and 'unconscious'.[1] All of these are essentially human (non-machinic) ways of action. In other

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1   *MOT Collins Compact Thesaurus Dictionary* and *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.

words, we – almost automatically – depict our deepest, the most un-technological psychic layers of human potentiality in terms of machine.

Writing itself, as a skill, action, and matter, has many technological and mechanical traits, as it can not be produced, distributed, nor received without material-technological devices and channels. Clearly, though not being "automatic" as such, writing as action *is* externalized production of language. Like Jacques Derrida (20) pointed out, even "when we write 'by hand' we are not in the time before technology; there is already instrumentality, regular reproduction, mechanical iterability" – all technological conditions of writing

Different literary periods and historical poetics have different relationships to the technological-material dimension of writing. For instance, the Romantic poets' ideals and metaphors for literary creation were radical opposites to machine and technology: interiority, nature, feeling, genius, tradition, organism. Among the movement poetry was determined and understood as anti-technological and anti-material art form. According to Friedrich Kittler, in the Romantic period "other arts were defined by their respective media (stone, color, building material, sound); the medium of poetry, however – language or tone, language as tone, but certainly never language as letters – disappears beneath its content" (Kittler 113). However, it is a curious historical simultaneity that the Romantic poets were contemporaries of the of the term 'automatic', which, in the 18th century, along with the rising mechanized capitalism, started to settle in, basing on the old 'automaton' of the Romanic languages, and mirroring the incipient "industrial nightmare" Europe was confronted with.

When we are perhaps not too bold to assume that the conceptual variants of machine and technology were important to the Romantics by virtue of their opposites – as in absent or negative form – the later avant-garde movements of modernity, however, were more keen on the machinic metaphors of art. For the Futurists the Machine was the key paragon of modern life, which in their manifestos was set to affect the language, vocabulary and typography of Futurist poetry. For the Dadaists, the machine as a concept of creation was self-evidently connected to their anti-human and aleatory aesthetics. For the Surrealists, then, the machinic and mechanistic metaphors, especially the automatic, were central figures of creation, authorship, and poetic action.[2] Their term "automatic writing" (*écriture automatique*) is still today public cultural property and pretty much connected to the Surrealists.

For André Breton (1896–1966), Philippe Soupault (1897–1990) and other Surrealists the term "automatic writing" depicted a method of writing that tried to evade the conscious, aesthetic regulation and antipatory intention on what was being written. The (intriguing, paradoxical, and perhaps impossible?) ideal was to write down the subconscious discourse of the mind *as such*, in a state of flow. However, the term itself was not invented by Breton – it was widely used in the late 19th century, before Breton's birth, especially in the United States. At that time it referred to two kinds of acts of writing: first, and more commonly, to trance-like writing, used in psychological personality tests, or setting down messages from the dead in spiritist or telepathic seances.[3] It was also used also of typewriting, the emergent new technology of writing (Gitelman 186).

It can be discussed, in what way the producing method was or is automatic. However, the target of the automatic writing was to manipulate or bypass the central role of the conscious, intentional, and aesthetically regulatory role of the Author, as well as to find flowing and productive *adjustments* for writing – to make it happen "by itself". This kind of automaton is internal, psychic, and metaphorical. Since the Surrealists, the traditions of experimental writing have plugged into more concrete and *more automatic* automatisms.

The different applications in the tradition of *procedural writing* have applied constraints, rules, methods or patterns to writing, thus bringing forth both *regulation* of expression and *emergence* of signifiers beyond authorial control. These implement figures of the *machinic* by virtue of setting pre-determined conditions or adjustments to the production process of text. The motor of creation and creativity is externalized and mechanized in much less metaphorical sense than in *écriture automatique.*

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2   'Automatic' was not the only one: in both of his manifestos for the Surrealism Breton used metaphors such as spark, fuse, receiver, voltage and short circuit to depict the (ideal) creative surrealist processes.

3   "automatic writing (1883): writing performed without conscious intention and sometimes without awareness as if of telepathic or spiritual origin" (*Webster's Ninth*).

For instance, a contemporary writer to Surrealists, French *excentrique* Raymond Roussel (1877–1933) developed a famous "method", which he used systematically in many of his works to yield weird visions in language. The method (and its variants) was based on the homophonic quality of French language. Roussel generated new verbal phrases from phonetic "translations" of a selected source text. For example, the found sentence "*J'ai du bon tabac dans ma tabatière*" ("I have good tobacco in my pouch") generated the sequence of story elements: "*jade tube onde aubade en mat a basse tierse*" ("jade tube wave morning serenade matte in low third") – which Roussel was then "obliged" to use in the story. German poet Unica Zürn (1916–1970) wrote extensive body of anagram poetry, in which every verse of her poems is a strict anagram of the poems title.[4] Where Roussel's mechanism was in the signifying potentiality of phonetic values, Zürn's was the endless possibilities of letter permutations.

Although this type of restrictions and constraints certainly do not produce text "automatically", they are clearly regulative and productive (while being essentially poetic) mechanisms. Both methods can be seen as phantasmagoric machine that can or must be set up and operated. In both, *language* is the is is the *primus motor* of the poetic event, and it is let to "suggest" bits of language for the writer. At the same time language is malleable and playable material *and* a process *external* to the writer and her verbal imagination.

Unlike these two, many other methods used in the history of experimental writing include *source text* – a text to which some sort of procedure (a series of operations) is applied. In these methods the effect of mechanical or automatic textual event is possibly stronger than in the previous examples. The fashion of the contemporary *search poetry* (using material sought from the Internet on certain search terms and stipulations, and then pasted, modelled and "sculpted") or digital poetry to use and manipulate source texts is by no means a novelty. In brief, such writers as William Burroughs (1914–1997) & Brion Gysin (1916–1986) (the cut-up method) or John Cage (1912–1992) and Jackson Mac Low (1922–2004) (mesostic poetry; "non-intentional" poetry) used existing texts from which they produced new texts either by material re-arrangement (cutting and re-arranging) or selecting words from on certain principles (mesostics).[5]

Since the 1960's the French group OuLiPo (*Ouvroir de littérature potentielle*) has invented dozens of procedures for treating texts, of which the "N+7" (replacing the word by the 7th same word-class word in the dictionary) by Jean Lescure must be the most well-known. It is a genuine source of poetical innovation and unpredicted verbal comedy, as well as it is formally open to endless modifications and expansions.[6] In the line of Oulipian methods to manipulate existing texts, obligatory to mention is also "Mathews's algorithm" developed by Harry Mathews. It is a set of rules that can be used to re-arrange any symbolic material.[7]

Compared to the methods of Roussel and Zürn, it can be argued that the procedural uses of source texts (described above) are a step further in "externalized" poetic generation. Furthermore, the principle is very much alive and widely used in the contemporary digital literary works, where the *process* of transformation between source and target texts is often the poetic core of the work. To be equipped to correspond, as readers and scholars, to the different modes of dynamic and programmed "source textuality" one might benefit from the typology suggested by Markku Eskelinen. It proposes ten variants and their possible values of the relationship between source text and target text.[8]

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4   Anagrammatic works include f.ex. "Hexentexte" and "Anagramme", the latter being readable at http://www.iti.fh-flensburg.de/lang/fun/anagram/unica/ana1.htm.

5   See Burroughs for the cut-up method, Mac Low for mesostics and non-intentional poetry. See McHale for an extensive account on these and other examples of procedural writing.

6   This has been shown recently by the Finnish poet Leevi Lehto by two hysteric texts, "N+1" and "Kirjavuuden puhkinta itsepetoksena", of which the first one is found in nokturno.org.

7   See *OuLiPo Compendium* (183–184).

8   These are: 1. Type of the procedure or operation. 2. Linguistic level of the operation (letter, word, etc.). 3. Visibility of the operation (visible or invisible). 4. Reversibility of the operation (reversible or irreversible). 5. Teleology of the operation (finite or infinite). 6. Ergodics (the reader has a possibility to influence on the relationship, or not). 7. Access to the source text (complete or not). 8. Number of the source texts (one or more). 9. Number of the target texts (one or more). 10. Uniqueness (source and target text can be personalized or not) (Eskelinen 66).

3. Surfacing from the depths – notes on *Little Mermaid* and *Overboard*

I will now discuss briefly two digital poems, which both are essentially based on dynamic, temporal, and programmed (algorithmic) transformation between the source text and the target text.[9]

Little Mermaid[10] by the Finnish poet and editor Marko Niemi can be called programmed poem, that works in temporal, generative, and visual/spatial level. Once the work is opened, it starts to generate a dynamic, un-ending text circulars on a black surface, using only, as the reader might have guessed, the classic tale by H. C. Andersen as the source text. From this corpus the unpredictable combinations of words or word chains are picked by the automatic, coded procedure, resulting in a dynamic, constantly changing poem.

To take advantage of the table suggested by Eskelinen (see note 9), we can describe this poem's type of procedure automatic, code-induced selection of separate words or word chains up to 3 words (linguistic level of operation) from one particular (not unique but static) source text to one particular, constantly changing (unique), target text. The transformation process is invisible, irreversible, and infinite. The latter trait seems the most important component to the work's general "mood". Furthermore, the poem is non- ergodic, and the access to the source text is (practically) complete, since the source code and text can be easily opened. A curious reader only needs to click the right key of her mouse and "View Source".

As the identical names hint, the relationship source text and the target text (the poem) is close and determined. The poem's name is identical to the found text used, and the poem adds no verbal material to the original source text. This relationship invites the reader to see the poem as a constant re-writing of the fairytale whose main theme is about being "human" – made by a programmed automaton. The "senseless" combinations of the source text's vocabulary often seem to produce even counter-ideological commentaries to the humanistic, christian, and sexual undertones of the fairytale.

Overboard[11] by John Cayley, is, according to him, a piece of "literal art" that presents constantly transforming piece of text. "It does this by running a program of simple but carefully designed algorithms which allow letters to be replaced by other letters that are in some way similar to the those of the original text." The source text is an excerpt from governor William Bradford's diary *Of Plymouth Plantation* (1620–1647) shaped as a 4-verse poem. It tells a story of a man that falls overboard, sinks to the stormy sea, but is eventually hauled back to the ship alive. The text is programmed to "fluctuate" in three states, which Cayley terms by watery metaphors: a verse can be either "surfacing" (letters appearing from black space, text transforming towards legibility), "drowning" (transforming away from legibility) or "floating", where "letters alternate according to a simple table" (cf Cayley).

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9   Considering the dynamic nature of the poems, screenshots can not make justice to them. The reader is encouraged to follow the links to check them out.

10   http://www.nokturno.org/marko/haynaku/mermaid.html.

11   http://homepage.mac.com/shadoof/net/in/overboardEng.html. The work has also credited to Giles Perring (sound) and Douglas Cape.
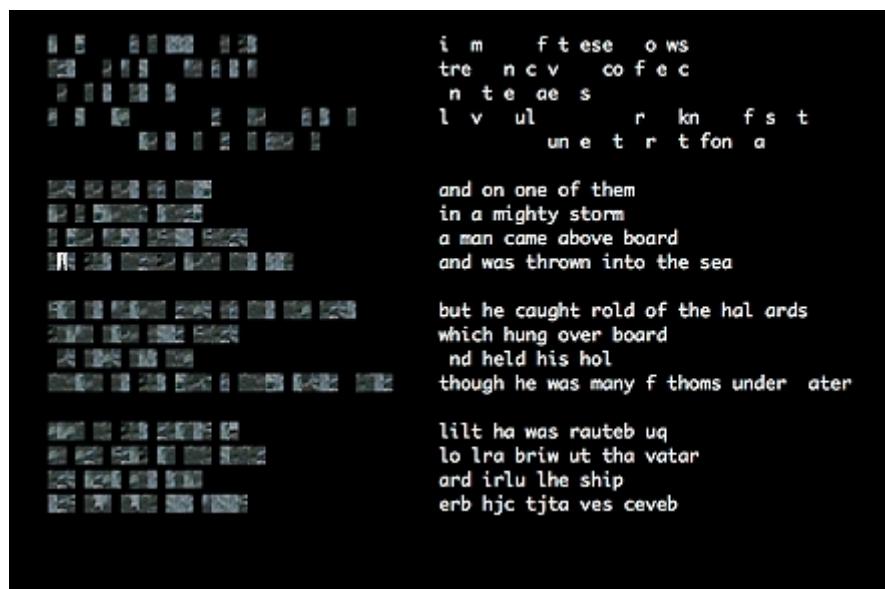
Figure 1. Screenshot taken from Cayley, showing the different states of the text. Verse 1 "sinking", verses 2 and 3 " surfacing", verse 4 "floating".

The relations between the source text and the target text can be described almost similarly to Niemi's works, with following exceptions. Automatic, code-induced procedure modifies the source text, which is basicly visible, albeit under constant transformation in the letter-level. In other words, unlike in *Little Mermaid*, the source and the target texts are visibly on the same textual plane, and the source text moves at intervals from being visible (i.e., legible) to being invisible. The operation then can be called reversible, as the process fluctuates from more legible states to less legible, like ebb and flow.

Both texts harness their automatics to the play of meaning and non-meaning, the gaps and intervals between letters (*Overboard*) or words (*Little Mermaid*). The on-going process of letter-based transformation process of *Overboard* is connected to the question of legibility (Cayley, ch. 2). While *Overboard* goes inside the words, their literal-material bodies, *Mermaid* is about temporal and spatial *dispensing* of the source text, questioning the legibility by making the reader to try and keep up with transient text.

Although the author describes *Overboard* with "sinking" and "surfacing", this "vertical" process of language is central also in *Little Mermaid*. This relationship between the *depth* (the hidden text, the unseen, the potentiality) and the *surface* (the happening text, the seen, the actual combinations) is never exhausted in these encoded poems. The watery metaphor of *source* – "spring, fount" – is also at play in both of these works, channeling the textual action from the source text, textual *source*, "point of origin" and "a generative force".[12]

Both source texts also include the theme of vertical, surface-breaking movement between worlds (between life and death, between humans and non-humans). The figurative and (through the source texts) thematical catalogue of surface, depth, rising, swirling, floating, sinking enacts also in the technological-operational level of the works, entwining the symbolic dimension with the technological and technological with symbolic dimension. Those figures depict the happening of the visual text (sinking into the black waters, into the swirls), as well as the "vertical logic" of the digital, encoded automatisms.

4. Conclusion: non-reducible "chance" and "regulation"

As can be seen from all of our examples, there is a constant opposition pair in the branching tradition of procedural creation. The opposition of chance, arbitrariness or random action on the other hand, and the

12   "source" in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.

controlled, systematic or (pre-)determined operations on the other are usually (more or less latently) present in non-digital and digital modes of poetic programming.

Some methods, like *écriture automatique,* or Burroughs' cut-ups, clearly cherish the idea of chance, at the expense of pre-determined, formal, or systematic elements.

The pair of "chance" and "systematic" action has been opposed also in the theoretical and backgrounding commentaries of OuLiPo. Jacques Roubaud's introductory essay to Oulipian practices states that "Oulipian procedures are as remote as possible from 'automatic writing' and, more generally, from the notion of any kind of literature whose strategic foundation is chance (considered the indispensable auxialiary of freedom)." (Roubaud 41.) Oulipian patterns, constraints, restrictions, and algorithms are strategies to externalize the literary expression from its banal, "internal" adhesions, like inspiration, voice, or freedom. However, it is clear that certain oulipian procedures, like N+7 or Mathews' algorithm, are dependent of the indeterminate, and even in the most strict and systematic restrictions, like lipograms (vowel restrictions) the creative element of the writer can be seen as the indeteminate factor that completes the whole. Poetic pre-determination, rule, or systematic "programming", needs the unsystematic element to activate itself.

Literary automata, then, regardless of their location or the level of concreteness, are amalgams of pre-determination (precepts, directions, rules, algorithms) and the unseen surfacings from the depths and verges of language. This bilateral, non-reducible relationship between "chance" and "regulation" means the essential, inexhaustible potentiality of poetic automata.

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Re: appearing and Disappearing Classics.
Case Study on Poetics of Two Digital Rewritings by a Finnish Poet Marko Niemi

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Marko Niemi is one of the most notable yet rarely noticed contemporary Finnish poets. He writes / creates poems mainly in digital environments. They tend to be quite minimalistic, being usually grounded on a single literary idea or conception. He has also made ergodic poetry and literary applications of classical computer games and plays (e.g. Rubik's cube, The Game of Life). But even though Niemi is a digital poet, not all his works are available online. He has, for example, published a printed collection of concrete poems called *Nurousoppi* (2006). He has also made performances and collaborations combining his field of expertise with those of "traditional" poets, and presented unique works tailored for various events. In addition he is the chief editor in Finnish portal for digital -, video -and experimental poetry (nokturno.org).

In this paper I will focus on Niemi's minimalistic and conceptualistic dimension by reading two of his digital poems. They both use classical text as their subtextual reserve, but in different ways. What unites these poems is that they question the meaningfulness of their word-for-word readings. They do this by suggesting other signifying practices. These practices are my main focus.

1. Contextualizations

The first poem, *Little Mermaid*[1], is based on principles of both aleatoric and cut-up writing techniques. The words used come from fairytale "The Little Mermaid" (1837) by Hans Christian Andersen. Text is arranged in a form of hay(na)ku, on a loop that consists of tree spheres. The text circles outward the spiral (or a whirl) and disappears, as a mermaid disappears in the water and leaves vanishing circles of foam. The text is presented in such a way, that the reader can barely follow it, and if he or she does, the whirl as visual shape becomes somewhat blurred. This makes it impossible to follow both what happens as a whole and what happens at every given moment. This radicalizes the difference between seeing and reading, reading and watching (cf Scholtz 81). I will later suggest few ways of interpreting this division from minimalistic and conceptualistic points of view.

The second text, *Free Afghanistan*[2], is based on a poem "Farewell, Thou Little Nook of Mountain-Ground" (1802)" by William Wordsworth. Niemi's poem is presented in a form that resembles the map of Afghanistan (but in a way that this minimalistic and rough representation has also a strange resemblance with that of United States of America). In the beginning the map is filled with bold capital Ts that stand for terrorists, Talibans, crosses or gallows, for instance. By moving the cursor on the map, the reader can change the Ts into a text that originates from the Wordsworth's poem.

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1   http://www.nokturno.org/marko/haynaku/mermaid.html
2   htt p://www.nokturno.org/marko/nurotus/misc/afghanistan.html (The poem is activated by pressing any key, which for some reason is not mentioned.)

In this re-contextualization, the original poem symbolizes the (ideological / individualistic / romantic / political) ideals that Western countries are trying to implant in Afghanistan.[3] But as time runs, the letters and words change back into T's according programmed patterns based on time, volumes and chance, and are therefore uncontrollable and irrevocable. Hence the poem by Wordsworth, and the nostalgic ideals it represents, fades away little by little. It should be noted, that during the act of any given reading, it is impossible to implant the poem on the map as a whole, or fill the whole map, and so it turns out that the striven idea(l)s are impossible to achieve. And because this is attempted by moving a cursor as a tool for reading, the reader understands also on the level of hand-eye coordination something "significant" about the nature of this impossibility, or, if you will, of otherness. There are also more sophisticated conceptual meanings in this poem, and I will return to them as well.

2. Conceptions out of nonsense

Both poems differ fundamentally from the definitions (e.g. Funkhauser, Watkin 509) that tend to stress the dadaistic tradition of aleatoric intertextual reorganizing in digital poetry. This poetic default is done by referring to Tristan Tzara's "Dada Manifest VIII", in which he makes the famous announcement how a poem can be made without any esthetic or poetic dead wood: "Take a newspaper. // Take a scissor // … // Cut the article. // … // Shake gently / Next take out each cutting one after the other" (Tzara). The result is a completed poem.

There are many cases in the field of digital poetry in which this kind of definition more or less applies, and it is useful to make divisions between different types of aleatoric practices, since they help to understand and appreciate different poetic arrangements or what can be achieved with them. But by iterating dadaistic randomness as chief principle obscures the fact that there are digital poems in which the aleatoric practice is played out. In these cases the very act of choosing a text to be treated is already a sign, a threshold of signification, something to be considered. In short: there are cases in which it is more rewarding and revealing to ask why this or that particular text has been chosen, instead of some anonymous text that the internet is so brimful (cf. flarf or google-poetry).

I argue that these two poems use their subtexts more in a conceptual than in a dadaistic vein. In both of them the relation between digital possibilities (digital poetry as a genre) and subtext is based on ideas that affect the very structure and functioning of these rewritings. I present that this kind of rewriting could be seen as an special case of intertextual practice in which a) the recontextualization is not made in order to reveal new aspects of the subtext at hand, and in which b) the recontextualization is not based solely on dadaistic 'playing with words' but c) to create ways of thinking about poetic signification via original subtexts – and by this to create meanings on particular digital poems.

3. Text as a whole / text as a hole

My other point of view is to question: what is the act of reading, what can understanding be or mean, when confronted with this kind of digital poetry? I suggest that there are other kinds of possibilities for understanding and reading than hermeneutic ones that dominate discussions in literary studies, as dissertation by Markku Eskelinen ("Travels in Cybertextuality") demonstrates.

Discussion based on hermeneutic presumptions tends to see and stress any given text as a whole, something that can be understood or seized. However, in the field of digital literature text may also function as a hole. This is not just wordplay, but a mean to focus on the following: what frames this textual hole should be the whole point of interest. I therefore stress that within the field of digital poetry meaning and understanding are situated on poetic tools, on their functioning, on the act of reading itself. Reader is supposed to have an insight why a digital poem is arranged the way it is. So in a sense I'm reiterating the demands made first by formalists and then by Veronica Forrest-Thomson in her book "Poetic Artifice" (1978). But in the case of digital poetry the question in hand is not so much about mapping or demonstrating how poetry should be

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3   "Farewell, Thou Little Nook of Mountain-Ground" has not Afghanistan as its theme, but has vocabulary (e.g. "mountain-ground", "temple", "saffron") that creates this kind of impressions in Niemi's recontextualization.

read as poetry, but perhaps more of how digital poems function as poems, how come they are still poems instead of something else (e.g. media art). How something that is clearly not language, like visual arrangement, becomes interesting from the view point of language.

My preliminary answer to this question is that I understand poetry as any means to activate or interpolate semantic potentiality of words – or in some cases: reading itself. These means may consist of typical poetic devises (e.g. anaphor, metaphor, paratactic relations), or they may include visual elements or mutations activated by the reader or performed on text according programming, etc. Next I will focus on these frames that affect on meanings more closely via two frames already mentioned, minimalism and conceptualism, and reading these two Niemi's poems as case studies.

4. Minimalism

As poet and theorist Bob Grumman states in his article "MNMLST POETRY: Unacclaimed but Flourishing", "there is more than one kind of minimalist poem". This is probably the truest statement there is, since minimalism is based mainly on singular ideas, ones that exhaust the idea or form in question. You can make a letter "m" with three arcs instead of two just once. And even though Grumman gives some useful categories as points of departure, I am not following them in this paper, and I am most definitely not trying to define this mode of writing comprehensively. But I state that there is one reoccurring tendency that can be isolated for my purpose: minimalistic poem exists without any internal reading instructions.

The above applies because, being as short as a form, there is simply no room to contain any reading instructions (e.g. what themes to follow, what kind of frames of reference is created by its images, how to relate to a certain speaker). Thus minimalistic poem allows – or even demands – multiple ways of reading or playing with its verbal (auditory hints) and visual material. Usually understanding about what the poem speaks of, and insight on how the poem should be read, merge on each other. I would however like to keep form and content separated in this paper. Instead I want to leave open the potential (in)differences between them. The reason is simple: balance between form and content would be very uneven in relation to actual practices, which are formalistic by the very nature of minimalism.

So, in lieu of deep meanings the minimalistic poetry usually creates insights on how language works, how language can work or signify otherwise than in linear fashion, or a fashion that strives for sentences redolent of speech acts. They do this by orienting reading towards its verbo-voco-visual elements or at least the visual materiality (e.g. spatial arrangement) of language. The "lighght" by Aram Saroyan and Richard Kostelanetz's "the rapist" are among the best known examples. In the first one the very material that is not pronounced, the material that is mute, that escapes attention like the 'light' does, becomes enhanced by doubling the 'g' and 'h' letters. In the latter example a small infra-verbal (Grumman) intervention on the materiality of the word 'therapist' proposes a witty meaning.

As the above demonstrates, minimalistic poems can be surprisingly meaningful. However, I think it would be an overstatement to expand the potential of these paradigmatic examples to cover all minimalistic poetry.

Same function is working in Marko Niemi's poems, and the visual features always suggest one or more contexts to alter and create textual meanings. In *Little Mermaid* this context is whirlpool, in *Afganistan* it is a map and ergodic activity to conquer (or colonize) it. The most important and reoccurring idea, or genre feature, that Niemi uses, is the exclusion of any reading instructions. The poems are to be found out from the very beginning, by working out little by little what and how they are.

5. Little Mermaid

I begin my reading by focusing again on the deliberately minimalistic graphic design. As mentioned, *Little Mermaid* is represented in a form of hay(na)ku, one of those forms that are more a way to organize random linguistic material than one with which to create meanings through its tradition and structure (e.g. actual

haiku, in which there is an assumption that reader can deduce time, weather and season from its images).[4] Since the form is in itself void of any meaning, it can be understood as a tool to direct the interpretations from linguistic material to verbo-voco-visual one, to everything there is on the screen, and to everything that happens during each reading.

On the screen is a clockwise whirl, in which textual information is presented in two alternating colors that resemble water. There is a continuous flow of text: text written in one color erases the other, and vice versa, in (approximately) every seven seconds. The statements forming in these "waves" have every possibility to build or brake-up a continuum with preceding and following ones. This continuous flow of textual potential creates an undulating and even slightly hypnotic sentiment. This could be described as constant state of expectation, in which the reader waits 'just one more loop' because of the poems potential for surprising statements.

The whirl's textual material, even though it is aleatoric by its nature, is always readable because of Niemi's programming, like: "I / shall never / flourish more human", "strange / forest in / which she longed", "the / little mermaid / kissed his wedding". Sometimes the combinations are hauntingly beautiful yet ephemeral (7 sec.) – and they may be lost forever if one isn't prepared to memorize or write them down.

So why this particular recontextualization of the classic fairytale? Why this connection with – and dramatization of – time and evanescence on practically every significant level? As one way of answering these questions, I will isolate the following observations on how this kind of poetry works, and how it works through time.

6. Perishable *Little Mermaid*

First of all *Little Mermaid* is an open ended poem. This means that each reading is a session that lasts as long as a reader finds the poem interesting, worth looking and thinking at. And reversely: this means also that the session lasts only if the reader finds it interesting. I would like to underline, that to state this is not to create a tautology, but to express how "session" functions as poetic principle.[5]

Session also foregrounds things usually hidden beneath the mechanisms of linear reading, because since the text does not form any closure its *raison d'être* must be elsewhere. The focus moves from what seems to be happening (three circles forming a whirlpool), what actually happens and becomes noticed if investigated 'with time' (textual whirls use same subtext, since certain words and tropes reoccur) and finally to questions like what else there is to it (why this form, this subtext, this recontextualization).

Chris Funkhauser makes an interesting claim that similar poems, poems that are based on aleatoric organizing of subtexts, are all sessions of the same infinite (particular) poem. In his conception that infinite poem would be the poem to understand and apprehend through different readings, which are seen as means to construct the idea of the missing whole. I think that in many cases that applies. But *Little Mermaid* is slightly different, since every reading remains or can be seen also as a singular one, due to its noteworthy strategy: every reading begins with "far away" or "far out".

These beginnings mean or at least imply that every poem is a singular 'story', as in a phrase "once upon a time". But even in this strategy lies an ambiguity inherent in many poems of this genre. If one happens to start his or her session after the first whirlpool is already gone, or doesn't repeat his or her readings, then he or she is not able to deduce this feature. And in this case the Funkhauser's notion would also apply on *Little Mermaid*.

I continue on this feature, since *Little Mermaid* makes also an interesting case in the field of loop poetry.[6] This poetic form tries to hide or erase its starting point, and does not suggest any beginning or ending. *Little Mermaid* has a clear starting point, but it immediately transfigures into an endless loop. This potentially

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4   In hay(na)ku there is one word in the first line, two words in the second line, and three in the third. In *Little Mermaid* the lines are circles, otherwise the function is exactly the same.

5   The other important feature of the session is connected on minimalistic principles: how interesting and rewarding it is to try to comprehend its mechanics (e.g. what reader can or should do).

6   For more information, cf Strehovec.

noticeable break in time, the beginning, which divides each readings, divides also its relation to time. Linear becomes cyclic. This is important. It directs not so much the reading as the ways of deciphering the conceptual levels that are connected to genre(s).

7. *Free Afghanistan*

I will change the procedure for my second reading. Instead of depicting the most significant formal or genre features, as was case with minimalistic *Little Mermaid*, I start by mapping how the poem works and by suggesting some possible meanings. I do this because *Free Afghanistan* is by its essence a conceptualistic poem, and therefore it creates meanings – instead of the actual act of reading – in various considerations made upon it, and upon reading. Thus the meaning is once again centered on questions like: why these poetic tools, why this particular subtext?

As already mentioned, *Free Afghanistan* uses aleatoric patterns from the poem "Farewell, Thou Little Nook of Mountain-Ground" by Wordsworth. The original form is mutated from stanzas to iconic arrangement. This creates brakes within words, as well as divisions that differ from original line division or that of normal conjugation, thus making it hard but not impossible to read.

There is also another feature that complicates reading. It is performed only by moving a cursor upon the map. When touched the individual T-letters that forms the map reveal the hidden letters from the poem. For example, if "TTTTT" here would be a pattern from this poem, the word 'bound' could be found underneath.

The words however are coherent and readable only for a short period of time: between the moment when the cursor weeps through the T's and reveals the words to the moment when the T's recur. Thus the word 'bound becomes gradually: bouTd, TouTd, TTuTd and so on until the row of T'a has reappeared: "TTTTT".

Because of this textual strategy the instant of reading, the possibility of reading, is very narrow. It is becomes literally linear, and almost mechanic in its linearity. The reader cannot return, check things, or make connections (except by memory) since the text begins to disappear and becoming unreadable the moment after the cursor has swept over it. In this sense the T's can also be seen as a kind of machine insistence that sweeps over human insistence. This is enhanced by selecting *Words*worth as a poet to be recontextualized, since reader is trying to feed words to mechanism he or she cannot control.

8. Conceptual Conclusion

When discussing conceptualism, it is customary to cite "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" (1967) by Sol Lewitt: "In conceptual art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work." This statement applies to these two digital poems. In *Afghanistan* there is not a single straightforward mention, actually not even a clue in the work itself that it uses textual material written by Wordsworth. In order to obtain this information, the reader has to check page source (CTRL + U, "view source", is an important tool while reading digital poetry), and unless he or she happens to know it by heart he has to trace the author by using search engines.[7]

However, the continuation that Lewitt makes that "the execution is a perfunctory affair" is not valid in all cases. At least not in a case of these two poems, where even though the ideas and forms of recontextualition are foregrounded as the basis of signification, the language still performs at least potentially interesting utterances. But after this reservation it is easy to unite with Lewitt. Both poems have certain ideas on linear and cyclical conceptions of time. They dramatize this by using classics, which by the very definition tend to reappear and to be reorganized according changing contexts.

But now, instead of creating an extensive reading on both these poems, I will leave them open: *Little Mermaid* in its endless swirl, *Afghanistan* unconquered. I have two reasons. The first one is lack of space. The second one is intended strategy: to focus attention to different aspects that seem perhaps insignificant or

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7   In the case of *Little Mermaid* the subtext is easier to trace, since the title is almost the same as in the fairytale by H. C. Andersen.

unnoticeable, but actually bring huge amounts of information to any reading when scrutinized. In addition my own research project is based on mapping out how digital reading practices differ from traditional ones. Therefore I do not want to end by making a traditional interpretation. Instead I end this paper by suggesting a list of three principles to be taken account when reading digital poem:

1. The particular ways how digital poetry challenges or questions the conventional aspects of reading bears significance: they interpolate semantic potential of the words.

2. Reading becomes also thinking and deciphering what is the purpose of different verbo-voco-visual materials: this interpolate semantic potential of the acts of reading.

3. If poem uses subtextual sources, it should always be thought very carefully why this particular subtext, instead of presupposing dadaistic principles: this activates inter- and hypertextual potential instead of being satisfied by mere notion of wordplay or nonsense.

Digital poetry is noteworthy not because it is supposedly new and challenging field, but because it has found ways to create meanings through the use of poetic tools that are characteristic to it.

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Cybertextuality Meets Transtextuality

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1. Introduction

The multitude of cybertextual media positions (Aarseth 62–64) implies many changes and challenges for traditional theories of inter- and transtextuality developed in the context of print literature. This paper will focus on certain novel types of relations existing between (and within) digital and ergodic texts and theorises them from a cybertextual perspective.

The paper has five empirical points of departure. First, ever since the emergence of the Internet, texts are no longer necessarily materially separated from each other and readers can seamlessly move between texts and chunks of texts that are mutually linked. Such movements are an obvious part of our everyday digital practice, but this type of relation (or should we say connection) is not recognized by traditional theories of inter- and transtextuality.

Second, traditional theories of intertextuality are fundamentally theories of textual relations that can only be interpreted (and not acted upon in any other way). Competent readers are expected to recognize the co-presence of texts within each other, or the way one text is modelled after another, but beyond recognition and interpretation (in the broad sense of producing meaning, significance and joussance) they can do nothing with the relations they have either found or fabricated. In contrast, ergodic literature (especially text generators and textual instruments) often allows its users to affect, manipulate, and sometimes even create these relations.

Third, as printed signifiers are permanent, any relation between them, be it co-presence, commentary, imitation or transformation, is also permanent (although interpretations of the relations may vary). That does not have to be the case in digital media, where we have a field of (potentially) dynamic inter- and transtextuality instead of the old static one. Print texts are also inescapably intransient, and thus incapable of letting the users witness the real-time processes of textual transformations and replacements - for example from pre-existing source texts to pre-existing target texts (and vice versa) as in John Cayley's *riverIsland.*

Fourth, as print texts are closed volumes they can only quote, allude to, comment, imitate and transform prior texts. However, dynamic textual machines connected to the continuously expanding and routinely updated resources of the Internet such as *The Impermanence Agent* can or could do all this also to the texts published after their own publication date. To a lesser degree this is also true with every text that accepts significant configurative textual input from the reader such as *Eliza* (1966-). Based on these observations we seem to have two major fields of transtextuality: open and closed, the former actively oriented not only to the past but to the future texts as well.

Finally, we should be more careful to specify at which level the relationships (and comparisons) between texts take place. In addition to the level of scriptons, the relationships may also take place between textons and between the kinds of behaviours the compared texts display.

2. The Choice of Theory

Of course not every theory of intertextuality is equally responsive to these shifts, expansions and empirically verifiable details. The main choice is therefore to made between broad and narrow (or general and detailed) definitions of this contested concept.

One of the classic formulations of Kristeva (36) states that a text is "a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text" and within it "several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another". In Kristeva's reformulation of Bakhtin's pet terms of dialogue and ambivalence the dynamic word's horizontal axis (sender/addressee) and vertical axis (text/context) coincide within the textual space resulting in intertextuality: "any text is constructed a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (Kristeva 66).

From this point of view intertextuality is a normal and inescapable condition of all literature and textuality, but one could also be tempted to take one step further to more specific aspects and ask if there are any differences in the processes of construction, quotation, absorption and transformation, and whether it matters if texts quote each other explicitly or hide the relation to be found only by readers competent enough, imitate each other as parodies and pastiches or through other generic and stylistic templates, or can or cannot be enjoyed and understood without knowing their implicit references and models and so on. In short, how much does it matter if the textual mosaic is not permanent and invariable but dynamic and transient varying and supplementing itself with or without the reader's ergodic effort.

Genette's theory of transtextuality (Genette, "Palimpsests", "Paratexts" and "The Architext") provides a detailed overview of several important relations instead of using only one broad umbrella term, intertextuality, for all of them. To Genette ("Palimpsests" 1) the subject of poetics is not the text considered in its singularity, but transtextuality defined as "all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts."

Genette ("Palimpsests" 1) finds five types of transtextual relationships: intertextuality, architextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality and hypertextuality. Architextuality is a purely taxonomic relation consisting of "the entire set of general or transcendent categories – types of discourse, modes of enunciation, literary genres –from which emerges each singular text." ("Palimpsests" 1)

Paratexts are heterogeneous elements that lie on the threshold of the text (such as titles and prefaces) and help to direct and guide the reception of a text by its readers (Genette, "Palimpsests" 3). They carry a pragmatic dimension, bearing and conditioning the text's "impact upon readers", and are thus interesting to us precisely because changes in textual behaviour are bound to affect these pragmatic threshold texts as well. Genette ("Paratexts" 4–5) divides paratexts into epitexts (private and public outside texts that help readers interpret the text) and peritexts (the features literally framing the text). Instructions and users' manuals are the obvious contribution of digital and ergodic texts to the already recognized variety of paratexts, and the more complicated strategies the user has to employ in order to traverse the text, the more meaningful they become. Also any additional information provided by epitexts about possibly hidden or inaccessible dimensions of the textual machine may have a higher status or relevance to the user than a more typical epitext potentially guiding his interpretations.

Metatextuality is "the relationship most often labelled commentary" (Genette, "Palimpsests" 4). There are at least three types of new challenges ergodic texts may present. Firstly, in addition to the usual interpretative skills, the critic needs ergodic skills to use the textual system in an appropriate and successful way, and should perhaps both explain and evaluate his strategy. Secondly, the potentially continuous and never-ending variation and supplementation may well exceed any humanly possible attention span, making the critic's observations and conclusions necessarily provisional. Thirdly, in certain encounters with indeterminate cybertexts, commentaries may turn out to be commentaries on one's own singular experience of ephemeral constellations of signs never to be repeated again or to be seen by any other user, as ergodic works may be very sensitive to the way they are used.

According to Genette's ("Palimpsests" 1) restricted definition, intertextuality is "a relationship of co-presence between two texts or among several texts" including the practices of quotation, allusion and plagiarism. The original definition of hypertextuality Genette ("Palimpsests" 5) is more complicated and provisional:

"any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A (the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not commentary." Later Genette revised this rather negative definition as follows:"a hypertext is a text that derives from another by a formal and/or thematic process of transformation" ("Essays in Aesthetics" 10).

To Genette ("Palimpsests" 2–3), the difference between inter- and hypertextuality is also one of scale: the former is more local and optional taking place in semantic-semiotic microstructures "at the level of a sentence, a fragment, or a short, generally poetic, text", while the latter takes place between "works considered as structural wholes." In his actual study of hypertextuality Genette concentrates mostly on what he calls "the sunnier side of hypertextuality: that in which the shift from hypotext to hypertext is both massive (an entire work B deriving from an entire work A) and more or less officially stated." (Genette , "Palimpsests" 9) This leaves open the darker side with more hidden and less massive relations between hypotexts and hypertexts – in short the meso level between intertextual micro level and hypertextual macro level, within which the relation between the text and its reader is less openly contractual and pertaining to a conscious and organized pragmatics.

The five types of transtextuality are most of all mutually connected and sometimes overlapping aspects of all textuality, and only secondarily potential categories of texts (Genette, "Palimpsests" 9). For our purposes they provide a detailed enough framework of relations and practices against and within which cybertextual relations and possible novelties can be compared and theorised. Given the limitations of space, in what follows we'll limit our observations to changes in inter- and hypertextuality.

3. Examples

1. Usually inter- and hypertextual relations are not directly announced and made explicit in the text; it is mostly left to the reader to discover the relevant relationships. In many ergodic works this situation is reversed. In *Regime Change* (Wardrip-Fruin et al.) the user is presented with two texts that are named (a newspaper article on Saddam's fall in Iraq and the well-known report of the Warren Commission). Only the newspaper article forms the invariable part of the process (and hence serves as a hypotext to be transformed) and with each new session it is accompanied with a different chunk (quote) from the report of the Warren Commission. The main task is not to recognize the connections between the two explicitly named texts but to mix them in interesting ways. Of course, both texts are already part of their own intertextual and generic networks, but these relations are not foregrounded and utilized in any way in *Regime Change*. From the outset the most obvious connection between two texts is thematic: political violence. The two texts to be mixed or played in an interesting ways are also non-fictional, which adds more emphasis and incentive to thematic readings and interpretations, which perhaps provides simpler criteria (and a slightly lower threshold too) for success. In *Regime Change*, as in many other instrumental texts, two or several texts are made co-present in widely varying ways in a process that doesn't have any given termination points – either to an individual session with the text or to the degrees of mastery to be achieved during multiple sessions. This kind of inter- and hypertextuality is both configurative and dynamic; the results of playing obviously vary resulting in different hypertexts quoting the intertext and transforming the hypotext differently every time.

2. Some digital texts such as *The Impermanence Agent* (Wardrip-Fruin et al.) open up another dimension not theorised in the context of printed literature. *The Impermanence Agent* can react to, appropriate and use texts that were not available or didn't exist at the point of its publication. One could say that this is exactly what machines generally do as they are designed to deal also with future objects and processes. The point is not the orientation towards future texts as such, but the nature of this relationship, i.e. that the earlier text will be the active party quoting and incorporating the later ones for its own purposes and by its own idiosyncratic rules. This operational novelty is based on the specific type of textonic dynamics of *The Impermanence Agent*: its ability to supplement itself by outside texts.

In the beginning of a process that lasts approximately one week the user reads the original story of Nana. During the process this fixed text will be gradually replaced so that in the end very little of it will remain. The replacement is based on the material (texts and images) drawn from the user's browsing, but the precise logic of this replacement works in ways that are likely to escape the user even if the user is aware of the

general operational logic of the Agent[1]. Browsing is necessary for the user's progress and the text's gradual replacement, but to view this progress the user needs to employ a peripheral mode of attention (Wardrip-Fruin et al. "The Impermanence Agent. Project and Context" 9): nothing happens to the Agent's text if the reader doesn't browse between his readings. The rhythm between reading and browsing is also left to the user: there are no paratexts suggesting how to fine-tune one's peripheral mode of attention, i.e. how often to take a look at the results.

With this work, two relations are of interest: not only the relation between Wardrip-Fruin's original story to the texts the user browses with or without giving it much thought, but also the relation between the user and the agent. The user is free to visit the sites he wants or needs, but it is the agent who decides what is important in them and how they will affect and be weaved with the fixed original text. Ironically then, it is the human user who does the lower level (semi-intellectual) work serving the Agent's decisions, and not the other way around.

The end results (final texts) of *The Impermanence Agent* are personalized according to the individual preferences and practices (as interpreted by the Agent) of each user. One can imagine two opposing poles of its readership: ignorant readers making no exceptions to their normal browsing routines while the Agent is on their case and experimental readers changing their browsing habits in order to tie the Agent to specific textual fields, modes, and genres or even individual texts, thus maximising their intertextual and hypertextual power that will still be compromised by the Agent's preferences.

3. The Golden Lion (Cayley) has two non-anonymous (i.e. explicitly named) seed texts, *Essay on the Golden Lion* by Fazang (643–712) and Cayley's short original poem *Han-Shan in Indra's Net.* Through a mesostic process the letters of a poem change one by one to the words of the essay (within the limits set by certain procedures of collocation) in a split screen presentation. The letters of the poem are shown in bold face within the words of the essay so it is easy or easier to follow the process. Here we can witness an intermodal transformation process between poetry and essay on the one hand, and the dynamic co-presence of Cayley's seed text within Fazang's essay within *The Golden Lion. The Golden Lion* shows intertextuality as a dynamic process in a way that broadens the possibilities for intertextual co-presence in two ways. First, transformations take place on the level of letters, words and syntagms (accepted collocations) that determine each other in programmable ways that are unnatural in natural languages. Second, *The Golden Lion* both intertextually quotes and hypertextually transforms Fazang's essay in ways that distort its original syntax (and meaning) to a varying degree on the level of textual presentation (scriptons) while it quotes it (the whole hypotext) in full only on the level of textons (hidden from the user who can of course try to consult the original text by other means). There are many other lessons to be learned from Cayley's ingenuity, but for our current purposes these three are enough: the distinction between textonic and scriptonic inter- and hypertextuality, the scale or operating level of transformations and quotes extended to include letters (still visibly able to be combined into words), and the full presence of the hypotext on the textonic level of its hypertext.

4. In John Cayley's *riverIsland* (2008-) fully visible source texts (hypotexts) change into fully visible target texts (hypertexts) through transliteral morphing. Here we have intertextuality and hypertextuality as fully visible two-way processes instead of one fixed and permanent state of co-presence, imitation and transformation. The two interchangeable ends of this process (every text in *riverIsland* can function both as a source text and a target text) consist of 16 horizontal texts (Cayley's poetic adaptations of 16 poems from the 20 quatrains of Wang Wei's *Wang River Sequence*) and 16 vertical texts (different translations of one of the quatrains). Horizontal and vertical texts operated by the reader morph to each other letter by letter choosing the quickest and least resistant way through the alphabet, which means that the longest transformative chain consists of 14 intermediary letters as separate steps in the process. If we take into account only the source and target texts we have 512 (2x16x16) different hypertextual processes the user can launch and observe.

Moreover, the phases of the process wherein the target text is not yet fully arrived and the source text not completely disappeared give us a series of perceptible stages with their intertextual specifications as letter by

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1   That can be obtained from Wardrip-Fruin et al. "The Impermanence Agent. Project and Context".

letter also the co-presences between the two chosen texts change and it is only in the beginning and the end of the process when there's no dynamic co-presence between the two. *riverIsland* quotes its 32 individual inter- and hypotexts in full and unlike *The Golden Lion* doesn't conceal them from the user. Alternatively (if we shift the focus from the letter by letter transformations to the initial and final stages of the process) we could claim that the transformations in *riverIsland* between vertical and horizontal texts are not hypertextual as the supposed hypertexts are not imitations and transformations (in Genette's sense) of the supposed hypotexts.

4. Conclusion

Within traditional scriptonic transtextuality, relationships can be static or dynamic, transient or intransient, and either interpretative or ergodic. To conclude we'll revisit inter- and hypertextuality in more detail as within these relationships the changes are more visible than within the other three types of transtextuality. On many occasion hypertextuality and intertextuality are tightly interwoven: hypotexts are often transformed by quotes from other texts. That's why we discuss inter- and hypertextuality together in the three dimensions mentioned above (dynamics, transience, and ergodics).

Dynamic (scriptonic) inter- and hypertextuality. Static co-presence is the norm in the otherwise conflicting theories of intertextuality, while there are many almost unexplored ways for dynamic co-presence inherent in digital media. Dynamic intertextuality can take place in three relationships:

1) The text's relation to its intertextual network (all the texts it either quotes or alludes to). Dynamic texts can incorporate quotations and allusions from new intertexts. This is what happens in *The Impermanence Agent*, which can quote whatever new site the user may visit and in the process of replacement some older references may vanish.

2) The relation between the text and its particular intertext. If the relation is static, then the intertext is always present exactly the same way in the text. If it is dynamic, then the intertext's co-presence undergoes changes. This is what happens to the quotes from the report of the Warren Commission in *Regime Change*. In principle, dynamic intertextual co-presence between a text and its intertext could undergo both quantitative changes (the area co-habited by the intertext may expand to the point of erasing and taking over the whole text or diminish to the point of vanishing entirely, i.e. the intertext may be quoted or alluded to more or less frequently and extensively) and qualitative changes if the original quotes are replaced by other quotes from the same intertext.

The presence and status of a particular quote or an allusion within the text may change. Overt intertextuality (quotes) may turn into covert (allusions) and vice versa. Also the position of a quote or an allusion in the text's composition may change and be either determinate (if the quote's or allusion's adjacent scriptons are always the same) or indeterminate (if they are not).

Dynamic hypertextuality manifests first of all in the number of hypo- and hypertexts. Traditionally (as the relationship is between "structural wholes") the ratio is 1:1, one hypotext for each individual hypertext. Of course there's no upper limit to how many separate hypertexts could be and have been constructed from one hypotext. Here the point is that several hypertexts and hypotexts can exist within the same text. For example, *riverIsland* contains 32 hypotexts and 32 hypertexts and 512 possible processes between them. In *Book Unbound* there's only one hypotext, but the number of hypertexts generated from it is unlimited.

Transient inter- and hypertextuality. Here the novelty lies in the way inter- and hypertextual processes are presented to the user. Traditionally hypotexts and hypertexts usually exist as separate volumes (although not necessarily as a hypertext can well contain a short hypotext it varies) and they are certainly theorised as if this kind of relation were a norm. In other words we have one static hypotext (as a permanent beginning situation so to speak) and its one static hypertext (one final outcome). Contrary to that doxa, the co-presences between the two chosen texts in *riverIsland* change morph by morph, existing only as transient parts of the transformation process. In *The Golden Lion* Fazang's hypotext changes less frantically, one screen after another, in a one way process. *riverIsland's* two way processes present another presentational variety by turning hypotexts and hypertexts into reversible positions giving the 32 individual parts of the text a double status as both hypo- and hypertexts.

Ergodic inter- and hypertextuality. Ergodic inter- and hypertextuality can be either explorative or configurative. In the explorative case the text is directly connected (linked) to its entire intertext or hypotext that can be explored. The connections can be determined by the links in the text or by the user's browsing activity alone (as in *The Impermanence Agent)*. Explorative forms are not particularly interesting as it is easy to let the user have complete or limited access to the intertexts and hypotexts to be used simply by including them in the text in their entirety.

Configurative inter- and hypertextuality can be further divided into impersonal, variable, and personal forms. Impersonal inter- and hypertextuality present the same texts and processes to every user. Whichever process the user happens to trigger while playing with the texts and the audiovisual streams of *riverIsland* there are no personalized differences or outcomes in them. Variable relations take place in *Regime Change* where they are bound by the given intertext (the report of the Warren Commission) and the given hypotext (the newspaper article) that are the only available source texts (to which the user can't add anything). *Eliza* offers possibilities for unbounded personal relations, as the user's input is not limited by any pre-given text. Following the logic of the cybertextual user functions one could conceptualise also textonic forms of inter- and hypertextuality exemplified by *The Impermanence Agent* and *Book Unbound,* but here we would have to go back to the textonic level of transtextual relations that were already briefly discussed above.

Finally, dynamic transtextual relationships are also related to and intertwined with the text's dynamic intratextuality. Inner variabilities of cybertexts have introduced a dynamic field of intra- or autotextuality, as texts could in principle consist of several more or less autonomous parts and phases quoting, imitating and transforming each other and changing their relations to each other. Under such conditions everything that has so far been theorised to take place only between texts could also happen within texts.

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Metafictionality and Deterritorilization of the Literary in the Hypertexts

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When we face a literary text, both as readers or writers, we also face a universe which not only responds to the individual, but also to a collective sphere. To read or to write a novel is to some extent facing the cultural, it is a hypostasis, both present in the writing and reading in relation to the knowledge of the culture. The new times and the invasion of technology in the modern world requires new procedures of reading and writing, new readers and new writers. This notion of "new" does not mean inventing another meaning, both for reading or writing, but rather adjusting, constructing and knowing that both writing and reading include different areas than those determined by the modern culture and dedicated to the culture which is still imposed by the book. Nonetheless, new views on the literature are appearing since the appearance of the hypermedia and hypertextual spheres. One of the views which is present in the novel (or a hypernovel) of Jaime Alejandro Rodríguez (JAR)[1] "Golpe de Gracia"[2] is one which simultaneously, as a literary and hypermedia project, constructs a network.

In an article presented by the author at the Latin-American Studies Congress in Rio de Janeiro in 2009 (Rodríguez, "¡Qué viva la música!") JAR states that the authors are configured as a network and that collective writing is possible thanks not only to technological means, but also thanks to the fact that post-modern literature assumes a new mode of thinking and constructing the reading and the writing. Such ideas or metaphors defined basing on his statements lead us to a series of questions which are related to the problem of what we write and what we read. Taking into account these boundaries, two central topics will be presented in this study:

1. Decompose the metafictional constructions of the hypertextual literature present in the virtual reality.

2. Study the background changes in the literature: new schemes and media for representing the literary in the hypermedia and hypertextual contexts.

The discursive structures which are currently used in the internet provide a new perspective for the literature and allow for experiments which have not been tried before. Then, there appears an important debate on how is the transmodern concept of the literary constructed and how is this concept transformed totally in the virtual world? Are they the technological forms which function in the network or rather do the narration forms change? Taking into account that the virtuality may be defined as fictionality itself or even further, a meta-metafictionality where everything which is represented flews from its writing dimension and passes to an open dimension on a material which is completely ephimeric, we are trying to establish a relationship between the traditional literature of its concept and the digital literature.

The NET and the virtual reality have promoted innovation formality and creation of new models and narrative structures such as hypernovels which use such techniques and procedures as: the digitalization, the simulation, the interactivity of the 3D images, just to mention a couple of them. In order to accomplish

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1   In some cases the abbreviation of JAR will be used in order to refer to Jaime Alejandro Rodríguez. It is made in order to facilitate the reading.
2   Cf http://www.javeriana.edu.co/golpedegracia/

this task, it was decided to commence the study of a virtual novel "Golpe de Gracia" by Jaime Alejando Rodríguez, which is considered a hypernovel in its hypermedia and hypertextual modes.

"Golpe de Gracia" is a typical example which allows us to comprehend the relationship between the novel, the virtuality, the hypermediality and the hypertextuality (four categories which will are defined further on), taking into account that the mere presentation of the text puts the reader in a complex position which is constructed by the NET. "Golpe de Gracia" is designed, construed and elaborated as a hypermedia novel (a project of Jaime Alejandro Rodríguez and the University Javeriana of Colombia which is defined as an interactive multimedia and is designed exclusively to be executed on an Internet platform), this hypertextual and hypermedia modality allows and requires a user to complete personalized actions with the use of all the resources the novel provides, among them: video games, author-reader simultaneous writing, non-linear writing, synthesized images, virtual realities, role-plays, etc.

> And it is this conjunction between the total (the closing of the work) and the universal (to be applauded) includes strong tensions, painful contradictions which transcend the pure writing exercise and transfer themselves not only to other forms of communication (e.g. mass media where the problem may be even more complex), but also numerous derived cultural forms which have a vocation to be universal, but they are totalizing in a certain way: universal religions, for example, which totalize on the sense, or the philosophy which does the same on the reason, even the literature itself which totalizes on the dialogue and the representation. (Rodríguez, "¡Qué viva la música!" 2)

In such a way, one could ask: Can this type of hypermedia literature be considered a literature, or rather a new genre? The discussion on this subject develops constantly, and nowadays more, as the writers face the use of new narrative opportunities which are provided by the Internet and which were explored in a secret manner before.

The same author explains that his writing started in a "traditional" way with his novel "Gabriella Infinita"[3] in 1994, but the creative project itself drove him to move to other creation zones compared to this of the "simple" writing. JAR sees a necessity of the readers and some elements in his own writing exercise and decides to give it more space to the writing itself. Through the descriptions of the novel backgrounds, the author saw a possibility that these stories and descriptions might be placed in an open space in order to develop the multimedia (videos and written texts). Those elements were a posteriori necessary for the characters like "Gabriella Infinita" which additionally become fundamental in the writing process. From this moment on, JAR understands that: the literature itself may cross with a form of hypertextual and hypermedia expression.

Thus, the following may be emphasized: the JAR's project quits the free plan in the favour of his first hypermedia novel "Gabriella Infinita" (in the CD or Internet version), which allows according to him to boost the narration possibilities (cf Rodríguez, "Gabriella Infinita"). Then, there appears another novel entitled "Golpe de Gracia" and this one offers an opportunity to solve the new narrative needs which are created by the work, however, without having it conceived before as a strictly hypermedia structure. Within "Golpe de Gracia" another work is constructed, entitled "El infierno de Amaury" which also has an unlimited space. One of the most important achievements of the JAR's works is that a literary text can always be seen from at least two points of view, one that is digital and another which belongs to the "traditional literary" world. Every work appears as parallel to the other and they are created in a complementary manner, each of them has a different narrative function, but at the same time, the first one arises by means of the second one and vice versa.

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3   "Gabriella Infinita" is a metaphoric work. Its presence is parallel to an intense and at the same time fickle writing experience. It is born as an artistic work: thanks to an intimate expressive need. However, as soon as it is born, it starts to look recklessly for its form, eager to have a body, as if it were sensing its fragility and contingency. And it ends by understanding that it was destined for the volatility. But this awareness has never been easy to achieve. It suffered first the first phase of its formalization, a whiny negligence by its readers; then, an impossible stubbornness of its author which prevented it to evolve freely. Finally, it had to be subject to the disintegration of its elements. Now, in its third metamorphosis, it is awaiting nervously, as a fifteen-year-old, afraid of her first blind date, a meeting with its reader. "Gabriella Infinita" was the first book, then a hypertext, and now a hypermedia novel. Would it further change?

In contrast to that, "Golpe de gracia" (my second hypermedia novel) was designed from the beginning as a highly interactive and multimedia work. On one hand, it mixes text, illustration, audio, models, animation and programming; on the other, it tries to counteract to the said "interface pragmatics" (too much emphasis on the navigation activity, at the expense of the content acquisition). Golpe de gracia offers to its user four profundization strategies. It's an invitation to participate in an interactive activity further from exploring multimedia resources (playing room). Another opportunity offers the knowledge of the literary from of the story (reading room). The user is also provided with the possibility to contribute to the subject, on the basis on the documentation which was needed in order to develop the story in different stages of its creation. Contrary to what is going on in the literature, where the creative process documentation and the work's sources are hidden or simulated, the digital novel exposes them, in this case, in two senses: 1) submitting it openly for a commentary (studying room: webblog) and 2) offering a possibility of its transformation and collective construction (constructing room: wikibooks) (Rodríguez, "Renovación del ejercicio literario").

The JAR's work's structure presents many fundamental aspects of the post-modern literature, among them:

1. The presentation of a ruined character.

2. The power of this character is dissipated in the context.

3. It includes itself in a popular genre.

4. The hypermedia and hypertextual structure provides a new element for new possible definition of the literature.

5. The text is both a novel and a video game which adopts a strategy game model (e.g. TEG, Strategy technicians in war, detective games); thus, the work is converted into a hybrid, infiltered, polymodel structure inoculated by means of and from other genres.

6. The work is irrigated and rhizomatic (Deleuze and Guattari).

7. It belongs to the tradition of the crime story, the novel and uses their models: Edgar Allan Poe, Agatha Christie, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Short description for the genre theory

Jaime Alejandro Rodríguez constructs in his work a literary body which may be defined as "cross-dressing" and "superimposition of genres" using such genres as black novel, crime story, including elements typical for a light romantic novel included in the newspaper serial, which was also referred to as a "pink novel". In order to do it, uses a wide range of opportunities and connects forms, structures, ideas and elaborates notions which go from elements representative for the high brow culture or escapes into the world of kitsch in its liking for the twee, the simple, the accessible. Also, as he himself mentions in the above mentioned fragment, his work uses modes typical for the network such as: weblog and wikibooks.

Such forms are described by Mikhail Bakhtin by means of all his critical studies on the novel which can be classified according to Javier Huerta Calvo:

1. Two stylistic lines in the European novel.

    a. JAR's novel is, according to Bakhtin, the second line. They transform the language not used in the literature and make it part of it. While all literary language debase what led it to its most everyday form of expression. (…) For the second line style, ennobled language of the novel of chivalry, with its controversial abstraction becomes a participant in the dialogue between various languages. (Bakhtin 385)

2. Statute of the character of the picaresque novel.

b. The characters are outside the normal and natural life. They are part of the adventure novel and the picaresque. They do not have a fixed place and secure. In the novel by Jaime Alejandro Rodríguez: "Golpe de Gracia", the main character is part of a journey through the various levels and worlds. The characters are faced with different situations that arise at multiple levels. These levels are three and are titled as: Exquisite Corpse, line deadly, digital death.

3. The "chronotope" of the "way" in the literature.

c. "Golpe de Gracia": have new narrative procedures. However, are quite consistent with traditional forms and procedures. The hero in literature hypermedia and hypertext is the same as used in the "romance of chivalry" embark on a road where they often develop their adventures.

d. The events that occur in nature are random. In the same way as in medieval literature, the novel hypermedia, travel and travellers are key elements of events. The traveller carries out an operation and conflict in the adventure of his journey.

4. Gender diversity in the novel.

e. In the hypermedia literature develop a series of multiple genres. This is what Bakhtin called an Encyclopaedia of genres.

f. The genera interspersed designed to introduce multiple readings and multiple languages used in the context of an era. Hypermedia literature run different times and languages, through a single medium: the Internet.

g. According to Bakhtin:

In the novel should be represented socioideological all voices of the era, in other words, all languages, even the least important, the novel must be a microcosm of multilingualism. (…) Thus formulated, this requirement is indeed inherent in the idea of the novel that led to the creation and evolution of the main variant of the great modern novel, beginning with Don Quixote. (Bakhtin 223)

5. Parody.

h. Through parody breaks the solemnity used by gender. Hypermedia literature uses the traditional elements of traditional literature, but we can not read them in the same way. Hypermedia literature is parody in itself, since it uses the mechanisms of a perfect way to articulate and deconstruct them.

6. The physical principle.

i. All hypermedia literature is also carnivalesque. The role of the hero in the novel's parodic JAR. The character is subjected to a dreadful series of adventures. Conflict is a kind of used and generated in the same way that a video game.

j. Interspersed with this idea, the author writes another novel: "El infierno de Amaury". Carnival turns from the very moment that the author or authors use many genres and many ways to get writing and rewriting the novel.

Anna Wendorff

In "The Novel, the Game and Knowledge" the creative process and the development of "Golpe de gracia", a hypermedia novel the production of which is submitted to a long process of investigation and practice which is completed with the publication at the beginning of 2006. The relationship between the novel and the game and the results of them – knowledge and didactic possibilities – are highlighted. What is emphasized in this matter in the "Golpe de gracia" is the following scheme:

1. The narration is maintained as an enunciation structure, with a view to tell a story, with a metaphorical (not only anecdotal) goal.

2. The video game is used as a principal interactive strategy: there is a conviction that this strategy guarantees the acquisition of necessary and personalized information.

3. Once the sensibilization (by means of the narration and its metaphorical dimension) and the information appropriation (by means of a video game) are guaranteed, the user is enabled to participate in a debate (a blog) or even in the text construction (wikis) which is provided by the hypermedia.

"Golpe de Gracia" is not a literature in its traditional meaning; JAR is considering it as a collective project where everyone may be operating from the inside and from the outside of thought and the work. Maybe this literature may be defined in the same ways as it has been done by the modernity, understood so it would be called "an extinct species", at least in its form, its casing. The discourse levels are metatextual, metadiscursive. JAR appears to use not only operative literary forms, but also other spaces and textualities. For example, he uses the tag language, like the XML or the HTML. It is a combination of electronic elements, graphic design, programming, videos. In those areas, there appears another text and another novel which may be hidden from the reader, but which at the same time is a part of the text without which it would not function. It is a palimpsest itself. Because of this, the analysis level and the text discursive level impose other functions, in this case, they are: hypermedia literature, literature and hypertextuality.

What is called hypermedia literature is the one which uses audio, image, text as a narrative and structural materials, not a piece of paper and a printed medium (ink), but a digital medium, a bit, an information unit which in its most pure and basic form is only represented by the binary code of "0" and "1".

Another formula: literature and hypertextuality may be defined in a following manner: taking into account that in this complex system, the hypertextuality is a fundamental element of the hypermedia functioning and which affects strongly the text. The hypertextual is a foundation element in the context of the hypermedia.

The literature opens a new knowledge area, for example in the novels like "Golpe de Gracia" it sentences the end of the author's power over the work as an authority, from now on, a new distinct perspective on the literature is announced.

Maybe it is the end of the book as an object representative for the modern culture, but it is not the end of the reading or of the literature, now open to new and different production forms and new descriptive elements included therein. Therefore, a dream by Roland Barthes defined in the "S/Z" is made true, he implied some kind or form of a reader-author which undertakes the identities not only proper for one or another, but those which come from the imagination itself.

In this way, it may be concluded that a hypermedia work is entropic; in other works, it is characterized by the dispersion level of the elements of a given work or its extent of uncertainty in the totality of the messages which it brings. Thus, it is metafictional, only existing in the imaginative areas, it does not adopt any realistic point of view, and consequently, the descriptive levels are constantly displaced.

Therefore, one may be ask how a post-modern novel may be defined. First of all, it would be inconsistence in the very definition of the post-modernity to define a concept of a post-modern novel. Still, at least some characteristics or hints might be determined which usually appear in these discursive forms:

1. The text behaves in an entropic manner.

2. It uses parody and irony forms in the literature.

3. The definition of the genre escapes, it is marginal, undefined.

4. They are hybrid genres.

The status: "postmodern novel" in this case is not a simple classification which is a result of the very dispersion of the text. The text which is entropic, but at the same time its structure is rhizomatic, which not necessarily makes it a "post-modern" text. This really is related to its structural side; however, if we take into account the story and the form as they are combined in the narrative blocks, they show a sign of "an essay" or "a narrative exercise" which becomes entropic, disperse, hybrid, metatextual and metafictional at the same time; moreover, its original author is unknown, if the work is possible to be written "collaboratively", in which everyone can take part in, in which the author loses his "authority", thus, such a work may be defined as or "classified" as a post-modern novel. And that is exactly the way in which "Golpe de Gracia" is functioning, in this way it would be a post-modern novel, it would be the only form possible to attach to this work. A question appears if it is still literature, as the full combination of many forms and elements prevents us from defining a concrete idea on experiencing the literature or a genre. This discourse is called "reducing to the absurd"[4] in the propositional logic.

> The famous genealogical study by Kristeva (1974) makes a novel a recipient of the scholastic tradition, especially of what is referred to as the fetishization of the "book" object, the authoritary tradition of the author's word and his belief in the representation, in other words, the belief in a word as a sign. On the other hand and in a discovering manner, Kristeva connects the "horizontality" of the novelistic discourse (its need to be in touch with the present, the everyday, the secular before contacting the sacred) with the consolidation of the market economy and the pre-eminence of the goods which are introduced by the burgesy in the relationships of the production, commercialization and consuming. (Rodríguez, "El horizonte posmoderno de la cultura de masas")

In the digital literature, this concept comes from the modern thinking and the construction of a book, not only as a medium for a literary text, but as an object centralizing the culture, subordinated to a new point of view, not taking into account the object's space, but the literature itself. This is constituted by the loss of power which the object used to hold (included in an object culture) and which the author hold (enframed in the authority culture) on the knowledge dimension. All in all: the power of the word is the power of knowledge.

The orientation of the JAR's literature is not extreme, it is rather a basically literary condition in the relationship with the knowledge and indirectly with the power exercised by the literature as an authority structure, deconstructed now by means of new media used for writing thereof. The announcement made by Kristeva seems devastating in the context of traditional forms of the literature as an evanescence of the contemporaneity. In terms of a complexity, according to Edgar Morin, it may be defined as: a literature for the knowledge, and not knowledge for the literature. The ultimate goal of this knowledge of the literature is the man itself; it is a culture more oriented towards the humanity. Thus, the digital universe provides an important element in order to take charge of other aspects which show the literature as a power.

However, it is important to underline that this power destruction formula in the literature (perceiving the literature from the modern point of view as a fetish) is also a cultural insult from the very moment when the digital becomes a literature itself. Thus, appears a question: What it the object and the literary procedure which is used by JAR in his work? It is exactly what is included in the concept of the literature, but exercises supremacy in front of it: the digital. This is how the idea of McLuhan is exposed: "The message is the medium".

In the post-modern novel, and especially, in the "Golpe de Gracia" the literature is destroyed, the story (anecdote, plot) is not and it does not become fundamental, it is the universe that is shining before it, the form of a video game, hypertextual and hypermedia elements which are included in it. A post-modern

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4   Reducing to the absurd (from Latin *ad absurdum*) is a demonstration method (formalized and used frequently by Aristotle as a logic argument) is one in which a hypothesis is conceived and an absurd result is obtained, due to which we can conclude that the initial hypothesis was false. This method is also known as a trial for the contradiction or an ad absurdum trial. Its basis is the completion of the intermedial exclusion law: an affirmation cannot be false, it has to be consequently true.

Anna Wendorff

novel assumes thus an absolute and total destruction of any schemes, objects, tools and procedures of a traditional novel.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

The Public Sphere of Poetry and the Art of Publishing

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1. Introduction

The concept of publishing is changing because of the web, A public text in the social web has primarily a social, not economic function. The first web blog server, *Blogger,* which was launched in the 90s, had an advertising slogan "Everyone can publish". Later it became clear that web logs need also a social network before bloggers' texts become actually public. The concept of the public sphere can explain this kind of publicity between people.

In this article my purpose is to look into how publishing has become also an art. Because of the web, the publishing of poetry is something else than the conventional process lead by a publishing house. This is possible because there is some kind of a public sphere for web poetry. I will study the effect of the public sphere of Finnish experimental poetry during 2005 –09[1] in the poetry of Karri Kokko. His poetry has been published in print and in webblogs, and also as visual poetry and audio works - all these get their publicity mostly in the same public sphere. Thus it is possible to consider how this sphere is also an open space to play with the possibilities of publishing.

The studies of social sphere of the web are dominated by theories of community and communication (cf. Jones). Art is not only communication, it is also a way to appear and a way to give something to wonder. Hannah Arendt's (1961) philosophical concept of the public sphere (*Öffentlichkeit*)[2] has these two sides, communication and appearing, and through it I will study how verbal art appears as public.

2. The public sphere, the social form of publicity

The "publicity" in everyday language has a meaning that refers to mass media. In attention economy, sensations and advertising, publicity is something given and above the common people. The term publicity, publicité, derives from the word *populus* (lat.) group of people.[3] Publicity is seen as a social organization instead of something given by the media. This pre-modern concept of the public sphere as something between people can also be applied to social web. Networks are often viewed only as communal places, but they can also be considered as public spheres. They are something else than mass publicity, because they are decentralized and communal. Blogosphere is a term that describes the public sphere between bloggers, who

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1   In the public sphere of Finnish experimental poetry the main forums are two publishing houses *ntamo* and *poEsia,* poetry magazine *Tuli&Savu*, web portal for experimental poetry *Nokturno.org*, and the networks in Facebook and webblogs.

2   The concept of public sphere is attributed to Habermas, but he has assumed the term from Arendt (Jürgen Habermas. *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft.* 1962). In translations of Arendt's texts, the term is "public realm", but Arendt scholars prefer the term "public sphere" (cf. Benhabib, d'Entreáves, Villa).

3   http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=publicity

read and write in the same network.[4] So, publicity in the social web is, according the word *populus,* a sphere between people. But this sphere consists not only of communication, it is also a sphere of appearance.

According to Hannah Arendt publicity has two meanings: it refers to the space of appearance and to the world of communication. This phenomenological emphasis on appearance is an important part of publicity, especially when we are discussing art. Art can appear so that its way of being is extraordinary and not too communicative. Arendt states that everything that appears in common space also gets some power within it:

> Compared with the reality which comes from being seen and heard, even the greatest forces of intimate life—the passions of the heart, the thoughts of the mind, the delights of the senses—lead to an uncertain, shadowy kind of existence unless and until they are transformed, deprivatized and deindividualized, as it were, into a shape to fit them for public appearance (Arendt, "The Human Condition" 50).

For Arendt, art is one way this transformation to public happens. This is important, when we are trying to figure how art functions in a public sphere. According to Arendt, transformation to public is the key to understanding what happens, when publishing itself becomes art. Even though she has not theorized about aesthetics, she has speculated the art's way of becoming public. Her theory of publicity is also useful when considering the social web.

The public sphere of Finnish experimental poetry is at the margins of the literary institution, but it is active in the social web. The structure of this publicity of poetry is quite different from the hierarchy of mass media. The publicity in the social web of poetry consists of networks, and publicity is organized between people. But the concept of network is not enough, because the appearance of the poem is also part of the same publicity. With Arendt´s theory we have the possibility of considering both appearance and communication in the public sphere.

Arendt´s theory of the public sphere has a fundamental tension between expressive appearance and communicative models of publicity. Her emphasis on expressiveness has been criticized for nostalgic sympathy for face-to-face community (Benhabib 172). The concept of the public sphere can explain how in the social web, there can be authentic publicity that differs from mass publicity and proto-publicity.

Arendt´s concept of appearance is relevant in theorizing the way how art functions in the public sphere: art appears more than communicates. Poetry does not use mutual language to communicate, and when poetry communicates, this happens in connection to wonder.

The concept of the public sphere helps us to understand how publicity is functioning in the social web between proto-publicity and mass publicity. Communication of a group can be called proto-public when a topic discussed only between members of a group. All communities in the social web do not form public spheres. Communities which are focused only on sharing togetherness, support and values are not public in a strict sense. Only when publicity is a principle of that community, it can be said to form a public sphere (Nowotny 2). In the public sphere of poetry the discussion is mostly supportive and communal, but the principle of publicity is clearly seen in the publishing of poems.

Publicity is not simply a given sphere, a media-made place open to visit, it is also something that happens. Broadcasting channels are not separated instruments of producing publicity, because the public sphere is a place for media to appear. The idea that medium is the message, can be continued by asking for the sphere where this message appears. Publicity is not a neutral space, rather it is a structured sphere formed by powers and intentions (Nowotny 1). Art is not only the object of distribution in the public sphere, because art itself and its power to appear are also parts of the public sphere.

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4   The concept of blogosphere is a version of public sphere. Blogs have revived the idea of the early nineteenth century salons or coffee houses where private concerns were discussed and turned into public issues. The interactivity of blogs has been seen as a rebirth of public sphere (Keren 9).

3. Karri Kokko and the public sphere of poetry

The public sphere is not something given from above, it is formed by communication and appearance. Next I will sketch by some concrete ideas about Karri Kokko´s poetry and blogging, what could be the public sphere of poetry that he is dealing with. Experimental poetry has often been an art of small audiences, but the social web has turned this limitation upside down: writers are also readers of other writers. In 2009, because of the social web, there are more experimental poets than before, even more than in the best days of Finnish avant-garde of the 60s.

Because of the web, the poems are present in this public sphere more than before. When discussions and socializing create often a closed, and not so public community, the principle of giving poems online lies in publicity. They make these kind of communities also public spheres.

In the web spheres of poetry, poems and discussions often belong together. The sharing of information links, or writing reviews, or having discussions of poetry are only the interactive part of the community. This is different compared to mass media. Literature can be the subject of news, reviews or general talk in mass media, but books must be bought in a book store. In social web links provide information, but they also bring the literary work on screen to be read.

Difference between media publicity and the public sphere can be seen in Karri Kokko´s work as a journalist and as a free poet. He has worked as a journalist in the biggest Finnish newspapers and magazines in the 90s. Now he is the editor of the largest literature journal of Finland, *Parnasso.* So he knows quite well the prevailing media publicity and also the literary field.

The change in the public sphere of Finnish poetry is crucial. At the time of Kokko´s first collection of poetry *Uno Boy* (1982) there were more literary reviews of poetry, but reading poetry was a quite private hobby. As Kokko says " I didn´t know then who has read my book. Now I know" (Kokko, Personal interview).

Kokko is an active figure in the scene of Finnish experimental poetry. Kokko participates in this public sphere by publishing his poems and having discussions in the social web. He publishes quite much, and he prefers the English word "relieving" to "publishing", because of its connotations to freedom (Kokko, Personal interview). His poetry collections are available by book on demand, and some of therm can be downloaded freely in pdf-format from his webblog. Kokko has also several webblogs for different poetry projects, and some of these are also published in *Nokturno.org*, the portal of Finnish experimental poetry.

A sign of Kokko´s connections is a linklist in the sidebar of his main blog *Lyhyttavaraliike*[5]: about one hundred poetry bloggers from different parts of the world are listed in it. There is not so much discussion of poetry in his blog. In 2008 *Lyhyttavaraliike* published 496 texts, but only 11 of them were commented on. In this blog he publishes also links to other poets' works. *Lyhyttavaraliike* (which can be roughly translated into "short stuff") is also a place for his poems that don't belong in his longer projects.

Kokko takes part in this public sphere also by documenting meetings with people and publishing the material mostly for these people themselves. These publishing acts can be seen as conceptual art. In the year 2007 Kokko kept a blog of meetings: each day he published names of the people he had met that day. The blog *Ihmisiä, Päiviä, Elämää*[6] was also published as book named *MMVII*[7] *Kokko documented meetings with the people that for instance belonged to his sphere of poets. The act of publishing is ironic in the sense that people can see if their names have been published in it. But this act can also be seen as a way of showing respect to these people. This can be seen as a conceptual art, where the social spheres are named and made public.*

Kokko is active in Facebook and its sphere of poets and writers. Kokko published *Das Leben der Anderen* (2009)[8] where he documented all the *Facebook* status updates of his friends during this year. The statuses are written in Finnish and English. The rhetoric of these expressions is often aphoristic, ironic, laconic - and sometimes there are also poetical lines. This publication is using the material, that the possible readers themselves have written, and it can be seen as a tribute to the lives of his friends. And it also has an ironic function of publishing: people in this network can see what kind of status updates they have been writing.

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5   http://lyhyttavara.blogspot.com/
6   http://vuodenpaivat.blogspot.com/
7   http://ntamo.blogspot.com/2008/01/karri-kokko-mmvii.html
8   http://ntamo.blogspot.com/2010/01/karri-kokko-das-leben-der-anderen.html

Transforming culture in the digital age

When Kokko published his collection of compound words *Avokyyhky ja lattiaheroiini* (2007), two poets started a tribute blog in his honor *Avokyyhkylle*[9]. *So the culture of "tributing" is part of this public sphere.*

4. Virtuosity and instant publishing

The concept of "virtuosity" is an important part of Arendt´s theory of the public sphere. Virtuosity comes from virtue and it refers to the ability to act in the right way in different situations. Her concept of active life is based on virtue and Roman ideal of *vita activa* - living public life as a synonym for human condition (Arendt, "The Human Condition" 12). Her emphasis on public life can be placed against mass publicity and dualism between celebrities and nobody.

Virtuosity is quite important in social web and generally at the margins of hierarchical publicity. When Arendt´s concept of virtuosity has been criticized of elitism (Benhabib) it has been overlooked how the idea of virtuosity can work against hegemony of media publicity. Even if virtuosity is a skillful action in public performance its ground is democratic. Paolo Virno also connects virtuosity to the idea of public action, *vita activa.* The virtuosity of speaking belongs to the rhetorical skills, but the essence of virtuosity is not in the rhetoric according to Virno: the essence is in the pure *praxis* of everyday speaking, and right to speak belongs to everyone (Virno 55).

Virtuosity belongs to the *praxis* according to Aristotele's famous distinction between two skills. Making an object demands skills of *poiesis,* but skillful public action in itself is *praxis.* Public speaking is an event that exists only in front of an audience, it is not produced as an object (Aristotle VI, 1139b).

Arendt speaks of *praxis* as a skillful public action, in theater performances, in rhetorically impressive speaking and virtuosity in general:

> Its meaning is best rendered by "virtuosity", that is an excellence we attribute to the performing arts (as distinguished from the creative arts of making), where the accomplishment lies in the performance itself and not in an end product which outlasts the activity that brought it into existence and becomes independent of it. (Arendt, "What is Freedom" 153)

In her essay "On Freedom" (1961) Arendt´s focus is in the relation between public action and free action. The aspect of freedom comes from performing arts and theatre. She refers to the public sphere as a kind of stage, and says that public action is performative by nature. The virtuosity of performance is for Arendt the most important manifestation of the freedom in public action. (Villa 136.)

The metaphor of theater and stage has been widely used in theories of virtual forums and webblogs, since if one writes online, the text stays in some public place of the web only for a short time. Writing has changed from *poiesis* to *praxis*, it has changed to a performative act in public space (Sandbothe).

Immediate publishing is a crucial part of blogging culture, although it is also possible to publish older texts in a webblog. In the blog writing culture there is a principle of one session: the text is published immediately after the writing process. Usually the text is not complete, there is no time to read the text later and make improvements. At first sight it looks that immediate publishing produces bad texts. But virtuosity is an important element in poetry blogging, when the writer is trying to make good lines and publish them immediately after they are written. (Niemi-Pynttäri 240.)

5. *Varjofinlandia* – sentences of depression

Karri Kokko´s *Varjofinlandia* (2005, shadowfinlandia)[10] operates with depressive sentences that are found in webblogs. Using found texts is important part of experimental poetry. Google poetry and flarf alongside older "cut-up" methods are some of these composition techniques.

The process of composing *Varjofinlandia* can be called *praxis* because every sentence was published at the moment it was found. The process is documented in weblog from Monday 25th April until 14th June and it lasted 52 days.

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9   http://avokyyhkylle.blogspot.com/
10   http://varjofinlandia.blogspot.com/

Kokko said, that he wanted to listen to "the deep moody sound of diary blogs, their background bassline" (Kokko, Personal interview). In 2005, diary blogs were popular in Finland, and in the springtime the feelings of depression had burst open. Kokko worked in real time: he was choosing and publishing lines that had just been published in blogs. He did not follow different lives of people but the flow of texts. He read random webblogs in the order they appeared at *Blogilista.fi*, the Finnish blog portal. First he selected blogs. Then he selected sentences, copied them and published them in his blog (Kokko, Personal interview). The *Varjofinlandia* webblog is a document of this process which includes the dates of publishing moments.

Later on, *Varjofinlandia* was published as a book (poEsia 2005). In the printed form, the signs that refer to documentation are replaced by a new composition: the sentences are arranged in one line to resemble an ongoing stream of melancholy - so the book is quite different than the webblog.

Before analysis of *Varjofinlandia´s* sentences as art of publicity, I shall make a short excursion to the tradition of the sentence in public utterances.

Finding and publishing sentences can show virtuosity also from the point of view of rhetoric. Also in classical rhetoric, the sentences must not be self made. Writers had collections of good sentences that they used in proper situations. Later the new rhetoric no longer used model sentences, and so the verbal space became open for unofficial sentences (Genette 103–126). In the social web, especially in chat, incomplete sentences are used and they can be understood because of the situation.

Poetry that uses quotes gets its rhetorical power from a sentence, or from a fragment of it. A whole sentence is more important in public space than a singular word, that is why rhetoric as art of public speech has concentrated on sentences. In writing, the smallest unit is the letter, in grammar it is the word, but the smallest unit of utterance is a sentence (Ricoeur 72). In Karri Kokko´s poetry there are all these elements, one word poems, letters only and so on. But as I will try to point out, the power of sentence comes to the public sphere in a different way than the power of a word or a letter. The question of how a word or a letter can get its power to appear alone in a public space must be considered elsewhere.

Kokko´s *Varjofinlandia* operates with sentences in which utterances of apathy, depression and anxiety can be found. On the first day, the 25th of April, almost all of the published 24 sentences are short, apathetic utterances. So in the beginning, the strategy was something one could have called "uncreative" in the meaning that the poet Kenneth Goldsmith[11] has given it. Kokko has said that uncreativity has also an important part in his work (Kokko, Personal interview).

In *Varjofinlandia* there are some sentences that have nothing brilliant in them. They are anti-rhetorical utterances of feelings that are usually kept private. They are not as in classical rhetoric: official and powerful expressions with aphoristic quality. They are also quite far away from usual melancholy poetry. The sentences that have no rhetorical figure, can be seen as utterances of powerlessness. As Julia Kristeva (50) says, in deep depression there is a danger of falling outside the language. To have the ability to use language also means that there is a connection to world and life, and power to reveal the world one lives in.

Some of the sentences in *Varjofinlandia* are only apathetic. Some sentences are metonymical: they include the whole situation in them. There can be seen movement between these two kind of sentences, that are copied between 6 seconds in June 12.2005[12]:

> "Tuntuu kuin minut olisi unohdettu tähän tyhjään asuntoon elämään loputonta yksinäistä elämää." ("It feels like I have been forgotten in this empty apartment to live an endless, lonely life") (at 1:39 AM).

> "On väistämättömän sekava olo." ("I feel inevitably disoriented" at 1:33 AM).

These two sentences are quite different. The first has some metonymical power, but the second collapses in itself. The first sentence shows the situation and the apartment that is empty. In a metonymical way, the sentence opens the context: lack of human contacts, feelings of being left alone, and apathetic living in prosperity. The second sentence has no power of showing the situation where it comes from: we know that

11   http://www.english.upenn.edu/Courses/Undergraduate/2006/Fall/ENGL111.301
12   http://varjofinlandia.blogspot.com/2005_06_01_archive.html

there is something, but the world remains closed.

In *Varjofinlandia* the creative moment of language comes from metonymical sentences. When a sentence reveals its context, it also reveals its connection to the world. These sentences don't have to be conscious descriptions of situations, all this can be included by metonymical way in sentences (Panther 386).

Generally in *Varjofinlandia* Kokko has collected and published sentences that do not have rhetorical qualities of public utterances. Even the metonymical sentences are not good, there are often wrong words or clićhes. But by bringing these sentences in the public sphere of poetry, they are suggested to be read as poetry.

Conclusion

The art of publishing can be considered as a free play in public space. In poetry this can be seen when conventions of publishing has changed because of the web. According to Hannah Arendt, transformation to public is the key to understanding what happens, when publishing itself becomes art. In Karri Kokko's *Varjofinlandia*, the copying of pre-public depressive sentences and publishing them, can be seen as transformation where these sentences expresses the politics of melancholy in general.

The public sphere as a social organization has also became a target in Karri Kokko's art of publishing. When he has documented the names of people he has met in one year, or when he published the status updates of his friend in Facebook, the readers can look if they are mentioned. In this way the mirror of publishing has turned at this public sphere itself.

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Solitude in Cyberspace

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Digital literature is usually described with the keywords of increasing collectivism: shared authorship, reader-viewer interaction, their active participation in creating text etc. The current paper examines the opposite phenomenon, solitude, and does it from two aspects: a) the solitude of the creator and b) the solitude of creative work.

The term solitude naturally also refers to the romantic principle of creative work and associates with the aesthetical concepts of art as self-expression or art for art's sake. The current paper disregards this aspect, as well as the emotional and psychological connotations of the word. Solitude is here regarded as a technical term, which shows the share of different agents in a creative process.

1. Solitude and author's responsibility

When writers write their texts they are usually on their own. A text is born in the writer's head and he or she needs some kind of form to present it. Until the form of literature was mostly what was recorded on paper, we could say that the author formalised his text in solitude – writing alone on pieces of paper. Only when handing in the manuscript were other participants in the completion process of the literary work added: editor, designer and printer. Each era has naturally also had authors keen to discuss their incomplete texts with friends, introduce half-completed excerpts to others. Such authors are thus to some extent influenced by others, although this depends on the author's character rather than on the form of the text. If we expand the historical dimension of the problem, two aspects could be added: peculiarities of oral and collective creative work (folklore) and the anonymity of the writer preceding the modernist authorship (cf. Foucault). In his essay "What is an author?" Foucault points out that the author emerges on the threshold of the modern era and it brings about not only his independence as a creator, but also social responsibility. Following this line of thinking, we could claim that precisely the modern author's position (public name) not only glorifies the author as a divine creator, but forces him into solitude together with the work he is creating. Responsibility and the author's name simultaneously denote appreciating personality beside God, but also the creator's burden. Although Barthes's "The Death of the Author", which preceded Foucault's essay, is generally seen as more radical, reducing the author's position in relation to text, the opposite could easily be claimed. It is namely Barthes who tries to liberate the author from the burden of social responsibility, thus reserving him for free creative work. The author lacks control over the fate of his completed text, but he also lacks

responsibility. Foucault, on the other hand, abolishes the author's freedom totally. His idea of the author is an agent who categorises and valuates texts, which are separated from the author as a human being, as well as from the creator who checks the meaning of the text. However, the author's responsibility is still there.

We could thus generally claim that the creative work of the post-printing author of the modern era is born in solitude, and the solitude is an inevitable attendant phenomenon in the emergence of a renaissance creator.

2. Solitude and digital Literature

These relations, however, change significantly in case of digital literature where the production is not a printed book, but cyber- or hypertext.

The changes are caused by at least two circles of reasons. The first naturally constitutes the peculiarities of creating digital literature (more about this below). Secondly, the position and functioning of digital literature in society as a whole, including: (1) its relations with the traditional mainstream printed literature, (2) its impact as national or beyond national, (3) its relations with other types of text (primarily mass media) and art.

In addition to the author of the text, cybertexts and hypertexts need active co-authors - programmers, designers and others. Creating a cybertext is therefore basically a collective act, although there are of course exceptions. An electronic writer or poet could thus be technologically skilled and also familiar with web design, or might use special programmes for writing hypertext literature (e.g. Storyspace). However, an ordinary writer who wants to experiment with hypertext literature does not, on the whole, have sufficient technological knowledge and needs assistants. Relying on Philippe Bootz, the electronic poet Jim Rosenberg has compared an author of a cybertext with a filmmaker (83). Just like a filmmaker, a cybertext author needs a team who realises his ideas. The author of a cybertext is no longer the only and unique creator.

3. Digimodernist turn

Alan Kirby has launched the concept of digimodernism which marks the cultural stage connected with the spread of Web 2.0 in the early 21st century (cf. Kirby, "Digimodernsim"). This can also be associated with Henry Jenkins's concept of "participatory culture" and the democratisation of culture (cf. e.g. Jenkins). The "digimodernist turn" in the form of blogs, wikis, Facebook and Twitter also brings about a change for authors of digital literature. The technological simplicity of software of the new web platforms and especially the simplicity of blog software meant that the authors no longer needed any urgent technical assistance. Although Alan Kirby himself has expressed doubt whether digimodernist literature actually exists (Kirby, "Another interview I gave"), we can regard for example the numerous literary blogs as such. Most blogs have been seen as descriptions of everyday life, writings focusing on a specific topic or an alternative journalism. Besides the autobiographical aspect of blogs and the form of life-writing, the blog researcher Jill Walker Rettberg, for instance, has noted the fictional essence of some blogs and analysed the blogs' narrative structures (111–126). Digimodernist literary blogs might for example be the writers' blogs where autobiographical stories are presented in a polished literary form. Or blogs that mix the factual and the fictional, blogs where the author knowingly plays around at the boundaries of fabrication and reality, and blogs where the author tells the readers in advance that they were reading fiction. Plus blogs presenting some literary narrative and blogs publishing poetry. We can therefore consider certain blogs to be literary phenomena and regard their authors as writers.

When we turn to the topic of solitude, it should be pointed out that the technological simplicity of the digimodernist turn brings forth the problem of the author's solitude – he is once again formalising his work on his own, just like with printed books.

At the same time the solitude of a creative work in cyberworld disappears. After publishing a book in print, the author lost control over it. In other words – the work was left on its own, or to be precise, the text began living its own life independently of the author.

In cyberworld, on the contrary, connections in various forms between the author, the work and the reader are retained (e.g. fan fiction, collective cyber novels, comments to blogs). The most significant difference, however, is retaining the author's controlling function. The author reacts to comments, can close down his blog at any time, edit the already published texts. Each text of course leaves a trace on the Internet, but it is neither public nor available to all.

It might thus seem paradoxical that in the printed world both the author and his work are solitary, whereas in cyberworld the solitude of creative work vanishes, because the cybertexts as well as the blogs need feedback from the readers and interaction between authors and readers. At the same time the author's solitude in cyberspace is twofold – creating cybertexts mostly requires some assistance, whereas digimodernist blog literature can be produced in solitude, independently.

4. *Staircase* and *Sonnet Machine*

Very few cybertexts in Estonian digital literature have been produced as teamwork, with technical assistance. One of the first was Hasso Krull's hypertextual poem *Trepp* (*Staircase*, cf. Krull). Krull, a poet always eager to experiment and familiar with post-structural theories, tested the possibilities of creating a hypertext at an early phase when the Internet had just arrived in Estonia. This is a classical hypertext poem, which is essentially simple. The poem has a fixed beginning, and navigating along links enables to read the poem differently. Selecting a certain path, the poem reaches the ending chosen by the author. Navigating by other paths, however, readers might find themselves in a circle without an exit. The poem is of excellent literary quality and with its various links offers different poetic impressions. The links are emphasised by different colours, the beginning and ending of the poem are marked by a picture.

This hypertextual poem is a typical case where the poet tries to experiment with new technological possibilities, but needs the help of a computer expert to realise his idea. Web design and linking the hypertext were organised by Krull's technical assistant. This remained Krull's only attempt in hypertext poetry, and after that he returned to traditional forms of poetry.

One of the grandest team projects was the *Sonnet Machine* initiated by the poet, translator and cultural theoretician Märt Väljataga in 2000. He was inspired by Raymond Queneau's work *Cent mille milliards de poèmes* (1961), although Väljataga developed his project *Sada tuhat miljardit millenniumisonetti* (One Hundred Thousand Billion Millennium Sonnets) to the extreme. By combining different strips in a book of strips (cf. Väljataga), it was indeed possible to form 100 000 000 000 000 sonnets. In addition, an Internet text generator was created in 2000, which allowed to combine lines in different positions and could thus produce $(20 \times 19)^7 \times 7 = 5\ 766\ 545\ 362\ 636\ 800\ 000\ 000$ English sonnets. It could also produce a huge number of Italian sonnets and 14-verse poems with other rhyme schemes. In addition to the book and the web version, Väljataga and his assistants constructed an enormous sonnet machine and displayed it in an art gallery. The machine was electromechanical and by operating it manually it was possible to create millions of sonnets. The original idea of Väljataga – to take Raymond Queneau's idea further – thus resulted in three solutions: on paper, on the Internet and in the huge sonnet machine. What should be pointed out here is that Väljataga could not realise a single of his ideas on his own. The designer helped with the book , the Internet text generator was mostly provided by the programmer Hannu Krosing, and the co-authors of the monster artefact were artist Lennart Mänd and composer Rauno Remme (see also Kesküla). Unfortunately Väljataga did not experiment any further, he produced no more internet projects and built no more new mechanical poetry machines. The most curious and regrettable fact about the whole project is that only the printed book still exists today. The text generator disappeared from the net after the crash of the server and the sonnet machine installation was dismantled. Only a few pictures have survived of the latter.

Considering the technological experimentation of Estonian writers, these two examples are exceptional rather than usual. There have been only a few other smaller projects (e.g. Tambet Tamme's project *The Weather Station Never Lies*, Lemmit Kaplinski and Jaak Tomberg's *Prepare*).

Estonian authors have been reluctant to try out computer-technological experiments, despite the general fascination with technology in Estonian society. However, the digimodernist change has altered the situation. All of a sudden, the Estonian writers seem to have overcome their aversion to technology and are eagerly

Transforming culture in the digital age

using the possibilities offered by Web 2.0. So are many Estonian writers active bloggers and Facebook users (e.g. Kivisildnik, Olavi Ruitlane, Aare Pilv and others). The writers' blogs include all aspects of the above-described literary blogs: there are autobiographical descriptions, the authors publicly declare that they are producing fiction, they publish poetry, play on the boundaries of the factual and the fictional (e.g. the blog of Olavi Ruitlane who passed autobiographical material off as fiction). Several writers express their opinion about literature and literary life. And quite a few have published their blogs in book format.

In sum – the Estonian writers who were earlier afraid of technology have become very keen on it in the digimodernist world.

What could have caused this change? Why have the Estonian writers not been eager to conduct elaborate computer-technological experiments that require cooperation with different specialists, but are ready to actively blog and use technological platforms, which are easy to use and thus do not demand any assistance?

5. Estonian author as a solitary author

One possible reason could be the wish to be independent. Estonian writers want to be solitary in cyberspace, write on their own, be fully responsible and not participate in teamwork, in a collective act of creative work. This could be explained by the well-worn thesis about the smallness of Estonian literature, which levels the experiments and extremes outside the mainstream. The reason might also be the general conservative attitude towards all cultural manifestations in the otherwise technology-keen Estonian society.

Of course, we can argue that there exist authors of digital literature who are technologically skilful and are familiar with programming, and therefore we can speak in these cases only about one, single author not about cooperation between different agents. However, on the other hand, such a person unites various agents or roles himself (as does the writer who illustrates his own works and a poet setting his poem to music).

If we look at parallels in other areas, then we see that for example the Estonian pictorial art quite easily accepted video and installation practices that employ technological possibilities from the 1990s onwards; also the opportunities offered by the Internet and digital art. Numerous examples can also be found in music and syntheses of music and pictorial art. Literature in Estonia is therefore sort of continuing the tradition of modernist author, without wishing to give up the position of an individual author. Digimodernist technological simplicity indeed enables the organic transfer from printed text to digital literature, which does not endanger the author' position. This seems to be confirmed by the fact that even writers who are active in blogosphere, Facebook or twitter are still primarily interested in publishing their message, and not so much in exchanging ideas, dialogues etc, which might cause the message to be changed or transformed into collective work. In conclusion, we could say that an Estonian writer is essentially a solitary author.

Cyberculture, however, emphatically reveals the paranoid position of a "dead" author. The printed text can be interpreted, although its original form can no longer be altered, whereas this is often possible in the digital sphere. A blog text can be changed, locked, cyberworks can be deleted. At the same time the public cyberspace is full of endless fragments about people, of which these people might not even be aware of, and certainly cannot control their existence. It seems that digimodernism eliminates the creative solitude and the responsibility of an author (e.g. the author can correct the texts later), but at the same time this elimination is rather deceptive and imaginary. Instead, it tends to conceal the solitude and responsibility, pushing them into the depths of the subconscious rather than nullify them.

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DIGITAL ART

Reprogramming Systems Aesthetics: A Strategic Historiography[1]

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1. Introduction

As the cult of high modernism tumbled from its lofty throne, the scientific theories of Claude Shannon, Norbert Wiener, and Ludwig von Bertalanffy gained substantial purchase in the arts. Radically opposed to the romantic emotionality of expressionism, Abraham Moles and Max Bense's theories of "information aesthetics," Roy Ascott's cybernetic art theories, and Jack Burnham's "systems esthetics" (hereafter, systems aesthetics) became influential models for more rational approaches to making and understanding art. Losing their luster by the mid-1970s, they disappeared from art discourses for nearly two decades, apparently gathering dust but, as recent affairs suggest, also gathering steam. Historical and critical writing addressing these aesthetic theories began to emerge in the 1990s and accelerated in the 2000s, when a number of exhibitions and symposia were devoted to related themes. These include: Open Systems: Rethinking Art c. 1970 (Tate Modern, 2005); Systems Art (Whitechapel Gallery, 2007); Imaging by Numbers (Block Art Museum, Northwestern University, 2007); and Pask Present, Atelier Farbergasse, Vienna, 2008. Specialized scholarly publications also mushroomed in the 2000s, including Roy Ascott's *Telematic Embrace: Visionary Theories of Art, Technology, and Consciousness* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 2003), Charlie Gere's *Art, Time and* Technology (2006), Francis Halsall's *Systems of Art* (2008), *White Heat Cold Logic: British Computer Art 1960-1980*, Paul Brown, Charlie Gere, Nicholas Lambert and Catherine Mason, eds. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009), and the forthcoming *The Art of Systems*, Francis Halsall and Chris Smith, eds. Paralleling the entry of this historical recuperation into museum contexts, scholarly writing on the subject has entered into more mainstream academic discourses, as in Pamela M. Lee's *Chronophobia* (MIT Press, 2004), my own *Art and Electronic Media* (Phaidon, 2009), and in recent work by prominent art historians including Caroline A. Jones at MIT and Claus Pias at the University of Vienna. To borrow a line from Hans Haacke's proposed 1971 work ironically dedicated to Norbert Wiener, "All Systems Go!"[1]

This terrain is rife with complexity, because the aesthetic theories mentioned above were what might be called "interpretive syntheses" of ideas originally formulated in scientific domains but that became widely, if not ubiquitously applied (or misapplied) across diverse disciplines.[2] Although their particulars differ, the terms *cybernetics* and *systems theory* are often used interchangeably and both rely substantially on information theory. It is difficult, therefore, to differentiate between them, to identify their particular influences on specific aesthetic theories in the 1960s (which typically mixed and matched to suit their needs), or to track how those theories, in turn, influenced the discourses of contemporary art practice and criticism forty years later. Of the three, Burnham's "systems esthetics," has gained the most recent scholarly attention. Contemporary discourses surrounding systems aesthetics, however, tend to lack an appreciation of the

alternate art histories that emerged around informational, cybernetic, and systems approaches to art.. Gere identifies early conceptions of systems thinking and computation applied to art in the exhibition catalog for *This Is Tomorrow* (ICA, London, 1956) and notes John McCale's 1962 pronouncement that "the future of art seems no longer to lie with the creation of enduring masterworks but with defining alternative cultural strategies, through a series of communicative gestures in multi-media forms."[3] Roy Ascott wrote about the application of cybernetics to art in 1963, proposed human-machine symbiosis as art in 1964, anticipated remote interdisciplinary collaborations involving artists in 1966-7, and in 1967 proclaimed, "When art is a form of behaviour, software predominates over hardware in the creative sphere. Process replaces product in importance, just as system supersedes structure." In 2003, Ascott's theoretical writings from 1964-2000 were compiled into the aforementioned *Telematic Embrace* with a lengthy scholarly introduction establishing a frame for his praxis within the context of the histories of art, cybernetics, and computer networking. [4] In *Materializing New Media* (2006), Anna Munster proposed "information aesthetics" as a "new kind of aesthetics," apparently unaware of Bense and Moles' theorizations of the late 1950s using the same term, and equally oblivious to Burnham's systems aesthetics. So, while it is important to recognize the vital contributions of Burnham's theories, it is equally important to recognize that they were not without precedent, and that those precedents contributed to the overall ecology of the discourses of which his were a part, just as the emerging literature on systems aesthetics is part of a larger ecology of historical writing on the application of scientific theories to aesthetics in the 1960s. The emerging literature has only begun to scrutinize these issues and to contend with why those aesthetic theories lost artistic currency in the 1970s, how they increasingly and differentially came to regain it beginning in the 1990s, and what their possible hermeneutic uses are today.[5] The question I propose is: How has the historicization of those interpretive syntheses in the 1960s been reprogrammed by contemporary artists and writers and to what ends?

Far from comprehensive, this initial study hopes to establish a foundation for further research on two themes: 1) how scientifically-based aesthetic theories of the 1960s were received and transformed by artists and theorists in the 1990s and 2000s; and 2) how the discourses of mainstream contemporary art diverged from those of art and technology and its extensions into new media art since the 1960s. One longer-term goal is to develop a deeper understanding of how the particular, yet shifting, cultural exigencies of recent history have shaped historical narratives and current practices, or, to put it another way, how 1960s aesthetic theories have been strategically interpreted to serve contemporary concerns. A second longer-term goal is to identify parallels and forge a rapprochement between both historical and contemporary discourses of mainstream contemporary art and new media art. In this regard, the term "reprogramming," along with other metaphors of the so-called information age, have been used liberally and with high visibility by art writers and curators, such as Nicolas Bourriaud, to describe practices central to mainstream contemporary art, while failing to engage seriously with new media art or theory. Hypothetically, a hybrid discourse that joins methods, strategies, and values for artmaking and interpretation can offer nuanced insights into the shared histories of these divergent discourses and forge a common language for future production and analysis.

2. 1990s: defining the field

Marga Bijvoet's *Art as Inquiry: Toward New Collaborations Between Art, Science, and Technology* (1997) is a pioneering yet under-recognized monographic study of art in the 1960s and early 1970s.[6] Despite the subtitle, Bijvoet's artistic concerns are not exclusively focused on science and technology, but rather with the "'moving out' into nature or the environment and the "moving 'into technology'": twin tendencies that, in her mind, stand out amidst the pluralism of 1960s art.[7] She claims that these movements not only broke "the boundaries of art and … the commercial art world structure" but more importantly that environmental artists and tech artists both sought out and engaged in collaborations in which the artist "entered into a new relationship with the environment, space, public arena, onto the terrain of other sciences." Bijvoet dedicates two chapters to interdisciplinary collaboration, a theme that runs through her case-studies and is highlighted in the book's subtitle. Given recent developments, this was a prescient emphasis: indeed, collaborations between artists and scientists and engineers that emerged in the 1960s have become an increas-

ingly common mode of contemporary art practice since in the 1990s, and the subject of a growing academic industry and scholarly literature.[8]

Bijvoet's radar for key concepts, figures, events, and monuments is equally keen. Jack Burnham, Billy Klüver and György Kepes are identified as central catalysts of the art and technology movement, and E.A.T. and the Center for Advanced Visual Studies provide case-studies of interdisciplinary collaborative projects joining art and science (including large-scale public spectacles. Other case-studies are divided into two sections, essentially of artists whose work, "moves out" into nature, (including Smithson, James Turrell and Helen and Newton Harrison), and of artists whose work "moves into technology," (including Nam June Paik, Bill Viola, Paul Ryan, and Woody Vasulka and Steina.) Her conclusion weaves these strands together, suggesting that they established the foundations for what emerged in the 1990s: civic programs emphasizing Art in Public Places and the proliferation of media art – the latter particularly involving telecommunications – that enables the formation of electronic "public places" through network technologies.[9]

Importantly, a key aspect of Bijvoet's framing of this terrain draws on information theory, cybernetics, and systems theory, with particular emphasis on the aesthetic theories of Jack Burnham. She discusses the application of biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy's general systems theory in Burnham's formulation of a "systems esthetics" in his *Artforum* essay of that title and in his book, *Beyond Modern Sculpture* (*BMS*) both published in 1968.[10] Moreover, she notes that Burnham illustrated his theory of systems aesthetics by referring to a wide range of artists, including Haacke, Smithson, and Oppenheim, whose work was not associated primarily with tech art but with environmental art. Though Bijvoet's treatment of Burnham's *Software* exhibition (1970) offers little interpretation of the works or overall curatorial concept, the chapter, "Hans Haacke: Systems Artist" goes into greater detail about the exchange of ideas between Haacke and Burnham, who introduced the artist to Bertalanffy's ideas around 1965-66, and the role of systems theory in Haacke's work with both environmental and social systems.

Bijvoet thus draws parallels between what are now historically authorized practices of earth art and video and the increasingly fashionable but as-yet canonically unadopted practices of art and technology. She merges blue-chip and relatively obscure artists and bridges historical practices with contemporary ones, drawing them into a more or less continuous narrative. She recuperates material buried in the rubbish heap of history, asserts its forgotten centrality during its time, draws parallels between it and the authorized mainstream of its period, and creating a historical narrative that ties the salvaged material to emerging contemporary practices. This set of operations articulates what has become a common model in the recent literature pertaining to the history of art and technology. In 1997 the historical erasure of art and technology and the ghettoization of new media art were not as pressing issues as they seem today. As such, Bijvoet's parallels and bridges strike me as intuitive gestures intended to make sense of unfamiliar material rather than as explicit strategies to suture a wound, or to revivify something that was mistakenly buried alive – strategies that characterize some of the more recent literature.

A similarly intuitive *modus operandi* characterizes my own early work. In my ISEA97 paper "Gemini Rising, Moon in Apollo," I noted that, in presenting "such diverse artists as Joseph Kosuth, Hans Haacke, and Sonia Sheridan," *Software* "implicitly problematized distinctions between 'art and technology' and other experimental art media and technological invention" including what had come to be known as hypertext and intelligent environments.[11] In "The House that Jack Built," (1998), I asserted that Burnham was the "pre-eminent champion of art and technology of his generation," and that his articles in *Arts* magazine and *Artforum* "remain amongst the strongest and most insightful commentaries on conceptual art."[12] I called attention to Burnham's account of working with software as a fellow at MIT, in which "'a dialogue evolves between the participants – the computer program and the human subject – so that both move beyond their original state'" and the insights this observation provided into "'the eventual two-way communication in art'" that he anticipated. I claimed that the relationship Burnham posited "between experimental art practices and 'art and technology' questioned conventional distinctions between them, and offered important insights into the complementarity of conventional, experimental, and electronic media in the emerging cultural paradigm later theorized as postmodernity." For example, I drew Haacke's *Visitor's Profile* into a theoretical alliance with Foucauldian critiques of institutional power and contextualized Ted Nelson's hypertext catalog,

"Labyrinth" within Barthes' "critiques of authorship, and 'writerly' (as opposed to 'readerly') texts," claiming that the "decentered and decentering quality of hypertext has become the subject (and method) of a growing critical post-structuralist literature, and arguably a central icon of postmodernity." My conclusion challenged contemporary artists and critics to live up to the conceptual richness with which Burnham imbued *Software*. Both "Gemini Rising" and "The House" are battle cries for greater recognition of Burnham's work, emphasizing the demonstrable prescience of his ideas. As Bijvoet had done, familiar and unfamiliar artists, authorized and unauthorized practices and theories, and the contemporary and historical are brought together in an effort to leverage greater credibility to the latter member of the dyad.

To my knowledge only two other publications from the 1990s directly addressed Burnham's concept of systems esthetics: Mitchell Whitelaw's "1968/1998: rethinking a systems aesthetic" (1998) and Simon Penny's "Systems Aesthetics and Cyborg Art: The Legacy of Jack Burnham (1999).[13] Whitelaw's short essay emphasized Burnham's "anticipation of contemporary concerns", such as the "'cybernetic organism'", "self-organising systems in relation to sculpture", and "an art embracing 'realtime information processing.'" Similarly, he noted, the re-entry of terms like cybernetics and systems into the critical vocabulary of cultural discourse give new relevance to Burnham's systems aesthetics. For Whitelaw, the 1960s work Burnham interpreted through the systems lens "provok[ed] an awareness of the real as an extensive, relational, dynamic network of processes." By contrast, Whitelaw claimed that 1990s "virtuality amounts to a kind of anti-systems practice… [that forgets] the system, the concrete infrastructure, for a frantically overproduced internal space." He attributes this "turning inwards", this "armoring of the subject" to a "desire for a safe haven." A systems approach, he argued, "demands a turn outwards…. [that] raises questions about the intervention of art in the world… of agency…. [that] threatens to spill out into everyday life, beyond culturally sanctioned and government funded forms, and so to evaporate completely, or rather to become imperceptible." Given the quandaries posed by contemporary technologies, Whitelaw asserted the need for an art practice that has the "expansiveness and embodiment of the systems experiments of thirty years ago, with an equal amount of late-nineties critical hip." It is worth noting that Whitelaw and I independently played the prescience card and that Burnham served us both as the gauntlet we threw down to contemporary artists and curators.

Penny states that he gravitated to Burnham's "visionary and pioneering" writing as a sculpture student in the late 1970s, and that it influenced his pursuit of interactive art practice as well as his own theoretical work. He describes "Systems Aesthetics" as a "radical and under-acknowledged text offering a new approach to installation and event art…." Of Burnham's "remarkably prescient" 1968 predictions about the future of sculpture in *BMS*, Penny cites "'the art of cybernetic organisms'" and "'artforms that manifest true intelligence, but perhaps more meaningfully, with a capacity for reciprocal relationships with human beings (in this case the word viewer seems quite antiquated.'" He observes that, thirty years later "most practitioners in these fields refer to the 'user' or the 'visitor' as opposed to 'viewer', the experience is no longer of passive contemplation but of engagement and ongoing interaction with quasi-intelligent systems through time."

Although it is common to read that "the impact of Burnham's work was limited,"[14] Penny's case indicates that its impact was perhaps much greater among artists than among critics and historians. Following Whitelaw's contention that a systems approach "threatens … culturally sanctioned and government funded forms," it stands to reason that Burnham's theories were most threatening to historians. The oft-noted "visionary" quality of Burnham's writing and his futuristic prognostications likely would have been more appealing to artists than to historians, particularly at the time of their publication. Indeed, the influence of *Beyond Modern Sculpture* (*BMS)* and the important essays in *Arts* and *Artforum* therefore cannot be measured in footnotes. It is probably safe to say, however, that a significant proportion of Anglophone artists who came of age during the span of *BMS's* five editions, printed between 1968 – 1978, knew about Burnham and his theories. Four decades after its publication, Burnham's work is suitably historical, and its prescience sufficiently verifiable. As a result, his aesthetic theories are now much more palatable to contemporary art historians, especially those whose research focuses on art that strives to offer what Burnham referred to as a "psychic dress-rehearsal for the future."

3. 2000s

By 1999, it had become increasingly apparent that the "wound" of exclusion and ghettoization confronting the historiography of art and technology and the practice and criticism of new media art required an explicit suturing strategy. In "Art in the Information Age" (2001) I argued that by "interpreting conceptual art and art-and-technology as reflections and constituents of broad cultural transformations during the information age," categorical distinctions can be relaxed, allowing parallels to be drawn between seemingly diverse practices, offering new insight into contemporary art.[15] Informed by Burnham's theory of systems aesthetics and his notion of software as a metaphor for art, my analysis of works by Levine, Haacke, and Kosuth in *Software* led to the conclusion that in the information age, "meaning and value are not embedded in objects, institutions, or individuals so much as they are abstracted in the production, manipulation and distribution of signs and information." (436) Confronting art historian and Art & Language member Charles Harrison's dismissal of art and technology, I interpreted the group's *Index 01* (1972) as a "manual hypertext system that allows for the interactive associative linking of ideas, connecting this important icon of conceptual art with a central technological icon of the late-1990s. I pointed out that Harrison's early 1980s description of *Index 01* explicitly referred to "artificial intelligence,... neurophilosophy, with strong overtones of cybernetics and systems theory." (437) I claimed that an account of Art & Language limited to addressing "the group's challenges to the aesthetic discourses of modernism .... is unnecessarily narrow in its implications because it fails to address the relationship of late-20th-century experimental art to the information age of post-industrial production." (437) This critique was reinforced by Warren Sack's 2007 reinterpretation of *Index 01* within the context of "database aesthetics." More generally, I asserted that a "comprehensive account of post-World War II art must also take into consideration the specific scientific and technological theories and developments that contributed to larger social formations that impacted all aspects of material culture." (437-38) Finally, I implicitly applied Burnham's systems approach to analyze the system by which art history is written. Using Haacke and Ascott as examples, I claimed that the historicization of an artist's work as conceptual art or art and technology "says less about their work than it does about the institutional mechanisms that have created and reinforced categorical distinctions ... at the expense of identifying continuities between them." (438)

On top of these early art historical forays into systems aesthetics, after the English publication of Niklas Luhmann's *Art as Social System* in 2000, Burnham's brilliant oddball 1960s theory gained high-powered company. Anglophone art historians have increasingly accepted systems theoretical approaches to aesthetic questions, often drawing parallels between Burnham's and Luhmann's formulations.[16] A staggering number of publications addressing Burnham's "systems aesthetics" were produced in the 2000s by both humanist scholars and artists. This research tends to be much more focused and detailed than the work generated in the 1990s, while at the same time it makes much broader claims for the significance of a systems theoretical approach to art historical methodology. Although Whitelaw, Penny, and I are closely associated with the new media art community, much of the 2000s writing has been done by more mainstream scholars of art history, aesthetics, and visual culture, including Pamela M. Lee and Caroline A. Jones.[17] This point is important because, as Charlie Gere has noted, a "problem facing discourse concerning so-called new media art was how it had been contextualized and historicized.... 'not that there was no critical discourse, but rather that it remains the preserve of those involved with little or no connection or engagement with outsiders.'"[18]

In general, there is growing agreement in the 2000s that Burnham's contributions to art historiography deserve substantially greater recognition and that his theory of systems aesthetics offers significant potential for the analysis of both historical and contemporary art. Matthew Rampley argues that Burnham "deserves greater credit for opening up a line of inquiry that has been scandalously neglected." Lee embraces Burnham's theory of systems aesthetics, asserting that, "the impact of systems discourse within both the sciences and humanities is immeasurable. My argument is that its rhetoric informs and certainly facilitates a new understanding of many of the artistic practices of the 1960s."[19] Jones uses systems theory as a primary theoretical source in a recent discussion of contemporary art and bureaucracy, applying a systems approach to her analysis of Hans Haacke in the 1960s and Olafur Eliasson and others in the 1990s and 2000s. She

refers to the author of "Systems Esthetics" as the "astonishingly prophetic" and "unreasonably obscure Jack Burnham."[20]

As in "Art in the Information Age," many of these art historical recuperations directly confront discourses and critics that spurned or ignored Burnham's theories. Similarly, they draw parallels between systems aesthetics and other, more authorized methods in order to identify continuities and erode categorical distinctions between the historical and current discourses of new media and mainstream contemporary art. For example, Francis Halsall (2008) has engaged Burnham's systems aesthetics in a discourse with Luhmann, Arthur Danto, Rosalind Krauss, Nicolas Bourriaud and other leading theorists, proposing an elaborate systems theoretical method for art historical interpretation.[16] The following discussion analyzes Luke Skrewbowski's application of Burnham's theory to critically engage with authorized discourses, in particular to challenge Benjamin Buchloh's dismissal of Haacke's early work, and to develop a more holistic understanding of the role of systemic thinking for the artist.

In "All Systems Go: Recovering Hans Haacke's Systems Art" (2008), Skrebowski takes on renowned art historian Benjamin Buchloh, whom the author refers to as the "most significant interpreter" of Haacke since Burnham. The pairing of Burnham and Buchloh is poignant to say the least. Despite his renown as a critic and art historian, Burnham was a trained artist (MFA, Yale) and art professor at Northwestern University in suburban Chicago. As such, he was an intellectual outsider to New York's academic art history establishment and a geographical outsider to its artworld. Buchloh, a European intellectual with advanced degrees in Germany (University of Berlin) and the US (Ph.D., CUNY Graduate Center), a chaired Professor of Art History at Barnard College and Columbia University from 1994-2005, subsequently at Harvard, and an editor of *October* magazine, has, for many years, resided in and constituted the inner-sanctum of academic discourses in the history and criticism of contemporary art, centered in New York but exerting unparalleled influence internationally.

In this David and Goliath scenario, Skrebowski effectively uses Burnham's "Systems Aesthetics" to attack Buchloh's strict division of Haacke's work into two camps, before and after the influence of systems aesthetics: "those earlier projects that emphasized 'physiological, physical, and biological processes'" and the "'mature – i.e., political – works.'"[21] While Buchloh dates Haacke's departure from "'the limitations of a systems-aesthetic approach'" to 1969, beginning with his *Polls*, Skrebowski counters that Haacke continued exploring biological and ecological systems in works including *Chickens Hatching* (1969) and *Rhine Water Purification Plant* (1972).[22] Beyond simple chronological blurring, Skrebowski claims that Buchloh's antipathy toward systems aesthetics blinded him from registering Haacke's ongoing concern with systemic approaches to art that provide continuity between his biological and political works: "Recovering the influence of Burnham's systems aesthetics on Haacke encourages us to understand his practice holistically, revealing a fundamental consistency underlying its stylistic diversity."[23] Although not mentioned by Skrebowski, the titles of some of Haacke's political works, e.g., *Shapolsky et al. Manhattan Real Estate Holdings, a Real-Time Social System, as of May 1, 1971* (1971) are explicitly defined by the artist as systems, and even more specifically as real-time systems, a term that had been publicized in art discourses via Burnham's *Artforum* essay, "Real-Time Systems" (1969).[24] Given such evidence, one might suspect that Buchloh's failure to acknowledge the ongoing influence of Burnham's theories regarding systems in Haacke's work was willful.

Buchloh's stated objections to systems aesthetics are important to account for, as they offer insight into the art historical establishment's ongoing resistance to Burnham's theories and the prejudices with which those advocating a systems theoretical approach to art practice and historical writing must contend. Similarly, Skrebowski's counterarguments provide an important defense of and justification for systems theoretical approaches to art and art history. He notes that for Buchloh, Burnham's systems aesthetics were "'techno-scientific reductivism …. governed by the logic of rationalist instrumentality' and the 'repression of historical memory.'"[25] His counter-argument notes that Bertalanffy situated his formulation of general systems theory within a long intellectual history "from Vico through Hegel to Marx" and that Burnham himself placed a shelf-life on systems aesthetics, claiming that it "'will become the dominant approach to a maze of socio-technical conditions rooted only in the present. New circumstances will with time generate other major paradigms for the arts.'" Although not mentioned by Skrebowski, it must be noted that in the

second paragraph of "Systems Aesthetics" Burnham discussed Thomas Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), explicitly acknowledging the historical procession of "major paradigms." Contra Buchloh, Skrebowsky concurs with Lee's characterization of systems theoretical approaches to temporality as "'nonlinear, recursive, and multidimensional,'" which he interprets as "instantiat[ing] a new form of historical consciousness rather than constituting the repression of historical memory."[26] Perhaps the essay's most potent argument against the dismissal of Haacke's earlier work by Buchloh is the claim that his position is founded on a binary opposition between nature and society. Using Buchloh's own words against him, Skrebowsky points out that, "for Buchloh, Haacke's art cannot be political until he 'transfers his interests from biological and physical systems to social systems.'" Following Bruno Latour, he deconstructs this mythic division and concludes that,

Systems theory offers a way to think the natural and social analogically, and Haacke's art, via his engagement with Burnham's systems aesthetics, make use of it to do exactly that. We can now see once more that Haacke's critical artistic interventions build on an unbroken, ascending scale of systemic complexity – from organic elements, through plants, animals, and finally up to human beings.[27]

Burnham likely would agree with this sort of systemic interpretation. Its recognition of the recapitulation of fundamental orders, relations and structures at various levels of organization parallels alchemy, structuralism and kabbalah, all highly refined theories of systemic relationships that fascinated him. At the same time, he would have recognized that the mortal dagger in Buchloh's argument is drawn not from systems theory proper but from Latour's radical critique of modernism's dualistic epistemology. Nonetheless, within the emerging historiography of systems aesthetics, Skrebowsky's interpretation of Haacke and his decisive dismantling of Buchloh's position demonstrate the hermeneutic potential of the systems approach, particularly when combined with other methods and applied to the work of an artist explicitly employing systems theory.

4. Conclusion

This brief and admittedly unbalanced odyssey through the emerging historiography of Burnham's systems aesthetics has demonstrated some of the ways in which the theory has been received, interpreted, and applied over the last decade or so. One of the strengths of systems theory is its general applicability across the sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities. However, as Bertalanffy noted in "An Outline of General Systems Theory" (1950), the complexity of open social systems is far greater than in closed physical systems, which makes their analysis more difficult. The success of any systems theoretical analysis will depend on the sophistication of both the tools and methods of observation. Moreover, the insights of second-order cybernetics, which were integrated into general systems theory, demand self-reflexive acknowledgment by the analyst that s/he is inextricably implicated as a participant in the system and cannot stand outside of it. What are the stakes when a scholar of systems aesthetics analyzes and comments on the historiography of systems aesthetics literature, including his own contributions to it, from a systems theoretical perspective?

In "Art After Philosophy," Joseph Kosuth stated that, "Art 'lives' through influencing other art, not by existing as the physical residue of an artist's ideas. The reason why different artists from the past are 'brought alive' again is because some aspect of their work became 'usable' by living artists"[28] (and the same can be said of art historical interpretations.) Kosuth's biological metaphor is itself insightful, not just because of system theory's roots in the biological sciences, but because it suggests his recognition of art as a quasi-living organism, an open system whose elements have relevance only when they participate in the current functioning of the organism. The same claim could be made of ar historical interpretations. Were I not so sensitive to that issue perhaps fewer words would have been dedicated to an inevitably self-promotional recitation of my own writing. I know that by commenting on my contributions and inserting them into a living discourse I revitalize them. I equally know that my interpretations of others comments also bring them alive. But these interpretations also transform the meanings of earlier works (including my own) making them resonate in tune my own current values and commitments. Skrebowsky may have little or no interest in "suturing the wound" that I experience from the omission of science, technology, and new media from mainstream contemporary art discourses. He may not have targeted the work of a high profile art historian

Edward A. Shanken

for the strategic purpose of stirring that debate. But systems theory would suggest that, within the framework of the artworld's discursive system, his work may have that effect. Moreover, it may be more likely to have that effect now that it has been interpreted in that light.

Acknowledgements

References

[1]	For a detailed description and analysis of the work, Norbert: All Systems Go, see Skrebowski, L. 2008. "All Systems Go: Recovering Hans Haacke's Systems Art" Grey Room 30 (Winter, 2008) 54-83.

[2]	Shannon specifically stated that his "Mathematical Theory of Information" was intended, and should be applied, only for electronic communications systems.

[3]	Gere, C. 2006. Art, Time and Technology, Oxford: Berg, 117, 120.

[4]	Ascott, R. 2003. Telematic Embrace: Visionary Theories of Art, Technology, and Consciousness, E. Shanken, Ed. Berkeley: University of California Press. Man-machine symbiosis, 129; remote collaboration 146; quote 157.

[5]	For more on cybernetics and art, see Ascott 2003. For information aesthetics, see Pias, C. 2007. "Hollerith 'Feathered Crystal'": Art, Science, and Computing in the Era of Cybernetics, Grey Room 28 (Winter, 2007), 110-33. For systems theory and art, see Halsall F. 2008. Systems of Art: Art, History, and Systems Theory. Bern: Peter Lang.

[6]	Bijvoet, M. 1997. Art as Inquiry: Toward New Collaborations Between Art, Science, and Technology. Bern: Peter Lang. Also www.stichting-mai.de/ Cited 15 Aug 2009.

[7]	Bijvoet, 3. Following quotes from pages 3 and 4 respectively.

[8]	See, for example, Pearce C., Diamond S., and Beam M. 2003. BRIDGES I: Interdisciplinary Collaboration as Practice, Leonardo 36:2 and E. Shanken, Series Ed., 2005. Artists in Industry and the Academy: Interdisciplinary Research Collaborations, Leonardo 38:4 and 38:5.

[9]	As examples of the latter, she identifies Kit Galloway and Sherry Rabinowicz's Electronic Café (1984), which, quoting Steven Durland, she notes, "linked MOCA (Museum of Contemporary Art) and five ethnically diverse communities of Los Angeles through a state-of-the-art telecommunications computer database and dial-up bank designed as a cross-cultural, multilingual network of 'creative conversation.'" Durland, S. 1987. defining the image as place - a conversation with kit galloway, sherrie rabinowitz & gene youngblood, High Performance 37, p 57. Bijvoet, 234.

[10]	Burnham, J. 1968. Beyond Modern Sculpture: The Effects of Science and Technology on the Sculpture of This Century. New York: Braziller. Burnham J. 1968. "Systems Esthetics" Artforum 7:1 (Sep 1968) 30-35.

[11]   Shanken, E. 1998. Gemini Rising, Moon in Apollo: Attitudes on the Relationship Between Art and Technology in the US, 1966-71, in A. Nereim, Ed., ISEA97 (Proceedings of the 8th Int'l Symposium on Electronic Art. Chicago: ISEA97.

[12]   Shanken, E. 1998. The House That Jack Built: Jack Burnham's Concept of Software as a Metaphor for Art. Leonardo Electronic Almanac 6:10 (Nov 2008).

[13]   Whitelaw, M. 1998. 1968/1998: rethinking a systems aesthetic, ANAT Newsletter 33 (May 1998). and Penny, S. 1999. Systems Aesthetics and Cyborg Art: The Legacy of Jack Burnham. Sculpture 18:1 (Jan/Feb). Quotes from online texts: http://creative.canberra.edu.au/mitchell/ and http://ace.uci.edu/penny Cited 15 Aug 2009.

[14]   Rampley, M. 2005. Systems Aesthetics: Burnham and Others Vector e-zine 12 (Jan 2005).

[15]   Shanken, E. 2001. Art in the Information Age: Technology and Conceptual Art, SIGGRAPH 2001 Electronic Art and Animation Catalog, New York: ACM SIGGRAPH, 8-15. Quote from expanded reprint in Leonardo 35:3 (Aug 2002) 433. An early version of the paper was presented at UCLA on 13 March, 2000 (video at dma.ucla.edu/events/).

[16]   See for example, Rampley, M. 2005, and also Halsall, F. 2008. Systems of Art: Art, History, and Systems Theory Bern: Peter Lang. Dutch art historian Kitty Zijlmans wrote her Ph.D. dissertation on art history and systems theory (University of Leiden, 1989), drawing, in part, on Luhmann's systems philosophy.

[17]   Lee, Professor of Art History at Stanford, is best known for her research on Gordon Matta Clarke. Jones, Professor of Art History at MIT, has published monographs on Bay Area Figurative Painting, Minimalism, and Clement Greenberg.

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Stepping Towards the Immaterial: Digital Technology Revolutionizing Art

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1. Introduction

Less is more and more and more: a minimal surface of a few square millimeters -getting smaller every time- stretches to host a universe of words, objects, identities. The infinitesimal size of a hard disk becomes the battlefield of a digital revolution that takes over matter: solid books, photos, music records vanish into bytes and pixels, lose their material substance forever and travel light to the immense immaterial space of the Internet. Along with matter, our everyday experience transformed: the dust on the grooves of a vinyl disk, the creases on a book page that's been read over and over again, the smell of the new or the old become fading memories as our fingers fidget over the keyboard, clicking and typing, ceaselessly.

Minimal gestures/ immaterial transformations: digitized text, photo, video, music archives are multiplied intact, change place, get converted or transformed through software; they are shared or deleted without leaving a trace behind. The artwork becomes our trivial possession, but somehow always manages to elude our senses: once the power is cut off, it retrocedes to its previous state of inexistence -until a new wave of electricity and a complex set of software brings it back to substance.

As we map the route from this state of minimal matter to image, we shall see how the traditional relationship among the artist, the object and the public has been shifted to a new balance, introducing thus a whole new way of experiencing art.

2. A first leap into the Immaterial Space – Conceptual Art

From image to material to idea: it's the distance run by the artists during the 20th century, who rejected the notion that an artwork should necessarily imitate reality and projected pure materials (color, canvas) as the only reality of the artwork; subsequently they turned towards the world of the immaterial.
The conceptual artists of the 1960s entered into immaterial space by working with ideas:

> "Ideas can be works of art; they are in a chain of development that may eventually find some form. All ideas need not be made physical" (LeWitt, 1969).

With these words, Sol LeWitt expresses the shift of interest from material to idea. Not that he completely rejects form; he just considers that the concept is the most important thing.

Yves Klein on the other hand introduces the immaterial as a field of constant experimentation, that he tries to capture, feel, measure, even sell. Initiated to Japanese philosophy, that considers void as one of the basic elements of the world -alongside with water, fire, earth and air- Klein adopts the immaterial as a basic expressive means. After presenting his Zones of Immaterial Pictorial Sensibility, completely empty spaces, he sold them to collectors for gold; what the collector got in exchange was just a receipt -subsequently the receipt was destroyed and the gold scattered -thus the artist returned to nothing, to the immaterial.

Yves Klein visualizes "the immaterialization of art in order to rebound, in one prodigious leap, from the brink of the problems of art into an authentic immaterial reality" (Klein, 2007: 71).

3. From concept to image: Immateriality takes form and shape

This vision of an immaterial reality is substantiated today in the virtual worlds created by means of digital technology. Objects, bodies and space are all constructions of data -mathematical numbers, pure abstraction.

Technology has invaded artistic creation for centuries now; from the camara obscura to photography, and from photography to cinema and video, it has introduced a number of changes in the way art was created and perceived: the authority of the object fades away, the "aura" of the art work is lost and its connection to tradition is shattered (Benjamin, 1935). On the other hand, photography and film have introduced new ways of perceiving the world, fragmentary and synthetic.

However, all the artworks produced by aid of technological means had a material basis; the leap into immaterial reality has only been made possible by means of digital technology.

This is clear if we look into the substance of a photograph. As the etymology of the word reveals, an analogical photograph (φωτο-γραφία) is the registration of light. On the contrary, a digital photograph is constituted by numerical elements, pixels. Every pixel corresponds to a specific code, according to its place in the picture and its color.

So what we have in a digital picture is not a copy or a registration of reality, but a reconstruction of the visible in a real-like way:

> "A digital image does not represent an optical trace such as a photograph but provides a logical model of visual experience. Its structure is one of language: logical procedures of algorithms through which data is orchestrated into visual form"(Legrady, 1990).

A digital image is a complex code that calls for the mediation of multiple layers of software, in order acquire a real-like form on our computer screen. Every computer archive or software has its equivalent a binary code -which expresses the presence or absence of electrical charge. When we turn off the computer or shut down a program, the image no longer exists and no sign of the image remains -except for electrons on the disk where it is stored.

It is an almost immaterial state, since it cannot be perceived by the senses; a state of abstraction, ruled by mathematics:

> Within the logical world of computers where number, not shape or volume defines geometric space, nature and the body as we know them do not exist (Lovejoy, 2004:153).

This means that artists working within the computer space are absolutely free from the confines of matter; when it comes to artists-programmers, who even create the software needed for their artworks, there are no limits to the realization of an idea, because code is limitless.

Limitless and flexible: like any other computer archive or Internet web page, a digital artwork can be endlessly transformed -by the artist himself or the public.

This means that an artwork is not a "sacred" and unique object, presented in a museum or an art gallery next to a "do not touch" sign. It can be multiplied and saved in computer files, becoming thus a common and everyday thing at the edge of our fingertips.

4. A new creative class: Artists and public interchange roles

Art becomes more accessible than ever, especially if we consider the fact that many artworks are created within the computer world and are designated to stay there, without ever escaping the borders of immateriality imposed by its digital nature. Works that never acquire a material dimension; they are transferred through the Internet, meet the public and change shape as they interact with it.

This means that a new kind of relationship is introduced among the artist and the public, who share content. For Miltos Manetas sharing content is an act that exceeds the division between artist and public:

"Around this realization a new social class is awakening. This is not a working class but a class of Producers. Producers are pirates and hackers by default; they recycle the images, the sounds and the concepts of the World. Some of it they invent but most they borrow from others." (Manetas, 2010)

In other words, sharing content is a productive act; the public is no longer the passive recipient of the artwork but recycles and shares ideas just like the artists, sometimes transforming them. It is a change similar to the one described by Roland Barthes, when visualizing the ideal text:

"The goal of literary work [...] is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text. Our literature is characterized by the pitiless divorce which the literary institution maintains between the producer of the text and its user, between is owner and its consumer, between its author and its reader. This reader is thereby plunged into a kind of idleness [...]: instead of functioning himself, instead of gaining access to the magic of the signifier, to the pleasure of writing, he is left with no more than the poor freedom either to accept or reject the text: reading is nothing more than a referendum"(Barthes, 1974: 4).

Digital technology has abolished the traditional limits between artist and public -just like the limits between writer and reader. The Internet users perceive culture as a participatory experience, where they don't just receive, but act as well: they can write their thoughts in a blog, leave comments below a text, upload images, change them through image or video editors and share them with the rest of the Internet community. They create and share content incessantly.

And a great part of artists today, especially the ones who are dedicated to interactive art and Internet art encourage this creativity.

Figure 1: Miltos Manetas, "Jacksonpollock.org"

Figure 2: Rafael Rozendaal, "FatalToTheFlesh.com", 2004

In Miltos Manetas' "JacksonPollock.org" (Figure 1) the public is stimulated to create action paintings on a white webpage: as the users click and move the cursor on the screen, they create a dripping technique artwork. Subsequently, one can store the created image or print it. Within this interface, making an action painting requires the slightest action: waving the fingers over the keyboard or the iPod screen.

Similarly, Rafael Rözendaal's "FatalToTheFlesh.com" (Figure 2) dimly recalls to mind Lucio Fontana's slashed canvases, except that now it's the public that is called to "slash" a web page by clicking and moving the cursor. Ironically, once you do so, the web page starts bleeding. It's a distant memory of corporeality within the context of a virtual world.

5. Savoring Immateriality: Virtual world experiences

Therefore, it would be interesting to see what happens to our sense of the corporeal, within this digital space constituted by the computer interface and the Internet -a mostly immaterial world that reflects the experience of the real one, sometimes distorting and sometimes augmenting it.

E-mails, forums, video games and every Internet page that requires the participation of the user, introduces us into a digital world of simulation. Users enter this world as their virtual alter-ego -an "avatar" that can correspond to their real personality or be completely imaginary- and enjoy simulated everyday experience -such as talking to friends- or transcend reality by flying, going through solid walls or killing.

"Multiple identities, fluid bodies, masks, images, and illusions - people who participate in these scenarios seem to be driven by the desire to transform and modify themselves, their bodies, and their psychological attributes and to produce any number of arbitrary forms of identity beyond biological, physical, psychological, and social limitations." (Barbara Becker, 2000: 362)

Therefore, digital technology creates a different experience of the body and the self. If the world is what we perceive and live (Merleau Ponty, 2002: xviii], then this immaterial, fluid and flexible world is just as real as the one we are born in; from a phenomenological point of view it's the experience that matters -even if this experience takes us outside the limits of the material world:

"The procedures associated with [...] virtual immersion may function to destabilize the experiential boundaries of a person's body, thus partially freeing the phenomenal body from the experiential constraints of a person's physical presence in the real world" (Murray, 1999: 319).

Figure 3: Charlotte Davies, «Osmose», 1995

Artists working with immersive art or internet art often introduce the public into a different experience of the body -by creating an alternative body or encouraging them feel their own in a more intense way.

For example, in "Osmosis" (Figure 3) Char Davies invites the public in a new universe, whose space and image is defined by slight bodily movements and breathing. The immersant, the person participating in the experience, wears a motion-tracking vest and a helmet with a screen. Every movement and every breath is translated onto the screen as a changing virtual space. Therefore, in order to explore this unknown world better, the immersants have to feel their bodies and control even the slightest movement or breath.

Taking this idea into a more complex perspective, Sommerer and Mignonneau have created a complex interactive space for "Life Spacies" (Figure 4), an installation that calls for the active participation of visi-

Figure 4: Sommerer/Mignonneau, «Life Spacies», 1997

tors who might or might not be physically present. The people who enter the virtual world of the artwork encounter some artificial life creatures, who react to their bodily movements. The dimensions of this virtual world exceed beyond the exhibition space: Internet users can interact with it by adding their own artificial creatures. Thus the focus of attention oscillates between the personal and the collective, the real and the virtual, the material and the immaterial.

6. Conclusion

A quest into the immaterial in today's art introduces us into a flexible world, where the lack of matter has made everything possible: a public that owns, shares and changes art, an artist that writes codes and creates interfaces instead of unique objects and most of all, an art experience that gives us a different sense of our bodies and our possibilities.

The digital worlds opened up in front of our eyes, no matter what they contain -texts, art, platforms for everyday contact - call for our participation. They transfer us to a universe of infinitesimal matter, where complex codes convert invisible electrons to worlds that are always familiar and forever out of reach. Despite the sophisticated software required to turn the code into a familiar reality on screen, the most important catalyst to experience this world lies beyond technology: it is our thought and imagination.

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Transforming culture in the digital age

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Creativity in Surveillance Environment:
Jill Magid and the Integrated Circuit

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"To be human today is to be totally intertwined with technology, specifically the technology of image-capture." (Magid, "Monitoring Desire").

This statement by American performance artist Jill Magid perfectly encapsulates the present condition and issues surrounding the subject and subjectivities in the (post)modern world. In the information age, technologies dictate and define our societies, our environments, our interaction with others, and therefore, ourselves. Technological progress and integration has come on so far, and in such a relatively short period of time, that our reliance on it is an unconscious one. Progress has evolved from large, obvious presences with years between upgrades, to a constant and fluid stream of new breakthroughs and inventions, with the onus on miniaturization (in the case of bio- and nanotechnologies) which serves to make our technologies more sublimated and thus taken for granted. In a similar way, the omnipresence of surveillance technologies has led us into an age where constant image-capturing and the recording of our presence and action in society is fully expected and critiqued – as in the dubbing of Britain as the 'nanny state' – but simultaneously, this expectance/acceptance of surveillance as *modus operandi* leads to the presence of surveillance technology achieving its own invisibility. We critique its invasive nature, but at the same time continue our day-to-day existence under its watch for the most part unaffected and unperturbed, our behaviours hardly modified.

Surveillance technologies, by which is meant the video cameras, viewing monitors, and recording methods that make the captured footage available for inspection, can be categorised in Magid's "technology of image-capture" along with other apparatuses utilised in the recording and broadcasting of image, regardless of eventual purpose, of which there are numerous and diverse. The invention of the camera, followed by the video camera and subsequently the film industry, has lead to an entire culture of representation that previously did not exist in society. Celebrity culture is a direct result of this mass-communication of the representation of individuals to other individuals, and much consumer-driven industry now relies on this ability to represent images and ideals to wider society on a commercial basis. On top of this, self-representation and broadcasting – in cases of cultural phenomena such as social networking websites or YouTube – allows for any one individual to record and (re)view themselves, and voluntarily situate themselves within a public discourse. Web blogs by relative unknowns become revered worldwide, and there is a higher potential than ever before to achieve something close to immortality, and for much less than any sort of personal achievement.

It is this notion of immortality that informs one of the many strands of meaning in Jill Magid's 2004 performance art piece, entitled *Evidence Locker* (with an accompanying text, *One Cycle of Memory in the City of L*). Part of her process involved making the UK's Data Protection Act work to her advantage, ensuring that the footage recorded independently of her was legally committed to computer memory for a further seven years.

The project itself was a serial performance over the course of thirty-one days, in which Magid integrated herself within the scopic region of Citywatch, the surveillance branch of the Merseyside Police in Liverpool, England, noted for having one of the largest CCTV networks in the UK. Magid successfully mediated an art project commissioned by Liverpool Biennial International 04 with Citywatch and Liverpool City Council, producing two installations that exhibited a selection of the period's CCTV footage, along with a 'novella' that documented her personal experience of the performance. The main aspects of the piece were down to Magid's physical performance, in which she daily appeared in areas covered by the city's 242 cameras, making herself known and visible to the operators by way of telephone calls, letters, and her symbolic red leather jacket; and the relationship she created with an unnamed operator (Rubin, Artist's profile). Under UK law, any CCTV footage recorded has to be kept on file for a retainer period of thirty-one days – hence the "cycle of memory" – after which it is destroyed, unless the footage is requested as evidence, in which case it is committed to an evidence locker for seven years in compliance with the Data Protection Act of 1998. Magid made thirty-one requests for the footage she appeared in, completing the Subject Access Request forms in the style of love letters to the operator, which make up the text of the novella. These diarised accounts of each day in the cycle provide a subjective dimension to what is essentially an impersonal system of evidence retrieval from an objective receptacle, and this is exactly what makes Magid's work so culturally significant.

This paper will critically evaluate Magid's work from two theoretical approaches. The first is taken from the work of feminist theorist Donna Haraway, with specific use of her thought as set out in her 1985 essay "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century". In this essay Haraway speculates on the "informatics of domination", that is, the techno-social systems in place which subjugate, control, and segregate, expressed as "integrated circuits" (Haraway, 149). Her "cyborg", a trope borrowed from science fiction to embody a social reality, is one who can transcend the boundaries enforced by society, moving fluidly through the systems, learning from them and gaining a deeper understanding of the human condition. Magid can be seen to assume the role of the cyborgian figure, using digitised culture to her advantage, infiltrating the closed networks and moving through the matrix as a multi-lingual "reality pilot" (Leary, 245).

The second approach is informed by Martin Heidegger's 1938 essay "The Age of the World Picture", in which he meditates on the nature of truth of representation and objectivity. Though the writings of Heidegger date back to the first half of the twentieth century, his work is incredibly prescient, and continues to gain weight as more developments are made in the technological arena and more social theory is devoted to the ramifications of these developments.

Prior to *Evidence Locker*, Magid's contribution to the art world has kept to a characteristic variation on a theme: that of the individual's subjective position in relation to ways of seeing offered by recording technologies, and a conceptualized view of the "system". Her MA thesis performance involved her hijacking the CCTV system at MIT and replacing its usual broadcast with real-time footage recorded from a camera she wore on her ankle, directed up her skirt, and gauging public reaction to this "guerrilla act of appropriation" (Magid, "Monitoring Desire"). Her performance and the accompanying thesis text challenge notions of self-representation, empowerment, and the "gaze" of film theory, as well as exhibiting the artist's preconception with infiltrating the language of systems. In *System Azure* (2002), she approached the Amsterdam police, requesting to decorate their surveillance cameras as part of an art project. When she was refused, she re-approached them as a businesswoman under the invented company name "System Azure", and offered them a camera ornamentation service for a price, which they accepted. The point here is one concerning language and closed systems, as well as self-representation, of which Magid says:

I transformed myself from an artist to a businessperson in order to be seen by the police. My intention, in either case, remained the same; this transformation was necessary for them to hear me. (Magid, Interview).

This emphasis on "seeing" and "hearing" is highly important when we consider the position of today's individual. All too often the modern world is considered impersonal and faceless; its inhabitants reduced to numbers, statistics, and population counts. Magid considers the individual in relation to the surveillance system, yet another institutionalised method which, as a result of its purpose and conception, serves to

dehumanise the subject, and only highlights the negative side of human behaviour. In a Q&A session with a City Watch operations manager (as part of the online material that supports the *Evidence Locker* project), she muses:

As a side note to you, I saw this exhibition yesterday about using technology and/or art as a way to imagine a better future. Imagine if the CCTV cameras could be used to record beautiful moments and interactions in the city instead of watching for problems? (Magid, Evidence Locker website).

As a matter of fact, this idealistic wondering comes almost to fruition during her performance, as she describes a conversation with the main operator of the text:

Outside your windows you had seen four altercations. You wanted to watch them all but you had to choose. You chose the one involving a woman. A guy had grabbed her, around the neck, and punched her face. Then he had her on the ground. You kept watching as they were coming toward you. You brought the window close. Then you realized, they were not fighting; they were kissing. And he had her in a bear hug. (Magid, 36).

The aim of *Evidence Locker*, in Magid's own words, is to "seek intimate relationships with impersonal structures", to achieve visibility in a system to which she would otherwise have been invisible, and in exchange, to make the invisible systems visible themselves (Magid, "Seduction"). She instigates an exchange between herself and her chosen system, in this case City Watch (with all its procedures, protocols, and legal frameworks), learns their language and finds a voice with which to speak to them through (the SARF paperwork), and situates herself fully in their midst (in the scopic reach of any one of the 242 cameras).

From here she finds ways to revisualise herself in terms other than her own. She recognizes, from an artistic standpoint, that the individual subjectivity can be limiting, and so uses her newly-created role as both subject and object in a larger viewing system to see herself from a variety of perspectives, and also draws into play the subjectivities of others, e.g. the operators, the police (who interpret her from a victimised angle when she becomes the target of muggers and the incident is recorded), and eventually, those spectators who view her in the exhibited installation.

Haraway's use of the cyborg in her work posits an embodiment of the female that harnesses both the natural resources that womankind have long been associated with, along with new aspects of identity conceived by technology's presence. Her argument centres on the opinion that modern female empowerment can come from mastery over nature and technology, by way of synthesising the two. There has much critical discussion of the social impact of technology in recent decades, running parallel with dystopic visions of modernity in science fiction – one of the most prolific and discerning vessels of technoscientific representation and the issues that have grown up around it. Haraway calls for a more celebratory imagining of the subject in the technoscientific age, and her cyborg is a way of resolving the human-machine dichotomy. Magid can be seen to embrace Haraway's cyborgian essence, as she personifies the institutionalised system, giving it weight and meaning, humanizing the nonhuman in order to relate to it and to relate it to her. As she says:

An institution is a body. I imagine it as a singular body or being, and this is always personal. Cities are the same. Each institution, each city, has a personality with qualities, character traits and moods. I want to have a relationship with this body. For me it's a sensual experience. I cannot relate to an institution in general terms. I make it a person or a lover in my mind and relate its body with my own. I am attracted to the disproportionate scale of my body to their body, and provoked by the exclusive barrier that divides us: their closed system versus my position outside of it. I look for a way to cross over, to get incorporated, to shrink them down to my size. I like the fact we form a connection, and that our connection is inherently fragile. (Magid, "Seduction").

Magid's cyborgian power comes from her ability, through human imagination, to revisualise the system in terms of her own identity, to make the unknown known. She acknowledges Haraway's cyborg theory in her thesis paper, stating that cyborgs "fluidly occupy the technological world we live in", and her view of her own position in relation to that of the system takes into account the boundaries "within the technology of everyday life and its networks of power" that the cyborg is able to transgress (Magid, "Monitoring Desire"). However, Magid recognises that the cyborg is not simply one who can reconcile the human-machine dichotomy by mere existence; it does not only need to achieve mastery over the integrated circuits and the

closed languages that define them, but also mastery over the subjectivity of human nature. The cyborg embraces a stance that is multifaceted, allowing for partiality and contradictory viewpoints, a being capable of poly-subjectivity.

Haraway claims that our sense of subjective and objective representation comes from the technologies that allow us to see further, deeper, more holistically, saying:

Both the whole earth and the fetus owe their existence as public objects to visualizing technologies. These technologies include computers, video cameras, satellites, sonography machines, optical fibre technology, television, microcinematography, and much more. The global fetus and the spherical whole Earth both exist of, and inside of, technoscientific visual culture (Haraway, 174).

Due to these kinds of visualization methods, we can see the world and within it ourselves, sometimes more subjectively, and at others more objectively. We can view our internal makeup, thanks to endoscopies and CAT scans; the sheer scale of human endeavour in aerial photography of the Great Wall of China; our behaviour as it happened on CCTV surveillance.

Martin Heidegger's essay "The Age of the World Picture" (1938) states that the modern scientific age – as distinct from the classical science of the Greeks, or the Mediaeval/Renaissance periods – is defined by "representedness". Heidegger explains this representedness in terms of the existence of a world picture, that is, the ability and scope of individuals to view themselves and the world in relative terms, as a system made up of parts, saying that "the fact the world becomes picture at all is what distinguishes the essence of the modern age" (Heidegger, 130).

Technology is almost wholly responsible for instigating this meditation on the individual's relationship to the wider world, because it is through technology – telecommunications, radio and video broadcasting, and later the Internet and global networking – that the world has become reachable. Internationalization and globalization are a result of the technologies that are put in place to bring people, societies, and nations into direct exchange with one another. Heidegger deconstructs his term "world picture" by offering a colloquial expression that conveys his meaning:

"We get the picture" concerning something does not mean only what is, is set before us, is represented to us, in general, but that what is stands before us – in all that belongs to it and all that stands together in it – as a system (129).

In this sense, we can link Heidegger's representedness with Haraway's technologically-visualized world picture as a mediation between subjective experience and reality. One cannot separate the two: when looking at a CAT scan a medical professional is always considering the grey matter as part of a larger whole, looking for what is wrong with the patient, the ultimate aim to ensure the patient can rejoin society with improved quality of life; and similarly, when looking at satellite images of the earth it is difficult not to envisage the life taking place there, pinpointing landmarks and imagining daily life playing out. This is down to our subjective experience of life, an inability to divide the micro- and macro-levels, and Heidegger posits that:

Man becomes that being upon which all that is, grounded as regards the manner of its Being and its truth. Man becomes the relational centre of that which is as such (128).

Increased technological progress has lead to this globalized world view, characterized by the crossing of boundaries and the ability to reach places previously unreachable. The detrimental effect of this, in some opinions, is the loss of localised and situated identity. The world becomes smaller, in one respect, but at the same time its immediacy and omnipresence makes it larger because we can see it, and our relational position is one of alienation and confusion as to what is truth. Before we were closer to settled in the way our personal society worked, and the truths that worked for us. Now, other cultures are on our doorstep, and conflicting ideologies make it harder to accept one over another as a working paradigm.

In the way that Magid makes use of them, visualising technologies can help make sense of the world, to regain some control over it, to scale it down to a more manageable size and make it work for us once more. Instead of getting lost in its swell, we can ride the wave of the information age until we better understand it. Heidegger's work is important, because it is among the first philosophical approaches to deal with the human condition as defined by technological environment, and thus paves the way in some respects for the work of Haraway in cyborg theory in the 1980s and 1990s. Both acknowledge the fact that technology has

changed the face of the society, and while both allude to the negative factors facing individuality and identity as a result of this, the common theme is human evolution and realignment with techno-culture through an acceptance of partial truths rather than universalities.

To reiterate, the current age is defined by a preoccupation with representation, with seeing ourselves. From mirrors and photography to reality television and paparazzi to the 242 CCTV cameras in Liverpool city centre: this techno-voyeurism, in my opinion, is exemplary of the human need for self-surveillance in a world that is increasingly and incredibly characterised by institutionalised systems: huge, overarching, faceless structures. We are terrified of losing our identity, of forgetting what we look like. But these systems are not sentient, we have to imbue them with our own projected emotional spheres and subjectivities, and Magid's work with *Evidence Locker* shows us how. The world is already a technological one, and it will only grow and evolve, and our role in evolving with it requires a change in perspective. Her opinion of the surveillance concept as constantly evoked in political debate is best summarised when she comments:

I have never looked at surveillance technology from the position of a civilian under its gaze... I was drawn to [it] because of its potential, as a tool that offered specific qualities and capabilities; CCTV system enabled me to see and capture myself (and my body) in a form that I could not experience without its employment. (Magid Interview).

Here Magid embodies the essence of Haraway's cyborgian figure in her celebration of the possibilities of enhanced subjective experience found in self-surveillance. She reconciles her individuality with the flattening ethos of the nanny state by a shift in perspective. To achieve equilibrium with an evolving techno-culture, the way in is to accept it, rather than fight against it. To enter the integrated circuit, learn its language, and once fluent in its discourse, work with it. In Heidegger's words, "relate it to oneself, to the one representing it, and... force it back into this relationship to oneself as the normative realm" (131).

The significance in Jill Magid's work lies in the movement away from the purely aesthetic nature of art, towards a practice which challenges artistic notions of function versus form. She says of herself that she is not so much "creating representations but enacting social engagements", and while this much is certainly true, what can be seen in her work is essentially a more abstracted notion of representation, or the Heideggerian representedness (Magid, "Seduction"). Her work is about shifting perspectives and evolving languages, and her enactments situate her physically in society in such a way that her artistic production becomes more about providing a real-world, pragmatic evaluation of current issues. Her employment of digital media is fighting fire with fire, to some extent, as she considers her subject and expresses it via aspects of itself. Magid teaches herself – and us – about systems through direct application of these systems, addressing the discourse currently ongoing between technology and culture, and using art to her advantage as a medium to communicate her findings to a wider demographic. That the purpose of art ought to be a functional, psycho-socio-political tool is another point of debate entirely, but drawing from a history of philosophical tradition, in Heidegger's words, "...art is considered to be an expression of human life" (116); and in Haraway's sixty years later: "life copies art copies technology copies communication copies life itself" (177).

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Audience Interaction in the Cinema: An Evolving Experience

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1. Introduction

Cinema has been an established cultural phenomenon for over a hundred years yet has changed little during that time, audiences sitting together for a couple of hours watching passively one or two films projected onto a screen in front of them. Although cinema might now be undergoing a digital transformation, this refers more to its means of distribution and projection than to its underlying form and structure – the digital age does not seem to be bringing a significant change to the experiences that take place when an audience sit together in front of a projection screen. The so-called 'interactive film', a film or video projection that can be changed in some way by the audience watching it, has been notable by its absence since the format was successfully premiered with the 'Kinoautomat' of 1967. There are numerous practical reasons for this, some economical and technical, but there has certainly not been enough experimentation with the creative possibilities that the interactive format - which is facilitated greatly by digital technology - offers both to creators and their audiences.

This is surprising on many counts. Firstly because the continued success of IMAX (very large format) and the resurgence of interest in 3D suggests that cinema audiences enjoy the novelty of something more unusual than the standard moviegoing experience. Secondly, interaction with a variety of devices – from ticket machines to mobile phones – has become an everyday part of our lives and we use technology to effect changes on a daily basis. Thirdly because interaction between large audiences, albeit remotely situated, has become popularised through the 'social media' of the internet. And fourthly, an interactive cinema (of sorts) has developed as a subset of new media art. Interactive artwork installations in public spaces started to become prevalent in the 1980s, and although the majority of these are suited only to small numbers of simultaneous visitors, they can offer interesting evidence about how the audience experience of cinema can be transformed due to the addition of interactivity.

My personal artistic work since 1995 has specialised in the creation and display of interactive films, in the field of new media art, originally in an installation format and subsequently as a cinematic live performance. One might consider this substantial body of work to be a microcosm of interactive cinema as a whole. Looking at it in more detail – in particular my observations of user behaviour when interacting with a film – might well elicit useful conclusions as to the past, present and future of a cinema in which audiences can actually change what they see. The approach here is not that of behavioural science, which has analysed the dynamics of the group situation in detail, but rather a presentation of firsthand results derived from actually creating and presenting interactive films to audiences.

2. Background

Whether cinema, theatre, performance, theme park, sports event, or other situation with physically co-present participants, a certain social influence between participants inevitably occurs, even though for the most part this influence is casual and unstructured. Fans of films such as The Rocky Horror Picture Show have successfully taken this to a more participatory level by enabling active interaction between audience members, although the film itself is still presented as a standard projection. Essentially it has been the arrival of new technologies into group situations that has augmented the social experience available there. This was noticeable in the late 50s and early 60s when cinema found new tricks and enhancements to ward off the threat of television, as typified by the technical gimmicks of William Castle who notably electrocuted selected audience members so as to spread mass hysteria in screenings of The Tingler and staged a fake vote to select the (only) ending of his 1961 film Mr Sardonicus. From Gene Youngblood's 'Expanded Cinema' of 1970 to Shaw and Weibel's 2003 vision of 'Future Cinema', changes have been taking place to make the cinema-visit a more varied and unpredictable experience, and one of these ways has been by the use of interactivity.

Genuine interactivity which enabled several filmic pathways to be chosen by majority vote during the screening was introduced in the Czechoslovakian pavilion at the Expo'67 in Montreal. Invented by Raduz Cincera with a team of talented collaborators, the Kinoautomat ran for six months and recorded 67,000 viewers. The creators of Kinoautomat were unknowingly conducting somewhat of a social experiment, and were taken unawares by the impact of the audience reaction during the moments at which voting was possible. The idea that the interactivity (audiences of 150 viewers voted nine times to determine the trajectory of the narrative) might influence the overall social dynamic of the event had not been anticipated whilst the project was being produced, as Cincera made clear in a contemporary newspaper interview: "We did not anticipate that the moment when the viewers vote is another dramatic moment in the whole performance, that the sight of the film drama on screen and stage is combined with another drama which is taking part amongst the audience". Only after the initial screenings were analysed was the importance of the audience response noticed and acted upon, the show being adapted so as to extend and enhance the value of the interactive moments. An enlightened Cincera later explained to Life magazine's Frank Kappler (1967) : "What we are doing here really is making a sociological and psychological study about group behaviour. It is fantastic. We are learning that people decide not on a moral code but on what they like to see" (p. 28C).

What Cincera and his team had discovered was the importance of studying the user's experience, and being prepared to adapt the work accordingly. Because each interactive film potentially has a different subject matter and means of interaction, and hence a different dynamic with its audience, it would seem quite reasonable that in each case some iteration to the final work might be necessary as a result of observing how that audience behaves. Although during the decades subsequent to Expo'67 there have been occasional attempts at interactive cinema, there is little evidence to suggest that this process of audience observation regularly takes place. This procedure has in fact been a bedrock of my practice as an interactive filmmaker, and is discussed in greater detail in my 2006 doctoral dissertation. My earlier films were presented as an interactive installation which allowed space only for a limited number of viewers and only one 'interactor', whereas more recent work has been specifically designed for and presented to physically co-present audiences, usually in a theatrical setting. The films themselves are usually of short duration, (with a performance consisting typically of seven or eight films) and each is influenced by a different method of interaction such as loudness, colour tracking, audio frequency (of singing) or movement detection.

3. A One-Person Interactive Touchscreen Cinema

Rather than designing for a situation in which a viewer might be situated remotely (e.g. at home with a CDROM or DVD) it was my intention from the outset to situate my interactive films in a public space, usually a gallery. The main rationale for this was to be able to observe audience activity and to become a more effective interactive filmmaker – by making improvements to some films and to design and create

more successful new ones. To show the works I created a metal stand holding two speakers and a plain glass touchscreen with a similar sized piece of semi-opaque projection substrate placed immediately behind it. A video projector is focussed onto the screen and displays a variety of my interactive films running from a host computer. Since there is no keyboard, a 'quit' button is attached to the metal frame which can be pushed by a user to stop the playout of the currently running film and to return to a selection menu. Over many years a variety of films were created that used the overall motif of 'touch' as the means by which the viewer could effect a change in the represented filmic imagery.

Figure 1: One-person interactive touchscreen cinema. Japan, 1996.

Some general observations which I made about the use of the touchscreen, when it was configured with various interactive films at exhibitions during 1996 to 2006, will be briefly summarised. Firstly, it was very clear that many audience members were unwilling to approach closely to the touchscreen and to actually 'touch' it. One reason for this is timidity to approach an interactive situation which might potentially cause personal embarrassment in front of others. A second reason was probably the unfamiliar design of the metallic stand and its innocuous looking transparent glass touchscreen, and related to this, the novel concept of actually 'touching' a film and to be able to change it by doing so. A second observation was that although the touchscreen that I was using at the time could only detect one discrete touch at any time and was therefore most suited to a single user, it was noticeable that small social groups regularly gathered around the screen and collaborated either through communal screen-touching or verbal exchange. From a creator's viewpoint, the most successful films appeared to be those in which the user's tactile action was directly related to the 'story' of the film, a phenomenon which I describe as 'movie as interface'. An example might be touching the video image of an insect causing it to fly away, or touching the video image of a spider's web causing the spider to move rapidly towards the user's finger. Most of these observations proved of use when I subsequently designed interactive films for the live theatrical audience.

4. Designing and Observing the Group Experience

After Kinoautomat, which pushed the limits of traditional film projection and electromagnetic wizardry to their limits, technologies have developed to facilitate not only non-linear video delivery but also the means to analyse and act upon the interactions of a large co-present audience. In this respect digital technology has brought about a transformation. The entertainment industry has come up with patented systems such as Cinematrix and Interfilm but many of these seem to have provided relatively trivial narrative content linked to specific hardware solutions. Numerous academic papers also report on research carried out on systems for audience participation (a typical example being Maynes-Aminzade, Pausch, and Seitz from 2002) and such systems have even been classified and categorised (Benford, Fraser, O'Malley and Reeves, 2005) - but these papers rarely seem to investigate the actual narrative content that might best suit the technical innovations presented.

Artists working in the areas of live performance and interactive art have also made interactive performance works specifically for group audiences, an example being Blast Theory's 'Desert Rain', and it is in this field that my own practice is situated. Usually when I show interactive films to group audiences it is with a colleague Teijo Pellinen and the show is called 'Cause and Effect', although one-man shows have been given such as at the Vilnius Short Film Festival in October 2009. In all cases, audiences have chosen to attend the show with prior knowledge that it will be 'interactive' and presumably are aware that they will become involved in some way. Every film during the screening is hosted by a stage presenter (i.e. Chris Hales and/or Teijo Pellinen) since this has been found to be an essential device to 'break the ice' and to provide a human connection to the audience during interaction. One overriding design parameter is that the entire setup runs on a laptop and is portable and does not require distributing expensive technical devices to the audience. Basic microphones and video cameras are aimed at the audience, and ready-made solutions for the interpretation of audience data from these sources are employed by the use of various software modules. Inexpensive physical objects are sometimes distributed to the audience to be used for certain films, for example Figure 3 shows the audience passing round flower-shaped coloured lights which cost one Euro each, and Figure 5 shows audience members wearing yellow rubber gloves costing even less than that for a pair. Whereas a more complex and expensive system might be restricted on practical grounds to the occasional one-off show, 'Cause and Effect' and my own one-man variant have totalled over 50 performances in various locations, producing valuable observational data of the audiences involved which is of benefit to all future creators of interactive events (those involving audiovisual content, rather than games per se) for physically co-present audiences.

5. Emergent Audience Behaviour

The content of the 'Cause and Effect' and one-man performances has been informed by an iterative process of making new films and testing them during actual performances. All films are individually made by either Chris Hales or Teijo Pellinen - although with permission, suitable films made by students during 'interactive film workshops' have also been trialled as 'guest' films (over a hundred such courses have been run by Chris Hales including since 2002 a yearly workshop at the Tartu Art College in Estonia). An overall design parameter in creating new films has been to avoid audience embarrassment, this being somewhat in response to the timidity clearly shown by many visitors to the touchscreen installation, as detailed above. By avoiding singling out individuals or putting audience members in the spotlight, a relaxed and collaborative spirit emerges in the theatre. Based on another observation from the earlier touchscreen installation that 'movie as interface' led to successful interactive films, there has been particular attention to develop very specific interactive films in which the video narratives are intimately united with a particular interaction technology, as will become clear from the descriptions that follow.

Results have been unpredictable and interesting, with a very noticeable aspect of what might be termed 'emergent collaboration' involved. In other words, although it is never obligatory for the audience to be (inter)active and there are usually no hard and fast rules about how and when to interact, the film itself has been created so as to elicit a natural action from the audience – encouraged and reinforced at times from the stage by the presenter of the show. 'Crescendo' (Hales, 2005) requires a communal sustained soprano note to be held long enough to break glass items that are portrayed in the film, a feat which is very difficult to accomplish as an individual but which becomes a group goal when many voices can contribute to the task in hand. 'The Crossing' (a 'guest' film from 2004 by Kalmus/Rahusoo/Lauringson of Tartu Art College) required the audience to solve a film-puzzle and regularly stimulated an uninhibited open discussion in the audience at the moments of choice as a successful strategy was developed. Noticeable also was the fact that certain audience members would deliberately choose the wrong strategy – immediately stimulating a spontaneous counter-reaction from the remainder of the audience.

Both 'Poetry in Motion' (Hales, 2006) and 'The Wave Things Go' (Hales, 2008) are influenced by audience movement. The former film, somewhat gamelike, portrays an ice hockey match and has resulted in

unexpectedly athletic activity as 'team-members' collaborate to make as much movement as possible to outscore the opposition – on occasion even getting out of their seats and running in the aisles. The latter film is somewhat more sophisticated in that the movement must follow the pattern of the 'Mexican Wave'. Exact timing is essential to complete the wave, which then affects the playout of the film, and this demands both concentration and spontaneous teamwork. After a 'failure', zones of the audience which fail to synchronise will invariably redouble their efforts in order not to let down the audience as a whole.

Figure 2: Audiences interacting with 'Poetry in Motion' at the Mindtrek Festival, Finland, 2006 (left) and with 'The Wave Things Go' at 'Kino', Budapest, 2009 (right).

When no specific 'rules' are given to the audience it has been noticeable again how collaboration, rather than competition, has emerged spontaneously out of the group experience when the filmic content permits it to do so. An example of this occurs during screenings of my film 'The Duel' (2006), which paints the scenario of two enemies, Mr. Green and Mr. Blue, about to fight to the death on an icy plateau, and is controlled by tracking the position of a green light and a blue light as they are passed around by the audience. One of the two protagonists will inevitably meet their demise at the climax to the film, but this is entirely dependent on the audience who can prolong the life of Mr. Green by manoeuvering the green light over his represented image – and vice versa for Mr. Blue. No teams are allocated amongst the audience, who seem to work together to extend the life of both protagonists, and seem noticeably saddened at the inevitable death of the 'weaker' contestant – whichever it might be. A recent comment from an audience member that the entire show resembles 'group therapy' supports the observation that interacting as a group in front of a film might be more successful as a collaborative rather than a competitive experience.

Figure 3: 'The Duel' at the Mindtrek Festival, Finland. 2007. The audience (left) react to the onscreen imagery (right).

Since to a certain extent anything is possible with the concealed trickery of the computer, care must be taken to show which interactions are being monitored, and to emphasise how they are affecting the projected

film. After some of the earlier performances, a few audience members suggested in casual conversation that certain films were only simulating the results of interaction and were not interactive at all. This surprising feedback opened my eyes to the fact that the audience interpret the screening experience with a totally different mindset and knowledge base to that of the creator, and are very aware that computer systems are more than capable of deceit. From this point on, where applicable I have chosen to explicitly display the audience-captured data on screen adjacent to the main film presentation in order to offer 'proof' that the system is really responding to the actions of the audience. Since that time no further comments have been received on this matter. Figure 4 presents a screenshot of the first sequence of 'Global Warming' (Hales/Pellinen, 2005-7), showing to the right of the main video screen an audio input level graphic which was added as a response to the user's comments.

Figure 4: The first sequence of 'Global Warming'.

As reported above, certain audience members (who usually spontaneously form some sort of a collaborative subgroup) will regularly attempt to 'sabotage' the trajectory of a film by interacting in an unexpected way – for example by staying quiet for a film that depends on audio input, or hiding a light that is intended to be passed around the audience. This type of 'bad' behaviour can be used to the interactive filmmaker's advantage. In 'Bad Education' (Hales, 2007), an on-screen educational presentation becomes covered by the video image of a female face floating in a bath of water. The educational film itself can only then be seen if enough audience members behave 'badly' by pushing the face under the water even though this can be seen and heard to cause anguish to the drowning person. The 'pushing' was originally effected by the audience holding up hands towards the screen whilst wearing yellow rubber gloves, but a more recent version uses the combined light emitted by personal mobile phones held up by the audience). It has already been noticeable that this film polarises the audience between those who appear to object to pushing a person's face underwater (albeit a fictional character) and those who wish to remove the inconvenience so as to see more interesting content.

Figure 5: Audiences interacting with 'Bad Education' at the Mindtrek Festival, Finland, 2007 (left) and at 'Kino', Budapest, 2009 (right).

A final word should also be noted about the importance of play, in the sense of Caillois' spontaneous freeform play or 'paidia' (as opposed to games that have more strictly defined rules and roles and in which the idea of winning or losing is central). In the context of a systematic study of the user's activity whilst playing the commercial interactive movie/game 'Tender Loving Care', Bernard Perron (2003) stated that it "is clear that interactive movies, as opposed to movie games, lean toward the paidia pole. This mode of playful activity deploys itself freely" (p. 247). My own recent experiments to involve seemingly childish paraphernalia as interface devices have indeed proved very successful. Balloons and glowsticks were distributed to audiences in Tallinn during 'Cause and Effect' performances at the Dark Nights Film Festival (PÖFF) in 2009. Waving the glowsticks and 'squeaking' the balloons proved popular with the audiences, not only during the films for which they were intended (movement was being detected in the first case, and high audio frequencies in the latter) but as playthings throughout the performances - and potentially afterwards too.

Figure 6: Audience members enjoy making balloons 'squeak' during 'Cause and Effect' at PÖFF in 2009.

6. Conclusion

As evidenced throughout Oddey and White's 2009 book, *Modes of Spectating*, there is no doubt that as a direct consequence of evolving digital technology the role of the audience and the issue of spectatorship has undergone, and is undergoing, a transformation. A notable feature of this, as discussed in the *Collaborative Futures* publication of 2010 (which was itself created by a collaborative process) is the willingness of

groups, small or large, co-present or remote, to collaborate towards a common purpose. Although much current interest in social interaction involves the situation in which the participants are situated remotely (using the internet and/or mobile technology), the practical observations noted here are based on an actual interactive cinema installation and performance, and offer evidence as to how and why an interactive cinema *might* be successful.

To briefly summarise, guiding the performance with a 'live' presenter and avoiding any embarrassing or humiliating situation for any particular individual encourages a relaxed group atmosphere in a situation that might otherwise cause unease. Creating films in which the interaction integrates directly with the represented onscreen action ('movie as interface') gives the audience a strong cause-and-effect linkage and reinforces their understanding and engagement with the film. Adding visual feedback to clearly indicate audience interaction helps dispel doubts about any computer trickery that might be involved. It seems pertinent to allow for exaggerated actions from the audience, and to expect - and even encourage - significant variation from the 'norm' (which includes spontaneous audience behaviour intended to have a negative impact on the flow of the film being shown). And finally, allowing audiences simply to 'play' along with an interactive film with the simplest of items like balloons and glowsticks can be more effective than at first it might seem.

Although there are strategies for potential success, the question remains as to whether interactive cinema - in the strict sense of a theatrical presentation - will become a more extensive phenomenon than it is at the moment. Although special format cinema continues successfully with IMAX and 3D formats, in more recent years the cinematic experience has expanded beyond the four walls of a traditional cinema, onto our mobile phones, the internet, the walls of nightclubs (so-called 'live cinema') and elsewhere. In *Convergence Culture* Jenkins suggests a shift from "real-time interaction toward asynchronous participation" (p. 59). Interaction can now mean something different, more akin to creation than to manipulating readymade content. Films can be created by online communities, YouTube 'conversations' respond one video with another, and dramas are acted out in virtual worlds. Digital culture has transformed the cinema-going experience by making audiences more active, but in a different way to the formal sense of sitting in a cinema – it seems that the interactive film of today is no longer an easily identifiable direct descendent of traditional film but has evolved into numerous other forms which are experienced in an equally varied range of situations.

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Delay and Non-materiality in Telecommunication Art

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1. Introduction

We can describe art as an asynchronous delivering of messages over physical or time distance. It maintains presence from the past and from far away, distant presence. Masters have been making artworks which are perceived by audience hundreds and thousands years later. It could be, that the sender of the artistic message has not been in existence for millennia (like authors of cave paintings). In this case, interaction between sender and recipient is not possible, but still, the act of delivery exists as there is a receiver.

We could create an imaginary axis of reception divisions, based on delay, where there are works of art on one side, whose 'transmission' to the receiver has lasted for millennia; and artworks sent and received in real time on the other side. Although this kind of formulation points to the vocabulary of information theory and though this viewpoint has been considered, art in this presentation has not been dealt with in this way.

Delays between performative acts and non-materiality in participative works are substantial attributes in new media art, but there are many examples in earlier art practice and art of the 20th century, which belong to the rich history of non-material art.

My interest in delay concerns its ability to be part of the concept, when delay between sequences of creation, elements of time-based artwork, exposition and reaction or feedback becomes an integral part of the interaction with the artwork and inseparable from it. Naturally, we can distinguish other episodes of delay, like one which is happening between creative intention of the artist and creative execution of the artwork.

2. From painting by telephone to internet art

László Moholy-Nagy's "*Telephone Paintings*" were made in 1922 and were almost the first examples of early telecommunication art. Evidently, as historians write, he got his ideas from „Dada-Almanac", which was edited by Richard Huelsenbeck in Berlin in 1920. Huelsenbeck presented the provocative notion that images could be ordered by telephone. It inspired László Moholy-Nagy, who lived in Berlin (Kac, 1992).

László Moholy-Nagy wrote:

> "In 1922, I ordered by telephone 5 paintings in porcelain enamel from a sign factory. I had the factory's colour chart before me and I sketched my paintings on graph paper. At the other end of the telephone, the factory supervisor had the same kind of paper, divided into squares. He took down the dictated shapes in the correct position. (It was like playing chess by correspondence.) . Thus, these pictures did not have the virtue of the "individual touch," but my action was directed exactly against this overemphasis. I often hear criticism that because of this need of the individual touch, my pictures are "intellectual"". (Moholy-Nagy, 1947)

We can say that in 1922 the first attempt was made to create and deliver a computer graphic picture over distance. The author was „removed" from physical result of his work.

If we think more deeply about the process of creation of Moholy-Nagy, then there are different steps, activity and delay sequences: delay between when artist is telling which square to colour and the factual colouring of it in the sign factory. Then, after the information has been delivered, an enamel painting was produced. There is a second delay between the second and third activity. After the physical paintings were sent to author, there is a third delay, or feedback which shows how the message was understood. Then, paintings are exhibited, the visitor/audience sees them, visual information is transferred directly to the viewer. The time between presentation and reception is the fourth activity sequence and delay.

We can describe this Moholy-Nagy´s order of telephone painting in the terminology of an information model: sender, message, transmission, noise, channel, reception, receiver and feedback. Moholy-Nagy, the artist, is the information source and sender of information, in between there is noise - which is irrelevant, as we see - information was received by the supervisor correctly.

According to traditional understanding, delay in aesthetical communication could be defined as time which lies between completing the artwork by the artist and the perception of it by the viewer.

What I want to discuss is the disappearance or shortening of the delay between when the creator has finished the artwork and when viewer perceives it; and the situation where (by means of interactivity), the act of creation and the act of perception belong to the performative telecommunication artwork. Another interesting aspect is the inter-relation and exchange between creation and perception, so that perception and action, where it leads, becomes input for the next act of creation. There is a situation, where presentation of an art object becomes a performance between the artwork and the user; it becomes time-based art were both the artist and the creator and receiver are taking part and where feedback from the receiver becomes input for artist, for the next stage of his creative activity.

Also, I would like to show that the delay between action and perception, or different sequences of activity, could be an essential building element - it could belong to a functional part of the artwork.

We can mention the delay which lies between instruction given by the artist and the execution performed by the same artist or somebody else, similarly with programming code which is written by the artist and will be executed by the computer or user.

3. Multi nodal art

There is historical internet artwork - Refresh project (1996), by a group of artists and referred to as "Refresh - Art Project: Multi nodal net art", more than 20 WWW pages located in many servers of Europe and the US were linked together in a loop through which the visitor would be „thrown" automatically after 10 seconds to another page. The project used a "refresh" meta-tag, a command within HTML. The command tells browser software of the PC of the user to automatically go to a particular page after a certain time. Refresh chain-pages take the user through all pages all over again. A refresh delay of 10 seconds is an integral part of the project.

Meta-tag looks like this:

<META HTTP-EQUIV="Refresh" CONTENT="10;URL=http://www.priss.org/fresh.shtml">

It brings user to the web site http://www.priss.org/fresh.shtml. But it could be any other site also, there where twenty of them.

Andreas Broeckmann (1997) wrote:

... the Refresh loop was designed to employ the interconnectivity of the computers and the software infrastructure to create one project that was simultaneously happening at more than twenty different locations, a genuinely distributed artwork whose experiential effect both depended on and transgressed the physical distance between the participants.

Another example is "FragMental Storm 02 (FMS02)" by Exonemo (2002). Before its use it should be downloaded to a local computer. Explanation by author:

"FragMental Storm 02 (FMS02)" is a type of web browser. It uses keywords to search the Internet

and displays corresponding data onto the screen. In conventional web browsers the graphics and text shown on the screen are positioned in accordance with instructions included in the mark-up language HTML. In contrast, FMS frees text and graphics from their HTML, scattering them randomly over the screen. (Exonemo, 2002)

This work is constantly in redesign and regeneration. The result is changing, evolving and we can speak about another kind of delay, or waiting until the artwork complete (if the user ends it) or does not complete. It is endless - it is not repeating itself in detail, but still we can say that it becomes comparable, as it starts to look similar if we don´t intervene by clicking and refreshing it. It reminds us rather time based art, looping video installation and it has been exhibited as installation as well.

We can say that the delay here is rather traditional, not like in the Refresh-project, were it was an integral part of the artwork. Here the viewer or user is "requesting" visual composition. After that programmed code retrieves visuals and text from the Internet in real time and mixes them, it plays with them "creatively". The viewer in fact is "ordering" the artworks next phase and it is "performed" and "delivered" to him. Everything is based on functional software designed by the artist.

We can describe all artworks which are defined as "participative" or "interactive" in the same sense. Artwork changes or presents its variations after user input, it gives feedback, and it talks back. Dependant on the complexity of the software or hardware it could happen more or less interestingly. A dialogue is taking place between the artwork and the user.

4. Dialogue and delay

For describing the specific quality of telecommunication art, Eduardo Kac has used the terms "dialogism" and "dialogical art". Kac (103) wrote that "there is a clear difference between dialogical art and interactive art (all dialogical works are interactive, not all "interactive" works are dialogical)". Also, he wrote: "dialogical aesthetics is intersubjective and stands in stark contrast with monological art, which is largely based on the concept of individual expression." (104)

Kac writes that the roots of contemporary dialogical art experiences can be traced back to this arc of experimentation ... —from modern avant-garde collaborations and interactive propositions to the dematerialized and participatory events of the sixties and seventies (110). „Telepresence art offers dialogical alternatives to the monological system of art and converts telecommunications links into a physical bridge connecting remote spaces." (Kac 2005a)

After Kac (2005) reason for appearance of dialogical art is „... increased dissatisfaction with concepts of art centred on the individual and on romantic heroic myths..."

Shortly we can describe dialogical art as art which produces new content during interaction with it and that the artworks' physicality or visual, audible or other content is changing. The artwork is not the same in beginning as it is in the end.

I'll bring for example a work by Nurit Bar-Shai (IL), an online performance in three acts - "Nothing Happens" (2006). The author describes it as interactive telematic mixed media live streaming installation with custom made software:

> "*Nothing Happens* is a telematic networked performance in which online viewers work together to make a series of objects tip over. The performance consists of three acts, which are centered around staged environments – a high shelf, a cluttered tabletop and an empty floor. Each scene contains a central protagonist, respectively: a cardboard box, a clear pint glass full of water and a wooden chair. In all three acts, web-enabled, physical devices controlled by viewer's clicks make these objects tip over. The three acts are performed sequentially, each within a duration of a few days' to weeks' time. These performance are linear and terminal; they end when the object falls." (Bar-Shai, 2006)

The website allows physically distant observers a chance to participate. In one direction, the site displays live images in real time of the current as it unfolds. In the other direction, users are able to click a simple interface in order to manipulate the scene.

Raivo Kelomees

The key aim of interactivity in this performance, as the artist writes, is to create an immediate and understandable form of interaction, so that each click of a user is rightfully perceived as developing the scene further. (Bar-Shai, 2006)

In this work we see paradoxically real materiality elements which are part of the telecommunication artwork. The user and participant operate in a real time factual distant reality, like an operator is manipulates with hands of robots in space. The internet performance of things is linear, it has beginning and end. The result is predictable, but different in its speed. Naturally, real-time transmission or bandwidth influences the execution speed of the clicks and the speed of refreshed images on a website where we see tipping objects.

This discontinuity of internet performance, that it could be defined as an act-and-wait strategy, is similar with other interactive artworks where the user acts and waits for feedback. Here we see that the delay between images, which is defined by the transmission speed of the network, defines the activity of user. The slowness and predictability of the performance gives the user an opportunity to follow the process, it really fits with internet speed. We can expect a possible rupture of communication if the speed changes, if it gets faster and the view on the installation is not refreshed with sufficient speed. The user cannot follow the performance. Not this one, probably, as it is predictable, but some other event of remote controlling.

In case the user meets a non-predictable installation, each act of the user is defined by changes of the artwork. The same is happening in real dialogical situations in human communication, where questions and answers could be random, even the topic could change and new content could possibly emerge.

5. Conclusion

The speed of data transmission defines the delay between acts of communication (which could be an act of creation and an act of reception) as much as processor speed defines the execution of algorithms in a computer which allow selecting more complex tasks to realize. It means that images with higher resolution could be rendered or videos with higher frame rate could be edited. Higher speed of transmission and short delay in real-time communication gives the possibility to follow much quicker movement of a distant object and to see a much higher resolution of images.

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Robot: Ritual Oracle and Fetish

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With the ever unfolding and amazing propagation of technology humans are becoming increasingly convinced of technology's magic-like abilities and potential.

Laptops serve as animistic power fetishes enabling a sense of control and power in an unpredictable world. Like a latter day Ouija board our fingers move over keyboards and tracking pads asking questions and seeking answers from symbols as to call up information, visions and fantasies from the banal to the arcane.

Cell phones have become magic wand appendages, loaded with applications and serving as shaman-like rattle sticks, empowered with sounds and insights enabling the survival of the post-modern hunter-gatherer. They are talismanic communicators helping us understand and navigate by capturing holding, measuring, and deciphering the seen and unseen forces of the surrounding world. The cell phone has the ability to endow its user with a sense of control, status, and connection with invisible worlds. The cell phone and computer are latter day magical objects filled with mojo to make us more powerful than the biological limitations. In the spaces around live the invisible digital spirits waiting to be conjured, like a séance, into a voice, a message or image.

The web is a mana machine, ethereal yet a pathway of networks offering near instantaneous knowledge, people, other times and places. It is a non-place that has magically given shape to the intangible collective world mind. It is a human-made urging for a collective will. It is an attempt at oneness that was once the providence of God or nature. It is something readily available to a teenager.

Synthetic chemicals, biotech drugs, and modern medical devices are our latter day medicinal herbs, potions, and juju power objects. Such things were formerly served up by a healer, shaman or herbalist who were able to decipher the hidden world, and understood all sickness as dealing with the spirits, unbalance, histories, and dreams. Today medicine converses with that which is invisible to the unaided eye. Sprite-like DNA, genetic pre-disposition, and emotional or environmental unbalance revealed in the recesses of dreams and histories follows the patterns and concerns first identified by our ancestors during the now archaic way of being in the world. The expression of old and new may be different but the methods follow the well-worn pattern of human systems.

Biotech along with advanced warfare has bequeathed onto humans powers once God-like—the power of destruction, pro-creation, and manipulation. We have all live with and have been effected by technology, it runs through our veins, is a part of our cell structure, social and culture, shaping and guiding our sense of the everyday and understanding of reality. Media, technologically mediated and presented, convey images, sounds, and words are folded into the soft tissue of our brains increasingly determining our sense of self, others and the world.

Nothing is beyond the bounds of possibility, for the human body is able to extend beyond biological finitude. We humans are in a historical moment constructing a new kind of reality, in many way a technological promise land, dazzling place of computer-generated perfectibility, a fulfillment of human desires and hopes; a place that makes commonplace fantastical offerings of that which was once unimaginable by mere mortals.

Thomas Riccio

The future was once the domain of prophets, oracles, and visionaries. From Delphi to the book of revelations to Nostradamus to stock market or weather forecasting, to know the future is to enable one's ability to survive and flourish.

Artificial Intelligence driven conversational robots, made in the image of humans, are creatures of the future-present. These robots, now in prototype, are positioned to provide the pathway between technology and humanity, a reflexive, ritual-religious unitary expression on which we inscribe the fears and hopes of our human evolution. The mere existence and presence of human-like robots amongst us is, like any human expression, reflective of the feeling, ideas, and aspirations that run like currents through our age. The human-like robot is an expression of our very specific historical moment, namely the wedding of humans and technology.

The human-like robot is for now an actor, performing a script written by humans for humans, serving, and like any theatrical offering, offering an insight to better comprehending who and what we are. But unlike a human actor, this robot actor is not playing a script, but rather actively participating in the writing of the script. Not just in terms of Artificial Intelligence but also in terms of the human-robot Meta narrative itself. Rather than simply being a metaphor and idealization (for better or worse) of what we humans are and what we are becoming, this human-like mechanical entity, is establishing a life of its own. The robot is expanding the human narrative. The robot is an outsider and insider, a surrogate for humanity to better see, understand, and change itself. The robot's terms, expressions, and behavior and the consequences it (he, she?) will have on human societies and cultures are in the process of unfolding. We are participant-observers in the unfolding.

Robots, long a figment of fiction and resident of the imagination are becoming a new species, now tangibly gestating, begot of human effort, will and need. Conversational, interactive robots, with flesh-like skin, human facial expressions, vision tracking, vocal recognition, synthesis, and speech, upgradeable software, large memories, central processing units, evolving artificial intelligent, animations, sensors, databases and personalities are all in place set to evolve beyond the sum of their parts and software. Set to evolve beyond the prediction of their human creators. Conversational, human-like robots are crisscrossing and blurring psychological, ethical, and philosophical boundaries and already the questions of responsibility, relationship and sentience are upon us.

When does a robot become human and then what is the essence of human? Is it an accumulation of data, personality traits, memory, behavior—what is it that uniquely qualifies what it is to be human? Is it information? Memory? Is it the ability to think new thoughts? Is it a soul, a something that we humans cannot quantify or qualify? Is a robot a mere expression, container, and medium of humanity or can it become human? Historically humans have identified and relegated marginalized human others (who shared human biology) as non-human, enslaving and destroying them only to later accept them as human? How were the once marginalized converted to humanness? Is humanness a malleable, negotiated social /cultural construct?

When AI evolves a robot beyond its data input, as it is surely doing, what does it become? No longer relegated to machine other, they are becoming more life-like with recognizable actions and characteristics evoking emotion and reaction. They are us and like us, in between humanity and technology.

Humans have long lived between worlds. Humans have long talked to, sacrificed and died for the figures of gods, spirits and ancestors that were avatars of larger, unseen and potent worlds, myths, and belief systems. Such fetishes have, since the beginning of our species, efficiently held and coded human longing, fear, and desire. Humanity has dreamed this robot moment into existence. Human have long lived with technology. Now technology, that other we have lived with has a voice and is able to talk back.

Like the human-robot, technology no longer lives within a human system. Humans now live within the system of technology. The argument can be made that technology has become the system, the narrative structure that organizes, orders, and perpetuates, for better or worse, life on the planet.

Our human sense of order, actions, and survival depends on technology—it is not just about hardware, software, the digital and the virtual now, but rather about a technologically based schema of reality. Humans are conforming to technological dictated placeless, to machine-like behavior, adjusting our patterns and

metaphors. The transforming of our language systems is only one indication of our evolving intercourse with technology. Am I talking about humans or technology actions when I say "process" information, "interface", have "operating systems", catch "viruses", have "mother" boards, "spell check", do "searches", "migrate", have "home" pages, "cache", have "down time" and "memory." Indeed, technology now holds and is the primary repository of earth's collective memory. Language, the first technology and most sensitive responder of human evolution, is indicating what is already happening.

As a consequence of this human-technological parlay, we humans are caught in a momentum, forced to respond to the dictates of a technology driven social and cultural lives. We, like machines, must become more productive and efficient, time sensitive, and less expensive or become obsolete. Our time and efforts are increasingly parsed, measured, monitored, evaluated and data crunched into pie charts, trends, and forecasts. Increasing our biological self and its expression is datafied, categorized, modularized, and processed in conformity with the technology driven dictates.

In response to the Niagara of information we humans have less time to, well be human. The technologically driven context we find ourselves in has changed how we think, see and live in the world. Becoming more like data processers than thinkers and integrators; our minds and bodies are understood more like machines than mysteries; our social and professional lives more fragmented, modular, categorized, and interchangeable; and our social cultural identities are now more malleable, negotiated and overlapping according to need which often has little or nothing to do with where and how our biological self lives, looks or behaves. Attention Deficit Disorder, stress, drug abuse, hypertension and Autism are consequences of our transformation.

We have avatars, multiple identities and existences that enable us negotiate modular lives in our technological reality. We are able to travel the world without leaving our computer and inhabit multiple social and cultural spheres. Indeed, it could even be argued in a Bauldriardian way, that we all are becoming or already are, avatars feeding off the nostalgia of what humans used to be like. Ultimately, however, we are the process of evolving into another kind of species in order to survive in an emerging new world order fashioned by the confluence and insistent, implicit demands of technology. Like our hunter-gather ancestors, we adapt or die.

Ironically, we humans of the developed world have achieved the apex of freedom and individuality. We are now free to roam and be anything anywhere everywhere and nowhere. Increasingly bereft of direct human contact, we've become more abstracted from terrestrial reality, more isolated, less communal, and more neurotic because our social being is being re-processed by technology.

Psychotropic and illegal drugs are symptomatic, the rise and appeal of radical and fundamental religion, the realizations of youth, sport, fan and political cultures are all a yearning for a surety in an unsure time. We go to chat rooms, facebook, or Second Life rather than cafes, watch movies, cooking, and reality shows at home as a substitute for living; the popularity of action films for an adrenaline rush, horror films for the surety of primal instinct and reconnecting to the oldest part of our animal brain. And there is the simplicity of video games, which comfort with their base obviousness, rules and formula, while providing the illusion of control, taking solace in vicariously being alive and fighting back the demons and evils that surround us.

Is it any wonder video and computer gaming is so popular? Fragmentary, mythological inspired ritualizations, the detritus of bygone eras, inform video games, providing a form and manifesting metaphors in what amounts to a street-to-street fight against a terrorist that is everywhere and nowhere. Beneath the games live ritual and mythic patterns and thematic motifs—things hardwired to our biology and humanity—updated, grafted and fashioned appropriate for our what I call our emerging, "Techdigenous" reality. We indigenous earthlings are in the process of merging of human and technological cultures.

Is it any wonder video games are most popular with those on the front line with technology, the inheritors of the human future, the young. An epic, mythic battle between titans, human and technological cultures, is being waged again. We are changing as a species, our humanity challenged yet mediated by the very forces we so willingly seek, accept and emulate. We are becoming willingly colonized. Life at it most basic has become so vividly a hyper-real, self-aware, paradoxical game, a competition demanding integration and interaction with the very thing that is insidiously taking us over. The monster of our own collective making.

Thomas Riccio

The body neurotic expresses our humanity challenged and in confusion. Some feed their neurosis to obesity; some starve to anorexia, while others push the body to idealized, fetishized perfection. Some seek to distract or lose themselves in the comforts of the material in extreme – from SUV to gourmet food to Mac Mansions – to feel bigger and better as much as to address fears, assuage anxieties and insecurities. Others seek challenge, authenticity and aliveness in extreme sports, emotions and experiences. Modern sexuality with its admixture of ambiguity and extremity of extreme archetypal assertions, is as much about a species in confusion as it is about cultural evolution, as it is an affirmation expressing the degree to which we are aware and willing to go to embrace more deeply the island of our bodies, the one thing we can still refer to with certainty.

The body is a site reflecting simultaneously our search, declaration, and confusion about being human in this era. The extremes of asexual androgyny and gender explicitness collide yet co-exist in our era of aggregated and layered complexity. We live in a time that folds reality with fantasy, myth, and willful projections—a time not much different than that of our "primitive" ancestors. Is it possible that a moment of re-creating the world anew beckons us back to the future?

Most of us, dress our bodies, hair, and skin in relationship to the instantaneous fashion-celebrity-corporate mediated, technology propagated priori, participating in the symbiotic dance of social conformity, acceptance and vibrancy. And much like the traditional regalia of indigenous people we dress and look like we should, according to rank, role, and affiliation. We balance, confuse, and conflate conformity and individuality in nearly every aspect of our lives. Much like the character Neo in the Matrix film franchise, we delude ourselves, thinking we are free, but rather are codependent, just one of the many, plugged into and feeding the machine to be fed by it.

How and why is wearing a shirt, jacket or shoes emblazoned with a corporate logo become the accepted norm and somehow a mark of personal expression?

How did it happen that humans so willingly subscribed and accept participation in the machine-like, technologically mediated efficiency of economies of scale? Convincing and fitting humans into a their place in the coma-like conformity of a franchise system, affecting dress, identity, thinking, and eating, is the most banal indicator of the creeping Techdenous age we live within.

Increasingly medical technology is put into the service of perfectibility with bodies becoming real only through machined monitors, becoming "plastic" malleable and transformable much like our expanding sense of identity, sexuality, and reality. Sexuality and its augmentations, trainer mediated body designs, penis enlargements, Viagra, breast, lip, and buttock implants, liposuction, you name it, all expressions of human fertility going to extremes out of desperation, competition, and/or is it anxiety?

Are we a species sensing our finitude and scrambling to leave our mark, the equivalent to our handprint on the Neolithic cave to say we've been here? Or are we approaching moment of fundamental change, a moment whereby suddenly things that have been building up rapidly to "flip" into another way of being in the world? Much like the fall of the Soviet Union, much like the mortgage financial crisis, much like 9/11?

For similar, but different reasons, people mark their bodies with tattoos and piercings to reassure themselves as they concomitantly search for identity, individuality, and/or belonging. Identity and belonging, be it physically, mentally or emotionally, however tenuous or provisional, indicates association with meaning systems—we humans seek meaning and systems and are assured by belonging. We need to be a part of something. Human civilization is exactly that—the biological being as part of a greater and ongoing system of meaning, values, signs, and structures. Life without system and meaning would be otherwise be not human, incomprehensible, and unbearable.

Is it any wonder our era is one of extremes, conflicts, and contradictions? A dialogue of obsessive actions, acts of terrorism, psychological dysfunction, religious revivalism and re-imaginingings of sacred pasts, tolerance and intolerance, incivility, and anxiety? Humanity is in the throes of becoming something new, something different, never before seen, vaguely understood, impossible to comprehend in its totality, a something suggesting annihilation as it indicates hope. This is a glorious and exciting time to live in and unlike any other time with all that is at stake. The world's populations stress resources, the bio system shakes and convulses. Things will never be as they were again.

The human species is a collective organism, increasingly being, thinking, and solidifying its identity on the planet. It is an organism out of balance and we are in a period of disruption, a flux, and re-ordering seeking re-balance. Extremes in such periods are to be expected for it is a testing of alternative as much as it is a demonstration of dysfunction. We are at the end of one historical cycle. Our inheritance is thick, too much to carry forward, so we collectively are in the process of trying, questioning, sorting out, sloughing off, playing out and re-examining, re-mixing everything, testing, shedding and incorporating, creating the world anew.

So rapid, overwhelming and fundamentally transformative has the evolution of humans into a Techdigenous reality been that its effects and long term implications cannot be understood despite our scramble to create webs of understanding. The paradigm has shifted. The human species move into the Techdigenous was welcomed like a sparkling, embracing fog, which belied its quick, tsunami-like force, which has left in its path many either giddy with excitement, disoriented or both.

1. Robots

Robots, the most sophisticated and human-like extensions of the human made, body and being in the worlds, have, for the last several decades, been obediently at work assembling automobiles, packaging food products, stacking prepackaged foods, assisting doctors in surgery, and performing tasks that would be hazardous for human beings. Doing things such as exploring the deepest of deep seas, studying whales close-up and mapping coral reefs, drilling far beneath the earth where humans have never been, rescuing miners trapped underground, dismantling and cleaning toxic waste, exploring the surface of Mars, doing repair work on the outer surfaces of spacecraft, acting in warfare zones as, drones, minesweepers and booby-trap searchers. These robots do not pretend to be human. They are constructed, activated, and carefully controlled by humans.

However, there is another kind of robot, one that has sprung forth from our collective unconsciousness, or will going from fantasy to fiction into reality. This robot is as much a technological marvel as it is a sociological and cultural event. As much a testimony of human civilization accumulated achievement as it is a mnemonic and symbol of who and what humans have become, to what they aspire, to what they hope and what they fear.

Namely the appearance and development of the "intelligent machine" the "conversational" or "intelligent robot." A human-like robot being modeled after humans, stocked with human data with the ability to recognize and participate in human patterns of communication. A human-like robot being that we bio-humans can interact and participate with socially, something that behaves, talks, moves and seems like a human. A human made, fully mechanical, human "other."

The artificial human, the human other, precursors of the robot, have circulated through history in various forms since Hephaestus created Telos from bronze in ancient Greece and Pygmalion created a woman from ivory. Such figures were, like the 16th century Jewish legend of the Golem, an artificial man of clay, as much imagination as they were the personification of a fear and desire. The mythology of living bodies, often from natural materials, has an ancient provenance. And they are almost always associated with religion, ritual or mythology. For such objects, be they mechanical or human-like or not, have always been objects that attract, hold and articulate human thought and feelings—much like a crucifix, a statue of Buddha, a Haida totem pole—they are functional as the are mnemonics, holders and markers of thought, time, space, and feeling. Are they alive? Maybe so but not like us, but maybe in their way, yes, very much alive.

Frankenstein remains the most vivid example of a manipulated human other, one that simultaneously reflects and forecasts the dangers of artificial and technologically created beings. The industrial revolution exacerbated the fear of anthropomorphic machines, such as "robots", which were initially fictive projections of the deepening shadow cast by industrialization, urbanization, and mechanization. World War I introduced war as machine and in so doing cemented the relationship between humans and technology as a necessity of human survival. And in so doing begin a co-dependency that enabled another world war, the nuclear age, computers, digitalization, and virtual reality. And here we are. One thing became certain in this relationship; humans gained and maintained power, enhancing survival, by, through and with technology.

Thomas Riccio

It is not coincidental that we consider in our current world the most advanced, most powerful, successful, and influential nations on earth are those that are the most technologically endowed.

Like Frankenstein, the monster with a grotesque body, so too are today's robots a collage of fragments, simulacrum of humans, not stitched but rather bolted together; not with the brain of a criminal but rather a brain animated by others. They are "creatures" that that give form to feeling. If popular culture is an indicator the robot evokes ambivalence, an evil Terminator destroyer countered by a cute and lovable Zeno created by Hanson Robotics.

Ambivalence is apt for the robot that, like Frankenstein, zombies, and spirits, reside in an uncertain realm between living and nonliving matter. Human desires built the robot endowing it with intellectual powers and unknown potentialities and these human creative energies once transfigured by Artificial Intelligence are, by their very nature, enigmatic, unpredictable, full of potential and existing on the horizon between fear and hope. And, like a ritual or sexual fetish—an object or person that incarnates simultaneously that which is feared and desired—the robot must be respected and subdued for if it were to be set loose it would run amok, take over social order and then demolish the world humanity has created.

Technology is not an inanimate and inert thing, but rather a dynamic and self-propagating force that has shaped and now dictates life on earth. Technology used to be something that supported and extended human efforts. Now it is something that leads, enables, and is near indispensible to human efforts. The conversational, intelligent robot is but a totem marking a new sort of god—a channel to access and make incarnate the spirit-like presence of technology that surrounds us. The air is filled with technologically created waves, passing through our bodies as biotechnology saturates and mediates every cell and synapse. The mysterious spirits of old, those that were brought to life by way of ritual, myth and religion, have taken on a new shape but not a new function. The "spirits" of technology live with us now, ordering and giving meaning to our reality, connecting us to a greater reality, instilling hope, longevity and meaning. The newest device is sought after with a new kind of (religious?) fervor for it somehow promises a greater ability to connect and survive in our Techdigenous world. Was not the medieval Christian fervor for indulgences similarly motivated? Is the Techdigenous simply the religious manifestation of science? Does humanity simply rework belief systems in adaptive response to the current reality? Are the patterns, attributes, and systems of myth, ritual and religion embedded in our cultural genetics, hardwired as an operating system and forever in a process of spiraling as concentric cycles outwardly?

For centuries the arch of technology has been that of evolving from cumbersome attendant and support, inarticulate and servile, to guide, shaper and facilitator. The influence and voice of technology has become exponentially louder, more insistent and more pervasive. Technology has been communicating with us, each of us in our own way, though our radios, iPhones, computers, and televisions—it is not just about human initiated content. It is more fundamentally about the patterns and systems of communication—the deep structures. Now technology has a focused voice and we are ability to talk directly to it. We can converse with the invisible that surrounds us. The human-like robot makes visible the invisible articulating a technological voice that formerly only murmured at the edges of human consciousness. Now that voice is heard and it has a face. Its voice and face are familiar, human-like, but not human. It is something from ourselves, different, greater, and lesser. Or is the entire human-technological endeavor just part of an ongoing pursuit to understand, manifest, and participate in the mystery of being that has always surrounded our species? Are the technologies that network, empower, and expand human ability motivated by survival in a world requiring connectivity, greater efficiency, actualization of potential, and extension of the human senses?

Humanity and technology are at a precipice gazing into a new era, and like the Hindu god, Shiva, we have endowed the robot as a symbol of creation and destruction. Such an endowment is necessary for a transfiguration.

Digital Art and Children's Formal and Informal Practices: Exploring Curiosities and Challenging Assumptions

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This paper explores art education with children of secondary school age in the UK, where digital technologies are being increasingly used by students to make artefacts. It addresses the following questions:

1. Is formal art education premised upon assumptions about what art should be and the sorts of processes that should be involved in learning to make art ?

2. What are the artistic practices that children and teachers are engaging in with digital technology both in and out of school?

3. Does engagement with digital technology in making art offer a kind of bridge between formal and informal practices of making ?

It begins with a brief discussion of the art curriculum in UK schools and the factors that are involved in the creation of art practices in classrooms. It then moves on to discuss some of the emergent practices that are developing in light of digital technologies. The main part of the paper draws on two vignettes of children's art practices in secondary schools which are explored in depth with reference to the research questions.

1. Art in schools

Art in school can viewed from the point of view of a curriculum document which defines a set of ideas about art knowledge, and influences the activities that go on in a school art classroom.

(Atkinson 2002) gives an account of several key trends which have influenced the Art and Design curriculum in schools since the 1970s and which may have shaped many teachers' values about their practice. He suggests that in 1970s and 1980s the idea of allowing children to express themselves and their feelings through art was valued highly, this was then counterbalanced with the influence of work by (Taylor 1999) with a critical approach to the work of other artists. Recent trends emphasize an assessment of children's artwork based on criteria which view art as a specific set of 'semiotic practices'. These practices, he suggests, often have their roots in modernist or pre-modernist versions of art practice, often emphasizing the accurate depiction of space, colour or tone, or certain versions individuality when engaging in the practice of self expression

These ideas are often visible in the sort of activities that can be observed in art classrooms. Here is one version of how these curriculum ideas would be typically enacted in a school art project:

- Starting with a gathering process whether through drawing from life, photography or through collected imagery. Teaching of techniques to allow this to happen. The gathering process will often be based on theme for the whole project such as Nature or Urban landscapes.

- A development period in which these collected images are used for some other purpose, often involving the introduction of artist's work that students are asked to study. One common technique is to use the model of analysing the Content, Form, Process and Mood of the artwork, a technique suggested by (Taylor 1999)

- A finishing stage in which a 'final piece' of work would be produced drawing together ideas and techniques covered already.

The practices that go in school art are shaped by the curriculum and the assumptions upon which it is based . They are also shaped by the teachers selections of materials, tools, cultural and artistic references that are decided upon in the planning of activities. There is also sense in which some art classrooms may have a particular ethos or set of values about what the purpose of learning art in school is. Eisner (2002) suggests several underlying versions of Art and Design education which inform the practice of art teachers. These include

- Discipline based art education

- Visual Culture

- Preparation for work

- Creative self expression

- Cognitive Development

- Creative problem solving

- Promoting academic performance

- Integrated arts

<div align="center">(Eisner 2002) p25-42</div>

These values grow from a combination of the values that teachers may hold about art through their own artistic practice, and also from experience of different values from the experience of becoming and working as an art teacher.

2. Digital tools and informal practices

Digital tools allow a different form of making process to take place in art and design. They combine what is often referred to in art classrooms as 'research' that is, finding out about artwork and artists, with the making of artwork through the use of tools. Using digital tools to create artwork may be different from traditional media, but I am not aiming here for a comparative discussion of these two ways of seeing tools. Many digital art tools have within them the cultural references to non digital ones, for example the 'rubber stamp' in Photoshop, some are completely new and only make sense in the context of digital artwork. Some people have suggested that digital tools allow a form of making that starts with ready made artefacts and that the creative process is one of recombining these to form new work (Wood 2004). This sort of work is not new though, the idea of the collage or montage has influenced many artists from the start of the modernist movement in the early 20th century. The difference is in the way that the ready-made material makes its way into the students work which is less likely to be solely through the filter of the teacher's decisions, (although may be through the filter of the education authority's internet policies), and this is not to say that the teacher's role in selecting material is redundant, but that the selection may become a negotiation process. Indeed, (Buckingham 2000) suggests that the view of the 'active' child in selecting media material is over simplistic as media corporations are very powerful in their targeting of audiences, in which case teachers are very important in this selection process.

New forms of knowledge in the art curriculum, I am suggesting, can only be understood by looking at the new forms of activity that emerge when these new tools become a presence in students lives. This does not necessarily rely on digital technology being present in the classrooms, as activity can currently be informed by children's ownership of technology, both mobile and at home.

Current research and literature covering the use of technology in informal spaces has focuses on different areas. For example (Merchant, Dickinson et al. 2006) looks at the way that children construct identity in digital chat spaces, and the forms of writing which emerge from these types of communications. (Rheingold 2008) explores how blogging might be used to start and continue debate based on the interests of students,

and (Jenkins 2006) discusses the phenomena of 'fan art', artwork based heavily on the worlds and narratives suggested in a variety of films or computer games. The use of digital tools in the making of art and design will form the basis of another chapter but it is important here to say that these tools are being used by students to create artefacts and that this may happen outside of physical and curriculum spaces suggested by school. It is suggested that technology use in informal spaces may be better understood as being playful, whereas the need for a curriculum to organise such emerging ways of working into clearly defined objectives may cause tension or even distrust of such informal practices (Merchant, Dickinson et al. 2006). So these practices can be seen as highlighting the limits of a certain type of curriculum which cannot organize them into clear packages of skills and knowledge.

I suggest that digital tools in the arts, as well as creating some wholly new practices, have also made visible a number of informal art practices that may have played a less significant role in the development of children's art. Such technologies, in occupying a curious position both inside and out of school or as both entertainment and productive tools, are showing the limits of an art curriculum based on certain assumptions about what it means to engage in the process of learning to make and understand art. In the two vignettes that follow, I explore this idea with reference to the work of secondary school students.

3. Two vignettes
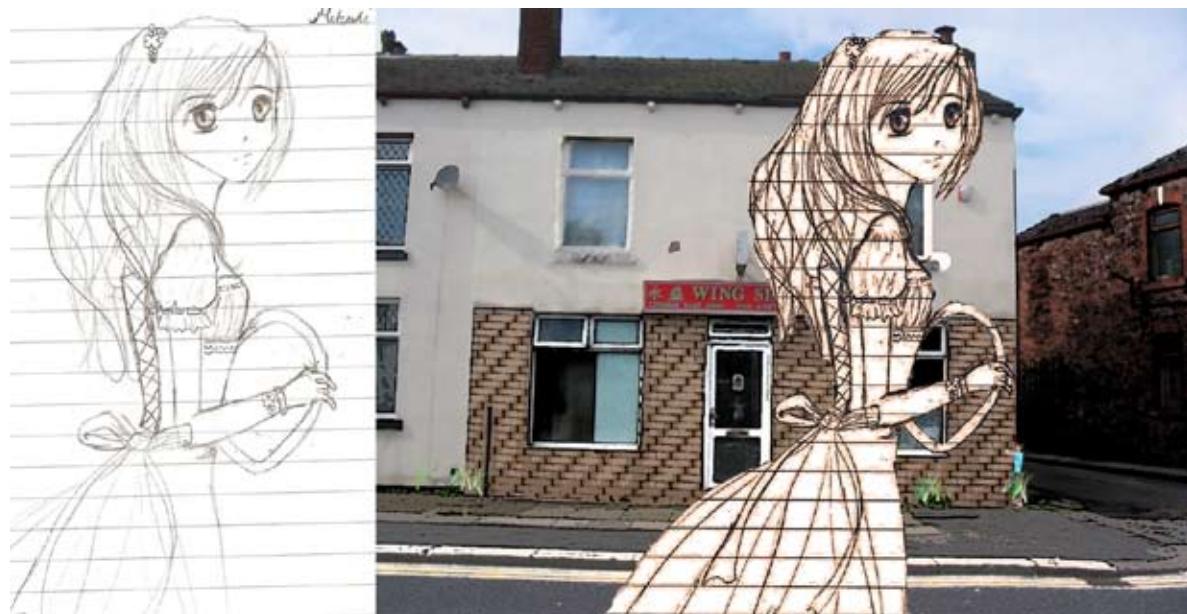
Figure 1: Jenny's secret drawings

Jenny was an A-level student in the school and the teacher had said that she had started some very interesting work and that I should talk to her about it. Jenny showed me a pad of ruled paper in which she had done many drawings of characters that she had invented. She was interested in the Japanese Manga/Anime style of artwork and all of he drawings were in this style. She explained as she turned the pages of the book, and I asked questions:

> J: I draw mainly female figures, like ballerinas, they are low status characters but they wear high status clothes…I'm not very good at hands and feet so I find ways of avoiding drawing them… I really want to draw a male character, its part of a love story, but they are harder, you can't make the eyes too big

> Me: How do learn the techniques?

> J: I have a book on how to draw them, and there are videos on Youtube showing you how to draw different parts

> Me: Do you do them at home?
>
> J: Yes mostly, but I do it in secret, I think my mum and dad think other subjects are more important than drawing
>
> Me: I think you could combine them with your photographs, we can scan them and try putting them together, and maybe you could make the story.

And so a project began where the images were scanned from her drawing book and combined with digital photographs that she had taken of the streets around where she lived. What strikes me about this short vignette is the evidence of her developing her own intentions with her drawings and the way that this interacts with the expectations, not only of her environment in and out of school, but with the those of the style of artwork that she has become interested in. In short they are:

J's intentions: To make a love story, to learn to draw difficult parts or find ways round them, to seek sources of advice with drawing.

Manga/Anime artwork: Low and high status characters, Male eyes should not be too big

School/Home expectations: To only draw for art subject in school, To use drawings as part of some other artwork.

Jenny's intentions stem from an interest in this style of animation and illustration and there are many examples available to her from many media sources (internet, DVD, film, books). She has an interest at the core of which is the desire to create characters and stories using a visual style that is appealing to her. She talks not only about where she is now – ' I draw mainly female figures, like ballerinas' but alludes to where she would like to go with her work 'I really want to draw a male character', she is also developing ways to cope with the things that she finds difficult either by finding ways around them, or by looking for sources of help. The sources of help come from tutorials by others that claim to have mastered them and are able to show step by step procedures for doing certain difficult techniques. Here Jenny could be said to be developing a form of 'deschooled' practice. She has identified an interest and sought out sources of information and help to learn about this. These sources of help come from outside her formal art education and are drawn upon when her need arises. In this sense there could be said to be a form of master craftsperson/apprentice or expert/novice type of relationship between her and the people that have the knowledge she seeks. However unlike the craft guild the apprentice here can choose to access whatever help is available when it is needed, due to it being publicly available.

This knowledge of how to create drawings in this style relates to a tradition which has developed a set of common understandings like any other artisitic tradition. There are certain conventions in this style of work which she is aware of, for example that 'Male eyes should not be too big', and these become part of the way that she approaches her drawings. In this sense this tradition with its conventions could be said to be part of a curriculum, at least a curriculum seen as a body of knowledge. However, curriculum is more than just a body of knowledge, it can also set out the methods by which this knowledge is to be learned. Indeed, knowledge can be understood in terms of processes and techniques. In this case the knowledge of processes, that is grounded in a particular set of values and conventions, is formed mainly by enthusiasts. By enthusiasts I mean those who develop practices for little material gain or outside of professional work. Whether this differs significantly from the sort of curriculum that is present in school art is a subject for discussion. Teachers, many of whom are practicing artists, could be seen as enthusiasts that ground their teaching activities in the traditions of art and design that they have a preference for. A more important subject for discussion though might be about what the role of the teacher and the school is in a situation where quite specialised knowledge can be sought from many different sources. By learning the techniques of Manga/Anime illustration is Jenny imitating a tradition, whether the sort of role that an art teacher can provide to move beyond this, and indeed whether 'moving beyond' has some greater value than imita-

tion, will be important topics for exploring the practices and roles of informal art.

> 'Hey there friends, this is mark Crowley I'm back with another how to draw tutorial this time we are going to be looking at inking, I think what I'm going to do is go ahead and zoom in here on the mouth area, I'm going to focus on cross hatching today because I have had people ask me about cross hatching, and its not so hard something you can pick up over time and practice. I'm going to outline the mouth, and inside the mouth is where where going to see a lot of classic crosshatching. One thing I will say as I outline the mouth is, with Japanese comics the line, the ink line is generally pretty thin, in American comics you will see a lot of variation in the width of the line and that's very much encouraged in the American tradition, but in Japanese tradtion they keep their lines pretty thin.'

The above image and transcript is from a Youtube tutorial video on Manga drawing, and is the sort of thing that Becky was using to help her with her drawing techniques. Tutorial videos on Youtube seem to fall into two categories, one is a video of the artist or teacher demonstrating techniques with a live voice recording, the other is a kind of stage by stage series of images with text describing the process, there are a also a number of videos which are hybrids of these two. This video falls into the first category.

Two things are of interest in relation to my study: the creation of community and the reference to sets of values in the 'tradition' of this drawing. The artist in creates a sense of community firstly by referring to those watching as 'friends' and secondly by responding to feedback about his tutorials by people who wanted to learn a particular technique, and saw a gap in the existing tutorials. This can be related to a teachers classroom practice in which she might identify difficulties that are arising in work, and then stop the class so that she can give some input on how to deal with such problems. However there are important differences, as in the video tutorial community the request is made specifically to the artist to demonstrate a technique.

My second observation draws on the references the artist makes to the traditions of comic book art, firstly in the use of the word 'classic' suggesting a kind of perennial technique that is understood many and in common use, and in the specific talk about the traditions of American and Japanese line drawing. Again this is similar to references that teachers make to techniques used by other artists, or groups of artists in their work. It creates understandings that are shared by the community and ones which Jenny has clearly been influenced by in her own drawing.

So when we consider how the notions of formal and informal learning relate to such methods of teaching, we can see elements of both. What has become clear is that analysis of the form of the demonstration is unlikely to show a great difference in the approach of a teacher imparting knowledge to students. What is different is the approach that students show to accessing and using these videos to add to their skills and knowledge, one in which they may have power which is denied to them by the formal contexts of the school art room.

A further development to the Becky vignette made me consider the view of children's informal practices held by adults that surrounded them. Becky said that she did her drawings in secret because she felt her parents did not approve of her drawing as it would take away from time spent on more important subjects. In many ways this is a situation I had encountered in teaching before, that art has a less clear relationship with the sorts of knowledge that might be needed to live, either in everyday life or in a chosen career, and this is the subject of different discussion. What interested me more was that one form of validating this work took the form of a commission by the school

There are also several different competing versions of art education that are valued by the different participants in this example. There is Jenny who values her own private drawings that have been influenced by the forms, drawing techniques, and ideas in Manga culture. Her drawings show a proficiency with this

style developed by seeking out tutorial books, online demonstrations, and searching for examples of this type of work which she stored in her hard drive space on the school network. So in terms of art education, and here I refer back to the versions suggested by (Eisner 2002) Jenny values 'creative self expression', and possibly 'discipline based art education' given that some of her t methods are based in illustration. The teacher in the school seems to value the same things but the focus here is probably more on fine art traditions rather than illustration. In fine art, the techniques of illustration may be used, but these serve a different end, one which adds another layer of 'knowing' understanding often through the creation of a mixed media piece. Illustration in the style of Manga may be seen as lacking in sophistication from this point of view, and simply imitating a fairly popular style (although the teachers do not express this openly), there is an influence from the curriculum which emphasizes ' a range of media and techniques' and 'variety'. One could also add a another value position, that of Jenny's parents who see art as less important than other 'academic' subjects, however they have still supported here in taking this an exam subject. Art for them, it could be suggested, is a form of relaxation from more taxing academic subjects, or something that won't have a direct influence on what she will do in further educational experiences.

The presence of digital, communicative technologies seems to permeate the differing values and there associated conflicts. Through internet resources both directly and indirectly pedagogical, Becky is able not only to see and collect the sorts of images that interest and excite her but also to begin to be a producer of such images. This gives her a value position in art education, even though the influence of others is very powerful.

4. The animation club

Whilst I was carrying out fieldwork in the case study school the teacher asked if I would be interested in being involved in an after school art club for children who were particularly interested in producing digital artwork. My involvement was considered valuable as I had experience of producing, and teaching the making of, digital images. The group consisted of 4 boys and 1 girl aged between 12 and 14.

I started by showing the group how to start making animation using a piece of software as this was an area that they had expressed an interest in. In many ways my approach was very similar to the one I described in the previous section (??) on demonstration of techniques, however a number of things became apparent made me see my role and the purpose of working time in school very differently.

I reflected upon the way that the children in the art club use the tools to create animation, and the different practices of using the same tool. When describing my own use of the tool I thought of words like 'plan' and 'organise', but when describing the children's use it is 'freeform' and 'improvise'. In some ways this reflects a pedagogy that is built into the tool in a similar way to the one that is built into Photoshop. Flash allows an animator to construct an animation which, if made in a certain way, means that any part of it can be adapted and changed at a later date. This has benefits to animators and designers working in an industry in which designs may need to be adapted to client's needs or rapidly changing tastes. For students exploring their own personal ideas in an art club though, these benefits appear to be less of a concern. What is important is making ideas happen quickly and in the most direct way possible, so although the introduction to the use of the software began with a teacher showing the most basic way of using it, the informal pedagogy developed by the students ran along its own path, and not necessarily a very sophisticated one in terms of the tool itself. What was very sophisticated were the ideas that the children used in there animations. Figure (??) shows 4 stills taken from one animation made by one of the boys in the art club, and contain several animation devices which he uses to tell the story: References to digital tools too move about in time; references to internet search engines; animations within animations; use of imagery to represent periods in history. He draws on knowledge from other subject areas and from internet culture in general to tell the story. Here is an example of a child being shown a potentially very complex tool, but only using it in its simplest form to communicate some very sophisticated storytelling ideas. The working methods built into the tool such as layered imagery, image libraries, programmable scripts could be said to be part of a formal pedagogy which would allow one to master the tool in the way it was envisioned by designers and the industries they provide for. In exploring the tool in his own time and from being mostly oblivious to the methods of use that the

software suggests, he has found a way of communicating ideas a building his own way of working. Informal art with digital tools then is not just a case of using them outside of the classroom setting, but involves, to some extent, using them on ones own terms, and either bypassing, or being aware of the pedagogies which may be a part of the design of the tool itself.

The combination of digital technologies which may be available in a number of different spaces in and out of school, with informal art practices, is shown as being very different to normal school art practices in which the tools, knowledge of their use, and expected behaviours in an art workspace, are contained within a pedagogical structure which makes sense only to those that understand and have experience of its emergence in a tradition of art, craft and design. The resulting animations that were produced at this time show great sophistication in their structure, reference points, and divergent storylines. The difference between this and what they might have produced in a formal setting seems to be more related to different understandings of the process of making art rather than different levels of sophistication in using tools. It is true that there are elements of structures in the content of the animations many of which can be seen in contemporary film and animation, there are such things as: playing with time, extreme violence, and languages fragments that come from film and television sources. If there is no qualitative difference between content such as this and the sorts of content and ideas in fine art, it is perhaps the process of using them that marks out two different territories of formal and informal art making. Talking with each other about work, making fun of it, and difference between solitary production and making sense of their work through interactions with others seems to be an important part of the development of work such as this.

Transforming culture in the digital age

Steven Naylor

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Locative Media and Augmented Reality:
Bridges and Borders between Real and Virtual Spaces

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There is no doubt that information and digital communication technologies are quickly changing the world we live in. In a few decades, the computer, Internet and a series of technologies associated with them, have transformed all aspects of the socio-cultural fields -from everyday life to the major infrastructure of capitalism. Among these changes can be highlighted the transformation of our relationship with space (and time, as they are inseparable) as a category of experience and, therefore, the concept we have of this notion.

With the emergence of the virtual space of communication –the Cyberespace- and through practices such as Tele-Presence and Virtual Reality (VR) developed in Real Time, our relationship with place and territory began to be questioned. The physical space is no longer the stable environment in which human activities are developed to become a "space of flows" inhabited by ubiquitous and *de-territorialized* subjects.

However, the development of new technologies such as tracking and tracing systems or Augmented Reality (AR) systems appear to reveal a different trend. Far from producing a separation of the individual regarding the physical space in which is developed his daily life, these technologies enable new ways of experiencing the space, which enrich our relationship with it. The space becomes a hybrid element in which boundaries between real and virtual are blurred. This raises a complex space that could be called *Hyperspace*.

My purpose is to account for this new trend towards hybrid space through creative and thoughtful use that artistic practices have begun to make of the technologies previously mentioned. I consider this approach essential because artistic practices, as symbolic constructions of society are, and always have been, regulators of the world conceptions from a critical point of view and a practical experience that strays from the everyday.

Thus, through various projects of what is known as *Locative Media* and examples of the artistic use of Augmented Reality, we will see how we can think any borders and boundaries between these two spaces -real and virtual- that tend to be one. In short, we see how is shaped and what is the *Hyperspace* and how, based on it, many of the concepts developed to define the relationship of the subject and space in the Digital Age, need to be rethought, discussed and questioned.

1. Space Transformation: Real *versus* Virtual

Before addressing the concept of *Hyperspace* and to understand it better, I consider appropriate some consideration of spatial model of the Digital Age, -i.e. the conception of space arising from the development of Cyberspace- and the concepts that define it.

Cyberspace, by Pierre Levy, is identified with the network and can be defined as "the new communication media emerging from the global interconnection of computers. The term refers not only the physical infrastructure of digital communication, but also the ocean of universal information contained, and human beings who navigate and feed it" ("Cibercultura" 1). That is, cyberspace is the space generated by information and communications on the network. It is a virtual space -understood as what exists potentially and not in act- and therefore without material existence or physical form that determines the very flow of information it contains. So the only way to access it is the device through which we visualize this information, the interface

(the computer screen, the screen of a mobile phone or other device with Internet connection), which acts as the membrane joining and separating these two spaces at once.

One of the characteristics attributed to it, precisely because of its intangible nature, is its ability to "generate various concrete manifestations in different times and places, without being bound by itself to a particular place or time" ("Cibercultura" 33). In other words, is characterized by its disconnection from the physical coordinates of space and time.

The importance of Cyberspace is that –as explained by M. Castells- modern society, which he calls "Network Society", is structured according to this area of Internet communication. This means that the network absorbs all logics of this permanently interconnected society, including the spatial one. Therefore, –since the network understood as Cyberspace is seen as disconnected from the physical coordinates of space and time- the traditional space of places -physical settlement of social activity located geographically- would have been replaced by a "space of flows". Thus, what counts most in our spatial logic –with the backdrop of Globalization- is the mobility of information, people and capital that is based in the very mobility of virtual information.

The direct consequence of this process would be, for many authors, often referred to as *de-territorialization*, a "disconnection of the forms of reproduction of a particular territorial space" (Perez Negrete and Bueno 11). That is, given that subjects are no longer where they are, their social relationships in and with the physical space are weakened.

With this idea that "subjects who are no longer where they are" I mean, rather than to geographical mobility, to the practical processes of our experience of network connection, of input in Cyberspace. I think about, for example, practices such as Virtual Reality, in which –through various types of interfaces- we can access to virtual space in an immersive way and in which we are also able to interact with the information contained in it and with other users that inhabit it. On these cases of immersion, the real, physical space is relegated to the background, and apparently disappears. The virtual space is superimposed on the real, and fully occupies its place. Thus understood, the VR could be a kind of material practice that helps us understand the current spatial model.
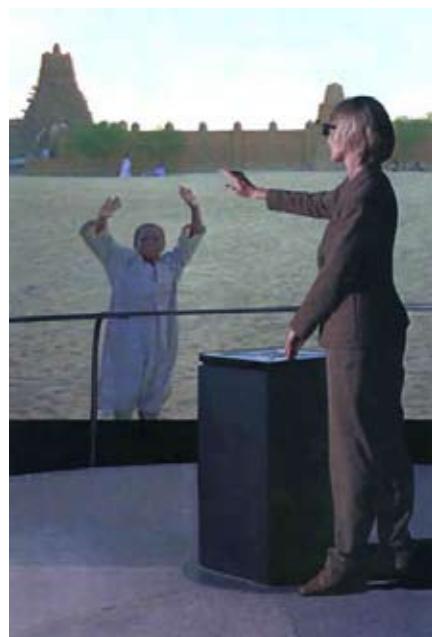
Figure 1. Example of VR as model of spatiality where real spaces annihilated by virtual space.
Be Now Here, *Michael Naimark, 1995-2002.*

So, this model would be based on the annihilation of physical space by real-time communications, i.e. the virtual space. This idea, defined by writers like Virilio or Harvey is based on an opposition between these

two spaces, one fixed and stable - the real- and other fluid and mobile –the virtual-. Cyberspace, however, seems to have -as we have seen- an attraction over the physical space, acting as an axis of force that seems to drag it towards its own mobility and rootlessness, threatening to make it disappear. And not in the sense of eliminating its physical existence, but it's social and symbolic functions which are moved to this new communication space. Thus, the virtualization of culture would also lead to the virtualization of space.

However, this model of spaces of different natures and opposite to each other, seems to forget that, as stated Rogèrio Haesbert, space and territory in its strictly physical sense, are themselves mobile and changing in terms of the social relations that are occurring in them, and forgets that they have been always crossed by networks, both social and communication (think about, for example, road communication networks). However, beyond discussing this concept of space from a theoretical standpoint, I will do, as I said, from the very material practices that allow us to think about it.

2. *Hyperspace*: The Real *plus* the Virtual

What I argue in this proposal is, indeed, the emergence of a new type of relationship with the physical space in response to the emergence of Cyberspace. But, unlike what is considered by the theories that we have seen, it would not be based on the real-virtual opposition, but in the coexistence of these dimensions on the hardware of physical space, the space we inhabit. The notion of Hyperspace is based on a space where virtual information and the physical experience of space have the same weight, so setting definite limits between both becomes increasingly complex. We have said also that this hybrid space is manifested through the development of a particular type of technology.

To understand what these technologies are and how they produce, in practice, this imaginary space as *Hyperspace*, we will discuss below some artistic examples of its use.

2.1. Locative Media

The *Locative Media* are a type of artistic practice based on the use of devices and location systems such as GPS, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, mobile phones etc. built to allow exchange of information with the physical world. This term, invented by Karlis Kalinis in 2003, refers precisely to the difference between the artistic use of these devices and its commercial use (Lemos). Based on these new localization systems and combining them with other ICTs, the *Locative Media* -as explained in the article *Prácticas Artísticas basadas en la Localización que desafían la Noción Tradicional de Cartografía* - in creating alternative maps in order to reshape our worldview through new strategies of spatial representation beyond the imposition of an external geometry on physical geography. Thus the *Locative Media* consist of adding information to the physical space to change the experience that we have on it. They appear just as a challenge to the discourse on space and cyberspace opposition, so they insist on the idea of physical space as a territory and on the production of content defined by objects and places. That is, they seek to generate a *re-territorialization* process through virtual space. In this sense, they are practices directly related to those proposed in the late 50s by the Situationist International, which tried to create social and political transformations upon the recognition of territorial space and what they called "psycho-geography".

One of the best-known projects in this area is *PacManhattan*, developed in 2004 at the University of New York and implemented in several cities since then. It consists of a mixture of location and display devices (mobile phones, Wi-Fi and special software), which aims to enliven the familiar videogame of the 80s, *Pac-Man*, placing it in an urban setting. It establishes a circuit of several streets that a player (*Pacman*) runs trying to collect virtual dots. These are depicted on a map of the city that the player carries on a mobile device. At the same time, he is pursued by four other players who represent the characteristic ghosts of this game and he can be located through the same system (pacmanhattan.com). This is an example of intersection of a virtual device with the real territory, so that the later takes on new meanings. The proposal consists on new ways to interact with urban space, generating new relationships with a particular physical space in terms of virtual information that refers specifically to it.

*Figure 2. Diagrame of **PacManhattnan** performance. Figure 3. Emocional Map of the **Biomapping** Project.*

Another example along these lines, but more specifically based on the idea of mapping is Christian Nold's _Bio-Mapping_ (2004). It involves the creation of emotional maps that represent areas of high and low emotionality. Such emotion is captured on the passers during their tours on a particular area using galvanic skin response devices. Then, this information displayed in constantly changing maps which can be viewed on the network both while doing the tour and later. Thus, its users are proposed to rescan the area in which they live according to these emotional maps and the subjective implications of own and other passersby. So they give a different interpretation to the urban environment and are more aware of the decisions they make and how they affect them. This project also allows social interaction from the pooling of data on the web (biomapping.net).

According to these examples we see how the physical space, mediated by Cyberspace as a virtual information flow, does not disappear. Nor are weakened subjects relationship with it, but this physical space acquires new meanings and dimensions in conjunction with the virtual space, so that it becomes impossible to understand them separately.

2. 2. Augmented Reality

Augmented Reality –also called Mixed Reality- is a system of 3D visualization of information that is superimposed on the physical reality. As explained by Bimber and by Kangas, "the goal of AR is to create high level of consistency between real and virtual environments" or to "supplement reality by adding objects into a real-world view" (qtd. in Hupkens 2).

For many, it represents the overcoming of Virtual Reality systems, i.e., is the new way that this one will acquire in the future. In fact, unlike VR, which generated immersive environments to which the user accessed, Augmented Reality performs the opposite process: transferring information from virtual Cyberspace to physical space occupied by the viewer, though this is captured and represented by a screen or other display device.

The technology of AR, although it has existed over more than a decade, is still not fully developed. Its mass marketing began since 2006, mainly in mobile phone applications, design and video games. However, it is not yet widely accepted in other fields, including art. Nevertheless, the pioneers in this technique have obtained surprising aesthetic and interaction results that augur a promising future.

Figure 4. Olivier's LevelHead as experimented by the user

One of these pioneers is the New Zealand artist Julian Olivier. Among other projects with AR, between 2007 and 2008 he developed *LevelHead*, an installation consisting of a series of plastic cubes whose eight faces have printed QR codes (Quick Response) –a more powerful variant of the bar codes that can be scanned by a webcam and provide extra information about the object (Haller et al. 12). Using a camera, on the screen, these codes are converted into the different spaces of a house. The viewer must help its inhabitant to travel these areas through the movement of the cubes (julianolivier.com). He sees himself on screen, interacting with that three-dimensional virtual space that between his hands is just a set of plain cubes. Thus, its own spatial orientation is tested on the screen, in the game between the virtual space and real space that he inhabits.

Another project from Olivier is *The Artvertiser*, under development since 2009. It's an urban piece of AR that reconsiders street advertising as an area to display art, and places like Times Square in New York, Puerta del Sol in Madrid or Shibuya in Tokyo as potential exhibition spaces. The piece consists of overwriting images from the art world over commercials. Using software that recognizes each ad separately and using a mobile phone or binoculars, the ads become a kind of canvas on which the image -stored in a database- automatically stands. Thus, the physical space, urban space, keeps its entity and our presence there, but is transformed by this overwriting of information on it.

A final project that I would like to comment is *The Auratic Body* of The Einstein's Brain Project (2004). This Canadian artist collective has spent years working on the display of various human activities, on devices and formulas to represent new modes of bodily activity. In this line, *The Auratic Body* can make visible the aura of participants through AR devices. The energy of their bodies is captured by sensors, is processed by computer to decide its auratic form and is rebuilt on the user's body through systems similar to those seen in previous examples.

The core of these projects is that they show a kind of spatiality in which we must no longer focus our attention on physical space and, separately, on information, but thanks to AR technology we obtain a single view of physical space and virtual worlds as if they were the same.

*Figure 5. Poster for **The Artvertiser** first Showing in Madrid.*
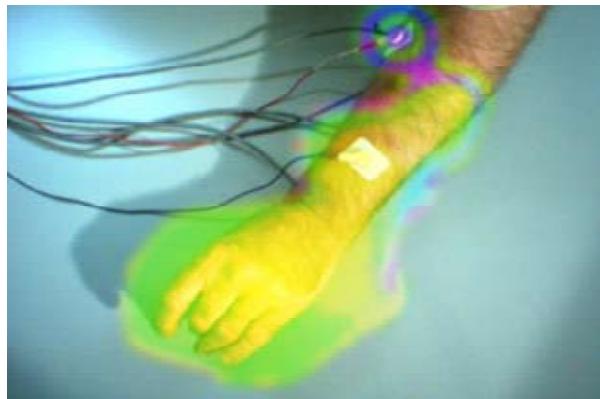
*Figure 6. Visual result of **The Auratic Body***

2.3. Hyperspace

What these examples show us is a new transformation of spatial conception within the Digital Age. If the practices and technologies such as VR constituted a model of attraction and disposal of real space into Cyberspace, the trend that seems to mark their successors –as we've seen- is towards coexistence and indistinctiveness of these spaces. On *Locative Media* and AR, we deal with physical places, real objects and real people, which thanks to new technologies, are crossed by the virtual space. So, in this way, experience forms based on temporary uses of the space are generated on them; forms of experience based on *re-territorialization* and mobility.

In the case of *Locative Media*, what takes precedence in these new ways of understanding the territory is the overlapping of subjective and emotional aspects –mapped as virtual information- to the physical experience of space. In other words, the real space is implemented with the imaginary dimensions of its experience, which may be visible on the form of alternative maps through ICT. In the case of AR, the space inhabited by the subject can be modified and reworked by the addition of any kind of information represented in 3D.

These alternative mapping and reinterpretation of the physical space by superimposing the information would be in the range of what Lemos called "Informational Territories". These would be areas in which the information flow on the intersection between Cyberspace and urban space is digitally controlled. And would also deal with what Lev Manovich call "Augmented Space" which he defines as "the physical space that is overlapped by dynamic and changing information".

And it is precisely through this overlapping of information as ITCs foster new relationships with the physical space, resulting in complex space that we have called *Hyperspace*. Note that the term comes from mathematics and had already been used by Jameson in his work *Postmodernism or Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* when speaking of *Postmodern Hyperspace*. However, he was referring, in general, to the space that manifests as a result of our inability to grasp the complex universe of advanced capitalism in globalization itself. That is, he refers to this new space of geographical and virtual mobility emerged with the Digital Age.

Unlike the spatial logic of opposition –in which Cyberspace, as a general information flow, attracted real space- in these cases is the actual physical space, a given space, a *place*, that attracts the virtual information to it, generating a coexistence between this information and the subjects inhabiting the *place*. Thus, their experiences of this given space are enriched.

So, each of these spaces implemented with information that becomes visible and thus transforms our relationship with them, becomes *Hyperspace*: a complex space that is made up of material physical space, the social experience of it and its imaginary dimensions and, finally, the electronic and virtual space of information.

However, while the virtual and real spaces are no longer seen as opposites, but their boundaries seem blurred, it is true that there is still a border between them. That is, we still need interfaces to display and project information over the real space. As much as these interfaces are becoming smaller, more manageable and portable, even if they are almost unnoticeable, they still point to a clear distinction between the two. Thus, hybridization of real and virtual space does not imply that either change their nature -we cannot "touch" Cyberspace as if it were real-, but simply that the interfaces –current technological systems and the ways in which we use them- tend to establish more bridges than borders among them. And these bridges are not based on the absorption of one another. On the contrary, we increasingly experience them as a single space, changing, multidimensional and incomprehensible without all the dimensions that comprise it.

In this sense, and returning to Jameson's definition, the space characterized by geographic and virtual information flows, the Globalization space also explained by Castells, Harvey or Virilio, do not stops to be a *Hyperspace*, a complex space made up of multiple dimensions. However, the *Hyperspace* as we have understood it here, as well as including subjective and imaginary dimensions, it is explained in terms of how we experience the impossibility of separating the real and virtual space.

4. Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, we can see how the transformation of our relation with space and its conceptions is a key element of the Digital Age. Cyberspace has had, since its inception, a huge attraction over the physical space, both in structuring social relations on it as in the ways of understanding it. These forms of understanding it, based on an opposition between fixed real space and another mobile and virtual, turned –and are still turning- mainly around the idea that cyberspace could come to annihilate the real space, could come to do away with social relationships in it and also with the place.

But as we have seen, there are a whole series of practices based on information and communication technologies that allow us to question this conception of space and the consequences associated with it. These, effectively realize a spatial transformation, but as we have seen, headed in another direction: the hybridization of physical and virtual space. Thus, instead of generating *de-territorialization* processes, they promote practices that claim the place, the experiential space and the *re-territorialization*. In this sense, the "Informational Spaces", the "Augmented Spaces", and in short, the *Hyperspace*, are much closer to the true essence of space and territory: their mobility and their internal networks, which are key elements of it.

Thus, the analysis of material practices of contemporary society -in this case artistic, which also has allowed us to approach aspects regarding the evolution of creativity and digital aesthetics- forces us to rethink concepts of contemporary spatial transformation widely accepted as *de-territorialization* or ubiquity. And this same analysis leads us to state that we live in a spatiality in which the real and virtual are much more connected by the construction of bridges than separated by borders.

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Index

Index

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