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Ecstasy of Communication in the Age of Instrumental Reason: *Self-Under-Siege*

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Abstract:

Having been debated for as long as history serves, experts of the field are merely unanimous in denoting sociology as the current life in which interaction takes place between various members of a community and the differentiating line between man and the other community-making beings would be the progressive and purposeful nature of the interactions which is assumed to be present only with man-members. When terms such as man and progress akin each other like this, the demand for considering a genesis for the developing line seems of great significance and emergence of technology, man's ability to utilize the tools as boons in his life, figures to function as a proper beginning. Man is supposed to have bettered his life condition in the course of history by means of the tools he has been making all over it, but has this deed ended to a development in his thought status is of salient enigma yet. Has socio-technology put man in a more refined understanding of his position in the universe and whether it has had impacts on his attempts to find his way through the plights he has been entangled in in his prevailing being is still the place of doubt and question. Modern man identifies internet as one of the most prominent boons of the age, one which has facilitated his life and the interactions within it to an utmost level. Man interacts within the net, recognizing himself as a member inside it, a simple analogy reminds us of the web spiders make around them and entrap their prays in it, the un-elucidated part would be identifying the spider who has made the net (internet) in which man is manipulated to develop and be content with. Modern man assumes to have personalized his life more and more and he believes to have performed this by means of the means like internet which allow him to possess his own desired atmosphere and detach him of the worlds of the neighbors but it's right here where a huge contention can be made which is the existence of a Big-Other who manages to Monitor the prays (man) inside the net which take pains to survive their lives and take hold of their Dreams. The more private and personalized the pray believes to become, the more that policing Big-Other penetrates its authority to very core of his life. Who the Big-Other is or are is to be quested.

Keywords: *Big-Other, internet, modern man, monitor, socio-technology.*

1. Introduction

Human involvement in face to face relations with its counterparts as *the* Human accorded him as a gregarious being that needs communications in order to survive. Society; an umbrella term, that could be subcategorized as small communes of humanity in mass, be it a tribe for instance, has engendered certain unanimous and anonymous social agreements, let's call it pacts, throughout its emergence in the days of yore. Simple as it may seem in the first glance through the lens of a 21th century individual who has been endowed with the complicated matrix of discourses by its predecessors, human commune has been under a lot of mischiefs and changes throughout its existence in the course of its history. That is not the concern of ours here by the by.

Language with its rules and regulations, previously thought to be the means of human communications; now a self-contained system with its tyrannical dominance on humans, conducted the herd from its pre-historic to history up to present, from the so-called ignorance of primitives to the inteligencia of the recent era. The pacts made by humanity was to boon its existence in the cosmos and to become of great help to situate him as the God-given-privileged creature to rein the earth and to know what is to be and would be the result of its tests. The will to knowledge/power, a Foucauldian and Nietzschean terminology or the Freudian Desire, human has fought its way to fulfill its insatiable desires to know itself and its surrounding universe and to rein it.

The individuals who formed the social life and felt the need to communicate to get rid of their loneliness, willingly or unwillingly were coerced to accept the rules and regulations endowed to them by the society in which they themselves had formed and had no way except to be entangled in its activities consciously or unconsciously. According to Bakhtin, we are in carnival where even the lowest casts of society are given the power to mock their upper-hands. By being a part of this game they have gone under huge changes which may be at the very opposite poles of their inter-personal desires and ideologies. How the herd keepers, head of the tribe up to the socially acclaimed candidates of the mass in the democratic state had their own move to control or monitor the mass to be

protective and obedient of the said or unsaid pacts in circulation of the commune. The power relation, be it in the most tyrannical and totalitarian states to the very socially admired ones are prevalent in every nook and cranny of that society, not only the state apparatus but the nominal un-privileged mass.

2. Enlightenment and *the* Modernity

Renascence or the age of enlightenment known today by the age of reason was the waking call for human's long lost consciousness of its existence by putting its trust in the almighty, the logos being out there beyond our understanding far to fetch only to be believed with total obedience. After three centuries of ignorance, as being called the dark ages, the social, philosophical, economical changes occurred which transformed their center of trust from being up in nowhere to down to the earth. It was impossible without the help of ancient philosophy to be interpreted from Romans and Greeks notably Aristotle as the leading character whose ideas paved the way and Descartes the French philosopher, who with his utterance of "I think, therefore I am" located the logos in humanity as the producer of meaning which is capable of reasoning.

Thereof called enlightenment, or as the Buddhist tradition which Buddha or the unlighted who is being given the *bliss* in Joseph Campbell's terminology, so after the dark ages of ignorance which blindly led humanity to total void finally was deformed and presented as the age of reason which gradually led to the outgrowth of human conditions in all social and seemingly technological development which its claim was the means to boon life.

Modernity simply put in Pound's term "make it new" was the present which the age of reason endowed us with. Modernity came true after the industrialization and French revolution which seemed yet another jostle to raze the remaining ashes of old system of thought. Things seemed to be getting better but it backlashed. The feudal and aristocratic system of the state was shattered and gave its way to capitalism. Rich got richer and poor got poorer. Instead of working for the monopolized aristocrat now it was time for the bourgeois to harness the mass and take their revenge on them. Things worsen up in the early 20th century when the Germans direly desired the Reich to back again. The imperial tendency of other superpowers of Europe be it Britain and France as the harbinger. But the loss of faith in God and churches as its representatives and the instigating words of Nietzsche Marx Freud and Darwin following their predecessors put the stamp of approval for the margined states to have their share back from the imperialist powers. Two world wars was the turning point for the post-war thinkers who were thoroughly aghast and awed by the so-called humanity being capable of reasoning as the rational subject who is in full control of himself and his environ, they all turned on its head.

We are being indoctrinated to think rationally, prized as a feature of modernity. Thereof we are seemingly ahead of our ancestor whom we didn't dare to question things and as the result it seems we needed to preserve it. Through the complex matrix of social activity accentuated by modernity and its doctrines not only wasn't the pursuit of knowledge ceased be stagnant, it through "social rationalization" led the mass and their supervisors as the government or The State to come up with new gizmos and ideas in tandem with each other. Modernized ideas, created new and more complex problems to be dealt with concomitantly because the old concerning problems, whether being answered or not, at least were not as keen as they use to seem to be at their birth through the course of history. One of the concerns which the *Philosophe* were accosted was the nature of the society and sociality and social controls which Rousseau puts it in clear diction as "social contract" which indicates the agreed social pact between the individuals and the state.

Growth of population and the dire need of food and health care and the growth of capitalism and its need for work labors, with low payments and high profits for the capitalists vibrated the whole social structure at both posts. As a result the mass which couldn't bear the conditions gradually were outraged to capsize the whole system, which 1917 Bolshevik revolution was a stamp of approval pursuing the Marx's clarifications of state strategies of ideology and false consciousness and alienation of the mass accordingly. At the same time the capitalists were to choose new ilk of monitoring and controlling systems to act both as a pacifier and infiltrating fear by punishment of any sorts to maintain their stability. Bentham became a leading theorist in Anglo-American philosophy of law, and a political radical whose ideas influenced the development of welfarism. He advocated individual and economic freedom, the state, and freedom, equal rights for women, the right to divorce, and the decriminalizing of homosexual acts. He called for the abolition of slavery, the abolition of the death penalty, and the abolition of physical punishment, including that of children. He has also become known in recent years as an early advocate of animal rights. Though strongly in favor of the extension of individual, he opposed the idea of natural law and natural rights, calling them "nonsense upon stilts". He was the founder of Utilitarianism who introduced us "Panopticon" which is of our paramount concerned.

3. Panopticon

The Panopticon is a type of institutional building designed by the English philosopher and social theorist Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th century. The concept of the design is to allow a single watchman to observe (-opticon) all (pan-) inmates of an institution without the inmates being able to tell whether or not they are being watched. Although it is physically impossible for the single watchman to observe all cells at once, the fact that the inmates cannot know when they are being watched means that all inmates must act as though they are watched at all times, effectively controlling their own behavior constantly. The name is also a reference to Panoptes from Greek mythology; he was a giant with a hundred eyes and thus was known to be a very effective watchman.

The design consists of a circular structure with an "inspection house" at its center, from which the manager or staffs of the institution are able to watch the inmates, who are stationed around the perimeter. Bentham conceived the basic plan as being equally applicable to hospitals, schools, sanatoriums, daycares, and asylums, but he devoted most of his efforts to developing a design for a Panopticon prison, and it is his prison which is most widely understood by the term.

Most influentially, the idea of the panopticon was invoked by Michel Foucault, in his *Discipline and Punish* (1975), as a metaphor for modern "disciplinary" societies and their pervasive inclination to observe and normalize. "On the whole, therefore, one can speak of the formation of a disciplinary society in this movement that stretches from the enclosed disciplines, a sort of social 'quarantine', to an indefinitely generalizable mechanism of 'panopticism'". The Panopticon is an ideal architectural figure of modern disciplinary power. The Panopticon creates a consciousness of permanent visibility as a form of power, where no bars, chains, and heavy locks are necessary for domination any more. Foucault proposes that not only prisons but all hierarchical structures like the army, schools, hospitals and factories have evolved through history to resemble Bentham's Panopticon. The notoriety of the design today (although not its lasting influence in architectural realities) stems from Foucault's famous analysis of it.

Building on Foucault, contemporary social critics often assert that technology has allowed for the deployment of panoptic structures invisibly throughout society. Surveillance by CCTV cameras in public spaces is an example of a technology that brings the gaze of a superior into the daily lives of the populace. Furthermore, a number of cities in the United Kingdom, including Middleborough, Bristol, Brighton and London have added loudspeakers to a number of their existing CCTV cameras. They can transmit the voice of a camera supervisor to issue audible messages to the public. Similarly, critical analyses of internet practice have suggested that the internet allows for a panoptic form of observation. ISPs are able to track users' activities, while user-generated content means that daily social activity may be recorded and broadcast online.

4. Communication in the Age of Instrumental Reason

Being a communicative being, human species has come up with many ideas to ease its process of communication be it Telephones, cellphones, and the recent network system. With the advent of computers, more specifically home PC's and the introducing of internet as a new and cheaper way of communication and the advent of applications and soft wares accordingly, the tendency toward a mass utilization was inaugurated.

Herbert Marcuse a leading figure of post-Marxism, in his written works, he criticized capitalism, modern technology, historical and entertainment culture, arguing that they represent new forms of social control. Being endowed by enlightenment the human subject who thinks, any form of technology is an instrument of human reasoning, he said. Being an heir of the modern rationality, individuals and society seemingly presumes to be in full control of themselves and their social milieu, all in all, anything happening as the social affairs. The point here is, internet and social networking and all the instruments of the sort are massively produced and available in the ubiquities part of the world. With one touch/click you are connected to the Net, presumably free as a bird to fly and be posted and updated in a sec. The question that is raised is however, where and who or what are in charge of preparing the primal means for these phenomena?

As an analogy to the web in which a scorpion fabricate as its place for living and its place for catching its preys, the social networking and internet as a means of so-called freed human activity ought to be in control of, even someone won't do, it's a good idea to call it the big other. A handy means to boon the life of individuals as it may be, it has turned out to be a means of surveillance in our lives. But how do people never get to question the procedure it works?

Through the act of Banalization (*coinage mine*) the stinginess and sharpness of a caveat emptor, an unbelievable incidents is reduced and is soften so that one would consider that as a routine and a no biggie! Soda is not a soda any more. We might know how harmful it might be but through media and advertisement the sugary soda which causes hyperglycemia and prizes us with obese has changed its very essence and is presented as sugar free one. The more you drink the more you are thirsty; soda is the very desire which Lacan called the object-petit-a which has been given a reality by the capitalists. What we desire but never get to have it and is censored by the other and is considered as a taboo is now given itself a form of reality out there looking at us right in the eyes.

Even though terrifying as it is, the personal privacy is turned out to be a sham. Functioning as a panopticon structure the network is being controlled by the big other or the state, you name it. Internet, being comprise of Inter which means in between and net which means a system or the diabolical web which is mentioned before. Through this system what the big other needs as data and info's is shared, commuted and exchanged through the devices and the means of it the internet. No more revolutionary ideas and ideology is needed now. Through the matrix of information, the main theme of the discourses exchanged is sorted out so that the Big Other could pacify the tensions and lay out strategies for the future to come by passing required laws and norms. The pan whether really there in the structure of panopticon itself would only sweat over opticon, observing the moves in which each individual in cell, and the entire prison would make and would make the quickest decisions in a matter of minute to conduct and control any sort of affairs in opposition with state apparatus.

That's exactly here when alienation takes place. According to Marx himself, the proletariat are deflected and inflicted by the unspoken pact which the state as the conductor and center of power. The individual are not themselves any more, they would become the prey of the state's power distributions. By looking through the optic of the Panopticon's structure the question that grabs our wrists is; are we really in full control of the affairs going on? Who is standing right behind us trying to knock us down? The subject de-centered, what Derrida's project aimed to achieve could be a stamp of approval. Being a system-bound being at any rate, we are no longer in control of anything be it our own outlook on life. Injected and interfered directly or indirectly by the power relation existing in all our activity and the sense of fear generated by the Father who has castrated us before-hand, the system out of which there exist no referent anymore, only looming and looting in the darkness of lingual illusion.

The death knell was heard when the post-rationalistic era which had accosted its own deficiency and the collapse in their way of thought by the outburst of the world wars. Humanities alongside paved the remaining ashes of hope. Linguist like Saussure, psychologist like Lacan and more to the circle of humanities, Derrida's decentralization of the subject as such and his deconstructive inscription of language itself and its internal Difference is of paramount importance here. No referent outside the self-contained

language system, only an intricate matrix of discourses flowing in *the* system, giving its potentiality of the *Real* through the means of technology. Likewise the soft/hard wares are to process the discourses recognizing the main themes running both on the surface and beneath the flowing streams of discourses. Taking the burdensome of calculating the data, it provides the big other to take action accordingly and plan the time to come. Capitalism in order to survive needs its means of production to be reproduced Žižek said.

5. Conclusion

Maybe Deleuze was right when he in his capitalism and Schizophrenia was trying to illustrate to get out of the centered based structure of society by emancipating from the flow of social stream of thought, the ideological apparatus, by dislocating the so called real and turn to phantasmagorical reality, acting as an outlaw not to be part of the herd even though identity may be at stake. The self-under-siege, what this paper aimed to illustrate, is the individual failed at its outmost to emancipate from the center to go beyond but the question is where to, and what then, and finally could we gain *the* Freedom as such or are we only adding more troubles to our very existence. This jostling up, from the so-called center no matter to what extent had is being the entire cosmos to survive, the platonic world of becoming moving to the world of being. We don't know what the head of the system, if it has one, want from us, because maybe there is none. What the minority of society, though we are all a minor one, as the abnormal, yet again we are to some extent some, are the one who tries to think differently or at least they seem so. Hysteria alongside with the questioning of everything around in an adventurous manner is the starting point for the reproduction and reinvigoration of the system which is one in dire need of it.

6. References

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