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The New Real? an Analysis of William Gibson's the Bridge Trilogy

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Abstract:

Culture in the postmodern context has often been placed on the graph of supply and demand as commercial goods are. Writers in the post war era have inexhaustibly explored this dimension of culture. A considerable endeavour of this kind can be seen in science fiction with the advent of the new wave of science fiction and capitalism in its extreme stages. Cyberpunk fiction, an off shoot of science fiction, can be seen as an expression of this. It, besides being an expression of futuristic dystopian reality in a high-tech world, highlights the fact that culture is a well planned entity in the post-industrial era, where data is the nucleus of human life and its every enterprise. This paper attempts to read William Gibson's Second Trilogy The Bridge Trilogy as an illustration of the fact that the term culture can be studied as being a commercial product in a postmodern world. The real is obliterated and the virtual has taken its place thereby establishing the new real, as everything relies on data and images generated by high tech mega corporations resulting into the situation in which virtual is being consumed as the new real.

Keywords: *Culture, Commodification, Virtual, Real.*

This paper attempts to analyse William Gibson's *The Bridge Trilogy* in light of the Postmodern literary theory. The concepts specifically applied to the trilogy are Commodification of culture and replacement of the real by what Jean Baudrillard terms as "Simulacrum". Culture can be placed within the social structure that embodies both the creation of social groups and the manner in which they interact with each other. As many critics have pointed out, culture in the postmodern context has often been considered a commodity, and indeed it shares many attributes with commercial products. As Adorno and Horkheimer have pointed out, Popular culture follows many patterns of behaviour derived from Economics, from the simple principle of supply and demand, to the creation of marketable demographics which fit certain criterion. This trend is exemplarily visible in contemporary fiction, especially in contemporary science fiction; Cyberpunk fiction in particular which is an off shoot of pure science fiction. William Gibson is one such author who in his works portrays such a scenario, and in *The Bridge Trilogy* he adds another level of interpretation to this state of affairs, by describing a world that is centred on industrialization of a new kind- that focuses around data in the cyberspace. In this new world, data has become the most important commodity, and man has become nothing but a nodal point in a vast ocean of raw data resulting into Commodification of each thing including Culture as well as individual resistance.

The Bridge Trilogy by William Gibson comprises of three novels namely *Virtual light* (1993), *Idoru* (1996) and *All Tomorrow's Parties* (1999). The first novel of the trilogy *Virtual light* deliberates upon the application of nanotechnology for the reconstruction of California into two divisions, Socal and Nocal. The program for the reconstruction is stored in Virtual light glasses which Chevette Washington, a bicycle messenger by profession, steals from a person who annoys her in a high profile party where she lands accidentally. This entire situation ushers her into a considerable mess of being pursued by the high profile mega corporate people who are secretly working on the reconstruction plan. Chevette Washington is one of the characters who live on the bridge along with Skinner and thousands of other homeless people. The novel also features Berry Rydell, an ex-policeman, who has lost his job recently and was opted by a famous TV show 'Cops in Trouble' but the idea was later dropped when the show authorities got hold of a more sensational case than the one of Berry Rydell. Berry works as a driver for the Intensecure and later he is assigned the job of a driver for the police personnel who are investigating the theft case of virtual light glasses. During this assignment, he happens to meet Chevette on the bridge. The novel also features certain sect of society which feels that television is in a way a manifestation of God. Rydell manages to help Chevette, who is on the run as the intensecure people are after her life for the virtual light glasses. Chevette, with the help of Rydell and the hacking group of The Republic of Desire, manage to escape from the clutches of the mega corporate people at the end of the novel. Due to this Rydell and Chevette are signed for an episode with Cops in trouble, a famous celebrity show.

The second novel of the trilogy *Idoru* revolves around the claim of one Rez, a popular rockstar of the rock band Lo/Rez, to marry an artificial construct 'idoru'. The novel features two important characters who are assigned the job of finding out the reality behind the claim of Rez by two different corporations. One is Chia McKenzie who works for the Lo/Rez fan club in Tokyo and is assigned the job of finding out the reality behind the buzz. The other character is Colin Laney who has the ability to predict future based on the patterns of reading the nodal points in vast amount of data in Cyberspace. Nodal points are those points in data, analysing which a data analyst can read the origin of anything. He is hired by Paragon Asia dataflow, the key corporation which runs the Lo/Rez band, to find out the factual details behind the thrilling story. Chia in the course of her assignment to find out the truth meets Masahiko who spends his maximum time in the Walled City, a separate virtual realm within the larger internet sphere. By the end of the novel Chia is also seen as spending her maximum time in The Walled city and becomes less interested in the fan club of Rez.

In the third novel of the trilogy, *All Tomorrows Parties*, Colin Laney is shown obsessed with Cody Harwood, a public relation mastermind, and is shown as obsessed with the idea that some kind of change is going to take place which he deciphers through his unique ability of studying the nodal points in vast amount of data in the dataspace. In this novel Berry Rydell works as a security agent for a convenience store named Lucky Dragon which is a chain globally. Later he works for Colin Laney and is assigned to take care of the hologram projector of Idoru through which they are able to see the actions of Idoru because Laney feels that it is through Idoru that some huge change is going to take place in the society. Harwood also consumes the same drug which Laney was given in the orphanage. Due to this Harwood is also able to feel that some change is on cards in the world. Insecure about his power, Harwood tries to make every effort in order to save his position as a personal relations giant in the field of media. The final novel of the trilogy emerges as zone of battle between Cody Harwood and the people of the bridge as Harwood is unable to secure the projector from Rydell who lives on the bridge by the end of the novel. Finally Harwood attempts to set the bridge on fire but Laney together with Idoru and the denizens of the walled city attempt to destroy Harwood through the medium of the virtual sphere. Harwood dies in the end but a replica of Idoru is produced from all the Nanofax units installed in the world as Idoru is shown to have humanised in the course of time.

On the surface level, *The Bridge Trilogy* appears as a futuristic dystopia which features several futuristic concerns like construction of cities with the help of nanotechnology, artificial constructs evolving into humanised forms by staying in connection with humans over a period of time. But like *The Sprawl Trilogy*, the three novels which combine to form *The Bridge Trilogy* highlight the condition of contemporary information society. The definition of the term culture as it was understood for the past few centuries has evolved over a period of time because in a world saturated with information technology, social groups have become detached from geographical, national and social boundaries. The world is connected through information, and this communion of people from all around the world connected by an increasingly complicated web of information and communication, at times, gives rise to new realities as opposed to the established realities in the society. On one side of this socio-cultural temporal chasm lies the remnants of an ancient past, where delineations between cultures was concretely established, and on the other lies the blended contemporary information society, which cannot be divided into the previously decipherable social and cultural hierarchies. Although science fiction is said to have been concerned with futuristic scenarios but as the new wave of science fiction progressed the concerns receded back to contemporaneity from future. William Gibson has attempted to do the same in this trilogy. The three novels, if analysed from the cultural point of view, project one aspect of contemporary society and that is of the popular culture. The novels highlight how popular culture is mass produced by media and most importantly how it fosters the growth of new resistance groups or to be more precise, how it is designed to cater to the needs of several individuals who fail to identify themselves with what is available in the society. The process is two ways in the sense that popular culture needs to thrive on people who readily adopt it and it sees the hope in those who project some kind of resistance towards the available options. In this way in addition to the Commodification of culture there is the birth of Commodification of resistance at large.

The issue of the Commodification of culture as well as resistance, if delved deeply, provides insights into the needs of an individual, like the sense of identity, belongingness etc. Culture is the most common platform/forum on which an individual can rest his need for identity and belongingness. When disillusioned with what is available, an individual searches for other available options and this is where, what Adorno and Horkheimer calls "the culture industry" comes into play.

The life of a human being has been intricate since its genesis as political, social, ideological constructs in the society have always been in a state of flux in light of the evolution of the entire humankind. A human being perceives his self in relation to the societal constructs and subsequently a sense of identity is shaped. In one way or the other the consciousness of this existence has been a subject of inquiry since the origin of existence itself. But the post World War II period has seen this sense of inquiry in much profusion and different disciplines like literature, sociology, psychology have tried to address the issue. As far as literature is concerned a plethora of illustrations are available where the matter of disillusioned generations, set out to question their sense of identity have established the tone of writers' narrative. This inquest for identity has been found to be the consequence of man's gradual desertion of faith and social bonds, absence of religion and comfort. The final sneaking in of doubt and departure of certainty/firmness has resulted into a severed connection/link between man and nature on one hand and man and society on the other. This detached relationship of a human being with his surroundings has been encountered countless times in literature ensuing into narratives of modern as well as postmodern era. These narratives address cohort of people who try to look out for alternate forms of existence as they are unable to stick to what is conventional and available. For instance the lost generation, beats, hippies who in one

way or the other couldn't identify themselves with available institutions of society and tried to look for alternatives. Contemporary science fiction has also attempted to unravel issues involving people who are transcending the normal behaviour and are trying to carve a new sense of identity by using certain alternatives available in the society. Gibson's *The Bridge Trilogy* has tried to reflect upon this issue through the characters of Rez and Colin Laney in *Idoru* and *All Tomorrows parties*. Whether existence is innate or has found new ways to sustain is the concern of the paper and this question will be analysed using the instances like announcement by Rez of getting married to an artificial construct, Iidoru; the identity of individuals as a set of skills in data space, Colin Laney's preoccupation with the nodal points to decipher a change in the universe and his life in a cardboard box in the trilogy.

Gibson through his dystopian, futuristic narrative in *The Bridge Trilogy* has tried to illustrate the belief in loss of sense of belongingness and increasing awareness of individual isolation and diffusion of identity to a new level which is centred on cyber industrialization in a post catastrophic era. Gibson has tried to portray how life of an individual would be shaped in a post apocalyptic setting dominated by media houses and popular culture. Gibson's characters in *The Bridge Trilogy* are primarily a class of society living on the peripheries, who are disillusioned with the set belief systems and thus searches for alternate modes to survive. In *The Bridge Trilogy*, Gibson has moved a step forward to portray individuals as trapped in the cyber world to the extent that an individual's identity is reduced to nothing but a combination of skill sets. For instance Colin Laney works for a media house and has the skill of finding nodal points in huge amount of data. Same is the case with Chia McKenzie who works for the San Francisco unit of the Lo/Rez fan club. Both the characters are there to explain the same reality i.e. the truth behind the union of a human being and an artificial construct. The characters are marginalised but skilled and work for corporations. The being of these characters reduced only to their skills gives them no sense of identity. It diminishes these human faces to some vague nothingness and blots out their individual sense of identity, thereby shrinking them to nothing but faceless representatives of a faceless corporation. In the novel *Idoru* Colin Laney realizes this fact by the end of the novel and confesses, "we will not meet, we will not carve out this deep and meaningful and bloody unforgettable episode of mutual face-time as representatives of our faceless corporation"(364). As compared to the characters in the first trilogy, a deeper cohesion can be visualised in this trilogy between the different characters that appear to be equally marginalized at the hands of huge mega corporations.

The novels delineate the fact that data is the most important commodity and Gibson has described a world that is centred on industrialization of a new kind-that is focussed around data in the cyberspace. In the novels data has become the most important commodity, and man has become nothing but a nodal point in a vast ocean of raw data. Data mining, collection and sorting has become a significant activity, and as a direct result, through statistical categorization, the identities of people are being blurred. This cyber industrialism has resulted in a shift of focus from the humanistic realization of the individual's capability, towards the reduction of human values to numerical figures and statistics which results into dehumanization and replacing the human values with data. This identification of human identity with data has further resulted in the fragmentation of the self, such that man's role in his different spheres of life are no longer connected to form a comprehensible whole, and man has simply become a series of numbers and figures, and nothing more thereby evolving a new concept of the real human which is nothing but data.

The trilogy thus evokes the fact that the dehumanized individuals are trying to look for some alternate medium for the construction of a sense of identity. The important question which arises here is who constructs the identity or how is identity constructed? In the post industrial era, where culture has often been considered as a commodity; individual needs/consumption is the ground on which culture as a commodity item thrives. In the contemporary era, nothing is personal anymore as with the innovation in technology, individuals are under continuous surveillance and personal and public sphere have almost become synonymous. The end of this surveillance is to keep track of what is being consumed in order to keep the curve of supply and demand in balance, thereby giving rise to consumer culture. Consumer culture addresses the needs of the individual and these specific needs become the ground requirement of consumer culture to thrive in society. *The Bridge Trilogy* can be read as an expression of this.

Colin Laney who features in two novels of *The Bridge Trilogy* namely *Idoru* and *All Tomorrows Parties* is seen by the end of the trilogy living in a cardboard box having the dimension of four by six and trying to decode/interpret some kind of a major change in the world. Colin Laney in his childhood has been dosed with a drug named 5-SB which is believed to have infused a stalker syndrome in the individual. Colin Laney is shown to be working for DatAmerica in *Idoru* but by the end of the trilogy Laney feels a kind of nothingness in his self, as he feels that his essential being is missing. His life in a small enclosed space like a cardboard is his attempt to show resistance to the social reality. The small cardboard box is an entire world to Laney and staying in it Laney feels that he is on a mission. Laney experiences a kind of void within his being which he perceives as an absence of self, "that hole at the core of Laney's being, that underlying absence, he begins to suspect, is not so much an absence in the self as of the self"(All Tomorrows parties 71). That's why he chooses a cardboard box to delink himself from the external world and sitting there Laney does nothing but tracks down the movement of Iidoru which he feels is the actual media through which an inevitable and magnanimous change is going to take place. Laney feels that he has a sense of mission which saves him from the intolerable feeling of being a misfit everywhere "the hole, that blankness at the core of his being, ceases to trouble him here. He is a man with a mission, though he readily admits to himself that he has no real idea what that mission may finally be" (All Tomorrows parties 71). Laney has no doubt the issues of identity, sense of belongingness and the sense of having an aim. All these issues are somewhat countered by him by living in a cardboard box and by tracking the path of Iidoru which is nothing but an artificial construct.

Rez on the other hand is featured in the second and the third novel of the trilogy namely *Idoru* and *All Tomorrows Parties*. Rez is publicized as a rockstar of the popular rock band Lo/Rez. Once, in a club, he announces that he intends to marry Idoru, a media sensation. The power of media is hinted at right in the beginning of the novel, Idoru, when Laney is acquainted with the fact that it is the media which creates celebrities and the might of media is absolute. The media is shown as feeding the people with what they would like to consume and in return they earn profits. But taking a deeper dig at the situation media does nothing but creates images to be fed to the consumers as Zona Rosa says “we are the media, Laney. We make these assholes celebrities. It is a push me, pull you routine. They come to us to be created” (Idoru 6). The tone of the narrative is set when Rez claims that he is going to marry Idoru and when Laney is hired to find the truth behind the immense buzz then a new world is unleashed in which an artificial entity namely Idoru comes into play. A set of questions follows after the introduction of Idoru. These questions are related to its creation, the objectives and aims behind the fact that such things are being created and how people like Rez and Laney start identifying themselves with something which is not pure flesh and blood but a “personality-construct”, an ‘Idol-singer’. Idoru is believed to be similar to a ‘synthespian’ which stands for a computer generated image of a film actor, especially used in place of the real actor when shooting special effects or stunts. The novel portrays Idoru as an “idol singer- she is Rei Toei- she is a personality construct, a congeries of information-designers. She is akin to what I believe they called a ‘synthespian’ in Hollywood” (Idoru 121).

Rez and Laney identifying with an artificial creation, if looked at from the cultural perspective hints at culture being a deep conspiracy in the Postmodern era. Culture amounts to being a consumable item which can be plotted on the curve of supply and demand as other consumable commodities are. To explore this in its entirety, the character of Idoru needs to be analysed wholly. Idoru is the Japanese translation of an idol in Japanese popular culture and it stands for a manufactured young star which is promoted as being cute. The intention of creating these idols is to create role models which are supposed to have perfect public image and are publicized as good examples for the young people. Idols in Japanese culture can play variety of roles like media personalities, models for magazines, pop singers etc with the essential feature of not being fully skilled in a particular area. But these idols have an inevitable appeal so that young people can identify themselves with it and these idols are made known as images through popular media. The model Idoru also has a feature which involves growth from inexperienced amateurs to famous experienced artists. Gibson’s Idoru namely Rei Toei is based on this model.

The appeal of Idoru in the contemporary teen group is seen to be the most important criterion, for these idols are being created to be the source of identification among the young, especially among those who follow the idea of non-conformism. Gibson’s novels also depict the Idoru in the same vein as it becomes a source belongingness and identification for those who are not convinced with anything else available. The novel projects Rei Toei and the concept of Idoru in the similar strain as it actually happens in the Japanese culture where “some of them are enormously popular” (Idoru 57). The essential questions related to Idoru, like “so people kill themselves over them?” (Ibid); “do people marry them?” (Ibid) are raised at the beginning of the novel through some characters. These questions hint at some serious issues related to the construction and sustenance of artificial constructions which Gibson has attempted to delineate through the narrative.

Idoru is a personality construct owned by a company and she is not what she appears to be. She appears to be a flesh and blood body but she is actually data accumulated to form a mechanical unit which resembles a human body. Idoru stands for a different world which is created by culture industry and it stays in the market until its novelty remains. A huge chunk of population identify with it. The Postmodern world thrives on information and Idoru is a construct made up of information. Gibson writes

- Don’t look at the Idoru’s face. She is not flesh; she is information. She is the tip of an iceberg, no, an Antarctica, of information. Looking at her face would trigger it again: she was some unthinkable volume of information. She induced the nodal vision in some unprecedented way; she induced it as narrative. (Idoru 233)

Rez’s proclamation in the novel *Idoru* hints something huge which Gibson is trying to project. Rez, defying the conventional concept of marriage, avers to get married to an artificial construct knowing that it doesn’t exist for real. “He says he is going to marry this jap twist that doesn’t fucking exist! And he knows she doesn’t and says we’ve no fucking imagination!” (Idoru 98). Rez, in *Idoru*, not confining himself to the dominant cultural concept of a human marrying a human, talks of falling in love with an artificial construct and decides to get married to it and terms it as “the alchemical marriage”. The “alchemical marriage” between a human being and an artificial construct forms an important thread of the novel *Idoru* and raises several important questions related to the subversion of the dominant concept of marriage. The conventional concept of an Alchemical marriage stands for the union of divine spirit with the soul initially and finally with the body. Rez challenges the dominant concept of alchemical marriage by terming his unification with an artificial construct as ‘Alchemical’ thereby deviating from the typical idea of the unification of soul, spirit and body. In the novel, the denizens of the Walled city also think of Rez being hallucinated as he decides to get married to a software construct. Zona Rosa, a resident of Walled city, says “Now that I have seen her, I can only think that Rez is crazy, pathetically deluded” (Idoru 306). The narrative covers an important conversation between Zona Rosa and Idoru where human-synthetic marriage is being deliberated upon. This is an important part of the narrative where Gibson has tried to delve into the futurity of important human affairs like marriage. People like Rez deviate from the usual concept of marriage as he is aspiring to exist in the virtual world perpetually and thus fall in J Milton Yinger’s category of “aberrant deviationst.”

Rez's debunking of the idea of choosing a human being for love and marriage and the essential dialogue which Gibson has ensued in the novel between Zona Rosa and Idoru comes up with an indispensable question about why a flesh and blood human being avers to marry a synthetic entity? And how the motives of media house behind the construction of synthetic entities are being fulfilled. Through Zona Rosa, Gibson has tried to highlight the fact that the concept of real is being obliterated as Zona Rosa says to Idoru "you synthetic bitch ...you think we don't see what you are doing? You aren't real. You aren't as real as this imitation of a drowned city! You are a made up thing and you want to suck what is real out of him" (Idoru 306). Idoru, a simulation, by getting associated with the Rez is said to have an obliterating effect on Rez as the real truth. This concept of obliterating the real can be understood using Jean Baudrillard's concept of Simulacra. Baudrillard defines simulacra as:

- It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory - precession of the simulacra - that engenders the territory, and if one must rerun to the fable, today it is the territory whose shred slowly rot across the extent of the map. It is the real, and not the map, whose vestiges persist here and there in the deserts that are no longer those of the Empire, but ours. The desert of the real itself. (qtd. in Tatsuko)

Baudrillard is of the view that in the Postmodern culture the reliance on image is so high that one has lost all contact with the idea of the real. According to him the concept of Simulacra of the third order i.e. simulacra in the Postmodern period (the first two orders being premodern, modern) with which we are dealing in the contemporary world, the reliance is on the precession of simulacra by which he intends to say that "the representation precedes and determines the real. There is no longer any distinction between reality and its representation; there is only the simulacrum" (6). Thus Idoru, a simulation of the real, is attempting to define the flesh and blood Rez and in the process of getting associated with Rez will obliterate the reality of Rez's self, thus rendering him an image without the original concept. Idoru itself is an image with no real self behind it and is a pure simulacrum in a hyperreal world of media and technology. Andrew Tatsuko writes about Baudrillard and the concept of hyperreal in a Postmodern world in his article titled "Rootlessness and Simulacra: The Loss and Recovery of Cultural Foundations." Tatsuko is of the view that "There is a severe breakdown in the relationality between different signs and their respective referents. A result of such a breakdown is in the appropriation of an endless supply of signs that do not have a referent." Idoru is one such sign supplied by the media industry which doesn't have any referent. A segment of people in the novel identify themselves with what does not exist in actual i.e. Idoru/ Rei Toei, and she is the pure definition of a sea of software which is there to entertain- an image created by media to feed those to whom she appeals and the appeal lies maximum among that section of people in society who knowingly choose something unreal as opposite to real as it satisfies their desire of non-conformity in the dull, monotonous dystopic society. The people who identify with Idoru are consuming the hyperreal in the form of the image of Idoru as Tatsko writes, "From Baudrillard's perspective such things as television and advertising are compromising that which is real and replacing it with images that are hyperreal - not really reality, nor signs of reality, but simulacra." As Tessa says, "She doesn't exist. There is no live girl there at all. She's code, software" (*All Tomorrows Parties* 69). What Gibson's novels try to project is that people consume images and what they want is made available or what is made available is made to appeal to them in such a manner that it satisfies their sense of non-conformity which becomes the reason for their choice of consuming the media mediated images. "People don't know what they want, not before they see it. Every object of desire is a found object. Traditionally anyway" (*All Tomorrows Parties* 69).

If we look separately at the characters of Rez and Laney, the answer to what they want is Rei Toei. Rez wants to survive the mortality of human race in the sense that he wants to live forever. He desires to exist perpetually in the virtual realm as an image and this is possible only if he lives on as an icon and Rez can be immortal if his image lives on forever which otherwise is not possible as media is responsible for creating the images and destroying them subsequently when their novelty is lost or becomes stale. The only possible medium for Rez to materialise what he desires is the digital realm in the form of Rei Toei, an artificial construct. Rez wants to transcend the physical and embrace the virtual. Thus the characters are embracing virtual as opposite to the real and over a period of time the virtual is going to substitute what is real. Hence the concept of real would be eliminated and consequentially the image will stay without its original form from which it has been copied and a new real would be established.

Gibson's in *Idoru* makes it clear that the construction of Rei Toei is on purpose. Such personality constructs are materialized for profit and technology is one of the profit maximizing techniques for those who are sitting at the helm of affairs. As Dani Cavallro writes in his book *Cyberpunk and Cyberculture* "... it exemplifies the idea that bodies are technological products and that technology in turn, embodies specific cultural forms of production and consumption" (79). Laney finally falls for Rei Toei in *All Tomorrows Parties* being aware of the fact that she has been constructed for him. She is the answer to that quest which people like Laney are not able to satisfy in the real space. So market becomes the space and media, using the technology, becomes the medium for such longing, "and Laney fell in love with her although he understood that she has been designed for him (and for the world) to fall in love with. As the amplified reflection of the desire she was a team effort; to the extent that her new designers had done their jobs properly, she was a waking dream, a love object sprung from an approximation of the global mass unconscious" (*All Tomorrows Parties* 164).

Thus this entire system follows the idea of manipulating the masses who pursue their specific needs. Media manipulates the masses based on their desire for identity construction. In *The Bridge Trilogy* too, the virtual exists as a sphere which provides the characters with ample opportunities to create themselves in whatever form they like and existing perpetually in the virtual sphere has been a

significant choice of the characters. Thus they choose deviance. Rez's desire to be immortal in the virtual sphere is seen by media houses as a ground based on which it creates the image of Idroru. An individuals' needs can become a specific ground, based on which media houses sustain in society. These houses, along with satisfying the natural human desires also follow the resistive strain in the individuals like Laney who detach themselves from the available world. Thus the masses with needs related to identity construction and belongingness to the resistive sections of society follow the path of commodity consumption for their happiness.

In the trilogy, what Laney or even Rez encounters doesn't lead them to any kind of movement but they try to meet their individual needs. The resistance is towards the available dominant institutions which want to reject, by transcending to the virtual sphere and identifying themselves with the image of Idroru, which is a digital manifestation of a desirable option. The detachment from social reality and resistance leads Laney to follow an image created by media. The market and Commodification of images fused together with individual resistance give rise to the idea of market evolving as an answer to one's individualised problems and resistive needs. This is what happens with Rez as well as Laney. The Alchemical Marriage is portrayed to be gradual where human and synthetic image will grow together and an attempt is made to use culture industry as a medium for such a change. The culture industry is successful in doing all this because it is surviving on the individual needs of Rez and Laney who resist what is available. Both are fed by culture industry in the form of Rei Toei and market becomes the answer to their individualized rebellion, thereby, giving birth or rise to Commodification of resistance. Rei Toei or Idroru is nothing but an image constructed to be sold, identified with, and thus consumed.

Thus William Gibson's *The Bridge Trilogy* can be read as a critique of the contemporary information society which highlights the emergence of the new real in the form of images. These images, formulated by media with the help of innovations in the technology, are being consumed by people who find them irresistible on one hand and on the other hand these images appeal to them as a source of escape from the contemporary dystopic reality which centres on data reducing human beings to sets of data skills.

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