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Social Media and Network Society – II:
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PROLOGUE

Postmodern Traces of Social Media

This book contributes to communication sciences with a collection of articles shedding light on the concept of social media and its various impacts on society. The widespread use of Web 2.0 applications has led to an interest in social media studies. Researchers have focused on many underlying questions to define the concept of social media as follows: “What distinguishes social media from mass media?”, “What are the dimensions of socialization in social media?” or “How does the use of social media influence our policies, economy, society and culture?”. Although the research in this field is relatively recent, it appears that it has already become a part of communication sciences studies.

Social media studies are generally conducted from an inter-disciplinary spectrum and on an empirical basis. Further, the theoretical framework of these studies can significantly be varied. The studies are explained or discussed mostly with the concepts of social sciences, but in particular of communication sciences. The most highlighted concepts in social media studies are identity performance (Goffman), social capital (Bourdieu and Coleman), gift economy (Mauss), surveillance society (Foucault, Lyon, Morozov and Niedzviecki), technological determinism (McLuhan), public and private spheres (Habermas, Boyd and Papacharissi), intimacy and narcissism (Lasch), virtual communities (Wellman and Rheingold) and network society (Castells). Such concepts have been introduced to put emphasis on the different dimensions of social media. Whether these concepts are sufficient to define social media, or as different from mass media, the position of social media studies in communication sciences should be discussed in a different context. Therefore, it may still be early to introduce the theories and the models similar to the existing ones in mass media studies, or entirely specific to the field of social media.

Another discussion has been going around the definition of social media. The discussions are centered on the questions, such as “Is social media a tool, a place, a content or a form of communication?” It also appears that it is difficult to introduce a holistic definition of social media in a “network society” (Castells), where digital communication technologies, designs and contents are rapidly evolving, digital applications refer to different social functions, and which is shaped by the activities of the internet users. Although there is no consensus on the definition of social media, researchers have agreed on some of its features. Mainly determined in accordance with Web 1.0, the features of social media can be illustrated as follows: (more) instant, (much) faster, user-generated content (i.e. productive consumer), self-sharing, collaborative, amateur, mobile, open to interaction and dialogue, horizontal, viral, imponderable, hard to control, responsive, daily, assembling individual and different voices, visible, hybrid, alternative, and participatory. It is possible to describe social media as a communicative field, which gives priority to identity-sharing and the freedom of expression. All these features give the impression that the power is centered
on the internet users, and they seem to be the new myths of an idealized, open and transparent world with considerably positive meanings. However, it is difficult to recognize social media as a sphere independent from social powers. As an example, governments are introducing more efficient ways to monitor their citizens. Besides, investment groups are creating new and softer strategies in order to extend colonization and consumption culture.

As the representation of inspection tools and monitoring hegemony of the previous-century nation-state and social structures, the prevalent communication practices of mass media industry with a dedifferentiation impact are likely to be the main reason of these concerns.

Media is one of the socialization tools, which allows an individual to socialize as an actor notably in mass market place. Further, it has an important role in the development of capitalist economy based upon capital accumulation; getting an individual to be a part of the system, and defining his/her sense of social belonging over consumption. As Jean Baudrillard states, “The consumer society is simultaneously a society of the production of goods and of the accelerated production of relations”. Therefore, the consumer society is indeed defined by the accelerated production of relations. In this respect, new media does not seem to be a separation from the old one. These are the efforts to accelerate the motion of a world of vital relations generated for the survival of consumer society. In connection with the developing capital accumulation, the production amount of communication content for consumption is required to increase. Ultimately, the relations will lose their inherent features, and become an agent of mass-produced consumer society.

Social media has been recognized as the primary tool of global capitalism. The statistical figures disprove the fact that generated by the social elites and the conventional media, the world of social media has influenced every aspect of social life and relations. Moreover, the current digital gap restricts the access to social media at different variables, such as international, national, regional and local levels along with sex, age and education. It is necessary to understand for what purposes the social media users use these technologies, and to what extent they can create an alternative world. As widely discussed within the context of Arab Spring, social media is considered as a user-generated platform, and is against the established social institutions, representative democracy, interaction and mass communication. Therefore, it is important to answer the question of whether social media can be used as tool for liberation, social transformation or – more assertively– for revolution. According to the views of the researchers saying “yes”, social media is regarded as a powerful tool, which allows the opposition to show its dissatisfaction and desire for transformation, and makes it more visible.

It may be suggested that social media is mainly seen as the voice of “silent” masses, and a reflection of their problems to the society. Social media is a postmodern medium, which re-unite the individuals becoming stranger with each other for the fact that they commute between working and free time, filled with consumption activities. It is also committed to “safely” connect its users with their friends, and on a global scale with the others. Social media is tool for social solidarity and attachment even through the
“weak ties” (Donath and Boyd; Ellison), and the limitations of sharing are determined by the internet users, which makes it self-reflexive (Giddens). We have a new communication platform, in which not only online and off-line, but also public and private spheres continuously come into contact, and thereby their boundaries have been eliminated. This platform is based on the rationale of “to follow and being followed”. Considering its user-generated content, the form and the boundaries of this platform are uncertain. It is flexible, instantly changing, and has different cultural forms of usage, makes differences more visible, and finally creates its unique pattern while re-creating the social norms. In Serif Mardin’s terms, the features and the form of “community map” shared among the users, is changing in the course of socialization. The levels of social comprehension are extending, the implications of the map are instantly changed, and its image vocabulary is being developed by spreading a sense of isolation. The prevalent business practices of mass communication industry are under shock impact of social media, and there are uncontrolled penetrations in the image world generated by the ideological tools of governments ruling our meaning and value systems. Whilst the power centers and the prevalent content gene-ration forces are relentlessly struggling under the outcry of “citizen journalism” and “alternative media”, the ruling icons have trans-formed by adopting “paradigm-shifting” discourses.

As above, the theoretical discussions about social media appear to shuttle between the ideologies of techno-optimism and techno-pessimism. However, another third theoretical aspect, which would eliminate this dichotomy, is necessary to properly analyse social media. The new communication tool of networking society is likely to be an indication of a new paradigm-transition period in communication. Therefore, social media analysis is becoming more important to understand today’s societies. It may well be argued that, in social media studies, the most crucial point is to consider social media as a community (i.e. a mirror which exists between the real and the virtual worlds, and allows the living individuals to express themselves, instantly share their feelings, status and opinions, and present what they have in mind through the virtual tools). In other words, to a certain extent, social media reflects the time-specific mental and mood status of a community in connection with their opinions and feelings. The current volume of the 7th Social Media and Network Society Book within the Media Critique Series draws attention to three main concepts, i.e. culture, identity and politics. An unusual sharing culture has been emerged by virtue of social media. The user-generated information has become worthwhile by sharing of the internet users, and virtual communities have been created by the individuals alike to each other. They are experiencing a kind of consensus and sympathy, and feel less alienated. Sharing opinions allows them to connect more people in the same view, and relieve their loneliness. Further, the users are now able to discuss the topics that they previously could not talk about in their limited friend circle. For instance, in Twitter, the social media users can see the hundreds of unfamiliar people’s political views, and become a part of the virtual community, an active agent of politics. On the other hand, the users are able to re-unite or develop new relations with their old peers, to manage their relationships or create new strategies of intimacy in semi-public social networks, such as Facebook. In turn, our friends can learn about our different features, and follow the
normally restricted parts of our lives on these networks. The more we share, the more information we receive from each other, and the more we could satisfy our curiosity. In this particular context, Şafak Erkayhan takes a closer look from different perspectives at the cultural dimension of preferences in social media use by focusing on the cultural problems in his chapter “Network Culture and Social Media on Global to Local Scale”. Following this, Ali Barış Kaplan traces the historical background of this cultural dimension. In the light of anthropological studies, he investigates social media based on a comparative study on the psycho-social behaviours of modern internet users and primitive cultures. Then, Cengiz Erdal draws attention to the present indications of social media by analyzing its importance in human life; how it fulfils the user needs and how it came into existence; how the current and pro-sharing applications have created and shaped this platform; how some of our obsolete habits and values have been transformed; and how sharing has become a new habit of today’s people thanks to new communication tools.

Social media is a leading form of media in which the concept of “identity (-ies)” popularizing with the postmodern society are presented. Each sharing on social media reveals some clues about our identity. Although the problem of self-presentation is not unique to social media, it has been legitimized through this platform, and the desire for sharing our life with others has become a continuous activity. Niedzviecki observes that mankind maintains its existence by presentation because people feel like a true individual when they present themselves, and their sharing are followed or liked by the others. In consideration of identity performance in social network sites (Zhao et al.), the users do not show their true or covered identities, but rather create an identity admirable for the others. As an example, they are struggling to look more popular, successful, charismatic or hilarious in order to get social acceptance. Besides, location-based applications allow us to show our social status and life styles, and they have become a location-customized form of conspicuous consumption. Boyd describes intimacy as a sense of control over our personal information. That feeling may get stronger by the fact that we are able to decide the extent of information and with whom we would like to share. It is also possible to attribute this to the success of social networks, such as Facebook. Many internet users consider Facebook as safe harbour far away from the anonymous and “open to danger” environment of the internet. The users are able to decide to accept friendship requests or not, share the information as much as they want, and present a controlled overview about themselves. In this respect, Ozlem Oguzhan asserts that Facebook is a communication medium developing the condition of narcissism. She presents an eye-opening research on Facebook from the point of the critique of modernity. Moreover, Gordon Alley-Young discusses the identity creation of female Muslims in social media, and focuses on the analysis of three ideologies in female Muslim representation and their implications as follows: (1) cultural insurgents, (2) Good Muslim Sister and (3) the Western’s fantasy. Gülüm Şener and Yelda Özoçak argue that the idealized image of an individual on Facebook is re-generated in line with the celebrity images circulated through the popular culture. Şener and Özoçak investigate the different functions of photos on Face-book and the self-presentation strategies of its users. In her article, “A Critical Perspective on the Female Identity Generated in Television and Virtual World”, Neşe Kaplan investigates
the discourse of female identity representation in television and virtual world, and departs from the question of whether female identity is a part of the dominant discourse or is generated as a representation of the opposing identity. In their research analyzing the behaviours of the university students from Honduras on Facebook, Whitney Coyle et al. demonstrate some empirical findings with respect to the creation of social reality among the youth through Facebook.

It appears that social media has significantly transformed the field of politics. The political powers continuously use social media as a new monitoring technology, notably for following the demonstrators of social movements through social media. “Global panopticon” is shutting down the voices of opposition groups in coordination with governments. However, the “strict” political institutions have resorted to create new policies in order to “become flexible” in social media based on dialogue and responsive communication. Social movements and the forms of opposition have been transformed by social media, and a new resistance culture has emerged in the cyber platform. Social movements are able to create their own alternative media, which in turn have made alternative political identities more visible, and the movements have gained a global perspective. Further, alternative and global public spheres have emerged thanks to the dissemination of different views; the posts shared before, during and after demonstrations are able to maintain their influence and continuity; online and off-line organization and demonstration practices have been integrated; and finally it is possible to organize the “disorganized” masses through the viral messages of opposition groups in social media. In this context, the preliminary general framework was introduced by David J. Gunkel. Gunkel investigates social media with a focus on political theories. In his study, Gunkel makes an analogy between Hobbes and Locke’s “social contract” theories and the “Terms of Service” released by the social networks. Following this general outlook, Perrin Öğün focuses on the opposition groups in her article “Is Opposition Progressing through the Networks? Or Getting Stuck Between them?”. Öğün explores cyber-democracy and the relation between online and political participation from the point of cyber platforms which have used as a demonstration area for new social movements, and created a promoter influence on them. She also points out how the access to IT technologies forces the users to fulfill civil responsibilities. Similarly, Gülüm Şener illustrates the opportunities and the limitations of social media in terms of social movements with current examples. Afterwards, Eva María Ferreras sheds lights on the relations between social media and social movements with a recent concrete example. Ferreras introduces a comprehensive analysis on how Spain-based 15-M Movement, which initially started at national level and created a global impact, shaped social media use, notably in Twitter from its early days to present. Finally, Savaş Çoban reminds us the fact that social media has become an influential monitoring tool for government and political institutions rather than a tool for promoting liberation. In his article, he adopts a skeptical stance on the roles of social media in social movements by describing it as a political spy.
I would like to express my gratitude to the authors who contributed to this book with the above-summarized useful chapters. Besides, my sincere thanks go to Can Bilgili for his continued support and guidance throughout the preparations. I wish that this book will contribute to the recently-started social media studies in Turkey, and will be a reference source to all people, students and researchers interested in this field.

Gülüm Şener
Istanbul, 2013
Rapid expansion of digital technologies over the past fifty years has led to significant changes in every aspect of life. While television broadcasting and satellite transmission were supporting transformation of the world into a global village, worldwide proliferation of the Internet usage has increased the acceleration of communication and removed boundaries of time and space. Since the mid-1990s communication has gained new dimensions with the emergence of electronic communication networks. In 2000s there has been remarkable transformations through fast spreading of networks. With transition from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, the masses have begun to communicate through social sharing networks, and among individuals with the involvement of institutions and various sectors, multidirectional collective sharings have begun to form cultures worldwide.

Frankfurt School criticism on mass culture was declared in 1945 emphasizing the relation to cultural hegemony. Today, it seems that new dimensions of mass communication brought by the internet and social media have reversed this criticism. While the criticism was aimed at the hegemony of power focused an those who directed the masses through the control of publishing and broadcasting, everyone is an artist, everyone is a producer and at the same time, everyone is a consu-mer, today. At this point social media has emerged as an alternative for traditional media and it has been a collective power worldwide, compo-sing a new language, new society and new way of communication.

**NETWORK CULTURE AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

Manuel Castells who is one of the well-known theorists working on social changes related to computer and communication technologies, calls the society which has been formed by new dynamics of information age as “network society” (Castells 1999, 2000, 2009). Castells examines communication systems in industrial and information societies, he states that communication systems of the industrial society have a central structure which have been distributed among the masses via unidirectional communication (i.e.from one center to many directions). On the other hand,
communication systems of network society are horizontal networks which include interactive message exchanges at a global scale such that they are multidirectional - from many to many directions- synchronous or asynchronous. Expansion of the Internet, mobile communication, digital media and social software tools have led to the development of interactive networks which provide connection at local and global scales. With the emergence of Internet and social networks lately mass communication has changed significantly in the digital era. Castells has stated that within this period mass communication transformed into mass self-communication and it has generated a creative mass audience at a global scale.

In network culture messages reach global audiences through internet connections and computer networks. “It is multimodal, as the digitization of content and advanced social software, often based on open source that can be downloaded free, allows the reformatting of almost any content in almost any form, increasingly distributed via wireless networks. And it is self-generated in content, self-directed in emission, and self-selected in reception by many that communicate with many” (Castells, 2007: 248).

With increasing acceleration in processes, social media has had a significant role in network culture. In brief, social media is defined as web based services which enable individuals to compose an open or half-open profile in a limited system, to list profiles of other users who are connected in the same system, to survey and to follow connecting lists of themselves and also other users. While technologies and users offered features of social sharing sites are substantially similar, culture of social sharing sites are different from each other. Some of them provide support to maintain relationship between individuals who know each other, while others give a chance to individuals who are strangers to each other to come together for common pleasure, interest, political views and activities. While some social network sites have cosmopolitan member profiles, others have members who speak a common language, who share a common base such as race, religion, gender, national identity (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Briefly, social media is a comprehensive term which defines software tools which have shared user generated contents. Social media includes network sites, blogs, wikis, and also phograph and video sharing sites and RSS feeds pages.

History of social sharing sites began with SixDegrees.com which was built in 1997 and had enabled users adding profiles, listing friends and surfing in the lists of the friends. From 1997 until 2001, sites such as AsianAvenue, BlackPlanetand, MiGente were built, which provided possibilities to users for creating personal and professional profiles. Then next step came in 2001 with Ryze.com which allowed users to build business networks. Providing connection between friends, Friendster had driven the market in 2002 and the number of users reached three million in the first 3 months. It followed the sites Myspace,Tribe.net, LinkedIn, Classmates.com, Jaiku, Netlog in 2003. And in 2004 Facebook, which has been the most widespread network in the world, was founded to provide communication between students at Harvard University. More than half of 19.500 students had become the members of the network in the first month. Today the number of members has exceeded 800 million around the world. In 2006, one of the remarkable sites, Twitter came into the market and also it managed to
attract a high number of members. Except from major sites mentioned, there are hundreds of social sharing sites which have taken form around diverse interests and hobbies on a local or global basis. Addressing different masses and interest groups through various contents, these sites could be examined under the headings such as publishing, shopping, gaming, networking, location basing, sharing, discussing, etc.

Although internet is an old technology which was developed in 1969, it has reached one billion users worldwide only in the last ten years. One of the reasons for this rapid increase seems to be the development of mobile communication tools in recent years; while the number of mobile phone users was 16 million in 1991, this number exceeded 2 billion in 2006. Convergence of the internet and mobile communication has led to the spreading at the internet and social networks. Today, connection to internet and social networks is provided via computers and laptops, and also mobile communication tools such as tablets and smart phones. People have been establishing their own mass communication systems through networks over new communication forms such as SMS, blogs, vlogs, podcasts, wikis (Castells, 2007: 246).

SOCIAL NETWORKS ARE SPREADING

To be able to realize the dimensions of social media which is described as a revolution in communication, it is useful to consider the statistical data in the field. Let’s make these three statements why social media is described as a revolution? In which countries and cultures is this phenomenon is widespread? How network preferences of people are decided?

According to the statistics, participation in social networks is rapidly increasing. Global adaptation of networks effects interaction among individuals, communities and societies; convergence between online and offline worlds comes forward. Social networks provide people new digital experiences offering them business opportunities and social contacts almost without any limitations of geographic locations. Clicking on a news in Twitter, connecting to a company over LinkedIn or choosing “like” in Facebook, people have constantly been drawn into social media.

A report published by the Nielsen company declares that users of social network and blogs among active internet users has reached 80 % of the population in the USA. According to the data of the company, which defines popularity of social networks as a “global consumer phenomenon”, while participation to the networks is growing on the one hand , the time spent on networks is also increasing on the other hand (Nielsen Report, 2011).

Also a comScore report released in December 2011 provides impressive results on the worldwide usage of social networks. Accordingly, social network sharing is the most popular online activity in the world. Measurements of October 2011 proved that 1 minutes of each 5 minutes spent online at global scale was spent in social networks, and 82 % of internet users, whose total population is 1,2 billion, have participated in social networks worldwide (comScore Report, 2011).
Table 1: **Top 10 Global Markets by Average Social Networking Hours per Visitor (October 2011)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Average Hours per Visitor Spent on Social Networking Sites</th>
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<tr>
<td>Worldwide</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philipinnes</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: comScore Media Metrix*

Likewise, studies of comScore have provided remarkable data on the time spent on social networks. The visitors from Israel who have been the first among all countries to spend time in the networking sites; they have spent average of over 11 hours monthly. Israel is followed by Argentine with 10.7 hours, Russia with 10.4 hours and Turkey with 10.2 hours, respectively. Worldwide all users’ average time spent on social networks is 5.7 hours.

In addition, the data shows that social networks have been used not only by young people, but also by all age groups. So, dependence on social media worldwide has become a new area of study.

**COUNTRIES AND SOCIAL MEDIA PREFERENCES: THE GLOBAL LEADER FACEBOOK**

Social networks are platforms where people around the world have been pulled into and have been increasingly interactive. Another outstanding question with regard to social media is how these sharing sites, which are in a vast number and variety, show distribution by country. Since the first sharing site opened in 1997 until today, hundreds of sites have been opened with different contents and target groups. While in some countries local networks are on demand, global active networks come forward in others. Therefore, competition between various networks continues.

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In considering social networks worldwide it is clear that Facebook is the frontrunner with its member quantity and distribution areas in different countries. Also the map in Picture 1 shows leadership position of Facebook through expansion in the world.

According to the research report of comScore published in October 2011, Facebook has reached 55 % of all network users at a global scale (comScore Report, 2011). The Vincos data dated December 2011 indicate that in 127 out of 136 countries where social media measurements were realised, Facebook is in the first place; it maintains its leader position with more than 800 million active users. Although Facebook has positioned behind the local networks in the countries such as Brazil, India, Japan, Netherlands, Russia, South Kore, Taywan and Vietnam in June 2010, it has taken the first place one year later except in Russia, and has sustained rapid expansion on the globe. Apart from China where Facebook is forbidden, local social networks V Kontakte and Odnoklassniki in Russia are the few networks who could compete with Facebook. Europe, with 223 million users; the USA with 219 million users and Asia, with 202 million users, are the continents where Facebook is the most widespread (http://vincos.it/world-map-of-social-networks/).

Source: Google Trends for Websites

http://vincos.it/world-map-of-social-networks/
### Table 2: Top 3 Social Networking Sites (December 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>Twitter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
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<td>Badoo</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>Badoo</td>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
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<td>Brazil</td>
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<td>Orkut</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>Badoo</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>LinkedIn</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Google Trends for Websites[^3](http://vincos.it/world-map-of-social-networks/)

This data indicates that Twitter and LinkedIn in all countries, and Badoo and Twitter in Europe follow the competition for the secondary position.

A remarkable development is the emergence of microblogs as a significant power in social networks. 1 of every 10 internet users worldwide uses Twitter and Twitter has grown at a rate of 59% in the recent years. Sina Weibo in China, which is one of the popular microblogs also grown at a rate of 181% with the last year and it was 10th.

[^3](http://vincos.it/world-map-of-social-networks/)
largest social network worldwide in October. Also, Tumblr has reached to 12th largest number of users with audience size grow the rate of 172 % (comScore Report, 2011).

In view of the data it is remarkable to observe that only one social network gathers people and cultures from almost all regions of the world in a platform. Currently, if Facebook were a country, it would be the largest in the world, as Qualman (2012) has stated. Such as country, has a population of more than 800 million, which is constantly growing and is ethnically and culturally most diverse, as its people are also able to cross geographies and boundaries easily and constantly communicate and interact at a global and local scale. In such a large country, when a message or news appears on the screen, it receives comments or reactions from audiences at the far edges of the world, where both cultural local groups of its own as well as multiple can react simultaneously worldwide.

Developments indicate that networks begin to gain importance as a power in local communities in many countries, on the one hand and they take effective roles to generate world public opinion on many subject on global scale, on the other. Therefore, it will be useful to examine the effects of social media at local and global scales.

**SOCIAL MEDIA AT GLOBAL SCALE**

Manuel Castells emphasizes that the most important feature of the network society is being global. While the industrial society has many different and contrasting manifestations around mainly rural and traditional societies with an industrialized core from America to Russia, from Japan to England, the structure of network society is global. Providing communication simultaneously over networks has an unitive impact. Network organization in each society privatizes culture itself, on the other hand protects it at global scale (Castells, 1999, 2000, 2009).

The concept of globalization can shortly be summarized as economic, social and cultural transformations which occur through the coming together of different cultures with various effects over a long period. The process is based on communication of people in different regions of the world and goes back to the migration of first humans (*Homo Erectus* and *Homo Sapiens*) from Africa and has reached today’s computer age where information is digitalized. As Hopper (2007) has stated, during this long process, there are three main cultural periods defined Premodern (untill 1500), modern (between 1500-1945) and contemporary (1945-present). Each period was linked to the process of globalization with its technological innovations, politic and economic improvements, social transformations and institutional changes.

The contemporary period which has been from 1945 until today, has been marked by advances in transportation technologies and developments of the infrastructure. Particularly, the improvements such as configuration of airways, roads and railway networks worldwide, by containers shipping transportation, rapid increase in the number of vehicle has facilitated contact between people at a global scale. So, on the one hand cultural flows through people, ideas, goods, symbols and images has been intensified and became widespread, on the other hand the number of people travelling
from one place to another has also increased. As a result, forms of global cultural interconnectedness have deepened globally.

Other significant aspects of the contemporary period of globalization are the advances in communication and information technologies. Especially, innovations in the areas of telecommunication, computer-ization and digitalization have provided and made international communication cheaper and instantaneous. Activation of satellites and fiber-optic cables has enabled more frequent access to televisions and radios worldwide. Through the expansion of the internet global communication has come into prominence. Communication over internet has provided the opportunity for people in different geographic locations to overcome the limitations of location and distance, and to come together in cyberspaces simultaneously (Hopper, 2007: 29).

In this context, it is possible to assert that social networks enable cultural interaction for different segments of societies, and from this aspect add new perspectives to cultural globalization. The most significant improvements of social media are to bring together a large number of people who cross over geographical borders and share the same interests, and to provide the opportunity for interaction as a feature of Web 2.0. Therefore, instead of one-sided communication of the previous periods, this period is marked by a multisided and simultaneous communication.

In questioning the cultural dimensions of globalization, statements have been made that cultural interaction and consumption (through the usage of communication devices) which has been realized by the elite segments of different societies previously, was now spreading among lower social classes which are experiencing the interaction and consumption at a popular level (Hopper, 2007: 29). Contribution of social media at this point is inevitable, namely centrality and class differences are overcome through the interaction feature and all classes of society have been positioned as actors in the forming of a global culture.

Examining the relationship of globalization and culture, Featherstone and Lash (1999) have stated that understanding of the global processes is only possible in association with complexity, temporality, disorderliness, context and connection. Certainly, this structure which takes form through multisided interactions is a complex form. Featherstone emphasizes that circulation of images of world’s music, sports and news in the Western media, access to internet, reaching food and consumer goods from all over the world in supermarkets and shopping malls create the feeling of a global culture, but this is much rather related to a common cosmopolitanism of consumer culture (Featherstone, 2006: 389).

Featherstone has stated that ‘emergent global culture can be seen as far from being the culture of nation state writ large, despite various globalization projects arising from nation states, or cultural and religious movements, to provide an all-embracing integrative culture’ (Featherstone, 2006: 390). Castells (2009) also says, instead of arising a homogene one global culture, there is rather a fragmented culture which has pointed historical cultural variety.

Social media is global, because its expansion area is the globe, there are connected structures along the globe and they are talking about transformation of cultures via
interactions of these structures. While people are communicating with their own friend groups, they are following each other constantly on the one hand, they are creating global connections, and at the same time information flows are speeding up in business field, on the other.

Contribution of the social media to global sharing varies; while some sharing sites generate information data banks at global scale, some support global politics; while some open the business world to all professionals globally, others turn their sites into places of action for common values of humanity such as ecology, peace, human rights. In this sense, social media has profoundly been active for creating common sharing such as global consciousness, global discussions and enlightenment. Social media has been functioning in informing, and molding public opinion and has been organizing globally. In these sites the world public behaves like a nation that has common targets, they almost represent a single nation in the world.

Some sharing sites whose number of members has increased and are active at global scale could examining. For example, *Wikipedia* which was founded in January 2001 come forward as a significant sharing site being a world open information source (http://www.wikipedia.org/). Wikipedia is a free encyclopedia which has been composed of contributions made by any person as an author or editor. It has grown rapidly and transformed into a giant structure which embodies 48.000 active editors working on 3.800.000 articles in more than 100 languages. Thousands of people from all over the world have been changing the encyclopedia every day by adding new information to develop the content of Wikipedia. In this structure many people from around the world behave cooperatively and generate a common place by using the interactivity feature of web 2.0.

Another networking site that tries to create a global public opinion in world politic is *Wikileaks* (http://wikileaks.org/). The site was founded in 2006 as a non-profit organization, it has leaked out important news and information on concerning world politics to the public and aimed at creating a real democratic global order in this way. By releasing hidden diplomatic documents, war, torture and crime news of governments and confidential activities of institutions in the fields of trade, finance, ecology, and health worldwide and exposing 92.000 documents which held the American army in the Afganistan war between 2004 and 2009, the site attracted wide attention. Wikileaks has opposed global problems such as war, crime, sensorship, ecological destruction and drawn attention of world public to protect democratic values.

*LinkedIn* is also one of the leading networks which has been addressing the business world and has been one of the five sharing sites with the highest number of members at global scale (https://www.linkedin.com/). This is the world’s largest professional business network which was founded in 2002. According to reports, *LinkedIn* has over 135 million registered users from more than 200 countries (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LinkedIn). Member individuals and insti-tutions of the site have found appropriate employees or businesses via this site by following the
global environment, they have managing their business in the ‘global village’ by crossing geographical borders.

Activism is a remarkable movement in the social media that has addressed global audiences to create a common culture. In many network sites, activist movements have been organizing and setting up groups or sharing information or visual materials. In this way, collective consciousness and support have been called.

While this article was in the process of being written, a striking movement has been initiated by Israeli peace activists. In the period, when political relation between Iran and Israel were stressed and were spreading news that Israel would bomb Iran, a civilian Israeli activist opened a page in Facebook with the heading *Israel-Loves-Iran* and published a statement against war saying “Iranians, we will never bomb your country. We love you” (http://www.facebook.com/israellovesiran). The page was opened on the March 19, 2012 and attracted huge number of people from Iran and Israel, and also from all over the world, who are against war; the number of members reached 54.000 in only 20 days. Many messages from different countries and languages flowed to the page, leading to the opening similar pages such as *America Loves Iran, Germany Loves Iran, Poland Loves Iran*, etc. The movement grew and began to create a global public opinion. Obviously, social media has been a civil power against the governments of Israel and Iran. Through social media borders of nation states have been blurred, states and nations have been improving their transnational relations.

Özgür Uçkan stated that digital activism has boomed in the period of web 2.0 and social networks have been the favorite environment of this kind of activism. Being comprehensive and profound, offering effective participation tools and offering the possibility for global interaction make the social media an efficient environment for activists (Uçkan, 2010). Uçkan (2012), underlines that in recent times movements such as “Los Indignados” in Greece and Spain, plunders in Israel and London, and actions such as “Occupy Wall Street (OWS)” have been transformed into occupation movements across the globe and the internet and social media have had a serious role in all.

Efficiency of the social media at global scale would be followed in numerous networks. Evaluation of examples proves that through the power of Web 2.0 interaction, people’s proceedings result dissolving of the nation state borders which were blurring through development of transportation and communication technologies previously. Instead of national citizenship “global citizenship” has come forward as a new kind of citizenship. From now on, people are being talked about as citizens of a global village who have been acting together in many different areas.

Cifuentes, Merchant & Vural (2011) have indicated that Web 2.0 has encouraged individuals, through collective intelligence, to think about world problems and to act as global citizens. Social network sites such as Wordle, You Tube, Wikipedia, Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, Delicious and Blogger have emerged as media tools that provide sharings for global citizenship related ideas, thoughts and concepts. Web 2.0 has
ensured that people came unite around certain targets and ideologies through social media.

Another subject of discussion that being “global” through the social media has brought about a new sense of belonging. As radio, television, press and novels had likewise played an important role to create national middle classes, also social media has played a role in creating a global middle class. While national media produce a national status around middle class identity, global media is the creator of a new global subjectivity. People are imagining themselves as part of the emerging global class through the integration of English into local dialects, consumption of foreign media and products and are forming new habits related to global culture. Participation in the global culture is expressed via connection to the international social networks beside cosmopolitan consumption practices (Polson, 2011: 148).

SOCIAL MEDIA AT LOCAL SCALE

The relationship between globalization and cultural transformation bring up new questions regarding the relation between local cultures and the social processes. As mentioned above, with the developments at global scale, whose cultures have created new common values and forms, global and local cultures have witnessed two-way trans-formations.

Examining transformations within the globalization process De Sousa Santos (1999) states that the process has introduced mainly four forms in cultures: the first form is globalized localism. In this form, cultures are under the influence of sovereign American culture, which means Americanization, McDonaldization, which defines the expansion of American fast food chains, and the proliferation of American popular music, English becoming widespread as a sovereign language. Second form is localized globalism which covers the changes that occur via the realization of transnational mandates in local cultures; institution of free trade, touristic usage of local values such as historical treasures, religious ceremonies, arts and wild life, changes such as being an ecological garbage dump, conversion of sustainable agriculture into exportable agriculture via ‘structural regulations’, ethnicization of business places put local cultures under requirements of global powers. The emerging third form is cosmopolitanism. With improvement of relations between various countries and structures, global alliances have been developed through NGO’s, environment groups, trade unions, world federations, and north south dialogs. Finally, the fourth form is the common heritage of humankind. Worldwide emerging issues such as the ozon layer depletion, destruction of the Amazon rainforests, antarctic ice melt, biodiversity loss, common global problems unite the world citizens (De Sousa Santos, 1999: 217-218).

Evaluations of De Sousa Santos are based on the sovereignty of center countries order and the orientation of the periphery countries around that order in the cultural area, as it has also been experienced in economic, political and social areas. Although some mutual influences exist, rather it is the subject of periphery countries to be under
effects of center countries, mainly under the influence of American culture. Although De Sousa Santos has introduced significant evaluations, new dimensions which have emerged through the expansion of the social media necessitate the examination these evaluations today.

Featherstone (2006) opposes seeing cultural globalization as equal to Americanization. Although the media, as speaker of consumption, spreads Coca-Colonization, Disneylandization and McDonaldization at global scale, using brands and icons of consumption culture, and increases the sovereignty of English in areas such as law, business, education and the internet, there are also various trends against this view. Featherstone calls attention to the emergence of China as an essential power in the areas of finance, media and the internet through its diasporas and global communities and similarly, he underlines the success of the Japanese media and culture in the areas of popular music, television dramas, animation and emphasizes the developing new regional cultures. Moreover, he also points out the emergence of various religious and other movements out of the West (Featherstone, 2006: 390).

Breaking of the central structure of the traditional media through interaction feature of the networks has led to significant results. The crashing of the transmitted message chain from a center to audiences, and from sovereign cultures and powers to other cultures at the same time, namely one sided message flows, were broken. Therefore, the development of cultural effects in the form of the expansion of sovereign American and Western cultures is not valid in social media. From many to many sided cultural flows in the social media produce a much more complicated set of multiple responses.

In this context, an important cultural transformation at local scale is the integration of local languages into the networks. As mentioned earlier, the sovereign language worldwide was English in the globalization process. Although this was the case in the internet environment, it seems that this situation has begun to change in recent years.

Hatem Ali (2011) has presented a research regarding the effectiveness of communication technologies in the developing countries, indicating that utilization of communication technologies is possible for local cultures only if they could overcome the digital divide whose one of the most important factor is the language barrier. According to the World Economic Forum 2002 report, three-quarters of the all websites in the world are in English. So, it is clear that the internet provides more communication opportunity for people who speak English, while it limits internet usage in countries where English is not the native language or is not widely used. While some cultures perceive hegemony of English as a threat against their own cultures, others take limited advantages of the internet because of the lacking contents in their own languages. Acceptance of the internet technologies in countries where English is not in use, is only possible with the existence of sites and contents in their own languages (Hatem Ali, 2011: 200).

With regard to language integration considerable advances have been improved in recent years. At global scale active social network sites have noticed that it is only possible through integration of local cultures, so they have begun to add language preferences into their features. Today in many networks who are assertive at global
scale such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, world languages have been increasingly presented for users, so local cultures make sharings using their own cultural values existing in global networks.

Usage of local languages in social networks has been increasingly becoming widespread. As Castells quoted the same situation is monitored in blogs; blogs are multilingual international communication spaces, where English was dominant in the early stages of blog development. In March 2006 for less than a third of blog posts were in English; 37% of blogs were Japanese and followed by English (31%) and Chinese (15%). Spanish, Italian, Russian, French, Portuguese, Dutch, German, and most likely Korean are the other following languages (Castells, 2007: 247).

An actual example which indicates importance of the content in local languages has been blogs in Egypt. When internet was opened in 1993 in Egypt, its language was English and pioneer web pages were addressing professionals and high-educated people who could speak English. In the beginning of 2000’s, the internet was out of use of 97% of Egyptians because of not knowing English. At that time, popular blog platforms like Blogspot gave the possibility for users to publish Arabic content, and so politic activist groups such as ‘Kefaya’ and bloggers who are against the government generated Egypt first blogs who use Arabic content. While first blogger groups were communicating their friends and people in the West who speak English, the other blogs which were founded in the years between 2003 and 2005, headed towards Egyptian audiences. In a short period between the year 2003 and 2007, the number of blogs which was previously 40, increased 1400 through prevalence of Arabic content (Hatem Ali, 2011: 208). Disappearence of the language barriers supported considerably more participatory culture in social media, and it increased sharings of information among the Egyptians. The social networks exist as a global media on the one hand, they give possibility for representation of local cultures, support development and sharings of local cultures, on the other. These statements prove that social networks has stand against the hegemony of American culture and language.

Democratization movements in the Arabic semi-island in 2010 has also indicated the significant role of the social networks in the local cultures and nation states. Social media has been one of the most important tools for local cultures to be able to reach global communities, and also to support national unity and organization. It has provided online communication and offline organization between people taking advantages of communication speed.

The movement which is called ‘Arab Spring’ and invoked a series of rebellions, had begun in Tunisia after the death of 26 age old Muhammed Buazizi, who burned himself after the discussion with the police that he was selling vegetables unauthorized. In the process, internet and social media platforms has taken the attention after people poured into the streets to protest the Buazizi’s death. Subsequently, springing to Egypt the movement was flamed up through revolutionary messages published in the social media platforms. Various groups who were founded with the aim of calling democratic order, such as “6 April Youth Movement”, “We are All Khaled”, “National Association for Change” reached Egyptian people using social
media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. In the first day of protests 85,000 Egyptians flowed into Facebook to participate the “Revolutionary Day”, and also “6 April Youth Movement” 90,000, “We are All Khaled” over 40,000 followers attracted. In two weeks Egyptians created 32,000 Facebook groups and 14,000 Facebook pages. With shutting off the internet for five days across the entire nation to stop the flows of coordination and communication over social media by Egypt’s president Hüsnü Müberrek on January 28, 2011, the incidents were exacerbated further. After prohibition Facebook had the highest number of active users in Egypt, the number of participants in demonstrations increased ten fold. While demonstrations were continuing in Tahrir Square, famous Egyptian rhetorician Amr Khaled had transmitted Arabic messages to his 2 million Facebook followers. Finally, 18 days later than protests had begun, 30 years’ authoritative regime was collapsed in Egypt (Hatem Ali, 2011: 187).

The role of social media in Arab awakening is remarkable. Sassen (2011: 578) stated that revolutionary movement in Egypt was mobilized not only through social media, also took action through the networks of the mosques and television broadcasting of Al Jazeera. Social media gave Egyptians the feelings of power which they have not had previously, people carried their collective power into the streets by organizing social media. In recent times, social media demonstrated similar effects in the countries such as Tunisia, Libya and Iran that has proved the significant role of social media in the developing countries.

Although during the times when internet was not existing spreading of news had taken time, the news from Tunisia and Egypt had spread simultaneously worldwide. Afterwards, the governments of these countries has experienced the loss of reputation in international area only in a few days that would be possible at least in a few week previously. The governments who had security intelligences, tanks, cannons, and guns has stayed helpless against the masses. By using the same language, Arab users has met in the common platforms of social media and has spread the rebellion in a wide geographical area (Halıcı, 2011).

Kodrich & Laituri (2011) has evaluated the significance of communication speed feature of social media through a natural disaster. After the Haiti earthquake in 2011, sharing of disaster news through social media such as Facebook and Twitter and rapid information flows supported the rescue works at local scale, substantially. On the other hand, the sharings on social media reached to the global audiences, and provided support to Haiti from all world.

As Özgür Uçkan has mentioned, one of the most effective dimensions of the network organization has been the actions in local environments. Especially, the actions of local communities who were organized in the cities or towns, could increase the effects of networks at a regional, national, global scale (Uçkan, 2010).
RESULTS

As Manuel Castells has emphasized ‘we are indeed in a new communication realm, and ultimately in a new medium, whose backbone is made of computer networks, whose language is digital, and whose senders are globally distributed and globally interactive. True, the medium, even a medium as revolutionary as this one, does not determine the content and effect of its messages. But it makes possible the unlimited diversity and the largely autonomous origin of most of the communication flows that construct, and reconstruct every second the global and local production of meaning in the public mind’ (Castells, 2007: 248).

In this context, social media has emerged as a new form of interactive communication in the network culture, that the way and the speed of communication has been more effective than its content. Although this culture is global in its structure, also it has taken tremendously effective position at local scale. On the one hand, people from different geographical locations around the world from different religion, language and cultures have come together as if they were citizens of a single country, and they have moved around common ideals. On the other hand, the features provided by that platforms strengthened the common values of local communities. The social network culture has supported the cultural globalization, and it has broken the cultural structure of hegemonic globalization providing participation from the base, giving chance for equity, and supporting diversity, at the same time. Social media has been a considerable medium providing simultaneous, participatory and fast communication around the world and has manifested new dimensions for the global and local cultures.
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A THEORETICAL COMPARISON ON THE PSYCHOSOCIAL MANNER OF MODERN MAN IN THE INTERNET

ALİ BARIŞ KAPLAN**

This article is presented at the International 1st. New Media Conference-2012, had place in Istanbul University October 17th.-18th.

ABSTRACT

Psychosocial frame assesment of the derivated datum of many anthropological and ethnographic studies leads us to realize that from primitives to modern man the significant struggling to survival acts of human both within nature and cultural environment is being followed smilliar psychophysical ways, and this points out that it is being functionalized not in completely different modes on the basis of cognitive and behavioral processes of human. The organization of cognitive processes which neurologically give shape to the human behavior, have being organized throughtout paralel defense mechanisms and is being processed on smilliar adaptation processes from primitive human to modern man. Here it apparently indicates that, adaptive ordinary abilities of human cognition is being “protected and preser-ved”, and this preservation mechanism is psychodynamically being processed on equivalent ways and follows paralel paths for both modern man and primitives.

The major assertion of Critical Theory and Simulation postulate does neighter denominate nor reflects the reality of psychodynamic structure of human nature by claiming that; In the consumption culture the usage of internet denaturizes and converts the behavior of individual, and modifies the aptitude and tendencies of society, by concealing the human conscious and/or corrupting some divisions of human cognition and inhibiting mental faculties.

According to the proposition of Critical Theory which alleges that the preferences and the behaviors of modern man is being somehow inhibited and corrupted,and the mental capabilities of Individuals are being censored. As a matter of fact; In this study we shall poly-syntetically try to argue that how much this mentioned asertation does have proximity impacts with the reality.

Keywords: Adaptation, Simulation, Conscious, Internet, Mandala, Screen.

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PROLOGUE

The dead sometimes can be stronger than the ones on alive; the ghosts of past will follow us forever; we can not be not to be inheritors, “on the Neurologic and Conscious basis”…”\(^2\)

_Derrida_

Frankfurt School and Critical Theory critically discuss historical dialectic within a philosophical framework and criticize Industrial Revolution that has been intensively revealed by the Positivist point of view especially from 19\(^{th}\) century; World of Machines; and new world order and new sociologies rationalized by the capital. As a result, by presenting new ‘reason’s’ new functional ‘language’ they suggest the individual human and society a critical ‘consciousness’, which is the reason of self and the other and has an adaptive potential; and ‘cognition’.\(^3\) Hence, the School and the Critical Theory, critically analyze the given dialectic system within the context of historical dialectic and Marxist perspective; and criticize Cartesian Dualism that has been continues since Descartes and its philosophical valuations; criticize the process of constructing meaning based on the opposites and binary logic; and refuse Hegelian philosophy’s premises and axioms based on the law of identity. In addition, in his work _Minima Moralia_ Adorno, who stays the course of Negative Dialectic, critically discusses even Psychoanalysis, which is a new science and aims to solve some pathologic problems of human beings and tries to offer a psychodynamic explanation for social and cultural structures through the theory that it is based, for trying to enlighten mental world through a logic based on dichotomy, and trying to adapt ‘Determinism’ which is a product of a Positivist logic to mental structure, and for some other reasons.\(^4\)

Within the framework of Critical Theory, School’s followers and poststructuralist scientists critically discuss the individual trying to survive from the practices of culture industry based on capitalist system; society’s state of mind; and, individuals’ perception and interpretation platforms shaped through the new order by pessimistically describing them within a psycho-social frame.

In this study, it was revealed that the way organizing cognitive processes of mechanism that shapes individual’s behaviors neurologically, has been protected from past to present. It was also shown that internet usage, like all texts presented to masses and commoditized instruments, diversifies modern individuals’ structure of behavior

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\(^2\) See, S. SIM, Derrida ve Tarihin Sonu, çev. Kaan H. Ökten, Everest Yayıncı, İstanbul, 2000, s. 36
instead of negatively changing it; and this is not an unconscious process, but an informed choice.

We can roughly summarize the reasons of opinions that descriptively define the given situation and do not offer solution in general terms; and refer to the descriptions of modern society’s current circumstances from cognitive and social perspectives.

Since the second half of 19th century, through increasing efficiency, the phenomenon of excessive consumption has been turned into an ideology for masses on the basis of culture industry. New equations were derived in order to sustain the relationship of dominance and independence; and social formation was reconstructed. Consumption is a kind of diet and compensation in exchange for maintaining the dominant and dependent groups’ socially separate status, and detaining human beings from humane abilities. The aim of the phenomenon of excessive consumption is far more than sustaining object’s major usage functions and vital factors. It prevented human’s ability to think freely by forming new aims and meanings. A great majority of the needs of the modern human is, in fact, artificial. Properties and objects are consumed not because of their material values, but due to their cultural forms and icon meanings. Passive human being who cannot change his real world and sees everything as a tool and turns into a tool himself, and alienates to his inner world and external reality, cannot experience his humane sides; as a result, he acts out by fetishizing his external appearance, transforming his lacking of individuality to an idol and being in his own inner world in a narcissist and transsexual state of mind. Liberation and freedom of an individual are objects instrument talized with the aim of sustaining the existence system, not to realize and improve human being’s humane abilities through symbolic exchange and iconological communication that actualize within the structure and existence of consumption-production relations. Actual platforms based on the so-called freedom and its concepts transformed our identity, status, and power into structural objects of pleasure, which can be bought and sold, circulated, produced and consumed; and modern playgrounds. Individuals, the very topic of the culture industry, were impregnated with pragmatic and utilitarian thoughts that reduce account to the society. The individual, as a machine, became shallow; his relationships with others in his spare time were limited, and he was drawn away from the consciousness of social existence. The blinkers in his eyes only aim to reach to the upper class life style; and/or aim to be able to at least pretend that life style. By doing so, the individual became alienated first to himself, then to his status in society, and to his society as a whole.5


social environment, via a very relationship that indicates as if it is a *fraternal prostitution*.  

Modern human rapidly became alienated to himself, to his society and external reality along with the industrial revolution; he was commoditized. Dependent technology and all its products, which are imposed in a polarized way by cultural hegemony created by Industrial Capitalism, has turned the social formation against its own potential competence; human became alienated to goods and to himself.

Icon and Meta fetishism, as phenomenon, is not an absolute individual inconsistency or absolute social result or problem. In a given society, in which technology is regularly-randomly injected in an ordered-unordered, programmed-unprogrammed way; this fetishism is not an absolute imaginary interaction or reflex problem either. Spectral-imaginary existence is a problem of alienation basically created by asymmetrical mind that comes with icons.

Fantasies existing outside of the real world have become to be life itself. Being manipulated by capitalist hegemony, political personnel and pressure groups; science and technology have been transformed into an icon, which is the sole pattern, instrument, and message, serves to change the individual and individual’s perception of reality, and the world as a whole. Science and technology, which turned into a puppet, even engineers and scientists -whether aware or not- alienate human beings from the basic values of their real world and bereave individuals of their humane potentials and remove them. Science diverges from its aims, to give hope; to grace; and to bring prosperity. It is transformed into a quasi-science that will destroy the human being; so far from the main subjects of science; perfecting human being and transcending itself. According to Horkheimer and Adorno, the progress as development of machines and technology has become identical to the power of capitalist system in terms of subordinating and manipulating humanity and nature. Individual’s ability to reason and imagine were both dried up. A human being can only stay as ‘the part of nature’ until the moment that he is separated from the uterus. Later, he becomes the modular fetish human of the imaginary artificial world that was deflected with the concept and consciousness of time; a world filled with commoditized objects, icons, symbols, and virtual relations. Rather than being nature’s wrought creature, the individual becomes a digital circuit of this fictional virtual structure of modified physical world filled with re-shaped and re-created Meta and icons. In the external reality, human becomes the beaten-human, a formatted virtual so-called individual detached from nature, himself, and his humane competences in a virtual society. The world within he lives is a matrix world, of which the resource codes are captivated by capitalist hegemony. A world that

6See, Ü. Oskay, XIX. Yy’dan Günümüze Kuramsal Bir Karşılaştırma Kitle İletişiminin Kültürel İşlevleri, Der Yayıncı, İstanbul, 2000
has a vicious algorithm and competence and turns into one of the rewritable ‘Jpg’ extensions or ‘download’ slavery programs.

According to Bauman, modular human is a mobile, disposable, and changeable creature in nature. Modular human is constantly drawing his own model and changing it according to the circumstances. This nature gives the liberal democratic system and civil society the opportunity to function. The quasi egalitarian democratic mainstreams of liberal global world and its system press mass community to expose the indicators of the external compulsory forms of liberation as an indicator of modern existence adapted on itself. As a result, it is punctuated that when the human being consumes more, he becomes more ‘visible’ and ‘free’; therefore, more civilized. By doing so it is insinuated that this is the only way for an individual to be a meaningful, joint owner, and acceptable part of the modern world.

As Baudrillard sharply points that we pull our lives on just like a digital petticoat. The external reality, which became comprehensible through the model screens indicated by orbits of symbolic compen-sationsystem in which only the given society and individual cognitive processes rapidly get into circulation, is; in fact, composed of commoditized appearances and hallow images of the individual; not the relations between individuals with humane potentials, ability and awareness. External reality has turned into images-spectrum based on fetish relations.

Jean Baudrillard points out that the reality that we experience, has transformed into a reality created by communication technology; in other words, we are in a virtual reality. For him this reality is threatening. Distances are removed; boundaries between real and imaginary, subject and object, and sexes are disappeared; now, everything is intermingled, hybridized, and transexuallized; everything has lost its essence. This is the reality that we experience; this is a simulative universe. According to Baudrillard, he is; in point of fact, making the individuals-the main context of his propagandist discourses- recycling wastes of the similarizing homogeneous world. We live in an order that life and its image are intermingled.

Therefore, according to the critical theory; the individual has began to lose the meaning and awareness of his unity with nature, society, and himself.

Tocqueville and Oskay claim that although the width of relationships has increased, its intensity and depth have so much decreased that imprisoned the human being in the

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9See, Z. Bauman, Siyaset Arayışı, çev.. Tuncay Birkan, Metis yayınları, İstanbul, 2000

10See, J. Baudrillard, Ekran Total, çev. Bahadır Gülmez, YKY, İstanbul, 2002


loneliness of his own heart; new equality only juxtaposed humans without any connection; political powers did not destroy the society, but limited life; it did not oppress but pressed the nation to a point that individuals became nothing but a herd composed of timid and hard working animals; and stupified them; and all of these were done easier than everyone assumes, by bringing together freedom’s external shapes.14

On The Functionality of Social Networks and Human Needs: Assay Sample of Arabian Awake and Gaddafi Based on Psychoanalytical Perspective

Internet and social networks can be counted as the examples of transformations of the structure of modern technologies, which bring mutually complementary transactional multi dimensional opportunities into use for individuals, on social basis.15

Let’s use the example of Arab Spring, West’s so-called democracy initiative project in Egypt, Libya, and currently in Syria:

We watched wide open how the people of Libya, organized through social networks on internet, tragically assassinated their own leader in 2011. We watched the indefinable assassin through social networks and Television, on which the videos and images were posted by the participants. Gaddafi (as the leader of an authoritarian regime) who had –oil- which is a reserve tool that has an indisputable function and a real value in the real world, to this respect, succeeded in being in opposition to imperial powers and dominant ideologies for a long time; from the moment that he allowed internet usage in his country and allowed to set-up the social networks believing that he would contribute to the freedom and development of the children of his country, he must have underestimated that this communicational object of consumption taken home would in due course seduce his children according to their mental and cultural potential in terms of liberation, globalization, and consuming more; and make them patricides and the victim is his very self. West innocently leaks in and causes a number of transformations in order to possess oil, which represents objective power and penis, freely and without being precluded/limited. Internet and social networks are like West’s potential virtual penis and the Jerusalem of free sharing. Gaddafi could not have coped with this virtual enemy; and, he was killed publicly in a holiday atmosphere by his own children who have developed hysterical-liberal symptoms under the heading of ‘social media brotherhood and solidarity’ in the mood for a new Apollo Brotherhood; they were charmed in the virtual world and registered to the new master as a volunteering disciple.16 The killing ritual turned into a sacred savageness in the name of freedom.17 The amoral views were recorded through the miraculous mobile phones in which sacred applications were installed, and disciples sent them to

14See, Ü. Oskay, XIX. Yı’dan Günümüze Kuramsal Bir Karşılaştırma Kitle İletişiminin Kültürel İşlevleri, Der Yayınları, İstanbul, 2000
17See. S. Freud, Totem ve Tabu, çev. Akın Kanat, İlya Yayıngı, İzmir, 2010
the Temple as an ‘offer’. We, as modern primitives, ‘only watched’ them without any inner pain. We; as the free computational participants of dominant consciousness watched them in the Jungles of virtual media sharing within the framework of our new understanding of entertainment and intelligence, as if it is a religious ceremony where primitive people sacrifice their totem ancestor and collectively eat its flesh and drink its blood, and go into trans because of the demonstration and become numb not feeling bodily pain; as if nothing happened.18

Here, a part of the people of Libya; in other words, a part which was ignored and was not included to administrative levels, has nothing to do with the arrangement of necessary requirements that are supposed to enhance vital conditions of motivations which prepared the basis of such a process. Compared with Western democracies and apart from their lack of fundamental human rights and related problems, the people of Libya who live under an authoritarian and despot regime, has average and high individual income among the people of the continent in which they live and in comparison with a number of less developed countries. Historically, primary factor that leads societies to revolt against the system in which they live is to be denied consistently regarding the fundamental needs which are primarily material needs. It can be said that in general sense there is no material basic need of people of Libya that is denied and neglected. What caused the rioters whom were kept under pressure for many years and were not allowed to participate to administrative processes is, repressed hostile feelings of the ‘other’ tribe, who wants to take the place of current tribe that has the power. The tribes that cannot draw conclusion through conventional ways, have instrumentalized the virtual platform in order to afford advantage, they were organized through the social networks on internet, which is one of the channels (medium) brought by informatics technology.19 The potential content of social media that directs masses- as McLuhan also puts, affectionally directs an interpreter’s perception and interpretation processes because the ‘tool is the message’; and if under any circumstances the interpreter does not have an inner cause to satisfy his own privations, then all presentations of social media became the play ground’s unstable ghosts. Hence, if the people of Libya did not have the desire to change the strong power, which is represented by opposite tribes, new media tool and its content would have stayed as a modern playground and a cathalitical medium that fulfills communicational functions. From psycho-social perspective, a human being tends to release his desires, deficiencies, privations, and suppressed sides once he discovers an environment that he can freely reveal himself; and/or an authority to apply and complaint that will help to satisfy his needs. For example, in a rural society, an individual has to account for the community; because, the rural society does not have


the space and domain to escape from its social reality. In such a community individual’s all behaviors are imprisoned in an area in which they can be observed, followed, and known. The individual can verify his tendencies that are conflicting with the society’s values and rules and not satisfying community’s rules by disguising under different identities and disappearing in a populous fast city life in which accounting for community has almost minimized and nobody knows nobody, time is divided into pieces, and relations are superficial and inconsistent. A similar process can be seen in social networks that are under hypertexts on internet, which is in a way the virtual substitution of the city from psychosocial perspective.

On the psychosocial basis, we may assert that a similar process as well is being derivatively available and also having presence on the social networks in the Internet under hypertexts. In this case, here the social networks are virtually having role like an urban plane and functionalized as the psychosocial factor of cities in a replacement.

All living and functionally differentiable fields and mediums are eventually subjected to rules. Considering the primary usage of internet, idle behaviors that do not account for the others were reduced with the introduction of IT crimes act; and the individuals moving on hypertexts became responsible to the act as much as they are to the written and oral laws when they go out.

Then the social change in Libya, we may claim, is not a result of neither a struggle of democracization nor a challenge of any natural campaign of civilization movement, it seems like opposite assumptions are being holding on under de facto presence of mentioned parameters, those Libya public had naturally so-called mental investment in to. The psychosocial circumstances of the given fact indicate with its entire psychodynamical factors that indeed It was the movement having a conclusion as a result in a form of sentimental “revenge, vengeance and hostility” which those emotions do have a certain historical basis in primitive figures. That well suits West’s purposes on East, as an interference “to satisfy the defect of rulership” of the public in Arab Awake, in the name of so-called civil insurrection.
We should immediately mention that Western so-called democracy initiative is not a hidden policy. That is, the ‘so-called’ part of is known. West is the new image of Imperialism, and the real purpose of its policy to liberate east, is known. This policy is an initiative to capitalize the entire world and especially those countries governed by authoritarian regimes and have oil resources. It is known that these interventions have both economical and strategic reasons, and We think the reason why the discourse of media and social media, which includes individuals, is ‘democracy, liberation, protecting civilians’ is pretty clear. In 21st century, the human being reveals in the ‘violence and crime’ culture in which he lives and applies himself. This is not a delusion; that is, crimes around us cannot exist as the imposition of an external authority; Ini-ciative and Primitive Necessities are ever going to give up following human of which closed-down running at the background curtain of humanity. The thing browsed around especially through media and social media networks, is like an image of the initiative to ‘liberate crime and violence’. This culture is designed as a ‘committal and confession’. In other words, for today’s individual who experiences opposing feelings at the same time, revenge (subconscious-violence) and feel guilty (super ego), goodness of collective (social Eros) is a lost feeling. We assume the discovery of global policy, behave childishly, will suit modern human’s book (!) however, science and arts can develop an independent discourse from this policy and guide to the future; because in science and art it is known that human being has a psychological side; and, because, what science and art desire to reach is the ‘universal goodness’ and ‘reality’.

This culture does not suggest be mature. In this culture there are no wise characters that take lesson from individual and collective historicalness of Jung, matured and complete its individuation. This culture accepts that existence of such a being is against its nature, even dangerous. For this very reason, culture needs children wander between id and superego. These mature-look children enjoy to play with the strategy, to live between ‘to possess in order to consume more’ and the feel of guilty. The new look of modern society is just like a ‘children’s play’ fictionalized through informatics technology and social media networks; a play addresses to regress; not maturity. Just like in the world of the primitives.

CONCLUSION

Infact, potential perception and explanation capabilites of primitif human about his cultural world and on physical environment, essen-tially are not much far different than our actual perceptions in the presence modern world and cultural sphere. In consequence, on the basis of the relationship that we facilitate and establish with Reality, there is no historical detachment, but uninterrupted contiunity; at least at neuro-logical base in the frame of obtaining upper preferences of utilizing the abilities into adaptive advantages to stay on alive on the multipara-meters of cultural and physical environment.

For human groups who are bond with kinship and attached to the piece of nature that they belong, instead of the content of this attachment, the stimulating logical structure of the process comes to the fore. From a pseudo dynamical point of view, this structure is closely related to the process of interpreting ontological being on the basis of holding on to life regarding the “Uncertainty of Sphinx” which shows the basic problematic in human babies at oedipal phase. The fact that this generic problematic goes for both communities composed of adult individuals and modern human from the perspective of psychosocial dynamic; has been proved in many studies. Furthermore, cultural and social platforms, institutions function with their sole being as ontological components to which human beings can attach their existence. In human communities in which individuals are bond with kinship, Totem is the indicator of social Eros. Determining the terms of marriage for the individuals who are bond with love, and the basic element of these terms are the Ancestor Totem that they are bound up. This is, in fact, the indicator of Erotic Resource of social coupling. Ontological being is


interpreted through the act ensuring the continuity of ancestor and the Totem to which the ancestor is attached. Just like a kid who bases his being to his mother through psychophysical processes and has autoerotic and incest affections; human communities also base their beings to a common totem; yet, on society level, the bond of incest is replaced by a kinship that strongly emphasizes on incest prohibition. Let’s refer to the resource of totem and taboo, which were generally accepted ethnographically before coming to the state of today’s societies. Totem is related to the ecological being that includes the flora and fauna in which the species live in. It is not a metaphysical, but an objective nature being to which the continuity of biological and cultural existence that determines the relationship between sexes of a certain species is attached. In short, totem is the necessary element of nature on which human communities try to hold and base their life. According to the studies in all around the world, totem is a thing that societies associate with ecological environment in which they live and its vital resources like wheat, barley, monkey, deer, oil palm, and frog; or, life-threatening creatures and elements including rhino, lion, wolf, bear, and thunder. Primitive people are attached to their totems, as the selection of totem shows, with ambivalent affections. In this attachment/bond love and violence is, in fact, intermingled, and this situation is externalized through disguised ceremonial demonstrations and rituals. Social organization, including language, is shaped through ambivalent assessments. As a matter of fact, Claude Levi Strauss relates the relationship between functions and subjects to structural context of dual oppositions by grounding the community’s myth-mystical forms of organization on etiological resources of linguistic structure.

Primitive human perceives and interprets the world he lives through spirits and the absolute power of thoughts based on magical assessments. Primatives’ interventions and participations to the real world are representatively formed by Mandala-screens in which Animas are used.

The screen total (ecran total) of today’s human being is represented by all means of audio and visual fields (surrounding all his life) through reanimating the real world phenomenon and events. The hunter who draws a sketch in a Mandala the representation of prey that he is going to hunt, by reanimating this process, a plan regarding real life, on Mandala screen the primitive human participates to the Animistic platform surrounding all his life. A modern human being who lives in a real world, works on the field in which he is expert- so he can hold on to life; develops functional adaptations in order to satisfy sociocultural need. At the end of the day,

34 See, S. Freud, Totem ve Tabu, çev. Akın Kanat, İlya Yayını, İzmir, 2010
from psycho dynamical perspective, there are no profound differences between the impulsive causal reasons of the attitudes of hunter and the modern individual who is in front TV and computer, which can be described as modern Mandala-screen.

The pragmatist necessity of a primitive hunter’s need to ceremonially and regularly draw Mandala on the floor before or during the hunt; however the techno-cultural opportunities are imposed to this individual by the commands of the given technology and social order of the society in which he lives, and whatever advantages and disadvantages those given imposition have; and how much free choice this ritual is, which is thought to gain objective favor, for the individual regarding the functioning of the real life; modern individual’s participation to visual and audio fields and especially interactively arranging his life on Internet, presenting himself and the other as signifier and the signified, watching the other’s and following it; joining to hyper textual fields where he can express his thoughts, opening blogs and mail accounts, registering to sharing portals like Facebook and Tweeter, watching movies, reading newspaper, online shopping and online organizing through various sharing can also be the imposition of the given society. Questioning the advantages and disadvantages of these meta-product and cultural-mental fields asking how much of it is free choice, is similar to the functionality of the meaning of a primitive human’s drawing Mandala on the floor, as was taught by given order taught and transferred by his ancestors.
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SELF OBSERVATION IN OWN ILLUSION: FACEBOOK AS THE MEDIUM OF NARCISSISM

ÖZLEM OĞUZHAN*

“One seeing no relief for pain but walking will never recover.
Knowing existence is confined to a world
not large enough for one is universal suffering.’’

Ergun Kocabıyık

Baudelaire’s nineteenth century depiction of the double (janus) face of modernity as being eternal and immovable on the one hand and ephemeral and circumstantial on the other (2004: 214), melting two poles into one concept, can be interpreted as the estrangement of modernity from its own sources by continually facing the new. Such reading of modernity, opens to rediscussion “modern thinking” as founded on Descartes’ “doubt” and the “duality” engrained in the logic of Aristoteles. The leading issue in this discussion is doubtless to be the reflexivity of modernity, an attribute comprising the evolution of one aspect over the other and the continual oscillation of opposites.

Today, the processes of ‘globilisation’ and ‘individualisation’, each having gained a meaning after co-evolving, cannot be distanced from Baudelaire’s depiction of modernity if conceived as two polarities. Modernity’s janus (double) face can only be understood as the oscillations of these two processes; this “face” being a window that opens not only outwards but also inwards to itself, displaying references to the ideals of the visible world, and, even being both a process and an end. Hence, each face gives clues to a deep “secret” and the processes creating that “secret”, comprehending which allows the recognition of the face. Throughout history, man’s struggle to comprehend herself and the processes she lives through have occurred concurrently. “Know thyself!” At this point the subject opens to a key fact that is also the source of what is being reflected: “Mirror”. The individual is acquain-ted, by looking at the mirror, with that relating to Self, Other-self and the Other, editing herself and her environment as a reflexive process in modern living. Yet, similarly to the effect of approaching the mirror since the Renaissance, with the decreasing of the space between the processes of globilisation and individualisation, the individual, having become a master of his

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autobiography, makes a “gift” of his communal existence - in its natural circumstances- to this face and its glance.

The foundations of capitalism, the system characterising modernity, are its means and relations of production that are based on expertise and division of labour. The cycles of production-circulation and consumption are conducted at a pace hitherto unequalled in our history, necessitated by the continual need of accelerating the capital turnover (Marx, 1976: 175). The need of the accelerated circulation is met by the transportation and communication technologies. Current communication is based on digital technologies interconnected via the internet. One of the aims of this study is to expose the historical continuity between the elements rated as poles in our current communication processes and going beyond the “bipolarity” in these processes by an approach taking Baudelaire as reference and stressing the oscillatory significance of the processes. Mapping the traces of continuity is possible through the oscillations of the globalisation and individualisation processes. Narcissism is concomitant to as well as the outcome of these global and individual processes. One of the tools contributing to the visibility of narcissism is ‘FACEBOOK’ - ‘the mirror’, the globally exploited social networking service. Although the simultaneous benefits to the individual, both by seeing and being seen through the Facebook in this oscillatory medium will be discussed, the primary purpose is to trace the processes which have produced this Facebook, the modern mirror.

This study is composed around the axis of the famous words of the Communist Manifesto that “All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind” (Marx & Engels, 2008: 38).

This sentence determines the study not only with respect to content but also its format. This study will discuss the vision of the individual of “self”, the “other-self” and the “Other” while the reproduction of her biography, turned to an obligation, goes on over the communication devices. In the first part of the study, under the first clause of the manifesto “All that is solid melts into air,” the flexible production methods and the basic relations of production with the concept of the “prosumer” will be covered. In the second part, under the second clause of the manifesto “...all that is holy is profaned,” displacement of “tradition” by modernity will be traced, including the individual obligated to compose his biography within the terms of the circulation in which she has replaced “tradition”. In the third part, under the third clause of the manifesto “…and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind.”, the face appearing on the Facebook in relation to the culture of appearances in the social media, as well as the narcissistic performances as the side effects of individualisation will be discussed.

“ALL THAT IS SOLID MELTS INTO AIR, …”

Since its publication, this famous clause of the Manifesto of the Communist Party has been published in many theoretical texts, and even constitutes the name of the famous book by Marshall Berman which analyses modernity. In this book Berman
describes modernism “as any attempt by modern men and women to become subjects as well as objects of modernization, to get a grip on the modern world and make themselves at home in it” (1988: 5). This statement referring to struggles of humans to be both the subject and the object doubtlessly stresses the reflexiveness of modernity. The basic reason for this having become the discussion point of the ‘reflexive modernisation theories’ at the end of the 20th century, is the inadequacy of the terminology used, and even of the institutions, to meet the current circumstances and to describe the limits or the poles of change. At this very point, the concept of “uncertainty” can be identified as the axis of modernisation in a general sense, and as the axis of the individualised communication processes within the scope of this work;

...because subjectivity and inwardness have become at once richer and more intensely developed, and more lonely and entrapped, than they ever were before. In such a context, communication and dialogue both a desperate need and a primary source of deight. In a word where meanings melt into air, these experiences are among the few slid of meaning we can count on (Berman, 1988: 8-9).

The melting, within the second half of the twentieth century, of these “solids” mentioned by Berman, through the reality gained by the technology-focused cycling in production-circulation and consumption processes, the ideal of flexibility and the subsequently digitalised technologies are the problems considered in this subsection. Flexibility, in its most idealised form, is striving to shape all processes, from production to consumption, and thereby to destroy the risks of excessive demand caused by massive population. At the point we have reached today, the ideal of flexibility is widely and intensely practiced. Its intensity is comensurate with the pace of technological advance as well as the links to expertise on fine detail. Its expanse relies on the organisation of practically all production and service sectors within the framework of this ideal.

Application by Ford, in the first half of the twentieth century, the scientific management techniques of F. W. Taylor to industrial production eradicated the production delays, or the frictions in movement and circulation resulting in slowing down the capital turnover. However, the very impediment “fordism” could not surpass was the massive production methods and the vertical separation of the production process. In the second half of the century, these impediments were flexed to feed the pace requirement of the capital by reduction of stocks, revising delivery systems and placing electronic controls, etc. under the displayed slogans of “just in time”. This process no doubt also covered logistics, electronic banking and the consumption dependent on computerised systems. Hence, in fact, culture and culture-dependent life style around ‘fashion’ turned to a faster turning hoop. The production method accelerating the turnover of capital not only concerned the hard objects, but transgressed to shaping processes in all aspects of life, such as entertainment, shows, of presenting history in the museums or geography in tourism and the planning of leisure time (Harvey, 1992: 229). All of these goods and services came to be produced by indivi-dualising, i.e., taking into consideration the demands of the consumer. In this process the axis of consumption has moved from need to demand and desire.
The flexibility ideal determines not only the turnover of the capital but also the position of the workers in the production process. The claim of “intensiveness without centralisation” is founded on the freeing of the labour force. But the application mode of this claim on the production methods does not abstract the system of relationships from vertical separation. At best, it distances the relationships from being face to face. In this method of engaging small work groups, the flexible working hours are, using clearer terms, loading on of extra duties. It is expected that workers regard pace as the principle of the process of work, be open to change, be distant from precautions dependent on experience, and be less tied to formal procedures. Even when working from home, which is the extreme point of ‘flexibility’ in timing, the worker does not have a right of opinion in the process of production, except on the choice of the place of work. The situation of getting encumbered with extreme work results in the addition of problems of authority stemming from intragroup dynamics, and of the responsibility of taking initiatives and even risks, in addition to the macro-economic inequalities. (Sennett, 2002a: 57-61).

The third leg of the system of the flexibility ideal is the consumer. Alvin Toffler’s hybrid concept the “prosumer”, formed from the ‘producer’ and the ‘consumer’, is a convenient concept to discuss the consumer dimension of the matter. Toffler had first used the term to meet the production situation for the usage value in the agricultural community where the producer is producing to use as well as to give to the landlord or to exchange. According to Toffler, who had claimed that following the industrial revolution, production and consumption had been separated from each other and the prosumer had been forgotten by the economy since most industrial products were distanced from being directly usable so much so that the conversion value and the consumer value were no longer pronounced together. However, following the progress after the 1950’s, this combination, due to economical and social reasons, stepped in again and the prosumer succeeded in socialising and overcoming individual problems, and finding a place in the economy. Toffler offered many examples such as dialling of numbers by the consumer as against connecting the numbers; replacement of the pump operators by the consumer during the petrol crisis, use of the automated teller machines. He claimed that during this process the borders between the producer and consumer sides had disappeared, and in the third wave where they had merged, the new production method had become “half conversion and half usage” (Toffler, 1989: 267-278). In reality, the basic reason for opening a place to the consumer in the production process had been to avoid overproduction resulting from mass production and at the same time to reduce the production costs by including the consumer in the production process. The more explanatory form of the reference given to Toffler in this study exists in the concepts of “use value” and “exchange value” of Marx and also A. Smith. However, the concept of the “prosumer” is quite useful to explain the production methods and their relationships shaped by flexibility and to investigate their reflections on the social media in the context of this study. However, the intention here is not to give credit to the shift claimed by Toffler, but to the contrary, it is to do with the loss of the chance of many to be individuals with a social position allowing them to recognise self and to comprehend life.
When these three aspects of the flexibility ideal are considered in relation to the current means of the developed mass communication, it is possible to observe the disappearance of limitation to the content of implements and tools, and to claim the almost natural integration of portable devices and conforming with daily life. At the initial stage of mass communication devices, the consumer had been identified as ‘the audience’; becoming ‘the user’ at the introduction of the internet at the Web 1.0 stage. Specifically for the purposes of this study, the consumer can be referred to as ‘the prosumer’ at the Web 2.0 stage when interaction has the capacity for descriptive, portraying functions. The templates offered to the prosumer by these technologies facilitate the formation and alteration of the contents by personal choice. Thus, as both the producer and the consumer, the prosumer is the last step element realising the flexibility ideal of the system, providing an ‘opening’ to the new socio-economic requirements, as argued by Toffler. When this ‘opening’ is over the social networking service Facebook, displaying the face and the biography of the prosumer, it can be easily claimed that it is the prosumer’s identity, labour and experiences that partakes in the give and take. While joining, on the ‘Home Page’, the other prosumers in a fragmented and disassociated flow, at the very personal ‘profile’ site formed by the prosumer, all details of identity, photographs, videos, likes and dislikes, friends, and practically all his activities (including the individuals influenced, and comments) are displayed. These don’t yield a reference to memory or trace in the known sense. The profile assumes a cinematographic significance in the “timeline”, which is a new application. The “profile” allowing the prosumer to move it from top to bottom, from the old to the new, gives the prosumer the opportunity to direct and act in his own production over a time line. Well, the “poles” have been diverted and gone into one another. Just like in stokholme syndrome, prosumers are tured into both a terrorists and hostages. For constructing an ‘identity’, we are doing nothing else than consuming ourselves by playing an ‘identity’ and subjective illusion game (Baudrillard, 2005: 56). On the other hand these preferences and actions constituting the “identity” are also another way of joining the flow on the Home Page. Thus the prosumer has created an area to be spectated by others and herself. For the prosumer, who has fashioned the fetish character for herself and others to watch, this area must be continually renewed not to lose its attraction.

**Prosumer** indicates a situation contrary to his implications. At the current stage of capitalism, the limits of production and consumption are fizzling out under the dominance of “circulation”. The need of the system to accelerate the turnover rate has caused the designation of the complete process of the circulation phase. Therefore, in this context, the continually colliding production and consumption have significance only with respect to the extent of the circulation. This points to the fact that circulation has become the defining condition of the total process, and that every aspect of the system has to be recognised in this respect, i.e., through circulation. This is, as mentioned at the begining of this study, the basic reason of the extent of the ambiguity in the production ways and its associations. In a life style given itself up to circulation,
the communications and dialogs which take their place among hard resources as described by Berman, have also yielded their hardness to circulation.

“...ALL THAT IS HOLY IS PROFANED, ...”

All that are holy depend on tradition. Modernity, since the Renaissance, has had a current that runs down the tradition it originates from and cannot hold a traditional style to define itself. It derives its dynamism from “disembedding” and “re-embedding” practices. These practices can be recognised by the distanciation of time and space. In the pre-modern period, while space was defined by locality, i.e., existence; during ‘modernity’ these concepts leave their positions to the relations of the absent others. The modern absence which has replaced the congruency of time and space also makes up the reason for uncertainty. In this respect, when disembedding the cyclying tradition inherent to ‘time and space’, it re-embeds it with modern institutions and their systems of expertise within the limits of trust (Giddens, 1998: 25-28).

Giddens places this case of “trust” against the reality of uncertainty, and classifies it into four grades: “family systems”, “local community”, “religious cosmology”, and “tradition”. Tradition gains its significance from meaningful routines it develops from (1998: 99-108). Tradition, which has been there to organise the past and is to organise the future, relies on repetition as the relevant and defining resource for the present. Continuity based on repetition and the guardians who establish the link between tradition and reality constitute its trustworthy significance. With these components tradition has rituals, and therefore it is outside the intellect. It can be interpreted as being ritualistic, but guidance is needed for this (Giddens, 1997: 62-65).

With the development of modernity traditions are gradually discharged from the cultural environment. With changes in their meanings parallel to those in the location and the local practices, traditions continue to exist in other forms, which Giddens describes as “relics” or “customs”. Customs are routines with organised repetitions that have binding power. Personalised customs are shaped by commodification and gain collective significance by the effects of institutional reflexivity. However, this collectivity has lost its ability to make references to the future or to adhere to another entity (1997: 101-102). “The post-tradition society”, which Giddens has proposed to depict this stage of modernity, is the direct outcome of the globalisation process. However, according to her, this society is not an end but a beginning. In this social structure the stage belongs to action, research and the new social order (1997: 105-106). The custom based on repetition, which has replaced tradition, provides a means to keep ties between the past and the present. But, what has become current is not the popular but the personal past and its resource for repetition is the individual worry. Therefore Giddens names customs as frozen autonomies. Identity has also taken its share from this transformation and has been turned into a plot that requires continual re-editing. Therefore, in western societies the need to seek psychological support has increased (2000: 60).

Everything holy rests on tradition, and tradition in today’s format of modernity has been “disembedded” and has been “placed in the flow”, one step away from the
analysis of Giddens. To be able to follow up this current depends on observing the gradually shortening oscillations between the processes of globilisation and individualisation: Bauman discusses globilisation in terms of the comparisons he makes between the global and the local. He argues that local units have lost the capacity to create a significance to place themselves above the individuals and being local during the current dominance of globilisation can only end in poverty. While the distinguished live through the process of globilisation in a homeless style, the rest are tied to the locality and the local. The superiority of the distinguished, in other words, the owners of capital, is in their mobility (2006: 9). The deletion or the transformation of values and meanings related to time and place by technologies has polarised rather than homogenizing societies. Whereas the locality/place lacks any pressing or definitive effects on the distinguished capital owners, the opportunities for the others to refer to identity derived from locality have disappeared. In this polarisation, owners of capital are recognised with their remarkable ability to move, while those confined to locality are left with the problems of belonging to a place. (Bauman, 2006: 26).

This global classification Bauman has proposed appears to be a system of thinking based on polarities far from the ambiguity axis of modernity at this phase of reflexivity, but it is not so. Modernity has not only disembedded tradition but also the locality which has let tradition exist. Therefore, for the individual who has dissipated tradition - the basic element of cultural memory, identity and thus the framework of belonging - there has remained no other choice but to continually getting re-embedded in the flow. This current is shaped by the practices determined by the distinguished during their global movements specifically for the circulation of capital and offered to the consumer individual.

In parallellism to Baudelaire’s recognition of modernity in an opposing wholeness, the only way to get embedded in the global current today can be conceived as the obligation to join the process of individualisation. The individualisation process splits all the cables the identity of the individual has been secured with. Given this indistinct, displaced life-style, the responsibility to set up values to position into the flow is wholly the individual’s. This responsibility doubtlessly turns into a troubling process. As the said value setups are not tied to any tradition or locality, they do not involve a continuity, in which respect uncertainty becomes the key concept of the process of individualisation. Ambiguity eliminates collective action in response to any popular demand, the idea of integration, and buries in history the idea of common interest. Hence it is not possible to gather around the common cause or any natural address. (Bauman, 2005: 36).

Beck claims that social classes have lost their worth since the individual has formed his own biography by education, mobility and competition through the reflexive modernistion process (1993: 93-95). The preferences of the individual, gaining visibility through these three criteria, determine what sort of identity he/she is to own. This is the “do it yourself” or the “job jugglers on the tight rope” tale, and the individual is in “homo-options”. In a stance opposite to Bauman, Ulrich Beck ve E. Beck-Gernsheim describe this stage of modernity as a process not involving the society
and its space. They claim that individualisation, which has replaced it, is made possible only through the town, education, consumption and mass communication; and that the questions “who am I?” or “what do I want?” can only be answered within the scope of these conditions (1996: 25-31).

Emphasis on the town and communications therein, while connecting this and the next part of this study, also provides the means to discuss the polarity of virtual-reality and physical reality which bear ideological significance for this study. The concept of location shakes this polarity from the start, since it defines both the imaginary and the physical. The town is a planned locality, and while this planning process continues there exists a language that describes directly what is being lived in it. The “imaginary”, indicating that the locality is a designed entity, goes a step further by pointing to a continuity. For example, the internet borrows architectural terminology, such as site, room, window etc. That the distinction between the imaginary and the real is a continuation of dualism; and that perception of these two localities is only possible through continuity is claimed in the “cybrid” concept. This concept based on the interaction between the physical and the virtual locality has a dual orientation (The Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture), in that the physical locality has as much effect on the virtual as does the virtual on the physical.

Facebook, an illustration to this study, is a ‘social sharing site’ that bases its name and its principal function on the information cards ‘teachers’ have designed to acquaint their students. Hence, these cards next to bearing basic identity information, are also the locality of the performance of the student throughout the course, to be evaluated for the purposes of teaching. Facebook, recognisable in physical reality as a card concerned with identity, is incomparably limited in this scope next to the locality it leaves to the imaginary, programmed at a higher level of expertise. The objectives and the controlling parties have been transformed at the ‘imaginary sharing site’ of Facebook, where it has come, on a considerably more horizontal plane, under the control of the owner of the identity. Here the familiar teacher-learner hierarchy has disappeared and the individual keeps his own tally through which she establishes interaction with herself and the others. Starting with this as well as many other examples, it becomes a necessity to comprehend that the relationship here between the imaginary and the physical reality is not one of opposition but one of continuity. Facebook is the outcome of the “do it yourself” biography borne by the process of individualisation. This designing of ‘autobiography’ suits the individual’s intensive efforts to recognise as well as to introduce herself to the other. Therefore, Facebook is taken as an example in this study to investigate the proposals of the theoreticians of reflexive modernisation and especially as the locality of the process of individualisation.
“...AND MAN IS AT LAST COMPELLED TO FACE WITH SOBER SENSES HIS REAL CONDITIONS OF LIFE, AND HIS RELATIONS WITH HIS KIND”

This last clause of Marx and Engles, quoted here as a heading, has become by today, in comparison to the days when it had been penned, far more significant as a result of the approach between the processes of globilisation and individualisation and the increasing frequency of the oscillations in between. Through individualisation, a basic process defining reflexive modernity, the individual, bereft of the characterisation imparted by traditions, and in midst of the uncertainties in relation to production, has become a prosumer facing the responsibility of composing and writing his own biography.

In order to cast light on this stage of the transformation process, Beck has identified the problem axis of reflexive modernity under the headings of “side effects are the motor of history”, “globalisation of the side effects”, “the bumerang effect”, and “the individuals as the bearers of the problem” (1997: 175-181). Through a general glance, at this stage of modernity, the side effects of modern science have taken the place of the defining and transforming functions of social classes. In this study, which keeps proximity to reflexive modernisation theories, but takes a counter position on the issues of production methods and the situation of the classes, the basic argument surfaces at this point. Expressing the argument with the terminology of the reflexive modernisation theories, if, as has been claimed, history is the motor of the side effects produced, the side effect of individualisation, which is one of the basal dynamics of the reflexive modernisation, is no other than narcissism. One of the basic sources displaying the practices of narcissism is the Facebook. The interaction recognisable between narcissism and Facebook also points to the passage between the imaginary and the physical reality.

Sennett claims that narcissism, further than being the self admiration of the individual, is a character defect describable as “self orientation”. The main question of the narcissist is: “What does this event or the individual signify for me?” The most important problems facing the individual are the presence of the needs at one end and “getting buried in the self” on the other, which constitutes the impediment to meeting the needs. For the narcissist, satisfaction is a condition which recedes as it approaches because the individual is destined to oscillate between these tips. It is not possible to get satisfaction by the individual subject to these circumstances (Sennett, 2002b: 8). The points made by Sennet on the narcissistic individual agree with the claim of the passing into one another and interaction of poles as continually stressed in this study. The spirit of the century, while blurring the borders enabling recognition and discrimination, has at the same time made circulation the axis of modernisation.

Narcissus kneels over a pool of water, enraptured by his own beauty reflected on the surface. People call to him to be careful, but he pays no heed to anything or anyone else. One day he bends over to caress this image, falls, and drowns. The sense of the myth is something other than the evils of self-love. It is the danger of projection, of a
reaction to the world as though reality could be comprehended through images of self. The myth of Narcissus has a double meaning: his self-absorption prevents knowledge about what he is and what he is not; this absorption also destroys the person who is so engaged. Narcissus, in seeing himself mirrored on the water's surface, forgets that the water is other and outside himself and thus becomes blind to its dangers (Sennett, 2002b: 324).

According to Sennett, narcissism, which has appeared as a prominent human character through the process of individualisation, is the outcome of the disappearance of opportunities to create meaningful relationships in the society, the public sphere (2002b: 22). From now on, to test the reality the individual will look at what there is for her in the reality rather than whether she fits the reality (Sennett, 2002b: 230). From a clinical profile, the narcissist has a passive, and not an active personality, and experience for her is to chase herself. What he looks for is her reflection in everything. Also, the relationships and the borders to assist the completion of her experiences are blurred (Sennett, 2002b: 325).

Christopher Lasch, in his celebrated work on narcissism, has determinations on the time perception of the narcissist. For the narcissist, who has broken the ties with the past, the future is also of no interest, and in fact the presence of “now” is problematic. This determination ties the claims of Lasch to the discussion in the previous section of this study “on the dissipation of the effects of tradition on the individual during modernity”. This also points to the disappearance of the rituals and meaningful repetitions which tie the past, the present and the future. In a manner to support Sennett’s argument that sociality has been ended with narcissistic character, Lasch claims that the weakening of the individuals relationship with the past is not simply due to the evaporation of ideologies, but is also due to inner deprivations. The past is only nostalgia brought to the market place in the ‘universe’ of the narcissist (1991, 27-30). “Since "the society" has no future, it makes sense to live only for the moment, to our eyes on our own "private performance," to become connoisseurs of our own decadence, to cultivate a "transcendental self-attention." (Lasch, 1991: 6)

Lasch at the same time emphasises the need of the individual for approval and appreciation. The others are the guarantee of self respect. The traces she has created for herself, her reflection on the masses is a mirror for her (1991: 59). At this point, just like Sennett, Lasch looks for the way out for narcissism in the soul of the epoch one lives in, and points to the media as one of the sources feeding this situation. In a cultural environment of especially expectations of fame and recognition, fed by the media, he argues that the narcissistic individual has found very favourable conditions (1991: 21). Giddens, who has made references to both Sennett and Lasch when commenting on narcissism, sees advertisement as one of the feeding sources. The consumption-oriented capitalism has a central role in the promotion of narcissism. With the consumption of suitable goods and services narcissist searches for the perfect, the beauty and popularity, and lives surrounded by mirrors (Giddens, 2010: 218).

Among the claims of Lasch there are also criticisms directed to Sennett. The most noteworthy, within the context of this study, is his determination on privacy. Lasch
criticises Sennett for having understood the result as the cause, and the cause as the result. Because Sennett has skipped the transformation undergone by the ‘individual’ in his claim on the occupation of the public space by privacy. For Lasch, what underlies the privacy culture is not claims of individualism, as thought by Sennett. On the contrary, it is the collapse of the claims to individualism (1991: 30). On the other hand, Giddens criticises Lasch with a guilt of inadequate humanity, and argues that by giving a passive position to the individual Lasch has created a view that sever the relationship between the individual and social activities. (2010: 222). For him, people at the same time characteristically react to what they perceive as pressurising social conditions. Hence modern social life impoverishes individual action, it facilitates the gaining of new opportunities; while being estranged on the one hand (Giddens, 2010: 222).

In the light of these discussions, when looking at Facebook as the irresistible channel of capital flow and individual living, many applications do overlap with the prosumer, the individual whose autobiographical representation has become an obligation. The point of exit in this study is the button on the Facebook profile page labelled “See Yourself With the Other’s Eye”. Thus, the prosumer who owns the profile can, by ticking a button, carry to her screen her own profile as seen by others, thereby becoming able to see by another’s eye the self she has edited herself. This points to the fact that the relationship of self, other-self and the Other have “telescopied” into one another. This button, which makes possible the reflexive look both through its use and the contents, is reminiscent of the self-orientation of the narcissist. Having dissolved the Other in herself, the prosumer, as if to support Baudrillard’s syndrome argument, is both the one who peeks at and exhibits herself. The profile in the Facebook functions as a specially developed mirror in its own right. Bonnett (2007: 101-102) recognizes the claim of “a mirror doesn’t show the copy of a model exactly”, and exemplify through the appearance in the mirror that right hand becomes the left. The subject is also both here and somewhere else, and at the same time everywhere, being perceived from an uncertain distance in a complex depth. … the mirror, just like a prism, can damage the visual field because it can hide as much as it discloses (Bonnet, 2007: 101-102).

Facebook apart from being the mirror, is the image of the personally edited image of the prosumer both watched by herself and the others. In this connection, it classifies and turns to images the other prosumers (e.g., family, friends, etc.), within the framework of the question “what does this individual or event signify for me?” From then onwards, people and events are momentary items making up and shaping his profile. Also, what the people and events express are exhibited in the profile upon ‘‘liking’’, by ‘‘sharing’’ or through comments.

Individualism arises from the mirror, and someone else is a mirror. Looking at another necessitates understanding, interpreting and analysing him/her because the other exposes himself/herself in the mirror of a cultural (physical, linguistic, artistic etc) whole. The face is the appearance of another. Another becomes manifest by the face (Kocabıyık, 2010: 22).
Prosumer’s profile is also represented by his photograph, which is usually his ‘portrait. It is quite a common practice for the prosumer to photograph herself to be used for the profile. Photographing herself to represent his Facebook profile suggests a multistratified thought process. But it must be pointed out that this reflexivity is limited by shape, or it is the reduction of reflexivity to representational shape. Here, therefore, the evacuation of the contents of the reflexivity concept and its blurring needs also to be added. In the straifications of the reflexive process which loses meaning while getting distanced from content, another blurred entity is—in support of Lasch’s argument—the person representing the social situation of the individual.

“Those who prefer to escape and get free would lose the chance to look themselves on the face. We can liken them to the kitschmensch of Milan Kundera. They would like to gaze at an untruthful mirror representing all as beautiful and see themselves in happiness. For them the mirror has not yet turned to a reflexive device to stimulate inward looking, and is solely a device intermediating the purposes of eradicating worries of external appearance. They do not look at the mirror, the mirror looks at them. The Kitschmensch says ‘I am seen therefore I am’ (Kocabıyık, 2010: 75).

The closed-circuit ‘universe’ of Narkissos, demonstrable as the loss of the individual drowned in his image or, better, buried in his image, is broken by the flow on the Home Page. This flow can best be understood by demonstrating the identities turned to biographies, and subjected to continual change to keep a piece of themselves (photograph, video, comments etc) in the flow to demonstrate the continuity of their existence. However, that flow is so fragmented, and the fragments can show such irrelevance that to find an attribute for what has been created in the profile may not be possible. Sennett’s referral to the narcissist’s “chasing herself” is what the prosumer does in the Facebook, but what she chases is not exactly herself. The current on the Home Page composed of a piece of everyone is what is left from the public space. Next to the loss of sociality emphasised by Sennett, this is the continuously displayed death advertisement of the individual recognised by sociality, as talked about by Lasch.

Outside the classical appearance of the profile, Facebook offers its user the “timeline”, which gives the prosumer and those browsing through his profile the chance to go back over the time spent on the Facebook, and to view it like a straight tape, or a film without a continuity or synopsis. This application is a revealing representation of an individual who has taken the responsibility to write about a life resembling a scenario (nuclear wars, terrorist attacks, epidemics, economical crises, etc). This application is also associated with the loss of the future and the narcissist’s time perception. With the loss of the ties of the past, the present and the future, the “timeline” in compatibility with today, codes the personal past or the present of the prosumer on templates separated from its ties. The profile is so fragmented in the timeline that the new tablets are like a collage with an axis slipped further than “pop”.

Fiction, fragmentation, collage, and eclecticism, all suffused with a sense of ephemerality and chaos, are, perhaps, the themes that dominate in today's practices of architecture and urban design. And there is, evidently, much in common here with
practices and thinking in many other realms such as art, literature, social theory, psychology, and philosophy. (Harvey, 1992: 98).

In this phase of modernity with loss of the thoughts of historical continuity, the public space and sociality of the individual, Facebook cannot be understood solely by the autobiography of the individual or self reflection of the individual. Facebook is the whole of an altogether marketing strategy. A considerably large commercial cycle turns in this channel with institutional advertisements, marketing of large masses of prosumers to brands. In this channel forming the axis of the circulation of goods prosumers have put on market their biographies, reminis-censes, experiences, likes and preferences. Prosumer’s marketing of personal issues through the reification cycle of capitalism can be estimated as his efforts towards the approval and acceptance of his narcissistic course. In this new style of slavery, production of goods, the carriers of the system, continues even outside the workshop over mobile tools everywhere and at all times. This process can be regarded as the continuous reproduction of the fetish character of the reification. Now, the individual while producing his biography in his profile, has also become his own designer, advertiser and the loyal consumer.

Through Web 2.0 narcissists have the opportunities to introduce themselves and consolidate their narcissism as the prosumers. At this point narcissism can be defined as being more cultural than ever it was. Even the names and the slogans of these Web 2.0 sites—for instance “broadcast yourself”- reveal the desire of the narcissist prosumer to be seen and “liked”. Another example for being “seen and liked” is the Time Magazine. Time chose “You” as the man of the year while introducing the Web 2.0 in december 2006 and there was a full length mirror on the cover of the magazine (Twenge & Campbell, 2010: 159-160).

To be able to discuss the relationships of the individual and his group over reification the display window and the performance concepts of Goffman can be introduced to the argument. This is another way of understanding the placement of the prosumer marketing herself. She is the designer of her display window who then looks at this display with others. The window is a mirror in this respect, although the display in the window are goods. When considering the relatively slow profile but the fast flow on the Home Page, the term ‘performance’, used by Goffman to depict the ‘activities of individuals effective on others’, can be used to depict the total activities of prosumers including continual editing of themselves, reproducing and marketing and at the same time consuming (2009: 33).
CONCLUSION

Studies on reflexivity, which is one of the main dynamics of modernity since put forward, have increased from the end of the twentieth century onwards. In this particular study, reflexive modernisation theories have been considered around the axis of ambiguity. At the current stage of modernisation, ambiguity has disem-buddled concepts as well as institutions and placed them in continuous flow. As a result, individuals having deserted the traditions depicting their lives and their locality in the gradually fading pages of the past, have attempted to edit themselves in a new order based on education, competition and mobility. Ambiguity of the individualisation process is this very life leaning on the ‘do it yourself’ type of lifestyle.

This study has been circumscribed around the argument that narcissism is a side effect of individualisation which is one of the basic processes of reflexive modernisation, and that one of the most prominent devices making narcissism visible is Facebook. It is the words of Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto: “All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind" (Marx & Engels, 2008: 25) that have given the study its format. In this study ordered by these clauses, the “prosumer” concept with the three aspects of its relationships with infrastructural issues, namely, capital, worker and consumer, have been discussed. Subsequently, the breaking of the defining frames of traditions and the burdening of the individual by the responsibility of composing his own biography as a consequence of the proximation and acceleration of the processes of globilisation and individualisation and the resulting uncertainty has been analysed. In the last part, narcissism as a social consequence and Facebook as its visible face have been merged with the topics discussed in the previous divisions and the fetishistic edition of his profile and the editing of his ‘do-it-yourself’ biography have been looked into.

These three divisions diverting from the traditional view of modernity based on opposites and polaritites, has attempted on a critical stance to create a different visual angle. Though the criticism mentioned has been derived from institutions related to modernity, the argument of this study has been constructed originally. This study, using this original argument, has attempted to discuss the processes which have produced the likes of Facebook and social networkservices of its kind, rather than discussing their functions and effects on our current society.

Most opposites employed to surpass the ambiguities of modernity have been brought to discussion along the study, and it has been argued that the separation between these opposites have gradually become indistinct. The basic support of this argument has been the reflexive nature of modernity. Of the opposites discussed has been the tension between the imaginary and the physical reality. This opposition which has been attempted to be explained and to go beyond using the cybrid concept have gone into one another in the Facebook example as Facebook is an important example to cybrid. Another opposition has been positioned between the producer and the consumer. The fact that these two identifications have become inseparable or indiscriminable from one another has been demonstrated in the example of Facebook
through the ‘prosumer’ concept. Even though appearing as opposites in terms of the scope of what they point to, globilisation and indivi-dualisation are processes which give birth to each other. Facebook, although having a global usage space, is a device that stays afloat only through the the visual designs related to the individualisation of the individual prosumers. With this character, Facebook makes indistinct the opposites it harbours between time and locality through both being in an imaginary reality and the acceleration of the turnover of capital. In this environment anything disembedded to become global is continually replaced in the flow. The narcissist recognised as the side product of individualisation, joins the togetherness of opposites by not being ever satisfied on account of keeping together his needs and his introversion. The narcissist produces, manages and consumes her profile in Facebook. The earlier tolerance of spying on others only has now taken her into its scope. Hence, eyeing and exhibiting, herself and the other, the victim or the terrorist have become one.

Facebook is a product of a culture wherein seeing rests on illusions (e.g., central perspective-illusion of depth). Seeing in this product the self, other-self and the Other is not free of illusions. However, illusion cannot originate from a lack that accompanies it. To the contrary the imaginary and the physical reality have overlapped. Many claim that Facebook is more open to interactions compared to other social networking systems. Forexample, the web site called My Space is more concentrated on its own presentations while Facebook allows for a space to interact with other users (McClard & Anderson, 2008: 10-12). The imaginary and the physical reality have telescoped into one another, but at the same time the individual furthers his estrangement level in daily life in an occurrence like this that takes reference from vision liable to illusion, because he trusts his existence to his coldblooded eye on the screen. An interaction relying on exhibiting and peeking cannot form the basis of a socialising way dependent on action and distant from illusion (wrong consciousness). In this respect Facebook is the stage of the tragedy of the individual’s ability to think of self, other-self and Other, and even the society. In addition to this, the audience is also the player and is always on stage. For Niedzviecki “Peeping Culture” is contagious. After one contact besides “following” the others, we want everything about us to be seen... Peeping is gradually gaining the significance of a mechanism converting the social sense. Minds going through this mechanism can no longer be satisfied by sitting aside; quickly coming to that stage of “we also want to do this”. (2010: 27-28).
REFERENCES


WHOSE NIQAB IS THIS?
Challenging, Creating and Communicating Female Muslim Identity via Social Media

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The 2010 annual report of the US State Department on Human Rights reported a rising bias towards Muslims in Europe (US State Department, 2010) while France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland enact laws restricting religious dress and/or mosques. Despite this bias, Gallup reports that 77% of UK Muslims identify with their country versus only 50% of the general public (BBC News, 2009). North American Muslims face similar challenges. US news reports of mosque building or expansion draw vocal opposition like that expressed about an Islamic Cultural Center opened near Ground Zero in New York City. US reality series *All American Muslim* lasted one season due to vocal opposition and a loss of sponsors. In Canada, the sitcom *Little Mosque on the Prairie* has gained an online following because it dramatizes the challenges and biases faced by Muslims in a small Canadian Prairie town. Faced with increasing bias and imperfect representations in the mainstream media Muslims are increasingly using social networks to build community and to regain control of representing their faith and their lives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

History documents popular representations of Muslims from the time of the crusades though earlier representations likely exist (Hillen-brand, 2000). Qumsiyeh (1998) argues that three stereotypes summarize popular representations of Muslims as bombers, belly dancers or billio-naires. There is research that both confirms and exceeds Qum-siyeh’s (1998) view. To focus the discussion this chapter considers three significant points in recent modern history that inform much of the current scholarship on Muslim popular representation: the publication of Orientalism by Saïd (1979), research pre and post 9/11 and the Arab Spring.

A key work in the study of popular representations of the East is Saïd’s (1979) book Orientalism. Saïd argues that the West originally viewed the East based upon limited experiences and Western academic writings from the nineteenth to twentieth centuries.

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Called Orientalism this perspective views the East, its peoples and countries, as the opposite of the West and thus needing the control of Western colonizers. Said (1979) argues that Orientalism views the West as the mind, the birthplace of democracy, knowledge and logic and the East as the opposite.

Researchers use Orientalism as a lens when analyzing news reports on Turkey joining the European Union (Aissaoui, 2007), the political implications for Palestine (Rizvi & Lingard, 2006) and attitudes in Hollywood film (Konzett, 2004). Said (1979) however is not without his critics. The most popular critique is that Saïd (1979) overlooks Western approaches to the East that do not fall into Orientalism like the work that was done by Western academics to uncover, preserve and study the history of Egypt (Lewis, 1993). Such critique does not negate Saïd’s (1979) importance but it reminds us to use his theory in concert with other perspectives.

Pre 9/11 literature as early as 1996 argues that Muslims are going online en masse to find community and challenge stereotypes such as after the Oklahoma City bombing when Muslims were first blamed (Bastani, 2000; Marquand, 1996). Post 9/11 studies examine the distortion and sensationalism surrounding Muslims in the news as a force that compels Muslims to go online to debate and contradict such representations in North America and Europe (Hallak & Quina, 2004; Harb & Bessaiso, 2006; Jackson, 2010; Macgilchrist & Böhmg, 2012; Sharify-Funk, 2009; Siapera, 2006). Post 9/11 studies explore how social media use can both defame and reclaim Muslim identity. Barr (2010) and Banks (2011) examine the negative online campaign labeling US President Barrack Obama a Muslim and Citron & Norton (2011) cite the use of anti-Muslim videos on YouTube. Research also argues that social media facilitates communication between Muslims around the world by eliminating communication barriers between the sexes and initiating business and cultural dialogues (Brouwer, 2004; Harris, 2008; Piela, 2010; Sands, 2010; Tarlo, 2010). El-Nawawy (2010) argues that a collective identity is emerging in the Arab World. This appears to foreshadow the Arab Spring and highlight the events leading up to it.

The Arab Spring starts on December 18, 2010 after Tunisian Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire after his fruit cart, his livelihood, is confiscated (Fahim, 2011). Massive unemployment and poverty touched off an increase in Egyptian suicides in September 2010 (Cook, 2011). Signs foretelling the Arab Spring include the Iranian election protests of June 20, 2009 during which 26-year-old Neda Agha-Soltan died from a sniper’s bullet to the chest. Video of Agha-Soltan’s death traveled around the world via social media. Iranian authorities restricted memorials to Agha-Soltan, controlled the release of her body and tried to claim her death was a hoax and a Western plot (Farber, 2009; Thomas, 2010). Agha-Soltan became the face of a struggling Arab World and her story spurred talk of revolution. In March 2008 bloggers shaped the outcome of the election in predominantly Muslim (though not Arab) Malaysia; some proclaim them to be the thought leaders of a new generation (Subramaniam, 2011).

Sky (2011) argues that Facebook, Twitter and feelings of powerlessness feed Pan-Arabism. The head of social media at Al Jazeera, Riyaad Minty, argues that social
media brings news to people in a way that is particularly human (Houndshell, 2011). Indeed Agha-Soltan and Bouazizi became an everywoman and everyman through social media as people posted their pictures and proclaimed We are Neda. Social media has created an army of citizen journalists who report what their government will not allow the world to see. Ironically, the same technological revolution that increased unemployment and thus discontent in the Arab World is also channeling the Arab World’s messages and images of discontent (Aoudé, 2011).

Some question whether democratic change in the Arab Spring countries will continue and help to balance extremist perspectives from the region (Kaye & Wehrey, 2011). Others ask what role the US will or should play in reshaping the region (Aoudé, 2011). Whatever the political outcomes in the region the events of the Arab Spring tell us that the conflict will be as much about politics as it will be over who wields the power to communicate to the masses via social media. Representation will never be completely resolved as identity labels such as Muslim and woman are always in flux as floating signifiers (Hall, 1989 & 1997 a & b). Cook (2011) argues that as politically connected religious groups compete for power that popular representations of the Arab World and Muslims will narrow in focus (Cook, 2011). After the Arab Spring, specifically the increased awareness and collective consciousness facilitated by social media, it is difficult to conceive of a world where the power to represent rests only in the hands of the elite.

RATIONALE

Recent research examines how Muslim women in business are using social media to reach target consumers, especially other Muslim women (Tarlo, 2010). Research on how Muslims use social media to change their popular representations specifically identifies women as a group leading this charge (Bastani, 2000). Piela (2010) argues that social media gives Muslim women a forum where they can discuss gender relations. Similarly, Harris (2008) argues that social media facilitates Muslim women’s communication by helping to deconstruct cultural barriers that keep unrelated men and women from talking to each other (i.e., social media allows anonymity). Ongoing analyses of social media attest to the presence of Muslim women from Neda Agha-Soltan to anonymous women citizen-journalists, bloggers and activists who are helping to forge new representations of Muslims during a time of great cultural change. Given the increased public voice of Muslim women via social media, this chapter focuses on three questions: (1) What popular identity representations of the Muslim woman are emerging via social media? (2) What role do social media play in the construction of these representations? (3) What are the socio-cultural implications of these representations?

This chapter focuses on analyzing the ideology and implications of three specific representations of the Muslim woman popularized via social media: (1) the cultural outlaw, (2) the good Muslim sister and (3) the Western fantasy. This research has complications. First, a male researcher will not gain access to password protected and gender segregated social media. Second, the anonymity that Harris (2008) says
facilitates Muslim women’s online communication means the social media researcher cannot completely know if the individual behind a representation is a Muslim and/or a woman (e.g., A Gay Girl in Damascus blog). This analysis aims to examine the implications of representations of Muslim women but does not assume or authenticate that Muslim women always create these representations. Finally, this chapter is not an exhaustive study but instead focuses on three prevalent representations that speak to a specific nexus of gender, culture and faith. The texts analyzed in this chapter include both written (e.g., responses, discussions and descriptions) and video texts from a variety of social media sites (e.g., Islamicity.com, YouTube.com, A Gay Girl in Damascus).

**METHODOLOGY**

Robert Scholes’ (1985) method of textual power argues that in reading the content of texts we have the ability to expose and critique social structures of power and privilege. Scholes (1985, p. xi) argues, “Texts are places where power and weakness become visible and discussable, where learning and ignorance manifest themselves, where the structures that enable and constrain our thoughts and actions become palpable.” This method enables this study to explore beyond the level of written language to identify and analyze the structures that underlie the written work. Doing this allows one to consider the effect of a representation to reinforce, challenge, change, or ignore existing structures and discourses of power at work in society. The method involves three interrelated and overlapping tasks of reading, interpretation and criticism.

The reader needs to know the generic and cultural codes and symbols from which a text is constructed. Reading recognizes that there is a gap that occurs whenever we use codes and symbols (e.g., language, images) because their meanings reside in people’s minds. It is the job of the reader to supply this meaning by articulating the codes that are used and to what effect. The reader will identify the genre of a piece and talk about the context in which a piece was constructed. This study establishes some of this context in the introduction and literature review that precedes this discussion. We must recognize how social context imbues a text with meaning. Therefore, by reading a short YouTube.com video one is reading its codes/symbols as well as its social context. Reading is also concerned with unusual and/or obvious symbol choices and asks why one chooses and uses them.

When interpreting the text the interpreter needs to be able to extract underlying meanings. Scholes (1985, p. 22) argues, “It is the feeling of incompleteness on the reader’s part that activates the interpretive process.” Interpretation is thus the active search for a non-obvious or obscured level of meaning (e.g., unsaid, implied and repressed). In performing interpretation, the researcher is considering what the content, that is read in the first stage, means in terms of social structure. Part of interpretation involves identifying repetitions and/or oppositions in the text and asking what these represent. The interpretation stage also asks what is missing from the text.
The criticism stage requires taking a critical standpoint to deconstruct the symbols/codes from which a text is constructed. Scholes (1985, p. 23) argues, “Any group […] can mount a critical attack on a story’s codes and themes from the position of its own system of values.” Criticism in this study does not speak for Muslim women but filters these texts through critical perspectives and writings on culture, gender and identity. Bowman and Kirstenberg (1992) argue that textual power allows the marginalized to comment on oppressive structures. Critique exposes texts that can, “change the ways we think and live” (Pollock, 1992, p. 60).

RESULTS

The author of this study was an online non-participant observer and he identifies as a non-Muslim and a Communication scholar with a critical perspective on gender, culture and identity. This chapter focuses on analyzing the ideology and implications of three representations of the Muslim woman popularized via social media: (1) the cultural outlaw, (2) the good Muslim sister and (3) the Western fantasy. This study is qualitative and does not claim that these three themes are exhaustive. In the sections that follow these representations are read, interpreted and criticized after which the potential for spurring future research is explored.

The Cultural Outlaw

To protest the French niqab-ban (enacted April 11, 2011) two Muslim women, Communication and Political Science students in their twenties, donned veils, miniskirts and high heels and took to Paris streets as the Niqabitches. The video went viral and played to the song Hey Fuck You by the Beastie Boys. In it, they pose in front of Socialist Party Headquarters, the Ministry of Defense and the Prime Minister’s Center for Strategic Analysis. Countless passersby take cell phone photos. A man yells, “That’s great, strike a pose,” while another says, “It takes things like that” and gives them a thumbs up. Sanitation workers pose and take pictures with the women. While standing outside the Ministry of Immigration and National Identity in Paris two police officers approach the women. The male officer tells them they need to move along and when the Niqabitches ask if they are doing anything wrong, he is uncertain. The female officer asks if they are protesting the niqab-ban. They reply, “Yes, we want to defuse the situation,” to which the female officer replies “Super, can I take a picture?” The Niqabitches opened Facebook/Twitter accounts, their video went viral and the press covered them.

The Niqabitches are cultural outlaws for opposing the law through performance that blends the sacred and the profane to engage politics, sexuality, women’s and religious rights. The Niqabitches also speak out against one establishment (e.g., The French Republic) without being co-opted by another (e.g., Islam). Their message does not fix on one meaning. Even by claiming to advocate for women’s choice they face opposition. One opponent writes online:
were was there mind when they did that, ok , i see they r trying to change the culture ... allah asked us to cover our body , but allow for us to show our face, and leave it as a choice if we want to cover it too. i felt shy while i was watching this

The Niqabitches are mentioned alongside Princess Hijab who paints hijabs on Paris billboards.

Moors (2011) argues that Princess Hijab rejects all labels claiming to be just an artist thus distinguishing her from the political Niqabitches. The Niqabitches also defy easy definition. They are not like other good Muslim sisters who reverently wear veils to challenge the law nor do they completely decry the veil. They stand culturally outside these and other standpoints. Instead of accepting negative interpretations and condemnations by respondents, the women privilege the lighter aspects of their performance with the effect of keeping the meaning of their work from being fixed in any one way. In an online posting about their performance the Niqabitches write, “Isn’t it better to LOL while making a statement?” (Moors, 2011).

Miniskirts and veils are politically charged symbols in France. A controversial 2008 French film called Skirt Day dramatizes the harassment that students and faculty face from religious conservatives for wearing skirts. Some French schools recognize a Skirt Day or participate in an awareness campaign called The Spring of the Skirt and Respect as a way to fight sexual harassment. Likewise, this is not the first time a veil has created a controversy for the French. In colonial Algeria, French attempts to abolish veiling made the veil a sign of cultural resistance and camouflage for resistance fighters who helped win Algeria’s independence from France in 1962 (Fanon, 1967). Fanon (1967, p. 44) argues, “The European faced with [a veiled] Algerian woman wants to see [behind the veil].” Fanon’s (1967) speaks to a French desire to possess the Algerian women’s body if only in the scope of the gaze. The current niqab law in France has similarly evoked criticism that the French government is controlling women’s bodies.

The Niqabitches are both critical of objectification and humorous about it. They reply to Facebook critics who say they are getting attention with sex appeal writing, “C’mon, do you think [...] TIME would talk about us if it was all about the legs? We are very concerned about this issue. Stop dissing us or we will stop shaving to make you have nightmares (evil voice) Mwaahahaha.” Clearly, they reject the law. Yet they also use humor to keep their performance message from becoming focused on one aspect (e.g., objectification) when they engage a much broader set of issues (e.g., choice, identity, politics, religion, femininity, satire, performance).

Butler (1993) argues that we realize gender by repeatedly performing the same script and actions. With Butler (1993) one could argue that social media helps to disrupt the repeating script of the Niqabitches performance. Critics reframe the performance like the Zone d’Expression Populiste (ZEP) who call the video Neither Whores Nor Doormats and attach a disclaimer:
This is a parody of the official NiqaBitch video. The video from NiqaBitch is insulting towards the French troops fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan, the French senators who have voted the niqab-ban in the streets of France and the Muslim women forced to wear the niqab and the burka against their will, and is an apology of the sharia and does not convey our statements Thank you (Moors, 2011).

The ZEP changes the video’s soundtrack to Collette Renard’s Les Nuits D’une Demoiselle, a song that euphemistically celebrates sexual acts, thus giving the Niqabitches a different significance. Each time the performance is reframed like this the range of meanings grows.

Lloyd (1999) argues that Butler’s theory of gender performativity overlooks how environment and participants give a performance meaning. The Niquabitches’ performance has a different significance now that it is illegal under French law. Similarly, when the performance is participated in, viewed (or blocked), in environments like Iran where the chador is required of all women in public, the performance takes on a new significance. One respondent writes:

The irony of this, girls, is that you’d be stoned or killed or jailed if you wore those hot pants in pretty much any Muslim majority country from Iran to Afghanistan. [...] And wait until you all are forced to wear the niqab in France (Moors, 2011).

This respondent is patronizing to the women (e.g., calling them girls) and generalizes the Arab World into a singular entity but also he/she highlights that the Niqabitches satire is possible because of their cultural privilege; cultural privilege that many other women are denied.

Hall argues that race is a floating signifier because changing social discourse leaves the meaning of race open (Hall, 1989 & 1997 a & b). Gender, religion and sexuality are open in the Niquabitches’ performance as parodies of the performance and online respondents challenge these meanings. For instance, some read them as men in woman’s clothes like one respondent does by writing, “one question: r they real women or shaved men? coz my stupid friend beside me here believes that they r real women !” The Niqabitches quickly assert their sex. Others do not want to fix their sexual identity. One writes, “who care if they are women or men? … My great respect and full support to them no matter if they are men or women.” The meaning of their sex floats openly as signified by comments like this and by comments of other respondents that the Niqabitches do not fit their definition woman by not being GOOD WOMEN or good Muslim women. These comments are relevant to the discussion of The Good Muslim Sister.

The cultural outlaw representation speaks to performances that allow for multiple readings and that challenge social multiple social orders and established standpoints at once (e.g., The Republic, Islam, and Western Feminism). This identity is, if not made possible, then is facilitated through the respondents varying participation in social media in ways that performers do and do not intend. Van House (2011) argues that social media shapes identity performance by presenting us with identity categories in
our profiles and by requiring communication, that is short and attention catching. Therefore, when the Niqabitches respond to their own performance or to other respondents comments online they write in attention catching, flippant or meaning rich ways. This perhaps is a result of working with a media that values brevity and creating user interest. Conversely, their responses shape the countless ways they are read by respondents as men or women, gay or straight, Muslim or Christian, feminists or niqab apologists.

One critique of the cultural outlaw is that they distract us from others’ rights struggles like the Arab Spring and social media is aiding them in creating this distraction. Others would argue that the two are one in the same in that they both fight oppression. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to resolve this issue neatly and some would argue not an issue for a non-Muslim, Canadian born academic to resolve. What is clear is that the ultimate point of the Niquabitches performance, like that of the Arab Spring, is just beginning to be understood, by no means resolved and is continuing to be written in ways that challenge linear thinking.

The Good Muslim Sister

A non-Muslim reading Muslim discussion boards will feel some shortcomings. Some sentences in Arabic script appear as photo images rather than as text. Such messages are difficult to decipher with translation software. This could be called gatekeeping, or marking who is part of the in-group by who is able to decipher the messages, both Arabic script and the various English spellings of Arabic words. Is it a way of keeping certain meanings within the Muslim community and away from outsiders? If so, does it also remind Muslims that being a good Muslim sister (or brother) means following the community’s example and seeing the different sets of permissions for cultural insiders and outsiders?

Gatekeeping weaves through discussion threads in prescriptions for behavior. For example, discussion board posts across several sites warn Muslims against being, acting or speaking like a kufir (also kufr, kuffar) or a non-believer. One should instead act as a mu’min or a believer (e.g., putting your faith in Allah’s law). Postings appeal to a good Muslim sister who avoids kufir dress (e.g., inappropriate or revealing) and kufir social practices (e.g., mixing socially males). In fairness, most cultures prescribe behaviors for good women (Faludi, 1991). Critics argue that Freud’s virgin and whore dichotomy defines Western culture’s view of women (Nagle, 1997). Dichotomies like these affirm men’s power over women because they are not applied to males, not applied with the same strength and/or not bound to men’s sexuality. When the author finds respondents debating if a man is kufir it is not because steps outside his prescribed gender role as a good Muslim brother. For example, respondents criticize a man in one thread because he went to the police for help after being cheated rather than first going to the Muslim community.

In contrast, a young Muslim female moving to Britain asks a British Muslim male what his experience in the UK has been like in a YouTube video. The majority of
respondents encourage and reassure her of a safe and easy transition. Though the word kufir is not used, the implication is clear in some responses to her that she is not behaving as a good Muslim sister as with one self-identified male respondent who questions her behavior, “Why is an arab sister from youtube messaging a british brother from uk anyway?” The tone of the post suggests that the asker is questioning the woman’s status as a good Muslim sister. In keeping with conservative interpretations of Islam, discussion forums like Islamicity.com do allow for separate discussion forums for men (brothers) and women (sisters) who prefer sex segregated discussion but there is no rule against opposite sex discussion and this latter type of discussion is common.

Islamicity.com allows cross-sex dialogue but prohibits writing about sex. There is a rule against impersonation but site registrants self-identify. How many people are operating within the forums for Muslim sisters who are not women or Muslims? Critics suggest that identity deception is widespread online. An online respondent questions the identity of a fifteen-year-old Londoner who says that she wants to wear the hijab but her parents are against it. Respondents praise her for taking an active role in her faith and even when they disagree with her choice, they affirm her right to choose. Despite an overwhelmingly positive response, one conspicuously asks, “are you bein serious?” Does asking if she is serious mean to question her story, identity, intent (e.g., serious or satire) or all three? The young woman does not respond to the question, nor do others, who accept her identity by continuing to give advice.

She wears the headscarf and the abaya and her mother has told her that she must wait until marriage if she wants to choose the hijab. Her father resists the hijab and teases his daughter, calling her Taliban. She explains, “When it comes to me and my hijab matters [...] he just backs my mum in whatever she says and doesn't really care himself, to tell you the truth.” Many respondents write to support the young woman’s decision and compliment her faith. One writes, “May Allah reward the sister for trying to practice her deen [faith] to the fullest of her ability.” The young woman is praised for being a good Muslim sister when her family disagrees. The family dynamic she describes with her mother setting the rule and her father backing up his wife and even finding humor in the situation is very different from the mainstream media stereotype of the abusive and dictatorial Muslim father (e.g., in Hollywood films like Not Without My Daughter and Towelhead). Here her mother’s word is the law of the family.

Others admit being denied the hijab by parents who fear for their safety. Therefore, while parents are shown objecting to the hijab it is out of fear for their children. Another writes, “I know plenty of girls who want to wear niqab, but they're scared of even suggesting it to their parents.” This affirms the young women’s family situation where they discuss it openly. Others support both the young woman and her parents. One writes, “It would be quite useful if you had your parents support because inevitably you will face some form of discrimination.” This represents the Muslim family as a source of support in the face of discrimination. Another respondent simultaneously supports both the young women’s identity and her parents’ view:
Think about when you go to college, uni and then work. Have you thought about the niqab and your work place? Don't think I'm dissuading you from the niqab at all, I think its a great thing just trying to make you see your mother's perspective too.

Respondents mediate the conflict between mother and daughter like extended family members. Their comments remind the young women that being a good Muslim sister means having faith but more importantly it means acting with the support and permission of her parents.

The online community comes to the support of a twelve and a thirteen year old that had to leave their French school for wearing the hijab. Words of support and encouragement include, “It's wrong to be punished for your religion, but anyone who continues to wear the hijab in french state schools will receive great rewards from allah on judgement day even if in life they are punished. Peace.” Another writes, “The parents of these girls are blessed. They're so young …but yet so strong. Allah will bless them for their courage.” Such support might not be easily found in one’s home community. A student writes:

i believe muslim women have a right to wear hijab. When i was researching this so called law i came across an article about a muslim girl shaving her head bald because she refused to go to school without her hijab.

Others ask girls under the niqab-ban to shave their heads in protest and praise news reports of girls who have done this. Such posts celebrate the good Muslim sister as someone who is willing to suffer personal discomfort and challenge parental authority for what she believes.

This theme demonstrates the different facets of the good Muslim sister. Online writings present this identity as positive by reflecting a woman who is strong and self-determining in her faith, in dialogue with her family and community. In other online writings, we see a woman who is or is not a good Muslim sister while she is watched, criticized and reminded of her place by anonymous others. Muslims, like other groups, have firm opinions about what identity practices are acceptable and not. Some online respondents use their opinions of the culture to support those who do not have the social and/or family support to make certain identity choices.

It is problematic when social media users celebrate a woman’s personal discomfort (e.g., a shaved head) as a sign of her faith when others might be expected to live up to these online examples. Would efforts be better focused on looking for forms of peaceful protest in which both men and women can join in equally? Those issues might be about women’s dress and identity but it affects the entire culture. We cannot know how prevalent these phenomena (e.g., wearing the niqab in the West; shaving one’s head) are by studying social media alone. There is the potential for the same story to be inadvertently distorted and become different stories by different tellers on different social media (e.g., how urban legends are created) thus making it seem like there are many more examples of a phenomenon than there actually are (e.g., “I know plenty of girls who want to wear niqab”). Also because discussion boards are fuelled by discussion starters that are dramatic in nature the impetus might be to focus on more
discussable aspects of faith activism. This might mean that we overlook the everyday work done by mainstream faith advocates because this is not as viable a topic for starting a discussion online.

The Western Fantasy

Amina Abdallah Araf al Omari claimed to be a lesbian blogger born in Virginia and raised in both the US and Syria. She realized her sexual orientation at age fifteen, became a devout Muslim, married, divorced and came out at age twenty-six (she kissed another woman for the first time on September 11, 2001) and returned to Syria as an English teacher. Amina joined the uprising protests and became famous as a blogger for the site A Gay Girl in Damascus. She claims family connections to the government and the Muslim Brotherhood but identifies with the people protesting in the street and is critical of the Syrian government. In an April 2011 post, called My Father the Hero, Amina tells how officers came to arrest her for being a militant/foreign agent. Her father sends them away. The pair goes into hiding.

A cousin reports that Amina has been captured. The world waits with baited breath. The story unravels; no one has ever met Amina. Her picture was taken from a London woman’s Facebook account. Defenders say Amina is protecting her identity. Her computer is tracked to Edinburgh, Scotland but bloggers and citizen reporters in Iran regularly bounce their electronic messages off proxy servers in other countries to protect their identity (Thomas, 2010). The US Government and Reporters Sans Frontieres look into Amina’s safety. Finally, Tom McMaster, a Virginia born Master’s student at Edinburgh University, unveils his hoax. Having a mother who had taught English in Turkey and a graduate student wife studying Syria provided the raw material for an elaborate Western fantasy. McMaster apologizes for his hoax while trying to sell Amina’s story as a novel. So how did this fantasy captivate Western audiences?

Amina lowered her cyber veil and wrote Western fantasies of the exotic East and of lesbians. Fanon (1967) argues that the European man desires to look behind the Muslim woman’s veil. Saïd (1979) similarly argues that European authors from 1800 on like Flaubert sexualize the East as a place of harems, dancing girls and sexual freedom. Amina’s postings, reported in The Guardian and elsewhere, engage this Western fantasy as she describes falling in love with women and finding, not dancing girls, but a lesbian hair salon (Marsh, 2011, May 7). Bill Graber, a heterosexual male, claiming to be lesbian blogger Paula Brooks (on the blog Lezget Real) helped popularize Amina’s blog while the pair flirted as lesbians (Flock & Bell, 2011, June 14). Similarly, Canadian Ms. Sandra Bagaria thought she was in a six-month online romantic relationship with Amina (Swaine, 2011). In addition, McMaster had posed as a lesbian on popular dating sites and had flirted with several women via instant messenger (Bell, 2011, June 13). Canadian photographer Nina Levitt uses her work to criticize how popular culture (e.g., pulp fiction) represents lesbians as a straight male fantasy (Cooper, 1994). Levitt recognizes that this Western fantasy has taken hold in
North America and one cannot help but see it as informing McMaster’s and Graber’s work as well as the devotion of their most ardent followers.

The popularity of Amina speaks to a criticism of Western feminism as wanting to rescue Third World women from suffering at the hands of Third World men (Fanon, 1967; Mahonty cited in Mohanram, 1999). Before her abduction Amina writes, “I keep my nails trimmed shorter than they have ever been lest I be captured and they try and pry them off” (Sly, 2011, June 8). Amina avoids a meeting with a UK reporter by saying that she was followed (Addley & Hassan, 2011, June 9). Even her post, My Father the Hero, conjures two Arab thug stereotypes that threaten to abduct Amina and her father. In these comments and others, Amina constructs a faceless Arab boogeyman as a villain to her hero who lurks a few steps behind her, waiting to leap, with the teeth of his pliers poised just above her fingernails. This boogeyman is a target for Western angst about the East and was believable enough for The US State Department to investigate Amina’s plight (Flock & Bell, 2011, June 14).

Criticism of Amina’s account does not diminish the suffering of legitimate journalists, bloggers and women in the Middle East. While the world watched Amina, blogger Kamal Sheikhou was charged with "publishing information liable to defame the nation" and then he disappeared. Jehad Jamal, a journalist and blogger (under the pseudonym Milan) was arrested on May 5, 2011 along with the owner of the computer he was using at the time of his arrest (BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 2011, June 8). In August of 2011 the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reports that a 28-year-old woman was detained for a week after which she died from torture in the city of Khan Shehoun; just one of a UN estimated 2,200 Syrians that by that time had been killed in the chaos (ABC News, 2011, August 25). This chapter also does not intend to diminish feminism’s gains for women around the world. This discussion aims to explode a Western fantasy narrative that diverts attention from real people.

The Amina story is pleasurable for its narrative familiarity. Amina is a fictitious Neda Agha-Soltan whose death during the Iran election protests mobilized protestors around the world with masks of Neda’s face and the rally cry of We are Neda. Neda was defiant in the face of authority, fought for and won the right not to have to wear a chador in her high school (Thomas, 2010). Similarly, Amina’s cousin reports that Amina defiantly slapped her abductor. During the protests Neda refused advice to hide her beauty and was proud of her femininity (Thomas, 2010) while Amina was proud of her sexual ity. Both were married, divorced and found new love, Amina online and Neda with Caspian Makan on holiday in Turkey. Their protests accounts are similar. Neda tells her mother, “They fired tear gas and we’re inside a laboratory. We put cigarettes on but our eyes are burning so much” (Media 4 Free Iran, 2010, April 30). Amina writes, "Teargas was lobbed at us. I saw people vomiting from the gas as I covered my own mouth and nose and my eyes burned […] if this becomes standard practice, a niqab is a very practical thing to wear in future" (Marsh, 2011, May 7). The niqab foreshadows Amina’s hidden identity. Both Neda and Amina are at different times untouchable and vulnerable. Neda is vulnerable to the sniper’s bullet and is so
revered in death that her family in Tehran is untouchable and thus speaks freely about her (Thomas, 2010). Amina describes how her family connections protect her from persecution in blog posts like My Father the Hero but ultimately once her fiction unraveled there was nowhere to hide. Ironically, both Neda and Amina had fictionalized elements to their stories. Amina was pure fiction while the Iranian government tried to claim that Neda’s death was a fiction, initially saying that she was alive and well and living in Greece (Thomas, 2010). Neda’s death was real and devastated people and some also saw McMaster’s cruel hoax as a death underscored by Swaine’s (2011, June 14) headline that read, “Death of a gay girl.” The familiarity of the story no doubt draws in some aspect of Amina’s audience who see in Amina a chance to change the ending of, to what Neda Agha-Soltan’s example reminds us, is a tragic story.

Amina represents contradictions that reflect Western dialectical perspectives on the world. Amina’s blog describes how she evolved from a devout Muslim to an out and proud lesbian. She blogs, "I believe God made me as I am and I refuse to believe God makes mistakes" (Marsh, 2011, May 7). Coming from Virginia conjures images of rural America and thus makes a Damascene urbanite relatable to Westerners who do not know much about Syria or the Middle East. Amina became the Syrian-All-American girl next-door and thus realizable in the Western imagination. When Amina is captured, her online followers naively speculate that she will be spared the mistreatment of other Syrian protesters because she holds an American passport (Sly, 2011, June 8). Amina bridges the expanse between the East and the West by serving as a buoy of democracy within dictatorial sea. Amina is represented at the convergence point of dialectics that frame some Westerners’ perspective on the world for she is the sacred while also the sexual, she is the foreigner made familiar and she is both the West and the East.

More than exposing the failings of her author Tom McMaster, Amina provides Western audiences with a window into the self. Saïd’s (1979) Orientalism is alive and well and lives and breathes within Amina. McMaster created Amina but Western audiences actively participated in this creation by making her a media celebrity, relaxing the standard for factual information and by accepting a representation informed by our own assumptions and biases about the Middle East and its women. After Tom McMaster was exposed, press coverage of the story criticized and condemned him. Following this was a wave of suspicion and criticism directed at social media. Only then did the press gently wag its finger at itself. One journalist writes, “Where does [McMaster’s] creativity begin to bleed into conning? … Is it the moment when famous journalist strangers become emotionally invested?” (Hesse, 2011, June 14). This speaks volume about the press’ selective look at itself. McMaster is exposed by name and is described as conning, another way of naming the villain in a story, yet not one famous Western journalist is mentioned by name but are left anonymous as famous journalist strangers who are only guilty of becoming “emotionally invested.” Interpersonal Communication scho-lars refer to it statements when people use it rather than I when assig-ning blame (e.g., It just happened) is a way
of avoiding culpability (Adler, Rosenfeld & Proctor, 2013). One could argue that referring to famous journalist strangers has the same effect of exempting a subject or subjects from blame.

**DISCUSSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Eisenberg & Goodall (1997) argue that any representation undertaken by a researcher is partial, partisan and problematic and this chapter is no different. The quality of partial characterizes this study to the extent that one researcher’s frame of reference is the limit of these findings. As a non-Arabic speaker and non-Muslim author there are levels of meaning in the text that have only been started to be read, interpreted and critiqued. It is worth repeating here that this study does not aim to be exhaustive of the popular representations of the Muslim woman. This study focuses on three representations that are dominant within social media but in recognizing their dominance, this does not mean that they are the most socially meaningful, valuable or even positive representations of women. In addition, not every woman can speak via social media due to political, economic or cultural barriers so the communication facilitated by social media is not universally accessible. Future studies should challenge the partial perspective of chapters like this one that speak from a specific if limited subjectivity.

This study was partisan for the lack of range in the perspectives that were chosen for study. Limiting the perceptions of choice for good Muslims where good means that one stays within the social parameters drawn by one’s online community increases the chance that certain representations come to dominate discourse even when it does not reflect the will of all community members. Choice needs to be encouraged for any online community seeking to be active and vibrant even though choice challenges the identity characteristics and gatekeepers that define a community in the first place. In discussion boards, Facebook is cited as a place where hybridized identities of those who choose to claim dual identity as both European and as Muslims is accepted or even encouraged. Future research needs to examine how social media facilitates dual identity construction (e.g., French-Muslim) for those living in countries with a monolithic understanding of identity or those that conflate nationality with a singular identity for all (e.g., French persons who assert that the nation shares in one singular national identity).

Finally it is important to problematize the themes and meanings that emerge from this analysis. A Western researcher doing this research in the West and focusing largely on English language social media and English language translations perhaps renders this research as Orientalist in presuming to speak for the Middle East. A great diversity of perspectives is available beyond the English language. For example, the author cites the earlier discussion on problems working with Arabic language translation. There were also attempts in this study to explore a Dutch language forum for Muslims living in The Netherlands but this was complicated by a lack of familiarity
with slang, text speak and writings that blend Dutch and Latin spellings of Arabic words. This wreaked havoc with translation software and made securing capta (Ducker’s (2011) term that recognizes when data is actually socially constructed knowledge) impossible for the scope of this project. Future research on Muslims in social media might take the perspective of a team, rather than an individual, including European, Asian and American Muslims alongside Western researchers that might bring a more diverse language and theoretical base understanding the table.
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GOING VISIBLE IN SOCIAL NETWORKS: STRATEGIES OF SELF-PRESENTATION IN FACEBOOK PHOTOS

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“Nobody is as ugly as his/her headshot, nor is s/he as beautiful as his/her Facebook photo.” (Anonymous)

“Act like no one else but yourself, you are much more beautiful the way you are” (Tarkan)

INTRODUCTION

What inspired this study was a specific kind of headshot (portrait) photo uploaded to the social networking site Facebook. The “flirty” pose with an “I am unique” look, self-taken from above, in which the model slightly tilted his/her head sideways smiling and was both near and far from us pretending to be a star… “Star” poses and “idealized” image of the person copied from popular culture are shared via social networks and re-generate the dominant culture. Aim of this study is to reveal the meaning of social norms and codes in Facebook photos focusing on headshots (portrait photos). Theoretically, it is possible for us to photograph anything when and wherever we want using a mobile phone or digital camera; however, we follow socially established norms while taking photos. We think that these social norms relating to creation, content and sharing of the photo in social networks are formed and shaped by the popular culture of capitalism which sublimates the individual. One of the basic hypotheses of this study is that the idealized image of the individual is re-generated according to the star images shared within popular culture. Although it is a challenging work to classify the photos shared on Facebook, we can suggest that these photos shared thereon contain repeated visual messages. As well as containing habits originating from Kodak and Digital Culture, these norms are also mainly determined by the features of communication medium and communication context within

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Facebook. In this study, the analysis to identify aforementioned visual codes was based on the descriptive framework – Chalfen’s photo analysis method.

FUNCTIONS OF PHOTOS IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

Rise of social networks brings a variety of changes to the practices of taking and sharing photos. Portrait photography having become popular after portrait painting, a tool used to document the social statuses of emerging middle classes in industrializing countries through 18th and 19th centuries, has been replaced, as from the second half of 20th century, by Kodak Culture in which the family is put in the centre, photography was popularised and amateur photography became wide-spread, and as a result of this replacement, personal photos have become nothing but mementos typically kept in photo albums and shared with kit hand kin.

With the emergence of Digital Culture, photograph has been transformed into a means of communication which can display any moment of daily life and be easily doctored, and shared in cyberspace. Digital technologies facilitated generating and networking the images, and on the other hand, they caused a transformation in photography practices as well (Van House, 2009:1084). Photograph was not a memento of public and personal events anymore, instead it was transformed into the practice of daily life describing “common ordinariness” (Larsen & Cruz, 2009: 205).

However, social networks indicate a new turning point: Social Photograph. It is a new period with its specific characteristics as well as containing the features of Portrait, Kodak and Digital photo cultures. Photograph acquires new social functions in social networks first of which is that social networkers use the photo as a means of self-presentation and –expression, thus performing their identities through photos. Each photo shared on social networks gives, just like the person’s other shared contents, a hint about the individual’s identity regardless of the person’s presence or absence on the related photo. Second, the specific group dynamics of social networks (the fact that we communicate within a group typically consisting of acquaintances, or friends we add to our list as our own preference) leads to use of the photo as a means of establishing and maintaining social relationships. Photos on social networks are shared with a semi-public environment in contradistinction to our physical environment restricted to our families, friends and acquaintances. Photo sharing is a limited activity when offline, whereas it becomes an activity we perform more often and with a different group when online. The fact that social networks base on the interaction between users pays the way to comment photos and like a content, thus maintaining social relationships, and new relationships that may not be possible offline may emerge during this interaction. Furthermore, photograph, a means of building identity of a user on social networks, becomes a means of being approved by others (receiving likes for the contents shared and positive comments in general).

Photograph had always been a means of self-presentation; however, as it was shared on social networks, it has become a means of transferring one’s identity to others, communication, and desire of approval. In the fourth place, photograph still keeps on being a memento on social networks as well. Social networking websites provide their
users with profiles that can be personalized, thus enabling them to create their own biographies and visually archive their memories. Photo albums on social networks are a major tool for having a closer look to the lives of one’s friends.

In this study, we limited our scope by discussing the photo only as a means of self-presentation and leaving other functions of it aside. The scope of the study was reduced to identity performance of the individual on Facebook profile photos which is one of the most widely used social networks across Turkey.

IDENTITY PERFORMANCE AND PHOTOGRAPH ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks lead to daily identity performance by individuals. As search for identity rises depending on the increase in uncertainty in global capitalism, social networks on internet are used as tools paving the way for this search for identity (Şener, 2010:255). Ager suggests that individuals create a kind of fiction of self on internet, and that they need this fiction of self more than ever in the figurative, blinking and imaginary world of internet they created electronically (2011:168).

“Studies on self did not begin with Internet. However, they gained speed with it. When it gets integrated with Internet and other electronic media such as mobile phones and chat rooms, the self becomes cyberself. Identity is achieved through these electronic tools. These tools enable or require the individuals to generate, change or reveal their own selves against others.” (Ager, 2011: 181).

Social networks accelerated the identity performance even more and made it sustainable. During the first period of Internet (Web 1.0), websites undertook the self-presentation and identity construction through bricolage of areas of interest, images and links; however, with the development of personal blogs and social networks, today’s users constantly perform their identities both personally and collectively (Lister et al., 2009: 269).

Self-presentation of users on social networks is explained based particularly on Erving Goffman’s views relating to face-to-face interaction (Tüfekçi, 2008, Kolektif Üretim, 2009). Goffman suggests that the social actor always plays a role in the eyes of the audience and performs various activities in order to leave a positive impression on them. During a performance witnessed by any group, the individual tends to socialize in accordance with the expectations of the society and leave an idealized impression about himself/herself (Goffman, 2004:45). Having adapted Goffman’s arguments into Facebook, Zhao et al. suggest that users try to create an ideal identity desired by others rather than revealing their true or hidden selves since they are nonymous (non-anonymous) and know each other personally (Zhao, Grasmuck and Martin, 2008: 1817-1818). According to this argument, each activity we carry out on Facebook gives a hint about our identity, likes, worldview etc. to our audience. Safety settings of Facebook enable its users to manage their identities, determine which information to share and hide with and from whom to what extent.
Photo sharing is a kind of identity performance for social networkers. It may be suggested that when compared to other written and audio-visual components of social networks, photograph is an image giving consistent information about the individual. It follows that, social network profiles are identity construction and presentation sites based on “showing” rather than “telling” (Zhao, Grasmuck & Martin, 2008, transferred by Morgan, Snelson & Elison-Bowers, 2010: 1405).

Many researchers studying the role of photograph in social media addressed the photo together with such concepts as identity construction and self-presentation (Morgan Snelson & Elison-Bowers, 2010; Lasen-Cruz, 2009), impression management (Wang et al. 2010; Peluchette & Karl, 2010) and narcissism (Sessions, 2009; Mendelson, 2010). From this point of view, each photo uploaded by us to social networks leads us to construct our identities and present idealized images about us. Identity performance is not restricted to how the photo represents itself and us. Creating a photo (having photos taken to share on Facebook or Twitter, and posing in consideration thereof), selecting a photo (selecting and sharing not any photo, but the most appropriate one among lots of photos), sharing a photo (how often and with whom a photo is shared) and commenting a photo are different steps of self-presentation process during which the users adopt certain strategies.

Photograph on social networks is initially the evidence of one’s presence. First of all, a photograph is shared as an evidence of personal experience and moments of life. The individual goes visible on social networks through photographs. Sharing images belonging to him/her is the evidence that s/he exists (Gomez & Larsen, 2009:215). A person mostly takes a photo to share on social networks with the aim of leaving a mark indicating s/he is alive. “Shall we upload this to Facebook?” shows that photo taking has taken place for social networks from the beginning.

Photos tell more than words and substitute for the human body during interactions via Internet. Physical presence is symbolized in images through illustration of non-existing body (Astheimer, Neumann-Braun and Schmidt, 2011:20). Social networks are designed to privilege such visual hints as images and videos (Wang, 2010:228). Social networkers follow certain strategies through photograph while carrying out identity performance. Few photos on social networks have randomly been taken and uploaded. Typically, these photos comprise photographic components and activities designed deliberately and carried out as a result of a number of preferences by the model and photographer.

Identity performance is not a unilateral process, and it takes the audience into consideration as well. The users would share not any photos or images of him/her, but pre-designed planned and selected images through which s/he hopes to leave a positive impression on the receiving parties. Mostly, the photo would display a doctored body and an idealized image of the person. Components of identity strategies comprise such activities as the person’s contemplation about his/her own body, highlighting the aspects s/he likes, determining what to display to which extent etc. Desire to be approved by others in interpersonal communication is a means of being dependent on others which is one of the features of identity construction (Larsen and Gomez,
2009:211). The users search for the ideal image of themselves, and at the same time, they crave for social approval. Therefore, messages carried by photos shared on social networks are mostly in accordance with social norms.

Photograph displays a time-specific and stable image of a person’s identity. Personal photos shared on social networks are fragments of one’s identity. Despite giving consistent information about the person, they are time-specific which means there is no past or future. Integration of social networks and digital imaging technologies enables the users to display different faces of them (McKay, 2010:481). The users try to construct a consistent identity using these fragments. Nusselder argues that technological images may create a sensation of personal identity as we find ourselves in these images. We identify with the image on the screen as if we were looking in the mirror. Thrill of a child seeing his/her reflection in the mirror is, indeed, the celebration of being able to control his/her own body (Nusselder, 2007). Taking and sharing one’s own photos leads to having a sensation of control over one’s own body just like the child looking in the mirror.

**PHOTO SHARING AND IDENTITY PERFORMANCE ON FACEBOOK**

“People have two lives. The one that wakes up in the morning with bad breath and eye boogers. And the other one, which is the photoshopped version we save expressly for Facebook.”

Being the most widely used social networking website, Facebook is also the largest photo sharing site. Above 250 million photos in average are shared daily on Facebook.

With which opportunities does Facebook provide the users? Users can upload photos from mobile instant communication tools, photos uploaded pop up under newsfeed and become visible to friends, the users can create a visual archive about his/her own life by creating albums, socialize by commenting and tagging photos, claim a face for themselves with profile photos in non-physical setting of the Internet, and perform their identities by doctoring photos using various applications. By providing new ways to display and edit online images, Facebook encourages the users to become visible. The website enables displaying the digital images in new ways, and on the other hand, the very images become actors and generate new modes of interaction (McKay, 2010:496). “Websites such as Facebook enhance and comp-liance even more the opportunities attributing different meanings to photographic images, such as exchanging, displaying, using semantically contradicting elements together so as to create irony, commenting, cultural production and selfformation” (McKay, 2010:481).

Facebookers are amateur photographers. Taking photos is a cheap leisure time activity for amateurs, and they train themselves by improving and sharpening their techniques while taking photos (Astheimer, 2011:105). They do not need any kind of technical information about photo taking. Thus, they view themselves, their friends and

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lives with only a mobile phone, digital camera or webcam which can take photos. While doing that, they do not need to have professional knowledge such as photo resolution, frame rate, use of light and lens properties. That is because, unlike other social networks on which more professional and artistic photos are shared, Facebook users take photos for only themselves as an extension and proof of their daily lives and lifestyles, and share these relatively selected photos on their profiles.

Facebookers usually share their personal photos. A photo contains messages specific to one’s own world, regardless of his/her presence on the photo. The individual aims to tell the audience about himself/herself and his/her life through the photos. Having family photos at home, hanging them on the walls, or displaying them in cupboards or on piano is a ritual re-constructing/solidifying the “family solidarity”/familial belonging every day, just as sharing “self” photos on Facebook is a ritual re-constructing/approving/affirming the self/individual. The fact that there are persons on Facebook the individual knows in person creates a sort of community pressure, thus determining which photos to be shared or not to be shared. The users must determine what to and no to display. Displaying personal photos physically is usually restricted to one’s close relatives and friends, whereas sharing photos on social networks such as Facebook is like holding a “life exhibition”. When your friends who have not seen your child in person yet say that “We are following it on Facebook, your kid has grown really well!”, means that they have an idea about your life, even though about a part of it. Or, peeping into first the photo album of someone you have just met and added on Facebook may give you a quick idea about his/her lifestyle. Facebook photo albums may be considered a sort of personal documentary representing the certain parts of our lives chosen by us.

How does Facebook change the habits of taking, sharing and commenting photos? A survey by Şener and Özkoçak including 694 users reveals that when having their photos taken, 78% of the users consider the possibility that the photo taken may be uploaded to Facebook (Şener and Özkoçak, 2012:264). People begin posing for Facebook and share the photos with a micro audience group comprising their acquaintances on Facebook. It is observed that the themes of photos shared on Facebook are similar. These photos consist of the images supporting the individual in leaving a positive impression on the small community comprising his/her acquaintances. Users become highly selective while uploading photos to Facebook (57% upload only 5% - 10% of the photos they take), and most of the users share on Facebook not any photo of them, but repeated messages: “look how sociable I am!”, “How beautiful/handsome I am!”, “How attractive I am!”, and “How happy I am!”. The study shows that the most widely shared images on Facebook are under the category of following events: celebrations such as birthdays, parties, concerts and weddings (70.6%), fun with friends (69.3%), trip to a new country or city (67.8%), and vacations (60%). Commenting, liking and tagging photos intensify the relationship between the users as well.

Facebook also changes the values regarding what can be photographed, and causes new photograph codes depending on social norms to emerge. Personal photography is a culturally and socially situated activity (Van House, 2009:1074). This study

addresses the photograph as a means of mass communication. Bourdieu postulates that the photo is not taken randomly as a result of personal imagination, but rather it is taken as a result of internalizing the objective and common regulations under the collective rules of the group, i.e. through an ethos (1998). Bourdieu suggests that norms relating to the photo belong not to the individual, but to the collectivity, and accepts that the “obvious tendencies of the photographer” represented by photos actually indicate “the system of perception, thinking and evaluation schemes pertaining to the whole group” (transferred by Pink, 2011:94). Similarly, Sontag (2008:19) states as well that photos always reveal what is worth photographing and create a sort of viewing tradition. Having studied Kodak Culture, Chalfen considers the photograph a means of communication and argues that homemade photos and videos, and snapshots are culturally-structured artefacts. “By studying Kodak Culture, we want to learn how people have organized themselves socially to produce personalized versions of their own life experiences.” (Chalfen, 2008:10). As a social ritual and group practice, social media users base on social norms taking the social context of social media into consideration. Accordingly, it may be suggested that Facebook creates its own viewing tradition as well. Users take photos for Facebook and share them with a semi-public environment. Photos shared thereon are created and presented in accordance with the norms originating from the structure of the social networks, and mode and context of communication thereon. Contents of these photos generally highlight the same themes such as sociability, physical attractiveness, desire of being liked and approved, and accordance with social norms. Van House suggests that creating, sharing, viewing and commenting images not only show how we represent ourselves, but also reveal in which ways we display ourselves both individually and collectively, and that we regenerate social norms and forms (2011:131). We regenerate social norms with the photos we share on Facebook.

Chalfen states that since the emergence of Kodak Culture, we have been photographing each activity, place and event through which we hope to be socially approved. “Kodak Culture promotes the visual display of proper and expected behaviour, of participation in socially approved activities, according to culturally approved value schemes.” (Chalfen, 2008:139). This is applicable for Facebook as well. Considering Facebook a small society, it is possible to suggest that communication-originated norms thereon affect taking, content and sharing of photos. Users take this into consideration while determining what to and no to share. Sharing the moments of happy, successful and new experiences intensifies the social belonging as well. Users both expect comments and to be liked. Chalfen argues that people show, with the photos they take and share, their knowledge, competency and skill indicating they do things “right”. “Thus, a sense of belonging and security is developed and maintained.” (Chalfen, 2008:139).

Photo-specific indicators of accordance with social norms on Facebook may be enlisted as 1- looking “trendy” by imitating the poses of popular culture stars, 2-stressing out friendship and sociability, and giving the message that one has a funny personality, and 3- likes and comments received for each photo.
Considering all these, where do these social norms originate from? It is possible to suggest that the photos shared on Facebook are a synthesis of visual codes belonging to Kodak Culture, personal and amateur photography, digital photography, and popular culture. As in Kodak Culture, the users share the images and views of happy moments and climax points in their lives; however, the individual and his/her friends are highlighted in these photos, whereas the subject of photos is family in Kodak Culture. That is because Facebook is a platform in which personal emotions and thoughts, as well as friends, become important. The users take the photos using digital tools and have the option of taking lots of photos at any time, and doctoring these photos as desired. Thus, photograph becomes a daily means of identity construction. Poses, however, we strike particularly when having our photos taken are affected by the global popular cultural of our time. Facebook contains lots of “star” poses.

**PROFILE PICTURE: SEARCH FOR THE IDEAL SELF**

Desire to idealize oneself on social networks is probably at the highest level in profile pictures. One distinction between profile pictures and other photos is that profile pictures are expected to reflect the person’s identity more². Portrait pictures contain much more certain information about an individual’s image, and they resolve anonymity, thus helping the individual re-represent himself/herself (Astheimer, Neumann-Braun and Schmidt, 2011:15). Profile picture is the first image we come across while search for someone on Facebook, and they give us the first impression about a person unknown to us.

Profile pictures date back to the tradition of portraiture. Tradition of portraiture, a means of proving its social status for aristocracy in Europe, has been popularized with the invention of photography. In the early periods of photography, i.e. circa 1830 – 1890, portrait photography becomes widespread depending on the rise of middle-class in Europe. Members of the emerging middle class aim to visually prove their new social statuses by having portrait photographs taken which cost less than portrait pictures (Frohlih, 2011:23). In portrait photographs, middle-class members represent themselves not as the people they actually are, but as the successful members of a certain stratum of the society (Frohlih, 2011:35). At the end of the 20th century, with digitalization and the popularization of particularly the cell phones and Internet Culture, self-portrait photos emerge as a preferred type of photography (Lasen, 2005:65, transferred by Schwarz, 2010:206).

Portrait photos have many functions: being a piece of evidence for documentary, identification, body representation, and biography (Astheimer, Neumann-Braun and Schmidt, 2001:28-29). Barthes notes the following for portrait: “In front of the camera, I am both the one I believe in and the one I want others to believe in, as well as being both the one the photographer believes in and the one s/he uses to display his/her art” (Barthes, 1980:29).

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² 67% of the profile pictures show only the individual (Şener and Özoğçu, 2012:265).
Tisseron states that today “a culture based on disclosure of privacy” has emerged and “desire to be oneself” has become widespread. “The Cult of the Self” having emerged in the USA in 1950s and become widespread across Europe since 1980s is based on the principle of the superiority of individual which intensifies and strengthens the individual’s acquisition of an idealized and inaccessible image of himself/herself. Apart from being a disorder, narcissism gets a function to feed and maintain interpersonal relationships (Tisseron, 2001:145-147). On social networks as well which are the outputs of a culture featuring individualism, sharing a photo and desiring it to be liked may be regarded as a narcissistic activity. The individual wants to look beautiful/handsome/well-groomed/star-like in his/her profile picture. Sessions states that profile pictures on MySpace are used to show the user more attractive than s/he is, deliberately hide the body, and have narcissistic characteristics (2009).

The individual displays the ideal self with Facebook photos. This ideal self is generally created depending on the positive values within the society, such as beauty, attractiveness and naturalness. Illouz argues that beauty and body have always existed on Internet, a photograph is a fixed and stable image freezing the body in its own endlessness, and is in a competitive market comprising similar photos (2011:120). On Internet, “people expressing themselves through their photos” are virtually regarded as models in beauty and care business or actors/actresses, in other words they are put in a place or position in which (1) they are over-aware of their physical appearance, (2) body becomes the original source of social and economic value, (3) they are forced to compete with others over their bodies, and finally (4) their bodies and physical appearances are explicitly displayed (Illouz, 2011:120-121). Schwarz, however, suggests that highlighting one’s beauty in the photos on social networks determines, at the same time, the value of the person within that social network (2010:170). Photos on social networks are the representations of multiple and fragmented postmodern self (Schwarz, 2010:166), and are a special kind of body capital carrier. They contain innate physical characteristics, changes to the body, and distorted versions of corporal representation. Thus, different representations of the body function as a social value (Schwarz, 2010:171).

**LEARNED STAR POSES**

Strategies used in Facebook photos are affected not only by the individual’s perception of his/her own body, but also by some social factors. Lee (2005) and Hjort (2007) suggest that self-portraits usually copy the stereotyped norms within mass communication tools (transferred by Schwarz, 2010). Poses on profile pictures are “learned” poses. They are the adaptations of the stars who are the products of global popular culture. Poses struck by the celebrities in advertisements, video clips, TV series etc. are modelled on. People learn how to strike a pose from mass communication tools showcasing the performances by social elites, media stars or models (Astheimer, 2011:101). Niedzviecki notes that we support the system instead of opposing and resisting devaluation of culture by the capitalist system, and that a new conformist individualism emerges. Being famous is spread to each moment of life.
Today, use of performance as a means of drawing attention has spread to the daily life from the lives of artists and actors. Popular culture plays a crucial role in creating this new conformism: “Popular culture has a message very similar to the ideology of new conformism: This is your story”… With the philosophy of life “I am Special”, we desire not only to live in luxury houses and drive cars like those of pop stars, but also to have the validity of being the one they reveal and exhibit their strong characters” (Niedzviecki, 2011:90-98). Men and women with their attentive and diligent outfits and stances in their profile pictures come right out of the fashion magazines. The dream to be attractive shared by many users is “discovered” as a model (Schwarz, 2010:168). Facebook users experience being famous through their photos. Attractiveness, the lifestyle emerging with the rise of consumer culture, and the culture of attractiveness cause new norms to emerge in the field of photography. “Attractiveness, as a lifestyle, is based on physical appeal blended with such values as fashion awareness of consumer culture, cheapness and fame... Attractiveness is related with the body and contains social information. Physical appeal alone does not qualify as attractiveness. Displaying an attractive body integrates consumer products with eroticism and sex” (Astheimer, 2011:106).

While striking poses like celebrities, the individual tries to transcend his/her class as well. Public images of celebrities have significant effects on visual codes of profile pictures (Frohligh and Sarvas, 2011: 37). Profile pictures regenerate the codes of tabloid culture and obscures the individual’s class belonging. Having stated that social networkers are impressed by global stars while creating photos, Astheimer established in his study he examined nightlife photos shared on social networks that codes of attractiveness were used and beauty, dynamism, richness and sex appeal were highlighted (Astheimer, 2011:101). Attractiveness and beauty promise social rise for lower classes and function as an upward social motility (Astheimer, 2011: 106).

SELF-PORTRAIT

One of the popular kinds of photos across social networks is self-portrait. Walker considers self-portrait a kind of self-exploration activity in which the digital eye turns inside and functions as a mirror. Furthermore, sharing the photo on Internet intensifies the feeling that the individual has the control over his/her own life (Schwarz, 2011:164). Similarly, Gomez and Larsen also point out that self-portraits play a role in individual’s self-exploration and –formation in reference to his/her perception of his/her own body: “Being both the photographer and the model at the same time, uploading these images to Internet or cell phones, receiving comments and evaluations of others and ongoing learning how to do it are the aspects indicating how much self-portraits contribute to the formation of bodies and subjectivities” (2009:206). Through self-portraits, the individual sees his/her own body from different angles, and puts himself/herself in the shoes of the ones to look at her/him. In this context, self-portraits contribute to re-formation of our bodies and selves (Gomez and Larsen, 2009:212-213). For self-portraits, photo taking takes place without interaction as a spontaneously
determined and controlled activity. Ego does not directly turn itself toward alter-ego for the role adaptation still keeps on (Astheimer, Neumann-Braun, Schmidt, 2011: 31).

**ON-CAMERA PERFORMANCE**

Posing develops based on a certain strategy in which the model has control over his/her appearance. While having profile pictures taken, the model virtually flirts with the camera. The model tries the poses that will make him/her look better, hides defects and highlights fancier points. Photo taking continues until the best pose is caught. Popularization of digital cameras turns photo taking into a daily activity, and on the other hand, forces the individual to think about his/her body more.

Hayri explains this as follows: “In the past, photos taken were kept in photo albums and people did not talk about their poses that much. However, today they can take photos any time they want and develop ideas as to how they could look better” (20.03.2012). With the help of posing, use of light and shadow, and Photoshop effects, people develop various strategies for both taking and displaying the images, and determining which images to be shared on social networks (Gomez and Larsen, 2009:212).

Technical strategies adopted while having profile photos taken can be summarized as follows: The individual is highlighted by lacking contextual information, setting the shot scale as medium shot or close-up and being aware of the camera, thus displaying certain behaviours created specifically for the camera (Mendelson, 2010:29). Images taken by the individual holding the cell phone or camera above the head level, thus making the person look better than s/he is, which began especially on MySpace and became widespread with Facebook had once been a trend on social Networks.

**DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF FACEBOOK PHOTOS**

**Method:**

Facebook profile photos were analyzed based on Chalfen’s descriptive photo analysis method (1987). The study included latest uploaded (20.09.2011) 30 photos (15 females and 15 males) to two public groups with the highest number of members created to determine the most beautiful girl and/or the most handsome boy of Facebook in Turkey. One of the main reasons why these groups were chosen was the aim of revealing the “ideal Facebook photo” in the minds of Facebookers.

Chalfen calls the descriptive analysis “communicative activities-framework of components” and studies communicative activities in terms of:

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3 Astheimer et al. classify the poses on Facebook profile pictures as follows: flirting, point of view, posing with gestures, model pose, clowning, do-it-yourself (DIY) pose (Astheimer, Neumann-Braun and Schmidt, 2011: 32).
Planning: Actions covering any formal or informal decision relating to creation of the photographic image.

On-camera shooting: Any action/actions somehow structuring the persons or objects whose photos are taken with the camera.

Behind- (off-) camera shooting: Any action/actions structuring the use and operation of camera even though not being in front of the camera.

Editing: Any action/actions changing, collecting, choosing, electing, editing and re-editing the images.

Exhibition: Any post-shooting action/actions displaying the photo-graphic image in a public setting.

He analyzes the components in terms of:

Participants: Identifying the ones taking the photo, appearing in the photo and viewing the photo.

Topic: Identifying the content of the image within the framework of the topics, activities, events and themes contained in the photos.

Setting: When and where the interaction takes place.

Message form: Physical form, “figure” or a kind of picture.

Code: Focuses on the norms identifying the nature of photographic images, and contains the features identifying a specific message form or style of image construction and composition.

(Transferred from Chalfen by Mendelson, 2010: 10-12)

Relationship between each interaction and component indicates the behavioural and action patterns of a certain type of visual interaction, which are specific to a certain group. Since it is not possible for us to collect data relating to production and distribution steps of the photos, in our study we took the photo text as a basis and focused on the relationship the shooting activities established with other components. For shooting activities, on-camera shooting was considered. On-camera shooting is any action/actions structuring the persons or objects filmed with a camera-on-record (Chalfen, s.21-22).

**1. Shooting – The component of Participant**

Participant(s) are photographers, subjects and viewers (Chalfen, 1987:27).
In Picture-taking

Graph 1: Photographer

Considering the photos sent to the beauty contest on Facebook, the individuals are the only subjects in the photos. These photos usually belong to young users. The reason why the young users are highly interested in this contest may be that consumer culture and individualism are more common among this generation, and that the young generation use the photo as a means of communication more frequently. As the related Facebook group is a public group, viewers may be any Facebook users. Models posed for the people unknown to them. Thus, it may be postulated that they struck the Facebook poses which seemed most suitable to them. 10 out of 30 photos evaluated were self-taken photos. 3 of these 10 photos (2 females and 1 male) were taken using a mirror. In the photos taken in front of a mirror it is realized that the individual does not care being lonely and, if anything, has a high level of self-confidence. Berger (1995) argues that the ones watching his/her own reflection in the mirror joins the viewer group.

Photo 1: Self-portrait

It is hard to tell the social classes of the users from just their photos. Particularly in self-taken photos, the setting and background may not be totally clear since the scale is dependent on the arm length. However, the setting chosen gives hints about the class,
whereas a tailored body, outfits selected attentively and standard postures obscure the class differences.

People appearing in the photos usually look well-groomed. Regardless of the setting and background, they appear with well-groomed hair and attentive outfits. It was found that individuals pay special attention to their hair even if they posed in their casual or sportswear. Additionally, the individuals’ being alone in all of the photos evaluated shows that they trust their physical appearance.

2. Shooting – The component of Setting

During the early period of the art of photography, people had their photos taken in the settings suitable for their social statuses. Professional and rich people were typically photographed indoors and in front of a plain background while people with low income, such as workers, were usually photographed in front of a background attributable to them and outdoors (Sontag, 1999: 81). Today, however, such a distinction has nearly vanished. With the fall in the prices of digital cameras and camera phones and their popularization, photographs have also been personalized and personal moments and places began to be photographed.

In some photos outdoors was preferred and the individuals were photographed alone and immobile with such backgrounds as sea, seaside, rural areas, natural scenery, parka and apartment buildings. Rest of the photos were taken indoors, particularly at home. In homemade photos, the individuals usually draw the attention of the audience to only themselves by choosing an empty wall as the background or having a minimum amount of furniture or appliances in the photo. These photos point out home-comfort as well. It did not matter if the model was in the living room which is a common place or in bedroom which is a private area; s/he posed comfortably regardless of the setting. Two of the photos leave an impression that they were taken in a studio because only a black background was used. In one of the photos, a wavy sea was put in the background. Two photos were taken in the bathroom in front of the mirror. Wherever the individual was, s/he was always in the centre of the photo; thus setting became
irrelevant. The model highlights his/her body capital. Obscuring or minimizing the setting and background in most of the photos prevent the model from giving a hint about his/her social environment and background, thus making class difference invisible.

3. Shooting – The component of Topic

“The Topic component describes image content in terms of the subject matter, activities, events, and themes that are represented in pictures.” (Chalfen, 2008:29). It is hard to find a certain event in Facebook photos. In general, the person having his/her photo taken represents himself/herself and strikes a stable pose. However, several themes may be realized in the photos analyzed in our study. As there was a beauty (physical appeal) contest on Facebook, the highlighted basic messages were beauty, handsomeness and attractiveness. Nearly all of the models were well-groomed people paying special attention to their outfit and hair. Although the preference of outfit was mixed since some of them were wearing casual clothes while some others chose to wear more formally (some of the boys preferred to wear a black suit and white t-shirt, and one young girl was wearing a white shirt and a thin necklace), it was observed that all the models was paying attention to what they wore, and that they got dressed especially for photo-taking. Complementary accessories such as sunglasses, leather jackets, watches, jewellery, tattoos etc. were seen in the photos as the symbols of status as well as showing that these individuals were following the fashion.

**Graph 3**: Basic message of the photo

Beauty/attractiveness is probably one of the most prominent themes of Facebook photos. Persons having their photos taken so as to look more beautiful or handsome than they are follow certain strategies. Hayri notes that an individual having his/her
photo taken is usually aware of the defects of his/her body, and develops various strategies to implement while posing in order to hide these defects and look better (20.03.2012). Star postures borrowed from popular culture are one of the easiest ways of achieving beauty/attractiveness.

In both of the above photos, female models chose bathroom as the setting in which they had prepared their bodies for photo-taking. They highlight their attractiveness by wearing low-cut clothes or clothes outlining their genitals, striking inviting poses, and smiling at and sending kisses to the ones looking at her. The model is in an interaction with the viewer. The female model in Photo 2 put a distance between herself and the viewer by looking at not the viewer, but the camera while the female model in Photo 3 puts this distance by wearing sunglasses.

In the photos below, male models copied the outfits and postured of pop stars. In Photo 4, the way the male model sits and looks whose black suit and white t-shirt reflect his both formal and sportive style, and watch is highlighted as a symbol of social status resembles the poses in album covers of Turkish folk singers. He is in contact with the viewer. However, the male model in Photo 5 in leather jacket and white t-shirt tries to put a distance between him and viewer and create a “cool” image by wearing sunglasses and not smiling. In both photos, the models tried to draw the whole attention of the viewer to themselves and their bodies by using a plain background.
Another prominent theme in the photos is comfort. Some of the subjects posed in comfortable and casual clothes, and a majority of them sat or lay comfortably on a sofa at home. They gave the message “I am casual now” There were no one photographed in a studio except a few.

4. Shooting – The component of Message Form

Chalfen suggests that message form may be the physical form, “figure” or type of the photo as well as being central to all the other components (Chalfen, 2008:31). Album photos, profile pictures or mobile uploads on Facebook can be considered the message forms. Additionally, various filters used and technical interventions made can also change the message form. In the photos analyzed portrait form was the generally preferred form. In these photos, typically, a part of or the whole body is displayed in a framework together with the face. At this point, the main topic slides from the real person to the environment as the scale is widened and the focus of the photo shifts from the person to the setting. However, in the photos evaluated it was seen that the scale called close-up was preferred in most of them as a result of the habit originating from headshot practice. 23 of the photos analyzed were taken right from the front, thus providing the viewer with an objective point of view. Accordingly, in addition to granting the viewer an objective point of view, the models tried to reflect their emotions, thoughts and inner worlds using the mostly (57%) preferred close-up, medium close-up and mid shot scales. When such scales are used, the expression in the face and of the eyes of the subject become clearer because the viewer and the subject face each other just as in a real-life dialogue, and the viewer gets a feeling that the subject is near, thus being able to understand the subject’s mood.

The users tried to create a retro atmosphere by sharing two of the photos in black and white font and one in sepia (a brownish colour). Therefore, an emotional point of view is created by aging the photo, and furthermore, technical defects of the photo as well as aesthetic defects of the model are eliminated.
5. Shooting – The component of Code

“The last component, Code, includes the characteristics that define a particular message form or “style” of image construction and composition. Description of code includes information on habits, conventions and/or routines that have structured shooting and/or editing events to give a certain “look” to images.” (Chalfen, 2008:32).

5.1 Use of Camera

Semiotically, codes which are components of structural analysis of the narrative, i.e. elements except for the subject, such as shot scales, camera angles, lighting, framing, image editing, point of view, setting, outfit, make-up and accessories contribute to structural formation of the image as well. Within this framework, as stated before, a photo has its own reality as well as having effects on virtual reality.

Graph 4: Camera angles

As photo-taking does not require education, except for art activities, individuals photograph themselves directly fronting the camera. However, since centre of the objective is the weakest point of the photo, this results in a static image (Akbaş and İkizler, 2010:79). When viewed from above, the individual looks shorter, tinier and weaker than s/he is. Therefore, reality fades away for the viewer in these kinds of shots. In a high-angle photo, the subject may reflect losing, weakness, defeat and desperation as well as revealing passive thoughts. 6 of the photos analyzed used this shooting technique 4 of which were self-taken. 2 individuals using high-angle, however, looked directly in the lens, thus leaving an impression that they were actually self-confident individuals in contrast to the narrative of this technique. Contrary to this narrative, low-angle technique was used when size, power, greatness, happiness and enthusiasm were aimed for. As a result of the technique preferred by only 1 person, the individual looks taller and bigger than s/he is. In short, high- and low-angles have emotional and psychological narrative functions.
In contrast to conventional photography rules, sometimes photos are taken tilting the camera. Oblique (or canted) angle is used mostly for emotional and dramatic purposes. Regardless of the point of view (whether subjective or objective), oblique angle reflects imbalance and a psychological crisis and depression as well as being used to create a dynamism in the frame.

5.2 Camera performance

From a gender point of view, clear distinctions are seen between individuals in self-presentation before the camera. Charisma is a theme aimed for especially by male users. They stress out that they are inaccessible by avoiding eye contact with the camera, looking away, and posing seriously not smiling. In the photos analyzed, male models stood upright with their hands in their pockets or fastened in the waist level. Females have a wider range of posing styles than males. In the photos analyzed, it was observed that except for 4 models, females smiled, at least briefly, looking directly in the camera which means she was interacting with the viewer. This clear intergender distinction may well be attributed to social gender roles. Distant, cold-hearted and “tough” stance attributed to men and qualities attributed to women by the society such as “sociable”, “lovely” and “attractive” are reflected in the photographs as well.

CONCLUSION

As a result of postmodernism, everyday life is rushed by images and image-oriented activities and ‘aestheticised” (Slater, 1995:137). Similarly, bodies on social networks are aestheticised before being presented. Photos shared on Facebook are created depending on various strategies adopted by the users. Major strategies models adopt while taking, picking up and submitting photos include perfecting one’s own image, highlighting his/her individualism, acting in accordance with popular culture and trying to transcend his/her social class.

Considering the family album, it can be said that photograph has been personalized with popularization of personal photos taken anywhere anytime and visualizing the personal experience. Personalization of the tools and popularization of cell phones and digital cameras caused photographs to be taken anywhere anytime which focus on the individual. With the personalization of the tools, content was personalized as well and photos were turned into a daily means of communication and expression.

The individual highlights his/her individualism in Facebook profile photos as well. Poses in these photos not only state “I am successful and charismatic, but also give the message “I am different than others, self-confident and unique” In Facebook photos, the individual idealizes himself/herself and highlight his/her uniqueness. The individual uses various codes while trying to present himself/herself in the most ideal way through photos. S/he utilizes technical auxiliaries and visual codes to minimize the setting, adorn and highlight the body and copy star poses. When compared to writing, photograph actually provides more options for doctoring and tailoring the body and image, selectiveness, sharing photos as a reflection of charisma, trying to look attractive, copying pop stars, being both far from and near the viewer etc.
Social networkers produce their own images by copying current role models through which they actually generate images of others instead of their own and turn themselves into the subjects of collective view (Astheimer, 2011:118).

Imitating and copying stars is of course not a new thing. Popular iconography studies emerging in late 19th century and developing with 20th century popular culture aim to understand and explain the admiration shown by the masses to the stars. What is new here is that star poses are copied and shared on public platforms with the fall in photo costs and popularization thereof. Global popular culture is regenerated in daily life through photos. However, this regeneration is also one of the functions of one’s identity construction. Having suggested that identification with certain role models is a personality-related problem, Morin notes: “Each of us has an identity, yet we all live with a myth about our own identities. In other words, each of us builds an immediate identity totally in contrast with his/her true identity and reaches his/her true identity therewith” (Morin, 1972:127). Within this context, copying the stars corresponds to the need to approve one’s own individualism (Morin, 1972:129). A great majority of the young people develop their personal relationships by using and adapting popular products (Astheimer, Neumann-Braun and Schmidt, 2011:15).

Another function of regenerating star poses is individual’s efforts to transcend his/her social class. Facebookers submit idealized images featuring body capital isolated from the environment by using symbols of status, minimizing the setting and background, and hiding class differences. Subject of the photo creating an idealized image belonging to himself/herself becomes a part of the popular culture of attractiveness and tries to transcend his/her current social class. Photo makes us stars by removing us from the social environment we live in and look like, and by breaking our class belonging, thus we can easily be a part of the social status we would like to have. Eventually, photo becomes a means of achieving social status and turns into a kind of conspicuous communication. In conclusion, it can be said that photos shared on Facebook are affected by the intersection between the images becoming more popular with the global popular culture (compliance with norms), communicative context specific to Facebook (sharing on a semi-public and semi-private platform) and visual culture, and the individual’s sense of privacy.
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A CRITICAL APPROACH TOWARDS WOMAN IDENTITY CREATED IN TELEVISION AND IN VIRTUAL WORLD

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INTRODUCTION

It will be tried to understand what kind of culture had been produced in media in general and especially in television and in the virtual world with regards to the representation of identity of the woman and funda-mentally in terms of “discourse” in this study, in which the modern cultural environment as it is defined by Baudrillard as “consumption culture” within the framework of the globalization process will be discussed in critical context. The purpose of the study is to find answers for these two questions:

Does the identity of the woman produced itself once more “within the dominant discourse” within communication tools and in the virtual world in terms of the representation?

Or, is it the issue, whether “an opposed identity” has been produced or not through an perception that is outside of the “individual of the population” and the “consumer identity” where we think it has been produced as an meta discourse and hence through an critical perspective?

Key Words: television, social media, woman identity, consumption.

LOSING OF THE PRIVACY AND PUBLICITY POLICY OF THE MEDIA

“What is cultural and historic for the love is for the service of womanhood: man has been designed to be the slave of the woman” (Derrida, Grammatology, 2010: 266)

The life has been surrounded by the publicity within the cultural environment of the modern society especially as the communication technology had developed. The privacy, on the other hand, which provides opportunity of “independence” for

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individuals, has been collapsed within this culture that is based on the publicity especially through the television and the internet and it has transformed into a subject of a show that is disputed in the public domain as it has been removed from being the area of independence. Reference of television programs aimed for the woman, for the issues such as “love, loyalty, sympathy, family” has made the notions, which has primarily been the woman, as the production channels again. Reducement of the privacy down to the public domain can also be continued through “social media” networks again. This situation is simply the use of the technology, which is the product of the will of the human being, against himself/herself again by the human being (but by masses).

It is not possible to find anything else but objectivised love in television programs, where “objectivised womanhood, that is to say seduction” through the definition of Baudrillard (Baudrillard, Fatal Strategies, 2002: 68) and where enticement are in excess amounts. The appearance of the identity of woman within the virtual world is already not much different from the identity of woman that is objectivised in the television. The general discourse that is structured on “aesthetics and love” on television programs that are intended for the woman and on the internet sites would regress the woman down to a statue, where she produces the consumption culture and who transforms her own body over to the consumption object as well by being also fed by sub discourses such as “family, children, health and decoration.” We should remember this question that Baudrillard had asked: “…which one of the miracles of the will, which divine power, which one of the plays can force human beings to love each other; which kind of lunatic imagination can push human beings to love, to love each one of us, can push one to say ‘I love you?’” (Baudrillard, Fatal Strategies, 2002: 96).

The tendency of people to reveal their natural lives and their intimacies in a manner that not to involve secrets, this “peeping and exhibitionism” act; is the relationship of common man who is suffering from the lost his own reality between “himself and the culture created him” based on the “violence”. In fact according to Baudrillard the confessions of people on their own lives are pornographic since they are presented as reproduction of reality (Baudrillard, Fatal Strategies, 2002: 55). In fact, this, as a result, is an obscenity encompassing everything. TV programs such as “Big Brother”, “Would you be my bride”, “We’re getting married”, “Wedlock”, “Dinner Time” are the indicators of civil-ization of peepers that Eco mentions about. Because these programs supposedly based on the themes of “love, family, friendship” and claiming reality, are actually directing the contestants in a determined format. While Television is searching for ways to create synthetic reality by pushing the boundaries of its own language; the individuals are also able to simulate/manipulate their own realities.

Actually this dramatic transformation of love which is transformed as a publicity strategy in media and virtual world, is not more than a presentation of private live to the public service.

In that case, this dramatic existence (game) of common man; is an indicative of a fictional (fake) identity performed in a play in the form of “secrets/lives dedicated to universal culture, that is mass culture, in a culture where partiality is lost”. Private
lives have become the cheapest consumption product of “history consuming (eroding) fragmented time”. Family relationships, problems and secrets got into circulation by being commoditized. The circulation of private lives spreading in media market is rapid and short-lived. TV programs made in order to find so called solution to everyday problems of common man function as an arena in which “secrets, crimes and the most immoral person are confessed”. The problems (privacies, love, secret etc.) materialized in this arena are becoming consumption objects giving pleasure to the masses for a short period of time rather than being solved and the expiration date (operating time) of these problems is valid in the course of program. The mass almost represents a “new human form” who is eroding himself and pleased with this and who is relieving in a society where crime and immorality became widespread with the emotion of guilt like everybody else. As long as mass people who need to be interactive in a manner not to involve privacy in order to reproduce the mass culture, feel pleased with being exhibitionist, they will be peeped and under surveillance. In that case the cheapest and most common meta entering into circulation in the market is the privacy of common man. This culture could degrade the love to the status of “cheapest meta”. In a world where the notions lose their symbolic meanings and detached from their contexts; the love, tears, anger of common man confessed through screens provide a short-lived information that does not correspond sentimentally; in other words provide “an embodiment which is substitute for emotion”. The emotions are transformed into shot lived information and consumed in media market through being materialized. Privacy enter into or was put into circulation through being commoditized. The cheap loves of the history consuming frag-mented time tell the masses: “you are not guilty, nobody is guilty, you have a sustainable life despite everything. The real crime is; to know and question, to look back past experiences and criticize today. Therefore forget about the past, questioning and thinking. Thinking and solving the actual problems are more difficult than you could ever think”. Here, maybe with the pain of this, in the mass culture, television and virtual world are in the status of “arena” of common man who does not control his/her will.

According to Derrida; “the order in the modern society was reversed by woman and it is the shape of extortion. This “substitution” is not an ordinary abuse like others. It is the paradigm of violence and political abnormality.” (Derrida, Grammatology, 2010: 268).

In a culture where artificiality is produced the look of the things has a fetishistic character and the communication is within a fetishistic language. The fetishistic look of the things produces a sense pointing the value of the purchasing the goods and here, the symbolic meanings-brands which are indicator of its place in the market, are important. The idea of consumption uses its symbolic language in a way that it will establish its ideological discourse and reiterate it endlessly. The common discourse produced by the symbols brought to us through civilization is the market and Exchange value of meta; history, art, information dream and fantasies could take place in the market as long as they produce a sense legalizing the now. Because the mass culture uses its symbolic language in a manner that it will produce a single sense which is consumption, and
transformed or degraded the prosperity of language to the indication pointing a single sense; the freedom could be perceived as being in love, making a confession in TV shows. Since this culture survives as long as it produces the artificiality through its institutions, the reality has been lost. The “exhibitionism and peeping” culture produced by all institutions of society including the media and television, is the look of this artificial world, “democratization, trans-parency, cultural prosperity and universal language”. The exhibitionism in these programs where reality has been lost through dramatization, and the privacy is publicized creates its own peeper. Therefore the real lives become fictional. The problem here, is not fiction as a form of narration. Hence, film theorist Metz explains the fictional structure of cinema as follows; the masses going to watch movie are aware of that the thing they watch is not real. The narration in TV, however, is misleading since it claims reality. It present fictional as a fact. The real art is; unique and product of creation, it screens the dreams and secret world of its creator; the real art provides the opportunity of image to the person reading it. The art does not claim reality, it clearly demonstrates that it is a fiction claiming the sense of reality and criticizing. Because the art does not hide that it is fictional it is closer to the life and it could transform the culture by interfering.

The real art uses its symbol language to serve a goal enriching the idea generation which gains a dynamic awareness pushing us to search for the potential of existence, dreaming and realizing these dreams. In that case the original function of cinema or art can not be compared to the function in the fictional world of television. The place where the art and science are party to is, in the final analysis, humanity. Improving life through goal, emotion and idea generation is to understand “human”.

**COMMODIFICATION OF THE BODY**

“*Now that there is only virtual strategy, the virtuality can no longer have a strategy.*” *(Baudrillard, Total Screen, 2002: 54)*

Bauman suggests that the connection of computer terminals to each other affects people differently. According to him, even today people could be separated from each other by “physical and temporal” obstacles. However this separation is now far more ruthless and deeper in terms of psychological effects compared to earlier (Bauman, Globalization, 2006: 26).

Baudrillard, states that today’s modern human is in an “artificial destiny” and defines him in a “transsexual” identity which results from a mutation in the symbolic order of sexual differences and represents everyone. Here, transsexuality is related to artificial that is there is a sexual apathy game and this game is performed on two levels: dedif-ferentiation game of sexual polarities from each other and the game of being indifferent to pleasure. Because even the pleasure replaced a “substitute emotion” detached from the context and pointing the consumption of signs. Transsexuality has become a stimulating model for today’s modern people acting as opposite sex and carrying uncertainty in terms of appearance. Baudrillard means that “we are all
transsexual as symbolic while” he states “the fate of body is to become replacement”. The representations of sexuality in the extreme (together with all signs) are actually the game of escaping from sexual body and hence the strategy to escape from desire. Since this strategy whose benefit for anyone is obscure, is performed by everyone; reveals itself within all institutions of society such as politics, architecture, theory and even science. Now everybody has an immediate memory and identities for advertising purposes. It is neither beauty nor health searched for the body. Because people “show their own appearance” in today’s time where the appearance is more important, they have become their own impresario (Baudrillard, Total Screen, 2002: 17-19).

According to Baudrillard mass media throws every power off the track –good or bad- and this is the fate of virtuality. There are lords of virtuality instead of the world. While the products of these lords of transparency (virtuality) are circulating freely in the market bowing before the rule of these is a form of voluntary slavery (Baudrillard, Total Screen, 2002:54).

Woman should not be a tool of a manipulation or eversion culture and shouldn’t invent this culture in itself. As a result of the pressure on woman by masculine culture, today woman is much more problematic in terms of representing an identity slaving the man and showing hostility to man instead of love. Because today, woman has been alienated to its features such as “loyalty, love, tolerance, creativity” bestowed by the nature and history in other word its own nature. Woman cannot avoid from being “consumer and producer “ of everything circulating in the market unless it has mercy on its own body. The role of man is also important in solving the problems of women. The main point is the need to question the information culture which is based on a fetishism producing a discourse “degrading the man and woman to the status of meta” by desubjectifying them and therefore “disidentificating” them by similarizing them, in a critical attitude.

Today, television and social media offer a production line appearance of dominant policies based on the ideology of consumption and they function as an arena in which everybody could take both active and theatrical role. This doesn’t point to a democratic culture on the contrary since it serves to the continuous reproduction and presentation of temporary information that doesn’t have historicity it points to manipulation culture. Thus a policy which is a substitute for democracy is produced. In fact the current results of pro-democracy movements in the Middle East in which social media Networks have important function and known as Arab Spring, constitute an example for this substitute policy. The permission of Democratic Western world to view the savaging of a dead body (Libyan Leader Gaddafi) and the execution of this attitude by so called democracy supporters; “are neither democratization nor progressivism, but primitivization and reactionism”. In the last instance, the transformation of a dead body into a “pleasure object” serving the satisfaction of revenge was viewed on TV collectively and shared on social media Networks. Therefore the main problem; is the violence policy of consumption ideology commer-cializing and transforming the human body into a sign.
On the one hand, while people view and share the events (the struggle for democracy of authoritarian regime opponents-2011) in the Middle East (Egypt, Libya, Syria); and on the other hand they consume entertainment programs, strive to exist in virtual world with their “appearances” and discuss their “loves and family affairs” in front of millions. This situation sets fort the following reality: the ones who show mercy actually need mercy and they substitute the death. Who will show mercy “on commodified body of woman” in an era where compassion became a show?

The mass culture serving the idea of consumption will see the mirror of his body through the museums pointing out the dead that is it will define itself through the opposite. The media networks in the view of channel judging the democracy opponents are actually transforming the all discourses against their own discourse into a “image of enemy”. Then the mass media is a museum of dead in which the opponents are mummified. The existence of this culture hiding in the dead body of the enemy it created that is defining itself as the opponent of the enemy it created, is the sign of all opponents and critical thoughts are killed. This state of being dead; is not identical with being in a grave, entombed saint, tomb and in an ancient city. Because the identity of museum defines a theatrical space in which mummified bodies left their spirit behind are examined. In that case modern culture in the view of museum is like a prison limited with the feature of embalming (mummification) and restraint (limitation). The language in consumption culture is in a string comprising of immediate pleasures taken by the consumption of everything transformed into a sign. This situation almost resembles this; “opposite totem is eaten in the world of primitives”. In this case the commodified body of woman is the reflection of both man and body of modern j-human who lost its spirituality.

**CONCLUSION**

The petty crimes and obscenity in the air look harmless since they are turned into an entertainment through the media; therefore they lost the meaning of “being crime” and “being unethical-immoral”. While the current cultural environment allows the immoral actions; the dangerous one became critical discourse protecting the seriousness whose presence is in the arts and science. Since the moral attitude of art and science in an existence alienated to dominant discourse is to “raise human”; it shall recognize that woman is a spiritual subject instead of a vision of object. Then relieving woman of the meta status could be possible by breaking the dominant discourse of media. Science and art should guide transforming the technology in favor of human.
REFERENCES


PROJECT FACEBOOK HONDURAS:
The Construction of the Social Reality
of Honduran University Youth on Facebook*

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ABSTRACT

Facebook is not only the most popular social network in present day, it is also the
most visited website globally. Since its creation in 2004 its popularity has drastically
increased worldwide. With its importance in society today, this study sets out to
explore how Honduran university students create a social reality on Facebook, and in
doing so, how they construct a virtual identity online versus the identity they present in
everyday life offline. The study discusses privacy issues on Facebook, how the design
of the platform limits or influences the information users can post, thus affecting the
virtual identity created, how the social construct of the online global communicate
cannot thrive without its users, and whether or not Facebook is an ideal community of
communication. The study is carried out through the surveying of Honduran
university students between the ages of 18 and 24, one of the most popular
demographics of users both internationally and within Honduras, by observing and
analyzing different aspects of their user profiles on Facebook.

1.1 Introduction:

Technology is advancing at a rate faster than it ever has. Today we live in a world
where unlimited information is literally at our fingertips. With the click of a button,
almost any question can be answered by the use of the internet. Globally close to 2
billion people are connected to the internet (The world of social media, 2011).
However, the general public is no longer connecting solely to the internet, they are
connecting to social networks, which is now the number one reason people go online.
In particular people are logging onto Facebook, the most popular social network in
existence today. Facebook is now the number one most viewed page in the world and
has even surpassed Google in terms of daily traffic. This means that the world’s
population is more interested in social networking than anything else on the World

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Wide Web. Facebook allows us to connect with an infinite amount of individuals through virtual time and space, thus allowing us to progress forward with our relationships while simultaneously acting out our everyday routines.

1.2 History of the Creation of Facebook:

Facebook was launched on February 4th, 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. The 19-year-old sophomore was studying computer science at Harvard University when he created the social network that would later become not only the most popular social networking site, but the most visited site daily on the World Wide Web.

Mark’s initial goal was not to create the global phenomenon that Facebook has become today. Rather, he wanted to create a website where Harvard university students could type in the name of a classmate and find out information about that person, such as where they are from, what they are studying, their age, and other basic personal information. However, since the first day it launched, Facebook captivated students’ attention and it was a sensation on the Harvard University campus. Within its first month of existence, Facebook expanded from Harvard to various other Ivy League universities around the U.S where it proved to be just as popular and had the same reaction among college students. (Facebook Facts and Figures (history and statistics).

1.3 Background Information:

When it was first launched, it was required that users had an “.edu” email address, indicating that they were university students. At the time, Facebook only had the features of the wall, profile picture, and group applications. As the Facebook team continued to advance the platform, they advanced the network also. It’s popularity was rapidly increasing, and by December of 2004, the user population had reached 1 million users, which consisted of only college students. In October of 2005, it is expanded to universities abroad, maintaining its focus on University youth, which was the original target audience. As Facebook expanded overseas, simultaneously it was expanding to different age groups. In September 2005, Facebook added a high school network in which the only requirements were that users had a valid email address and are over the age of 13 (the supposed minimum age of a high school freshman). Almost exactly one year later, using the same minimum age criteria along with having a valid email, Facebook opened its doors to everyone. (Facebook Facts and Figures, 2011).

Mark Zuckerberg’s motivation for creating Facebook was to connect people to their loved ones, like the slogan on the log in page of Facebook.com reads: “Facebook helps you connect and share with the people in your life”. The idea of making connections applies to everyone, and knows no specific demographics or boarders. That may be an attributing reason why Facebook is the global phenomenon that it is today; because it appeals to all genders, races, ages, and cultures. It has been translated into 70 different languages, but aside from speaking (or rather typing) in different languages; we become the same virtual culture within the world of Facebook. (Facebook Statistics, 2011).
1.4 Facebook Format:

Since the birth of Facebook, Zuckerberg and his team of 500 engineers are always looking for ways to advance the design of the platform and accommodate new features and applications to appeal to users (60 Minute Facebook Story, 2011). Currently, when a user wants to log onto Facebook he/she is taken to the login page which has the logo in large letters in the domain colors of blue and white on the left part of the page. At the top right hand of the page, the user may sign in with their email address (a requirement to start a Facebook account) and a password. In the middle left part of the page is a Facebook logo that reads “Facebook helps you connect and share with the people in your life”. The right middle of the page is occupied by a place where new users can create accounts by simply putting in their name, email address, a password, gender, and birthday. The bottom left part of the page is where a user can select or change the language that their Facebook is in. The bottom right is reserved for various buttons such as: about, advertising, create a page, developers, careers, privacy terms, terms, and help.

Once the user is logged in, they are greeted by the home page, which has the news feed or “recent stories” of what other Facebook friends have posted recently in the center of the page and takes up the majority of the space. The profile picture (a photo that one has to upload) is a tiny thumbnail photo that anyone (whether they are your Facebook friend or not) may see, and is located at the top left part of the page beside your name to help identify who the user is. Below this is a section which has different options that you can click on such as favorites, groups, apps, pages, lists, and friends on chat. On the left side of the page the user can see under what is labeled the “ticker” what other users who are logged are on doing. For example their status updates, comments, or what music they are listening to. Below the ticker, Facebook will inform you whose birthday it is today and what events are going on. The bottom left is where you can “chat” with your Facebook friends in real time.

The profile page is the most pertinent part of Facebook. The user’s profile is where the user “introduces” themselves on Facebook by giving their personal information, such as the user is from, where they live, study and work, and their birthday. This information is located at the top center of the page, so it is clearly visible. It encompasses basic personal questions one may ask upon first meeting someone. Below that are the users photos or videos. These photos or videos may be posted by the user or tagged by others and are in order from the most recent images, thus show a graphic timeline of events. Initially photos were not a main focus of Facebook, but today this is what sets it apart from other social networks like twitter, and is one of the most popular features of Facebook. Below the photo portion of Facebook, users update their status and can write “What’s on your mind” by writing a short sentence to tell the world of Facebook what you are thinking or feeling. It also contains the wall where friends can post dialect, photos, videos, and comment on these items. The wall is visible to all of your friends (depending on your Facebook privacy settings).

Other features that can be utilized on the home page is, one can send private messages to other individuals or groups, create events and invite their Facebook
friends, create pages for organizations or businesses, create common interest groups that can be private or public, and add various applications. Facebook has over nine hundred million objects users can use to interact with, and the average user is connected to 80 of these (Facebook Statistics, 2011). The Facebook team of engineers is constantly changing and bettering the features of the platform, so it is inevitable that Facebook will continue to gain popularity.

1.5 Privacy on Facebook:

Privacy has been an issue since Facebook was created, but in a virtual world where members can post extensive personal information, what exactly does privacy mean for a social network meant to connect the individual to the masses?

Facebook is privately owned by Mark Zuckerberg and his co-founders. Under the terms and conditions of the official site it states that, “You own all of the content and information you post on Facebook and you can control how it is shared through your privacy and application settings” (Facebook Statistics, 2011).

Facebook’s privacy settings allow users to monitor what they want the general public to have access to. Users can control who can see their profile, status, photos, comments, and all other posted items. One can choose to share their information with everyone, friends, friends of friends, and people within your network (like your hometown network or University network) or choose to keep all information only visible to yourself. The only information that is always available to view by the public is the user’s name, profile picture, network, and username and user ID (Facebook Data Use Policy, 2011). However, Facebook users always have the liberty to delete their profiles from Facebook.

With millions of users around the world connected to the social network, Facebook faces the same dangers as any other social network. However the Facebook team emphasizes the importance of privacy and makes it known that users can “report” other users or offensive photos. Despite the well maintained privacy controls and settings the website offers, users should know there is always a risk when signing up for social networks or when using the internet.

1.6 International statistics:

Facebook to date has over 800 million users around the globe, half of whom log onto the site every day (Facebook Statistics). If Facebook were a country, it would have the third largest population in the world behind China and India (Socialnomics.com). Although it was created and initially intended for only university students within the United States, in October of 2005 Facebook began to expand to international university networks. Today it is translated in over 70 different languages and 70% of the populations of users are from outside the United States. The United States has the highest percentage of users. Facebook is represented on all five continents. (Facebook Facts and Figures).
As stated previously, Facebook may be so popular because it appeals to a diverse audience. It doesn’t focus on a particular age group, sex, or nationality; rather it is directed at a multicultural, diverse audience. But age demographic is dominated by users between the ages of 18 and 34 years old who may be the most popular age group to use the site due to the fact that University Youth were the original target audience. Facebook was created seven years ago when this age group was potentially studying at a university, about to enter, or just finishing, and then continued to “grow up” with Facebook. Because Facebook is a relatively new thing, we can see if it will predominantly appeal to this age demographic or if in future years, the age disbursements will even out and the gap between ages won’t be as drastic. However, currently this seems to be the trend internationally (socialbakers.com, 2011).

**Graphic No 1: Age of World Population on Facebook**

![Age of World Population on Facebook]

Source; (socialbakers.com, 2011)

**Graphic No. 2: Gender of World Population on Facebook**

![Gender of World Population on Facebook]

Source; (socialbakers.com, 2011).
1.7 Facebook in Honduras:

Of the 8,143,564 people populating the country, in Honduras there are 1,036,100 users on Facebook which consists of 12.97% of the population. Facebook in Honduras has grown by 178,320 users in the past six months alone. (Socialbakers.com, 2011). Facebook, although first launched in 2004, did not start to add international school networks until 2006. It was not translated into Spanish until February of 2008, two years after its creation. University students could join as of 2006, but the profile was in English. Once Facebook was translated into Spanish (among various other languages) and opened to the general public in December of 2008, Latin America embraced the social network, and its popularity grew (and is still growing) at a rapid rate. (Facebook Facts and Statistics, 2010).

When comparing the global statistics with those specifically from Honduras, it can be observed that in Honduras the group that uses Facebook the most are 18-24 year olds, whereas internationally 26-34 year olds are the most popular age group (but only by one percent). However it can be observed among both groups (Honduras and internationally) that the older groups make up a smaller percentage of users. This trend is likely to change due to its increasing popularity across all ages groups, and judging by its growth thus far, one can assume that it will continue to gain popularity in years to come.

**Graphic No 3: Age of Honduran Population on Facebook**

Source; (socialbakers.com, 2011).
1.8 The Future of Facebook:

The expansion and advancements of Facebook seem inevitable, judging by how it has revolutionized the internet in less than a decade thus far. Society today is accustomed to a form of communication in which one can write, message, post, call, text, or email an individual or group at their own convenience. And Facebook is just that; convenient. Users can talk to an infinite amount of people any time of day or night, share photos, videos, ideas, events, or groups, and they can do it all from their phones, homes, schools or offices. Our lives are being documented in a timeline like format on the internet, and one can log on at any moment to message, chat, post, upload, share, or comment to any one of their Facebook friends about anything to contribute to the timeline. This has so far changed the way we interact, have relationships, meet people, have meetings, advertise, consume, sell, and above all, communicate. And there are no signs of the Facebook Phenomenon diminishing.

Chapter 2

2.1 Introduction:

Social networks, namely Facebook, is a technological advancement that has, although less than a decade old, has had an immense influence on society. One aspect that should be addressed is that Facebook causes its users to create a virtual identity in order to participate. This identity, although supposedly based on that of our everyday lives, constrains its users to present themselves freely because of the features Facebook possesses. It is therefore important to define what identity means, especially when referring to our identity in the everyday life and the identity presented on Facebook of its users.
2.2 The Construction of the identity of Facebook Users:

The notion of “identity” as established in the Royal Spanish Academy Dictionary, is defined as “the set of characteristics of an individual or of a collective that characterizes them against the rest; the awareness that a person has to be themself and different from the rest”. Identity implies and assumes, as it is known, the presence of the “other” which is established through a confrontational relationship that allows us to establish the differences between self and the “other”.

The theory of identity is a concept addressed by various authors in the field of sociology, and although the idea is similar, the definition of the identity of an individual changes in the aspect of who and what it is related to. Jürgen Habermas, a German sociologist, for example, explains in his book “Theory of Communicative Action II” that “identity” is the complex property that people can acquire from a certain age. They have to start without having this property, and it is possible that they never possess it. But once they have acquired it, this property makes them “autonomous”. They can become emancipated from the influence of others; they can give its life a form and continuity that earlier, perhaps, they only possessed for external influence. They are therefore, by virtue of identity, autonomous individuals” (Habermas, 2002: 145). Henrich uses the concept of “identity” to refer to the ability of a person to act autonomous, which is a generic property of people in general. Ernst Tugenhhat, a German philosopher born in the Czechoslovakia, uses the concept of “identity” to refer to the ability of a person’s identification on the basis of a reflexive relationship with themself, as they want to be.

These sociologists define the concept of identity as “I” as a question of how to identify a particular person. Although the definitions of identity differ, the concept of “I”, in order to express oneself it is significant within all sociological, physiological, and conceptual definitions, because it is the term we use to express and identify ourselves to all others. However, we can use the concepts of “identity” to be able to understand the process of the construction of “identity” of Facebook users and thus, better understand how the reality of interaction on Facebook is constructed.

2.3 The Universalization and the Particularization of the “Identities” of Facebook Users

The approach of universalization and particularization of “identities” of Facebook users can be described by the principals raised by George Herbert Mead, an American philosopher, sociologist and psychologist, about the construction of the ideal communication community. This definition provides an impartial, rational model as a product of the collective will. According to that ideal, Mead also outlines the model of a non-aligned communication treatment between the subjects, enabling reciprocal spaces for a spontaneous self-presentation that requires a mutual empathy. According to Mead, when analyzed carefully, the ideal community for communication involves two different utopian projections. Each one of them is modeled after moments of ritual
practices that are still fused together; the practical time and the expressive, moral moment. Both variants are the point of reference from the concept of Mead of a fully individual person.

“Let’s assume that individuals were socialized as members of an ideal community of communication; then they were acquiring an “identity” that would have two complementary aspects: that of universalization and that of particularization; on one hand, having been developed in these ideal conditions, people would learn to orient themselves inside a universal reference frame, which is to act autonomously; and, on the other hand, they would learn to make use of their autonomy, which equals the rest of the moral agents to develop their subjectivity and peculiarity. Mead attributes both, autonomy and capacity of spontaneous self-fulfillment, to everyone who is in the revolutionary role as a participant in a universal discussion and who is liberated from the chains that supposedly occur in concrete social relations as pure habit. Belonging to the ideal community of communication, in terms of Hegel, is constituted as the “I” in self and the “I” like an individual” (Habermas, 2002: 139).

Assuming that Facebook is an ideal community of communication, then the acquisition of “identity” in this community would be mediated by the universalization and the particularization of the individuals that form part of it. From this point, Facebook users develop ideal conditions and mediate as a universal reference point, as in the “identities” of the people interacting in this community acquire a certain degree of autonomy, which allows them to be able to choose a level of spontaneous self-fulfillment, and with this, establish a pertinent relationship with the ideal community of communication giving. In relation to Facebook, the construction of the “I” that is determined as universal due to the orientations of the universal action that develop within the community. However, the predominance of “I” like the individual, functions at a level of particularization that is needed for the construction of “identity” in this community.

According to Mead the orientations of the universal actions penetrate and transcend all of the existing conventions and penetrate and allow a distance to the social roles that constitute the history of the nature of one.

“The requirement here is freedom from the conventions of given laws. Of course that such situation is possibly only when the individual appeals, so to speak, of one close community and restricted to another more comprehensive; more wide in logical meaning of include rights that are not as restrictive. One moves away from the fixed conventions, which no longer have any sense for a community in which rights have to be publicly recognized, and appeals to other individuals […] even if this appeal is an appeal to posterity. We have here the attitude of “I” in contrast with the “Me”. To “appeal to a much wider community”, just that autonomous subject capable of oriented in its action, by universal principles. But the “I” represents not only the peculiarities of a captive moral conscience of the tradition, but also the constraints of a character that obstruct the deployment of subjectivity. Here too, the ideal communication community members become an explosive force. Non-aligned between the subject treated structures that cause guidelines of action than in a different way than the Universalist
beyond existing conventions; they tend to fill in the blanks of self-realization reciprocal: “this ability allows one to display their own peculiarities….For the individual it is possible to develop their own peculiarities..., those which identifies you” (Habermas, 2002:140).

Perhaps Facebook is a space of reciprocal self-fulfillment to the effect that it offers the opportunity for its users to present or exhibit its peculiarities. However, Facebook does not only represent the peculiarity of a captive moral conscious of the tradition, but also the coercions of a character that obstructs the deployment of the subjec-tivity.

2.4 The self-determination, self-fulfillment and the identity of “I” on Facebook

These two aspects of “the identity of I” (Ich – Identität), self-determination and self-fulfillment are illustrated by Mead through proper-ties such as “self-respect” and a “sense of superiority”. Even these senti-ments reveal the implicit reference to the structure of an ideal community of communication. Facebook could be considered, based on the above assertion from the reference to Mead, an ideal community of communication because it can be used as space for its user to express their morals, ideas, opinions, political views, religious philosophies, ect. However it cannot be ideal because within the community, although virtual and acts as a global society where its user has the freedom to express themselves in the manner they choose, and create and construct an identity, possibly that is different from the identity they have constructed in real life, but Facebook governs its users through the template it offers. The construction of the “identity of I” in Facebook functions as the identity relationship with the social roles of everyday life of the individuals who interact in this virtual space, and these interactions are constructed in function as an organized biography that is characterized specifically as the edition of Facebook users profiles.

In order to understand ourselves as people as well as present an identity to others we can identify with certain characteristics of who we are such as: birth date, place of birth, family origin, marital status, nationality, religion, ect. These are commonly the criteria used to identify a person, which can generally be seen on Facebook users profile page, aiding other users to help identity and classify this particular person based on these basic facts, as well as the user to present their identity to those who may view their page on Facebook. On Facebook the users’ profiles are constructed using the following criteria: the user’s name, sex, birth year, date of birth, place of work or study, origin city, actual residence, sexual preference, relationship status, religion, nationality, political ideals, and other interesting aspects such as; favorite music, books, movies, languages one can speak, favorite sports, ect. The criteria used for the construction of identity on Facebook, however is limited to only these characteristics, whereas in everyday life people have the freedom to identify themselves with these basic facts, but they are not limited to only this information.

Finally, we can establish a clear relationship in the construction of the “identity of I” on the basis of the definition provided by Mead, which highlights two aspects,
utilizing a non-factual universal discourse reference: on the other hand, the capacity for autonomous action on the basis of universalist action guidelines and the ability to perform as yourself in a life which provides continuity assuming that you are taking responsibility for it. “The identity of I” does not exist on Facebook without the existence of the “other”. On Facebook you are never alone; the profile is a place among “friends” from different origins. The roles of the “other” that are socially accepted, appear here, strongly conditioned to construct the “identity”. The identities are built collectively or constructed with the amount of interactions on has with others.

2.5 The Design of Identity on Facebook

The participation of the communicative spaces on Facebook obviously does not occur in a vacuum. It is mediated, not only by the architecture of the social network, but also by the technological, textual and graphic design. These design guidelines enable what we can and cannot do within this space.

The design of Facebook demands the user to register with their complete name, sex, age, birthday and email address. Whether we lie or not in these fields, this design, by default, induces us to introduce ourselves on Facebook from these default demographic features, partnered to be understood and established as the “user identity”.

The objectives that we have set for ourselves, in the sense that we give to our actions, depend greatly on social imagery of the expectations generated around the common meanings that we draw upon Facebook and its promises (Vayreda, 2003). In relation to our notion as people, cyberspace feeds a number of utopias relating to the possibility of being an “other” inhabitant of a different identity (San Cornelio, 2004). These expectations and promises are creatively involved in the appropriation made by technical users of partner resources for social interactions and the presentation of themselves within cyberspace.

On Facebook we can only act on the basis of “entities” that we create from textual images (photos, videos or graphics) that represent or act for us. To make our online interactions intelligible, we understand and realize our actions in the world of Facebook, use cultural strategies that are not new, but come from our social experience from face to face interaction, as well as our experience with writing, using the telephone, radio, cinema or television (Morse, 1998).

What is surprising about the construction of identities online is the “display” of the cultural process of the construction of identity. In the physical world we tend to think of representations as forms through which we “express” through our own identity. While in cyberspace, we are witnessing the process in reverse; our identities are constructed from the representations that we have developed; as RemediosZafra stated: “In the media, the identity does not produce representations. Representations are which produce identity” (http://www.web-side.org/reme-dioszafra/). Finally, the design of the “identity on Facebook” is mediated by the profile page that represents the person and acts as a mediator between two people who do not know each other. On Facebook,
the question of authenticity is especially relevant and takes on significance to the meaning of interaction.

2.6 Conclusion of the Construction of Facebook Identities

In this chapter the construction of the identity of users who interact on Facebook has been defined by the theoretical approach based from Mead’s definition, from which we can establish a clear relationship in regards to the construction of the “identity of “I”. The definition of Mead’s theory highlights two aspects of this “identity of I”: a factual reference against the universal discourse and the capacity for autonomous action on the basis of the guidelines of universalist action, and lastly the ability to fulfill oneself in a way that provides continuity embracing and taking responsibility. On Facebook there is no “identity of I” without the existence of the “other”. And not only this, but the profile is a social place between our “friends” from different origins. The role of the “other” and what is socially accepted appear, strongly conditioning the construction of “identity”. Identities are constructed collectively or co-constructed through the interactions with “others”. The construction of identities on Facebook is mediated by the existing relationship between the reality of the real world and the reality of that constructed in virtual space by a cultural context that has been developed by Facebook users.

Chapter 3

3.1 Purpose of the study:

With the development of Facebook, many questions have risen about how the social network is effecting out lives. For example, how has it changed the way we think about technology, interact with people, effect businesses, even down to, does it have a psychological effect? Because the social network is relatively new, there have shockingly been very few studies done on how Facebook effects the global population despite how widely used it is. Therefore this study sets out to explore the affects Facebook has on University students here in Honduras by asking how students construct a social identity on Facebook, and more specifically how Honduran university youth interact on Facebook, and how they construct their identity online in comparison to the identity they present offline.

3.2 Population Objective:

Honduran University Youth between the ages of 18 and 24 years old who interact on Facebook and reside in the cities of Tegucigalpa or Comayagüela, from the municipal central district, Department of Francisco Morazán in Honduras. This specific age was chosen because this age group tend to be the normal age of university students, and (as seen from the graphics in Chapter 1) this age group has the highest population of Facebook users in Honduras.
3.3 Probabilistic Sample:
250 Honduran university youth who interacted on Facebook with the comprised of ages in sub-categories of 18-20 and 21-24 years old, and of both genders.

3.4 Analysis Unit:
The Facebook profile pages of the university youth that were registered on Facebook between the ages of 18 and 24 years of age, and that wished to voluntarily participate in the research project.

3.5 Procedure:
During the first stages of the study, biographical and documented information was collected. This phase lasted during the months of August through October of 2011. Because of the lack of literature and research done on social networks and Facebook, during this time sociological concepts were studied in order to gain a superior knowledge about concepts such as how media reaches the masses, concepts of identity, how communication has changed in the last decades, etc. This was realized in the Library of the National University Pedagogic of Francisco Morazán and the National Autonomy University of Honduras to gather related information about the subject studied. However, aside from the sociological concepts learned, most of the information found about Facebook itself was found on the World Wide Web. These included the few Facebook studies done that were relevant to this study, biographical information about Facebook, articles about technologies influence on today’s world, and various other articles about the effects of Facebook on different aspects of society.

The second phase consisted of the creation of the profile page. A Facebook profile page was created under the name, “Jovenes Universitarios fbhn” (University Youth fbhn) and managed and observed by the research team involved. The page consisted of various graphics showing Facebook statistics or information, video clips from youtube.com with information about technology, social networks, and/ or Facebook, and information about the study.

Simultaneously during this stage of research a survey was created. The survey and asked various questions intending to gain knowledge about students’ interaction on Facebook and the specific population that uses it. Basic information questions were asked, for example: Age, sex, address, subject of study, etc. As well as questions about when the user is logged onto Facebook, what aspects they like the most, etc. (To see the full survey refer to Appendix A).

The third phase corresponded to the field work, which consisted primarily of visits to the universities where there were Honduran students on the social network, Facebook. University classrooms were visited (with the permission of the professors) where the surveys were passed out to the university students present. After gathering the completed surveys from those who agreed to partake, we explained that students willing to participate in the study beyond this point would need to voluntarily add or accept our friendship request sent through Face-book. It was important to address that
no names would be revealed at any point during the study, and the information obtained through their profile pages would be used strictly for observation and statistical purposes. After surveys were passed out to 200 students, based on the name they presented on the survey as their user name on Facebook, friend solicitations were sent. This process was carried out in the two months of November and December of the year 2011 and again in February of 2012 because the students have a break for the holidays during the end of December and all of the month of January.

From the time the friend requests were sent, as individuals accepted they were put into the data system and their profiles were being observed in order to save time rather than waiting for all students to accept.

The fourth phase consisted of an analysis of information obtained from the application instrument that in this case, was the survey which was analyzed in the statistics program SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), version 18.0. This process also included the realization of typical bibliographic record, both identified as the content of summary, and the information of a qualitative nature analyses through the Atlas ti, Version 5.0 for qualitative analysis respectively.

From the 200 surveys obtained, 14 students were not eligible to participate as a “friend” on Facebook due to their age, that they didn’t have Facebook (a surprising low percentage), or incomplete or inco-herent answers. 186 students were sent friend requests on Facebook from the profile created earlier in the study. Of the 186 friend requests sent 74 accepted. What was realized at this point in the research was that many of the students shared the same name as another Facebook user, or the students could not be identified by solely the name they provided us, thus many of the students may have never received their friend request because there is a chance it was sent to someone who shared the same name. Although a number of students sent friendship requests to the profile page later on, these students were not used in the study because they were not part of the final analysis group.

It was during this phase that the profiles of the voluntary participants’ photos were observed and analyzed based on categories that included: photos of the user by themselves, with friends, with family, with pets or animals, on vacation, at events, with food, or photos downloaded from the internet, cartoons, graphics, or digitally enhanced photos. 74 students participated in the study as “friends” on Facebook, and each profile was observed in this manner, and also how often they appeared to use Facebook, how often people wrote on their walls, and in what ways they appeared to use Facebook the most, for example to upload photos, chat, write on walls of friends, ect. This process lasted from January through February of 2012. From these observations collected, data was put into a spreadsheet in SPSS for further analysis.

The fifth and final phase of the project was related to the drafting of information. This phase which was one of the most arduous processes realized in the research project due to the revision process and editing of the biography, orthography and some relevant academic and scientific criteria for the final document which took place over the course of February and March of 2012, while simultaneously collecting data.
3.6 Results:

The results are based on what information was given by the 186 students who participated in the survey portion of the study, and then the observations and analysis done by the research team when reviewing the profiles of the 74 students who accepted Facebook friend requests. All data was collected and put into SPSS for further analysis.

Of the 186 students surveyed from 3 different universities located in the municipal district of Tegucigalpa and Comayagüela, 65.6% were female and 33.9% were male which follows suit with the international trend that there are generally more females in universities. 24.7% of the students were 19 years old, which represented the highest population of the age category. 80.1% of the students registered for Facebook sometime during or after the year of 2008, which is when Facebook was translated into Spanish (although since 2005 it was available internationally). Only 9.7% registered for Facebook between the years of 2005 and 2008, which means they were utilizing Facebook in English rather than their native language. 10.2% chose not to answer this question because it can be presumed that do not remember in which year they registered. When asked how much time each student spends on a Facebook a day, the majority spend more than an hour a day on Facebook, indicating that Honduran university youth spend a significant amount of time on the social network.

Other data found was that the majority of the time (70% or more in each case), the students utilize Facebook the most for the following features: chat, to communicate with friends, share photos and videos and communicate with family.

80.1% of the 186 students surveyed claimed to use their real names. However when requesting students as Facebook friends, it was difficult to identify the participants by their names because although they may be using their real names, often they would identify themselves by only their first and middle name, for example.

75.3% of young people expressed that they do not publish private data on their Facebook profiles, but when analyzing and observing their profile pages on Facebook, it was noted that the students posted information such as; the date of birth, phone number, place of residence, e-mail address, among other data that is consider personal data. 22.6% expressed that they do not post personal or private data on their Facebook profiles and 2.2% did not complete this field.

81.7% of the 186 surveyed have their privacy settings set so that only their “friends” can see their profiles. However, the concept of a friend on Facebook certainly signifies something different than how one would define a friend in the reality of everyday life because when asked if the students have people that they do not know as “friends” on Facebook 54.3% said yes. 55% of the students claim that they have more “friends” on Facebook than they do in real life. 89.2% said they have met their Facebook “friends” at least once during a face to face interaction; however this contradicts the previous question of if they had people they do not know as “friends” on Facebook. This shows that not only is the term friend obscure within the Facebook
community, but also the concept of “knowing” someone is unclear as well within the social network.

62% of the survey participants said they feel that their Facebook pages are a good representation of who they really are. This means that the majority of the university youth use Facebook to present an accurate identity of themselves to show other users.

The results and observations obtained from the product of the analysis of the "Facebook profiles" of Honduran University students that allowed us to observe their Facebook profiles for approximately three months of observation, were observed using the following criteria; analysis and reading of the wall, observation of photographs, state and content analysis, observation of the personal information in the "profiles", as well as the "friend" groups and other activities that young people perform while interacting on Facebook,

Although of the 186 students surveyed the majority were woman, 70% of the students that accepted friendship requests were men.

The highest percentage of photos tagged on the students profiles were of themselves with friends. It can be assumed based on this that Honduran university students want to identify themselves with friends.

Therefore, what can be concluded from all presented evidence is that Honduran university youth create an identity based on who they are offline by using Facebook as a virtual reality as an extension of their identity in their everyday lives offline. They utilize the social network by communicating with friends, family, peers at the university and acquaintances that they have met face to face the majority of the time.

3.8 Conclusion:

To answer how Honduran university youth construct a social reality on Facebook, one must consider the implications produced throughout the study. These include:

• The construction of identity: Facebook allows its population to create an identity separate from the identity they present in their everyday lives offline, by presenting themselves through images such as photos and videos, text, status updates, ect.

• The format of the design of Facebook by default creates certain parameters for the identity the user creates.

• Facebook creates a community where the existence of the “other” is necessary to thrive, in comparison to the reality of everyday life where this element is not necessary.

• Facebook is not an ideal community of communication, based on Mead’s theory, because it lacks certain elements that would qualify it as such.

What can be interpreted by the results found through the Honduran university students who participated in this study by accepting a Facebook friendship request, thus allowing us access to their profile for analyzing and observational purposes, is that these observations, as well as the answers that were given on the surveys show that Honduran university students utilize Facebook as a means to communicate with friends and family, post photos and videos of themselves, their friends and family, pets, food,
parties, events, vacations, etc. What can be deducted by this is that Facebook users are indeed creating an identity through the space Facebook offers by utilizing its features such as posting picture, images, and videos on their pages, communicating with chat, messages, the wall, as well as the spaces offered to comment or “like” something.

Although Honduran university students (like all Facebook users) are posting images that represent the truth, Facebook offers the liberty to be biased by editing and censoring what information is posted on the profile page, thus creating an image that is based on one’s true identity, but generally not a complete representation of the user. The limitations Facebook creates through its template only allows the user to post what the social network offers, in this case (as discussed previously), messages, photos, videos, wall posts, and various other basic information can be included in the profile page, by default. In this sense, Facebook is telling its user how to portray themselves through the template offered, and limiting their ability to express an online identity freely.

Of course the user is free to communicate how they choose, which is based on their identity offline in everyday life, but this too causes restrictions because the interaction humans have in the reality of everyday life offline is different to that online. If two people interact face to face as oppose to online, the speakers will be able to express themselves through facial expressions, body language, voice inflection, even emotional sounds, like laughter or crying, that a receiver online could be completely oblivious to.

Facebook is a convenient form of communication in our techno-logically advanced global society, because it conforms to the fast pace society we live in today by allowing its user the options of when and how they want to communicate. The user has the choice to communicate by utilizing chat, a way to communicate in real time with their “friends” on Facebook, send messages, which are private and may be read the next time the receiver of the message logs on, and the wall, which is text that is visible to everyone (or depending on the user’s privacy settings, possibly only their friends on Facebook, or only themselves (although of our 74 subjects, not one had their pages set with this specific privacy setting, which can lead to the assumption that Facebook users in fact are not overly concerned about privacy). These forms of interactions on Facebook provoke real time and delayed responses, which are convenient to both the sender and receiver, which attributes to Facebook’s popularity.

Interactions online allow one to construct a more anonymous identity, but not only that, but because the user has the ability to choose their sending and response time, as well as censor what images are portrayed on their page, they are able to construct an identity to their liking (within the guidelines the format of Facebook offers), where as in everyday life, they cannot because they are judged based on their presence.

Facebook user’s identity depends on other people to thrive, because without the idea of the “other” based on Mead’s theory, as discussed earlier, the user has no reason to communicate (which takes place between two or more people despite the form of communication; face to face, telephone, text message, through social networks, web cameras, etc), post photos or videos, write messages, wall posts, or comments. This is
contrasted in everyday life because in the reality of everyday life one can thrive as an independent functioning being, with or without the “other”.

Lastly, Mead’s theory of an ideal community of communication implies that an individual has an autonomous identity constructed through the concept of “I”, and that individual is free of given laws. Based on this theory, Facebook does not fit the profile of an ideal community of communication because the users can construct their own peculiarities to attribute to their identity, but only within the guidelines of the features presented on Facebook. Facebook users are free to express their political and religious views, personal philosophies, show their interests, and display unlimited imagery to an infinite amount of people, but they will always be governed by the limits of the platform. Also the concept of time in the community of Facebook differs from that of everyday offline interactions because the users have the freedom to send and respond to messages as they please, which defies Mead’s definition that within an ideal community of communication, communication is a ritual practice based on practical time. And finally Facebook users act autonomously within the community, but their interactions and communication is based on the “other”. Without the “other”, the idea of communication would be pointless within the social network.

3.9 Limitations of the Study:

This particular study was written to present at the National Pedagogic University of Francisco Morazán. The final product had a total of 84 pages including the graphic results of all data completed. However for the purpose of this publication, the paper was condensed, so that only the most relevant information is presented in this publication.

From the start we had planned on surveying 250 students from 5 different public and private universities in the cities of Tegucigalpa and Comayagüela in order to obtain a diverse sample. However, in the end only three universities were visited due to time restrictions, and authorities not permitting our entrance into the university. The final results are from three different universities, and 200 people were surveyed rather than 250.

Due to these problems encountered here, only 200 surveys were passed out. Of the 200 surveys given to students to complete, 186 students were eligible because they had the appropriate age between 18 and 24, were registered on Facebook, and they were willing to participate (by filling out the survey). What we had not anticipated was that after passing out the 186 surveys, that a percentage of the university students would not fulfill the age requirement we were seeking, or did not want to participate in the profile portion of the project (the students were unwilling to accept the friendship requests for privacy reasons, or various other unknown indicators.) Thus, after creating a profile page and requesting the 186 surveyed students to accept, only 74 in total actually partook; a percentage much lower than expected. Although we would have liked to have a larger percentage of students’ participation to gather a wide range of data for our statistical purposes, 74 sufficed.
An error that was encountered was during the survey portion of the study. On the survey we asked for the Facebook users’ complete name or the name they use on Facebook if different. However, once in the process of sending friendship solicitations, we encountered that this was not sufficient information in order to find the students because many of the participants had the same name as another Facebook user that did not attend a university in Honduras. This made it hard to differentiate who was eligible to participate in the profile analysis portion of the study. Due to this dilemma, of the 74 people who accepted friendship solicitations from our profile, 2 were not in fact students at the universities, rather they were 2 people with the same name of a Honduran university student. This also affected the total number of Honduran University Students who participated in profile observation phase, because many of the students who were willing to participate in the survey were unidentifiable on Facebook.

Another research error was during the process of the statistical analysis. We were investigating the number of photos the University students have of themselves, with friends, with family, at events, on vacation, with pets, of food and graphics downloaded from the internet (such as of famous soccer players, cartoons, advertisements, etc). We decided to only analyze the tagged photos rather than the photos of albums because we concluded that this would be a better indication of the construction of identity because the Facebook user, although did not necessarily post the photos themselves, has control of what is posted on their profile pages under tagged photos because they have the option of removing the photo by untagging it or reporting it. The problem encountered, however, was during the analysis it was difficult to classify the photos into categories because often it was challenging to differentiate between a photo with friends, for example, and a photo with family members. We judged the photos to the best of our ability, but the statistical results were surely influenced due to this error in judgment on our part.

It was realized also that during the research and writing of this specific study Facebook had changed its format from how it had previously been to the “Timeline” version. Therefore within the six months spent researching, our data already became obsolete because this paper discusses the format of the version prior to the change.

Lastly, because the authors were from different cultural back-grounds, the United States, and Honduras occasionally ideas were not translated accurately. Although both authors are bilingual, neither has a certification in translation, so there are certain chapters translated from Spanish to English and others written in English initially. Therefore the language of the final product is not uniform.
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To visit the profile page that was created for the study’s purpose visit:
http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100003075760765
SOCIAL CONTRACT 2.0:
TERMS OF SERVICE AGREEMENTS
AND POLITICAL THEORY

DAVID J. GUNKEL*

Terms of service, privacy policies, license agreements, and other legal documents are the governing instruments of digital life. They are its Magna Carta, its Constitution, and its Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Downs, 2009, p. 22).

This essay advances the thesis that the most influential and important political documents of the twenty-first century are not necessarily the constitutions and charters written for new or reconfigured nation states, but the often-overlooked terms of service agreements that users must sign (or, more precisely, click "agree") in order to participate in social networks like Facebook, Second Life, Google+, Bebo, etc. These agreements, which constitute the principle governing documents of online social worlds (Grimes et al., 2008), constitute a kind of postmodern, post-nation state social contract. As such, they articulate, structure, and regulate not only the kind of social interactions and political opportunities that are available within these global networks but determine what forms of social activity and affiliation are considered to be appropriate, acceptable, and even possible.

The examination, which takes a critical approach to this subject, will be divided into three parts. The first situates these agreements within the history and lineage of modern political thought in general and social contract theory in particular. The second pursues a critical reading of the Terms governing Facebook, a social network with a population of active users that now exceeds Brazil making it the fifth most populous polity on the planet. The final section extrapolates the broader social and political consequences of these agreements, arguing that informed users not only need to read these documents carefully but also need to recognize the way these seemingly unimportant texts define and delimit the very conditions of (im)possibility for social involvement and interaction in the 21st century. Although the subject addressed by the essay is contemporary and a product of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the method of its presentation is rather anachronistic and deliberately dissimulates the rhetoric and tone of an 18th century treatise. And this has been done, I can tell you dear reader, not out of affectation, but because the subject matter will have required nothing less.

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1) Of the Social Contract – In which the concept of an original compact are explained with reference to recent advances in social media

The term "social contract" refers to a theoretical device of political philosophy. Although the concept it names has arguably been in circulation, in one form or another, since the time of Plato's Crito, "the social contract" is a distinctly modern European innovation and a product of that period of time called "the Enlightenment." According to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique, first published in 1762, the social contract explains the origin and legitimacy of governance: "To find a form of association which shall defend and protect with the public force the person and property of each associate and by means of which each uniting with all shall obey however only himself and remain as free as before. Such is the fundamental problem of which the Social Contract gives the solution" (Rousseau, 1893, p.20). In addition to Rousseau, the two thinkers commonly associated with this concept are the Englishmen Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, who represent what are now considered to be the two opposing versions of classic social contract theory. For this reason, "social contract" names not one homogeneous theoretical position but a "variety of traditions" (Boucher and Kelly, 1994, p. 2) or variations on a theme. Despite the fact that each version or iteration has its own distinct qualities and aspects, there are three consistent and common elements.

First, social contract theory posits an original, pre-social condition that is initially called by Thomas Hobbes (2008) "the natural condition of mankind" (p. 84) but commonly referred to as "the state of nature" (Locke, 1821, p.189; Rousseau, 1893, p.19). This "original position," as John Rawls (2003, p. 102) calls it, was not, as many commentators have pointed out (Priest, 1990, p. 112; Williams, 2005, p. 28; Zagorin, 2009, p. 45), understood to be an actual point in time situated at the dawn of human history. It was, in other words, not offered or intended to be taken as an anthropological fact but was a hypothetical premise derived by abstraction from the social reality in which human beings always and already find themselves. The concept of the "state of nature," as Rousseau (2004) pointed out, "must not be considered as historical truths, but only as mere conditional and hypothetical reasonings, rather calculated to explain the nature of things, than to ascertain their actual origin" (p. 16). For this reason, the "state of nature" is what Slavoj Žižek (2008) calls "(presup)posted" (p. 209); it is the supposed initial condition that comes to be posited as the origin of that from which it has been subsequently derived. This means, then, that the state of nature is a "virtual reality"—something that is, as Michael Heim (1993) characterizes it, "real in effect but not in fact" (p. 109).

In terms of the Internet in general and social networking in particular, this virtual state of nature was actualized and made operational in first generation social networks like LambdaMOO. (In fact, it could be argued that the "state of nature," as a virtual reality, could only have been actualized and modeled in a virtual environment.) LambdaMOO was (and still is) an Internet accessible, text-based virtual community founded in 1990 by Pavel Curtis of Xerox PARC. It is one of those first-generation, online social applications that employed text-based descriptions and keyboard
commands along with a synchronous chat communications channel to create the
experience of a common virtual world where users could interact with each other and
the computer-generated environment. "To be more precise about it," the journalist
Julian Dibbell (1993) wrote, "LambdaMOO was a MUD [Multiple User Dungeon]. Or
to be yet more precise, it was a subspecies of MUD known as a MOO, which is short
for 'MUD, Object-Oriented.' All of which means that it was a kind of database
especially designed to give users the vivid impression of moving through a physical
space that in reality exists only as words filed away on a hard drive" (p. 14). In terms
of governance, LambdaMOO was initially an autocracy or more precisely what Eric
Roberts (2005) calls a "Wizardocracy." That is, the social world of LambdaMOO was
originally organized, overseen, and policed by a group of self-appointed managers, or
what Curtis called Wizards. This curious terminology is a consequence of the historical
lineage of the MUD, which was initially developed as computerized emulations of the
table-top role playing games that were popular in Europe and North America in the
1970's, especially Dungeons and Dragons. Although LambdaMOO began, like many
MUDs and MOOs before and after it, with an authoritarian regime, a deliberate
decision was made to turn over governance of this social world to its occupants and
users. As Dibbell (1993) explained: "the wizards of LambdaMOO, after years of
adjudicating all manner of interplayer disputes with little to show for it but their own
weariness and the smoldering resentment of the general populace, had decided they'd
had enough of the social sphere. And so…the archwizard Haakon (known in RL as
Pavel Curtis, Xerox researcher and LambdaMOO's principal architect) formalized this
decision in a document called 'LambdaMOO Takes a New Direction' [LTAND] which
he placed in the living room for all to see. In it, Haakon announced that the wizards
from that day forth were pure technicians. From then on, they would make no decisions
affecting the social life of the MOO, but only implement whatever decisions the
community as a whole directed them to" (p. 19). In terms of social contract theory, the
ruling elite decided to extract themselves from the social order and plunge
LambdaMOO into a virtual state of nature. Or as Curtis (1992) described it in the
LTAND document: "So, as the last social decision we make for you, and whether or
not you independent adults wish it, the wizards are pulling out of the
discipline/manners/ arbitration business; we're handing the burden and freedom of that
role to the society at large" (p. 1).

Second, the theory proposes that social order arises from this state of nature as an
agreement or contract between individuals. The underlying reason and motivation for
this development, however, varies among the different advocates of contractarianism.
For Hobbes, who presumed that the state of nature could not have been otherwise than
a perpetual "condition of war of every one against every one" (Hobbes, 2008, p. 89),
the original agreement was sought in order to mitigate exposure to violence. According
to Hobbes's argument, social aggregates coalesce when naturally solitary and self-
interested individuals reasonably decided to cede some rights—namely the right to kill
the other—if the other agrees to do likewise. This "mutual transferring of rights," as
Hobbes (2008) describes it, "is that which men call contract" (p. 91). Locke provides
for an entirely different interpretation of things. For Locke the "natural condition of mankind" was not assumed to be a violent battle ground of everyone against everyone else. "The state of nature," Locke (1821) argued, "has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges every one: and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions" (§ 6, p. 191). Because of this fundamental disagreement about the assumed original conditions, Locke provides an entirely different account of the origin and purpose of the social contract. For Locke human beings come to associate with each other not for the purpose of mutual protection but in an effort to ensure the continued enjoyment of these natural rights and manage any conflict between individuals that might arise in the free exercise thereof. "If man in the state of nature be so free, as has been said; if he be absolute lord of his own person and possessions, equal to the greatest, and subject to nobody, why will he part with his freedom? why will he give up this empire, and subject himself to the dominion and control of any other power? To which it is obvious to answer, that thought in the state of nature he hath such a right, yet the enjoyment of it is very uncertain, and constantly exposed to the invasion of others" (Locke, 1821, § 123, pp. 294-295). Consequently, people come together and agree to live under some form of mutual compact in an effort either to protect themselves from harm or to ensure the continued free exercise of their will.

The former, which has its origins in Hobbes's Leviathan, is clearly evident in the development of governance in the virtual community of LambdaMOO. When the Wizards turned over LambdaMOO to its inhabitants, instituting a virtual state of nature, Pavel Curtis (1992) announced the change with considerable optimism. "I think," he wrote at the end of the LTAND document, "we're going to have a lot of fun, here... :-)") What resulted from this, however, was anything but "fun." Four months after the Wizards abdicated, the citizens of the LambdaMOO were confronted with a crisis now known as "The Rape in Cyberspace." A user under the pseudonym Mr. Bungle used a little known feature in the LambdaMOO software application, called Voodoo Doll, to take control of the avatars of other players, attributing actions to these characters that their users did not intend or actually initiate. This loss of control over one's own avatar—arguable a form of personal property, if not the personal proper—was perceived, by members of the LambdaMOO community, to be a violent violation and was called "rape" by those individuals directly involved in the incident. Whether the use of this term was appropriate or not, is something that is open to considerable debate (see Dibbell, 1996 and McKinnon, 2007), what is not disputed, however, is the effect this event had on the community of LambdaMOO. "Faced with the task of inventing its own self-governance from scratch," Dibbell (1993) reports, "the LambdaMOO population had so far done what any other loose, amorphous agglomeration of individuals would have done: they'd let it slide. But now the task took on new urgency....And thus, as if against its will, the question of what to do about Mr. Bungle began to shape itself into a sort of referendum on the political future of the MOO" (p. 19). The outcome of these debates, discussions, and protestations issued by the users of LambdaMOO resulted in the publication of a second influential document.
"LambdaMOO Takes Another Direction" (LTAD). "On December 9, 1992, Haakon posted 'LambdaMOO Takes A New Direction' (LTAND). Its intent was to relieve the wizards of the responsibility for making social decisions, and to shift that burden onto the players themselves. It indicated that the wizards would thenceforth refrain from making social decisions, and serve the MOO only as technicians. Over the course of the past three and a half years, it has become obvious that this was an impossible ideal: The line between 'technical' and 'social' is not a clear one, and never can be. The harassment that ensues each time we fail to achieve the impossible is more than we are now willing to bear" (Curtis, 1993). As Hobbes had theorized, the virtual state of nature, although offering unfettered freedom and opportunity, was actually a violent "war against all," and the occupants of the MOO quickly sought protection from such violence by submitting to the authority and control of a Leviathan, in this case the Wizards.

If the experience of LambdaMOO lends empirical evidence to support Hobbes's version of social contract theory, the web 2.0 application of Facebook can be conceptualized in terms that follow Locke's alternative formulation. Although he is no social contract theo-rist, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg offered what is arguably a Lockean explanation for Facebook's modus operandi. "We always thought," Zuckerberg told David Kirkpatrick in a 2004 interview, "that people would share more if we didn't let them do what ever they wanted, because it gave them some order" (MacKinnon, 2012, p. 155). According to Zuckerberg's explanation, people decide to participate in the social network not because Facebook lets them do whatever they want, ostensibly indulging in an unrestrained exercise of freedom that could only be found in a "state of nature." Instead, people agree to subject themselves to the social order of Facebook, because the organization imposes some structure on the terms and conditions of the interaction that would, so the argument goes, make them feel more comfortable in the free exercise of sharing information with each other. In other words, the freedom to share information with others is not free insofar as people perceive there to be considerable risks to and liabilities for engaging in such activity. Facebook offers various protections that ensures the free exercise of this kind of information sharing while minimizing exposure to risk. As if to prove Locke correct, users agree to submit to the governance of Facebook, because the organization provide them with some order.

Third there is and remains some debate concerning the ontological status of the social contract. "Hobbes talks," George MacDonald Ross (2009) argues, "as if there were a time in history when people got together and contracted to leave the state of nature and form a civil society. But as we have already seen, he doubted whether there is actually a pure state of nature, in which case it is doubtful whether people in a state of nature ever got together in order to democratically set up a civil society" (p. 117). For this reason, Hobbes's view of the "original covenant" is often interpreted and understood to be a hypothetical idea. "His social contract," as John Rawls (2007) explains, "is best viewed, not as explaining the origin of the Leviathan and how it came to be, but rather as an attempt to give 'philosophical knowledge' of the Leviathan so
that we can better understand our political obligations and the reasons for supporting an effective Sovereign when such a Sovereign exists" (p. 30). In the case of Locke, however, the contract was often assumed to be and presented as an actual occurrence taking place either through explicit agreement between parties at some particular point in time or, when such explicit agreement was not possible or lacking, though something Locke calls "tacit consent." "No body doubts," Locke (1821) writes, "but an express consent, of any man entering into any society makes him a perfect member of that society, a subject of that government. The difficulty is, what ought to be looked upon as a tacit consent, and how far it binds...And to this I say, that every man, that hath any possessions, or enjoyment, of any part of the dominions of any government, doth thereby give his tacit consent, and is as far forth obliged to obedience to that laws of that government" (§ 119, p. 291). The concept of "tacit consent" especially applies in the case of subsequent generations who are not necessarily in a position to willfully enter into the fundamental agreements that structure the social order into which they have been born and under which they already live.

The development of governance in LambdaMOO appears to illustrate, if not prove this thesis. Shortly after the "wizardly coup d'etat," as Curtis (2002, p. 41) later called it, some members of the LambdaMOO community challenged the legality of the LTAD decree. The challenge was, following the established protocols for petitioning, formulated as a ballot initiative and communicated to players for their vote on 25 May 1994: "Message 300 on *News, known as LTAD, was a declaration by the wizards saying that they would be able to make social decisions. This statement violates the earlier wizardly declaration, known as LTAND, that wizards would make no social decisions. This makes LTAD illegal. This ballot is an attempt to determine the legal and social standing of LTAD. The passage of this ballot additionally indicates: The LTAD declaration is legal. The population has shown its confidence in the Wizards. The population has shown its consent to LTAD" (Curtis, 1993). The ballot passed with 321 members voting in favor, 111 against, and 272 abstaining. With this vote, then, Lambda-MOO was legitimately organized as a kind of benevolent dictatorship. The majority of players agreed that the LTAD declaration was in fact legal, expressed their confidence in the decision making and leadership of the Wizards, and consented to the stipulations articulated in the LTAD document. These stipulations, however, were never codified in the form of an explicit contractual statement, charter, or terms of use agreement. The social structure and expected norms of behavior for users were communicated to newcomers either through word of mouth or via a library of documents contained in LambdaMOO's help archive. Although new users are directed to consult these resources, especially the "manners" file, at the time of their first login, there is no actual "social contract" per se that users must explicitly agree to in order to participate in the LambdaMOO community.

For Facebook, as for most commercial online services (i.e. AOL, Google, Yahoo, Second Life, Bebo, etc.), the "social compact" is an actual contractual agreement that takes the form of an explicit legal document.1 Initially, Facebook instituted and operated with a rather traditional Terms of Use agreement that articulated the terms and conditions of the relationship between the provider of the service and its users.
This standard practice was, in the case of Facebook, eventually found to be woefully inadequate. "Our main goal at Facebook," Mark Zuckerberg wrote in a blog post from 26 February 2009, "is to help make the world more open and transparent. We believe that if we want to lead the world in this direction, then we must set an example by running our service in this way. We sat down to work on documents that could be the foundation of this and we came to an interesting realization—that the conventional business practices around a Terms of Use document are just too restrictive to achieve these goals" (p. 1). In Zuckerberg's estimations, Facebook could no longer operate with a traditional Terms of Use because that kind of legal agreement was too restrictive and at odds with Facebook's main objective to create a more open and transparent world. In place of the traditional Terms of Use agreement, Zuckerberg announced and Facebook now operates with two innovative governing documents. "The first," as Zuckerberg (2009) explained to users, "is the Facebook Principles, which defines your rights and will serve as the guiding framework behind any policy we'll consider—or the reason we won't consider others. The second document is the Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, which will replace the existing Terms of Use" (p. 1). These two documents currently comprise Facebook's "Terms" and users are required to consent to their stipulations. "By clicking Sign Up," the Facebook login/default page indicates, "you agree to our Terms and that you have read and understand our Data Use Policy." The hypertext link on the word "Terms" leads directly to the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" document, which begins with the following preamble: "This Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (Statement) derives from the Facebook Principles, and governs our relationship with users and others who interact with Facebook. By using or accessing Facebook, you agree to this Statement" (Facebook Terms, 2011). This declaration clearly situates the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" document as a contractual agreement between Facebook and its users, or more precisely between users of Facebook and one of two versions of its official and legally recognized corporate identities: "If you are a resident of or have your principal place of business in the US or Canada, this Statement is an agreement between you and Facebook, Inc. Otherwise, this Statement is an agreement between you and Facebook Ireland Limited" (Facebook Terms, 2011). Consequently Facebook's "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" is positioned and operationalized as an explicit contract between Facebook and its users and, insofar as Facebook's basic service is social networking and interaction, such an agreement is quite literally a "social contract." Additionally the terms stipulated in this document apply to and are considered binding for users of Facebook whether one actually reads and understands the document or not. This means that users of this particular social network either consent to the Facebook's Terms though explicit agreement or, more often than not, provide "tacit consent" insofar as they employ and enjoy the opportunities provided by the network. To paraphrase Locke, Facebook also asserts "that every person, that hath any possessions, or enjoyment, of any part of the dominions of Facebook, doth thereby give his/her tacit consent, and is as far forth obliged to obedience to Facebook's Terms."
2) Of the Social Network and its Terms – In which Facebook's "Statement of Principles" and "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" is submitted to analysis

As explained in its first sentence, Facebook's "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" derives from and is legitimated by "Statement of Principles." If the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" articulates the exact terms and conditions of Facebook's agreement with its users, or what had previously been called the Terms of Use, this document provides a declaration of the organization's underlying values, modus operandi, and raison d'être. "We are," the "Statement of Principles" declares in the authoritative voice of the first person plural, "building Facebook to make the world more open and transparent, which we believe will create greater understanding and connection. Facebook promotes openness and transparency by giving individuals greater power to share and connect, and certain principles guide Facebook in pursuing these goals. Achieving these principles should be constrained only by limitations of law, technology, and evolving social norms. We therefore establish these Principles as the foundation of the rights and responsibilities of those within the Facebook Service" (Facebook Terms, 2011). This declaration and the ten principles that follow it constitute a remarkable innovation in governance that is unique to Facebook. It is not common practice for online service providers to explicate how the organization defines and understands the rights and responsibilities of its users. Most Terms of Use agreements, like that provided by AOL, Yahoo, Google, Bebo, etc. are limited to legal statements stipulating user obligations, liabilities, proper conduct, admonitions, disclaimers, and warranties. The "rights and responsibilities of those within the service" are not typically recognized as a legitimate matter of concern. For this reason, Facebook's "Statement of Principles" reads more like a founding political document, i.e. the Bill of Rights or the Déclaration des droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen, than it does a standard Terms of Use or End User Licensing Agreement. If the contractual language of the standard Terms of Use agreement, as Deborah Halbert (2009) points out, reminds us that these social environments "are proprietary and the political structures creating these worlds were not designed to be democratic," then Facebook's "Statement of Principles" confronts and challenges this common expectation by introducing what appears to be innovative democratic reforms. Although it would be worth the effort to investigate each principle, its operative assumptions, and consequences in detail, let me, in the interest of time, examine three elements that comprise what could arguably be called the underlying social and political doctrine of the commonwealth called Facebook.

The majority of the ten principles, the first seven in fact, articulate the rights of people. In fact, these seven principles, in terms of grammatical and logical construction, begin with and identify "people" or "person" as the subject of the sentence and deploy the verbal imperative "should." According to Facebook, people should 1) have the freedom to connect and share information with others, 2) own the information they provide and have the ability to control this information, 3) have the freedom to access information made available to them, 4) have the right to equal
treatment and a belief in the fundamental equity of all persons, 5) have the freedom to build trust and reputation through personal identity and interaction with others, 6) have the inherent right to communicate and access to the means of communication, and 7) be able to use Facebook irrespective of individual commitment or level of contribution. Although this list sounds rather impressive and seems to afford users of Facebook a wide range of rights and freedoms, its approach is noteworthy and requires some explanation. First, the subject of the "Statement of Principles" is explicitly political. Facebook's "Statement of Principles," unlike the standard Terms of Service contract or End User Licensing Agreement, does not address itself to "users," "player," "participants," or "customers." Instead, it concerns the "people." In addressing this particular subject, Facebook establishes and recognizes a collectivity called "the people," which comprises the principle subject of modern political discourse (Canovan, 2005). For this reason, the subject of Facebook's "Statement of Principles," both in terms of the subject matter addressed by the text and the subject who is addressed, is deliberately political. In addressing the rights of people, Facebook interpellates (Althusser, 2008) a political subject.

Second, the subject of the "Statement of Principles," namely the people, is subject(ed) to the statement. In articulating and defining the rights of people, Facebook assumes for itself the right to grant rights to others. In doing so, it already occupies a unique position in the social order, giving itself the power to define and to ensure for the people what is thereby recognized as their right. In this case then, political authority is not vested in the people who grant themselves rights nor is the rhetoric of the "Statement of Principles" constructed such that the granting power occupies a place that is equal to or on par with that of the people. Because of the way the "Statement of Principles" is positioned and functions, Facebook and "the people" occupy different places in the political hierarchy. Consequently, the subject who is addressed by Facebook's "Statement" is also thereby subjected to and made a subject of Facebook. This is precisely the way the sovereign of the commonwealth comes to consolidate political power in Hobbes's social contract theory. For Hobbes, the original covenant involved two fundamental gestures. On the one hand, individuals agreed to cooperate with each other by collectively and reciprocally renouncing some of the rights they had against one another in the state of nature. On the other hand, they cede to some individual or assembly of people the authority and power to enforce this covenant, or as Hobbes (2008) describes it, "a common power set over them both, with right and force sufficient to compel performance" (p. 94). This sovereign power was, according to Hobbes's argument, absolute and not a party to or participant in the social order it would oversee and administer. "The sovereign of a Commonwealth, be it an assembly or one man, is not subject to the civil laws. For having power to make and repeal laws, he may, when he pleaseth, free himself from that subjection by repealing those laws that trouble him, and making of new...therefore he that is bound to himself only is not bound" (p. 183). It is for this reason that Hobbes titles his treatise Leviathan, making nominal reference to that figure of absolute authority presented in the Hebrew scriptures (Hobbes, 2008, p. 218). In explicitly granting and seeking to protect the
rights of the people, Facebook takes up and occupies the position of Hobbes's Leviathan, and the people agree to associate under the rule of this sovereign power who, precisely because it occupies a position outside the rule it establishes and oversees, is able to grant, ensure, and protect their rights.3

Two of the remaining three principles (numbers eight and nine) address issues having to do with Facebook's social operations and governance. The eighth principle addresses what Facebook calls "common welfare": "The rights and responsibilities of Facebook and the People that use it should be described in a Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, which should not be inconsistent with these Principles." This principle, then, establishes and legitimates the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" document, which should describe the rights and responsibilities of both parties to the social contract, Facebook and the People who use it. This other document, which is understandably longer and more detailed than the "Statement of Principles," is divided into 18 articles that address privacy, intellectual property rights, safety and security, and protection of the rights of others; special provisions applicable to developers, users located outside the jurisdiction of the United States, and advertisers; and administrative procedures for amending the document and terminating the contractual relationship, methods for resolving disputes between parties to the contract, and an explanation of terms used throughout the document. For the most part, the specific rights and responsibilities articulated in this text are consistent with and follow from the "Statement of Principles." What is remarkable about the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities," however, are those articles that explicitly address personal property and privacy.

Property rights are a pivotal component of Locke's social contract theory. According to Locke, governments form primarily to ensure and protect the right of property. "The great and chief end therefore of men's uniting into commonwealths and putting themselves under government is the preservation of their property" (§ 124, p. 294). Facebook also recognizes the importance of property rights: "You own all of the content and information you post on Facebook, and you can control how it is shared." This statement, however, is qualified by a few additional stipulations. "For content that is covered by intellectual property rights, like photos and videos (IP content), you specifically give us the following permission, subject to your privacy and application settings: you grant us a non-exclusive, transferable, sublicensable, royalty-free, worldwide license to use any IP content that you post on or in connection with Facebook (IP License). This IP License ends when you delete your IP content or your account unless your content has been shared with others, and they have not deleted it" (Facebook Terms, 2011). Every word of this caveat is important and informative. Although users are assured of their property rights, they agree (whether explicitly or through tacit consent) to grant Facebook a rather liberal license to use their intellectual property as the organization sees fit. This license is determined to be nonexclusive and royalty-free, meaning that there are no restrictions or limitations imposed on Facebook with regards to how this material may be used and that people should neither expect nor will they receive any compensation or payment for such use. The agreement is further characterized as transferable and sublicensable, which means that Facebook
can, at its discretion, not only extend this license to others, but may also, if they decide to do so, initiate and grant subsequent licenses for the use of this material by other entities. Finally all of this is said to apply not just in the country of origin or use but anywhere and everywhere across the entire globe. Consequently, the license people agree to extend to Facebook concerning the use of their intellectual property is absolute, universal, and all-inclusive. Although Facebook officially recognizes the IP rights of the people and provides them with various technological mechanisms to exercise a modicum of control over how this information is displayed to and accessed by others, the licensing agreement grants the organization virtually unlimited access to and use of personal information and property. Or as Hobbes (2008) had succinctly explained, "the master of the servant is master also of all he hath, and may exact the use thereof; that is to say, of his goods, of his labour, of his servants, and of his children, as often as he shall think fit" (p. 140). Furthermore, this arrangement, whereby Facebook has a right to the user's property or "all he hath," is considered to be in full force and effect as long as one maintains his/her Facebook account. This means that the IP license, which is initiated at the time an individual or organization creates an account with Facebook, will remain active and applicable to all content even if that individual or organization, for whatever reason, only uses the service occasionally or no longer uses it at all. The license terminates only when one actively removes content or deactivates the account.

Related to the issue of personal and intellectual property is the right of privacy. The importance of this, for both Facebook and its users, is evident by the fact that "privacy" is the first item listed in the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities," and it is dealt with in considerable detail in a separate policy statement that is directly referenced by way of an embedded hypertext link. This policy, which adds a third document to Facebook's Terms, is called the "Data Use Policy," and it is longer than either the "Statement of Principles" or the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities." In terms of content, this policy addresses four areas concerning personal data and its use by Facebook: "information we receive and how it is used, sharing and finding you on Facebook, sharing with other websites and applications, and how advertising works" (Facebook Data Use Policy, 2011). Rather than analyze this document item by item, I will only note two important aspects. First, the information users supply to Facebook involve the obvious identifying items like name, email address, date of birth, etc. but it also includes any and all information that is generated in the process of interacting with Facebook, its users, or its applications. This covers the expected things like looking at another person's profile, sending a message, or posting an image on your wall, but it also includes other less obvious kinds of data like the identifying IP (Internet Protocol) number of the user's Internet connection, a history list of other pages visited on the Internet while logged into Facebook, and current geographical location. This information is collected and stored by Facebook in order to offer various services and can, according to the policy, be used not only by current applications but any future application that might be developed. Facebook's stated purpose for doing this is "to create a more social and personal experience for users" (Facebook Data Use Policy,
In other words, in order for Facebook to provide a personalized experience and support many of its popular features, the organization must, it is argued, collect personal information and maintain a substantial data profile for each individual. Users agree to and tacitly endorse this practice at the time of sign-up, even if they have never actually read the "Data Use Policy." Consequently, the people of Facebook are not only exposed to the ever-present and watchful eyes of "Big Brother" but willfully consent to this practice for the sake of various services and personalized conveniences.

Second, Facebook reserves the right to share user data with law enforcement agencies in the process of complying with the law or in order to protect its own interests. "We may share your information in response to a legal request (like a search warrant, court order or subpoena) if we have a good faith belief that the law requires us to do so. This may include responding to legal requests from jurisdictions outside of the United States where we have a good faith belief that the response is required by law in that jurisdiction, affects users in that jurisdiction, and is consistent with internationally recognized standards. We may also share information when we have a good faith belief it is necessary to: detect, prevent and address fraud and other illegal activity; to protect ourselves and you from violations of our Statement of Rights and Responsibilities; and to prevent death or imminent bodily harm" (Facebook Data Use Policy, 2011). What is interesting about this clause is that Facebook, in the interest of global participation and interaction, explicitly agrees to comply with law enforcement both in the US and elsewhere. This has at least two related consequences. On the one hand, it exposes all users to surveillance by US law enforcement, not because Facebook's policy is weak but because the standard for obtaining legal warrants and subpoenas is so low within US Federal law. As Junichi P. Semitsu (2011) argues, "every single one of Facebook's 133 million active users in the United States lack a reasonable expectation of privacy from government surveillance of virtually all of their online activity" (p. 1).4 Furthermore this surveillance is not limited to US citizens but extends to non-US users insofar as the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" stipulates, under item #16 "Special Provisions Applicable to Users Outside the United States," that users "consent to having your personal data transferred to and processed in the United States" (Facebook Terms, 2011). On the other hand, this policy supports and has been used to justify Facebook's cooperation with national governments. Israeli authorities, for example, recently obtained access to Facebook data which they used to compile a black-list of pro-Palestinian protesters (Protalinski, 2011, p.1) in order to restrict their access to travel. Although Facebook presents itself as "creating a world that is more open and transparent," it also works with and supports the surveillance operations and hegemony of real-world governments. And these actions, as stipulated in the "Statement" take place entirely at the discretion of the sovereign power, which, consistent with Hobbesian social contract theory, is responsible to no one.

As if to respond to potential criticisms of this absolute authority, the ninth principle asserts the value and importance of transparency in the political process and the exercise of sovereign power. "Transparent Process – Facebook should publicly make available information about its purpose, plans, policies, and operations. Facebook should have a town hall process of notice and comment and a system of voting to
encourage input and discourse on amendments to these Principles or to the Rights and Responsibilities." (Facebook Terms 2011). This is as close as Facebook comes to articulating its particular form of social organization and governance. As a privately held corporation, Facebook is arguably an autocracy or dictatorship, and its social/political structure is what Peter Jenkins (2004) calls "a company town." But, as this statement makes clear, Facebook declares itself to be something of a benevolent dictatorship. This means that the ruling elite of Facebook, the sovereign power of the commonwealth, recognize the importance of communicating the organization's purpose, plans, policies, and mode of operations. Evidence of this effort is already apparent in the very documents under consideration: the "Statement of Principles" articulates Facebook's purpose and plans and the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" and the "Data Use Policy" detail its policies and operations. Furthermore, Facebook, at least in terms of what is stipulated by the ninth principle, does not understand the social relationship to be asymmetrical. Although currently run by a small and exclusive group of individuals, Facebook explicitly recognizes the importance of input from the people. For this reason, it allows, in principle at least, for town hall meetings, where the people of Facebook can comment on new policies and eventually vote on amendments to the governing documents. The exact terms of this arrangement are given detailed treatment in the "amendments" section of the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities":

1) We can change this Statement if we provide you notice (by posting the change on the Facebook Site Governance Page) and an opportunity to comment.

2) For changes to sections 7, 8, 9, and 11 (sections relating to payments, application developers, website operators, and advertisers), we will give you a minimum of three days notice. For all other changes we will give you a minimum of seven days notice. All such comments must be made on the Facebook Site Governance Page.

3) If more than 7,000 users comment on the proposed change, we will also give you the opportunity to participate in a vote in which you will be provided alternatives. The vote shall be binding on us if more than 30% of all active registered users as of the date of the notice vote.

4) We can make changes for legal or administrative reasons, or to correct an inaccurate statement, upon notice without opportunity to comment (Facebook Terms 2011).

Although Facebook, as the sovereign power and sole authority over the social network, may on its own initiative make whatever changes it wants to its governing documents, it stipulates that all potential changes will be announced via official notification and offered to the community for commentary. This procedure is unique to Facebook. Yahoo, by comparison, states that it may make changes to its Terms of Service agreement "with or without notice" and does not include any consideration or mechanism for user commentary (Yahoo, 2008). Furthermore, if a proposed change receives more than 7,000 user comments, Facebook agrees to put the proposal to a
vote and will consider participation by 30% of all active registered users (which conservative estimates put at 425 million in the spring of 2012) to be binding. The terms of this "transparent process," which are, it should be noted, similar to those instituted by LambdaMOO almost two decades ago, were partially developed in the process of responding to a controversy that arose after Facebook attempted to make unilateral changes to its original Terms of Use policy in February 2009. The alteration was immediately flagged by Chris Walters (2009) of The Consumerist, who noticed that the new agreement extended Facebook's IP license, effectively granting the organization the right to use an individual's personal data in perpetuity. Users of Facebook complained and eventually pressured the corporation's CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, to retract the alteration and revert to the previous policy. In fact, the "Statement of Principles" and the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities" both derive from this event and Facebook's subsequent efforts "to develop new policies that will govern our system from the ground up in an open and transparent way" (Zuckerberg, 2009, p. 1).

Despite the organization's explicit promise to foster and support a transparent political process, it should be remembered that Facebook is, in terms of its governing structure, a dictatorship. It is arguably a benevolent dictatorship, where the ruling elite has, in principle at least, pledged itself to transparency and popular participation. But it is a dictatorship nevertheless. Even though the people have, according to the organization's own Terms, the right to comment and vote on changes, the initiation of a change, any alternatives that might come to be formulated, and the conditions of voting are all under the control and regulation of the sovereign. Instead of providing a truly transparent democratic process, then, Facebook has instituted what Joseph Bonneau calls "democracy theatre." "It seems," Bonneau (2009) writes, "the goal is not to actually turn governance over to users, but to use the appearance of democracy and user involvement to ward off future criticism. Our term ["democracy theatre"] may be new, but this trick is not, it has been used by autocratic regimes around the world for decades" (p. 1). Although Facebook's Terms, as they are presented and codified in these three documents, are an improvement over the highly restricted Terms of Service agreements typically found throughout the Internet, the governing structure these documents institute and support is merely a difference in degree and not a difference in kind.

The tenth and final principle concerns Facebook's main objective and raison d'etre. "One World – The Facebook Service should transcend geographic and national boundaries and be available to everyone in the world." This principle is interesting for at least two reasons. First, it indicates Facebook's desire to create a truly international and cosmo-politan assemblage—a kind of post-modern, post-nation state commonwealth that exists and functions beyond the limitations of physical geography and arbitrary political boundaries. This "one world," as Facebook calls it, is undeniably utopian. If the mythic origin of the separation and global dispersion of human beings is narrated by the Judeo-Christian fable of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), Facebook situates itself as the means for redressing these differences and achieving global reunification. Although the dream of a post-Babelian, global polity has been
operative in the rhetoric of the Internet since its modest beginnings (see Gunkel, 2001), Facebook dedicates itself to making this dream a reality. And the current demographic data is undeniably impressive. At almost half-a-billion active users world-wide, Facebook can now be considered the fifth largest "nation" by population on the planet earth. For this reason, Facebook, perhaps better than any other previous or current technological application, provides proof of concept for J. C. R. Licklider and Robert W. Taylor's (1968) prediction that the future of human social interaction will belong to "communities not of common location, but of common interest" (p. 38).

Second, this utopian vision of "one world," is complicated not only by the material conditions of the majority of human beings but by the experience of history. On the one hand, Facebook's "one world" is made possible and facilitated by a particular assemblage of technologies, e.g. the Internet, local access points or point of presence (POP), electrical power, and information processing devices, like computers, smart phones, tablets, etc. Despite the imperative form of the statement, namely that Facebook should be available to everyone in the world, it is in fact only available to a small fraction of the world's population, in particular those individuals who have the means to gain access to and use these particular technologies. The majority of the world's population unfortunately falls on the "have-nots" side of the digital divide and therefore are always and already excluded from participation in this fantastic global commonwealth (Gunkel, 2007). Consequently, Facebook's "one world" is, despite its lofty principles and pretensions, an elite gated community that already excludes a significant part of world's population. On the other hand, these exclusive utopian and cosmopolitan pretensions are really nothing new. We have, in fact, entertained similar promises for each new generation of Internet applications and with almost every form of innovation in telecommunications technology—telegraph, radio, television, etc. Radio, for example, was also introduced and promoted with a rhetoric that promised transnational participation and universal understanding (Spinelli, 1996), and the technology of broadcast television was heralded, by Marshall McLuhan (1995) in particular, as the harbinger of the "global village" (p. 5). For these reasons, we should be cautious and skeptical of these fantastic proclamations. If earlier innovations in information and communication technology, like radio or television, failed to deliver on their initial promises for global involvement and cooperation and became just another means for delivering customers to service providers and product advertisers, we should hold open the possibility that Facebook, despite its lofty rhetoric and utopian ideals, is simply more of the same. As Simon Penny (1994) has persuasively argued, "we have no reason to delude ourselves that any new technology, as such, promises any sort of socio-cultural liberation. History is against us here. We must assume that the forces of corporate consumerism will attempt to fully capitalize on the phenomenon in terms of financial profit, and that the potential for surveillance and control will be utilized by corporate and state instrumentalities" (p. 247).
3) Of the Social Contract 2.0 – In which the consequences of the foregoing are explicated

Let me conclude by noting three consequences of the foregoing, all of which can be expressed in the form of short-hand, algebraic equations. 1) \( T = C \). The Terms of a social network are, in both form and function, a "social contract." These documents, which in the case of Facebook involve and apply to almost half-a-billion users worldwide, represent a privatization of the political as individuals form social affiliations under the sovereignty not of national governments located in geographically defined regions but multinational corporations that form and operate in excess of terrestrial boundaries. If declarations, constitutions, and national charters were the standard governing documents of the modern era, organizing and legitimizing the nation state as we know it, then it is the terms of service and related policy statements that arguably occupy a similar position in the postmodern era, articulating the foundation of social and political affiliations for a post-nation state, multinational polity. These agreements, therefore, constitute the next version of what political philosophers, beginning at least with Hobbes, have referred to as the "social contract," or what we have called, following a procedure that is common-place in the IT industry, social contract 2.0. This means, then, that the most influential and compelling political documents of the early 21st century might not be found in the democratic constitutions written for the newly reconfigured nation states of Afghanistan and Iraq, the manifestos and agreements developed in the wake of the "Arab Spring," or even influential transnational treaties like that of the European Union. Rather it is likely that some of the most important political documents of this epoch are being written, published, and prototyped in the terms of use agreements, terms of service contracts, or other governing statements that organize and regulate online social networks.

2) \( T - U = I \). The Terms of a social network without user Understanding results in Irresponsible behavior. Despite the fact that these governing documents prescribe and regulate the rights and responsibilities of users, dictating the terms and conditions of online social interaction and affiliation, many of us, even those who are politically active and attentive, either ignore these texts as unimportant or dismiss them as a kind of "legalese" necessary to obtain access but not very interesting in their own right or worth serious consideration. This negligence is irresponsible for two reasons. First, on the face of things, Facebook, for example, appears to be a rather well-designed technological convenience allowing users to connect with friends, to share photographs and news, and even to participate in important social and political actions. The contractual agreement Facebook has with its users, however, also grants the organization a world-wide, unrestricted license to use this information in whatever way they see fit and the right to pass this and other forms of personal data to law enforcement agencies both in the United States and elsewhere. Although Facebook explicitly promotes a utopian vision of "one world," where individuals communicate with each other beyond geographical and national boundaries, it also serves the interests of national governments and modern social institutions by enforcing their laws and facilitating the surveillance of citizens. Users of Facebook, therefore, need to
know not only what opportunities can be gained by joining the network but also what is potentially traded away, compromised, or exposed in the process of agreeing to its terms. Second, what can now in retrospect be called "social contract 1.0," namely the agreements that had organized and structured modern political institutions, often have been negotiated, executed, and decided such that subsequent generations only have the opportunity to agree to the contract through what Locke called "tacit consent." Social contract 2.0, by contrast, not only affords but requires each and every member of these post-modern virtual communities to make a definitive decision concerning the exact terms of the social relationship. If the social compact of the modern nation state often remained what Hobbes called "implicit," social contract 2.0 is explicit—every participant has the opportunity and right to agree to the contract or not. In order to take advantage of this extraordinary situation, however, users not only need to make an informed decision but also need to know the exact terms and conditions of what is to be decided.

3) $T + K = \Delta p$. As a corollary of #2, Terms plus user Knowledge results in political change (represented by the standard mathematical symbol for change, the Greek letter delta). Being critical of a terms of service agreement or any of the other documents governing operations in a social network does not mean nor does it necessarily entail that one opt-out. It would be naïve to expect that any social organization, whether real or virtual, will be able to get everything right from the beginning. And there may remain, as is clearly the case with Facebook's "Statement of Rights and Responsibilities," one or more aspects of the contractual agreement that give users legitimate reasons to be cautious or concerned. Deciding not to participate, or opting out of the social contract, is clearly one way to avoid or even dispute such problems, but doing so not only means missing out on the opportunities afforded by these increasingly useful and popular Internet applications but, more importantly, does little or nothing to question, challenge, or improve existing policies. Instead of opting out, we can alternatively engage these new social systems, capitalizing on their opportunities while remaining critical of the limitations of their social contract and advocating for improvements. And there are good reasons to be optimistic that such efforts can and will have traction. The social/political structures of both LambdaMOO and Facebook have not been static, they have developed and evolved as a result of user involvement, complaint, and struggle. The "Rape in Cyberspace," although a less than pleasant affair, caused the users of LambdaMOO to take seriously the questions of governance and led to numerous discussions, debates, and experiments with social policy. Similarly Facebook has developed and evolved in response to crisis and user criticism. In 2009, as the result of what can now in retrospect be called a "mistake," the users of Facebook helped the organization's ruling elite recognize that the traditional terms of use agreement, which had been standard operating procedure and for that reason gone largely unquestioned, was obsolete and no longer appropriate for Facebook's stated mission and objective. As a result, Facebook introduced what are arguably revolutionary innovations in social network governance—the "Statement of Principles" and the "Statement of Rights and Responsibilties"—effectively changing
what had been an autocratic totalitarian commonwealth or "company town" (Jenkins, 2004) into a benevolent dictatorship supporting democratic participation. Despite this remarkable transformation, however, it can still be legitimately argued that these improvements do not go far enough—that Facebook's "transparent process" is cloudy at best, if not opaque. Pointing this out does not, it should be noted, negate the importance or influence instituted by the innovation. It merely recognizes that things do not necessarily end here. Like all forms of political activism, therefore, users of social networks need to engage the structures as they currently exist, work to identify their inconsistencies and problems, and advocate for improvements. What is needed is not mere opposition and abstinence but informed involvement and critical participation. For this reason, we can end by reissuing the concluding statement from Pavel Curtis's LTAD document (1993): "I think we're going to have a lot of fun, here... :-)") This sentence should, however, be read in light of the emoticon that punctuates it. What the sideways smile-face indicates is that the word "fun" might need to be understood and interpreted with some wry humor. That is, the opportunities that are available with social networks may, in fact, turn out to be interesting, engaging, and entertaining. This "fun," however, will still require a good deal of struggle, effort, and conflict, and might, at times, appear to be less than what one might consider immediately enjoyable or amusing.

Notes

[1] Although Terms of Service (TOS), End User Licensing Agreements (EULA), and other contractual mechanisms have been recognized as the principle governing documents for virtual worlds (Grimes, et al., 2008; Halbert, 2009), there has been some debate about their legal status, especially in the case of user property rights and EULAs (Passman, 2008).

[2] Facebook operationalizes the terms "people" and "person" in a way that is rather broad and consistent with contemporary practices: "Every Person—whether individual, advertiser, developer, organization, or other entity—should have representation and access to distribution and information within the Facebook Service, regardless of the Person's primary activity" (Facebook Terms, 2011). As far as Facebook is concerned "person" names not just individual human users of the service but application developers like Zynga, the company that created Farmville; corporations, schools, and nonprofit organizations who use the service and maintain their own Facebook presence; and advertisers. This characterization is entirely consistent with modern legal practice. In the United States (2011), for example, the term is explicitly stipulated by federal law: "In determining the meaning of any Act of Congress, unless the context indicates otherwise—the words 'person' and 'whoever' include corporations, companies, associations, firms, partnerships, societies, and joint stock companies, as well as individuals" (1 USC Section 1). Despite the fact that there remains considerable popular debate, especially in North America, over the legitimacy of extending the term "person" to corporations and other collectives (see for example the rather heated discussions following the US Supreme Court's 2011 decision in the case Citizen's
United v. Federal Election Commission), doing so has been standard operating procedure for modern political institutions since at least the mid-nineteenth century, and Facebook merely follows suite.

[3] This arrangement is complicated by the fact that Facebook is also a user of Facebook. That is, Facebook has a Facebook page where it, like other users, can share information and interact with others. For this reason, Facebook actually occupies the uncanny position of both sovereign and user.

[4] The US Department of Justice's (DOJ) Computer Crimes and Intellectual Property Section has, since January of 2003, generated a number of memoranda instructing US law enforcement agents in methods to obtain and use information from social networking sites. These internal documents were made public in March of 2010 as the result of a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) filed by the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF). The documents may be accessed at https://www.eff.org/files/filenode/social_network/20100303_crim_socialnetworking.pdf
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DOES THE OPPOSITION PROGRESS IN NETWORKS? DOES THE OPPOSITION GET CAUGHT IN THE NET?

PERRİN ÖĞÜN EMRE**

The fact that social media allows for a multi-directional communication in which ordinary citizens are able to make their oppositional stance, observations and voices heard has been promising for the democratization of communication. For this reason, in conjunction with the social events unfolding in 2011, the revolutionary power of social media with its contribution to the improvement of freedom of expression and democracy was reemphasized. Revolutionary characters have been attributed to the social networks used in the social events developing in the world. From the Green Movement in Iran to the news of the Occupy Wall Street, we encounter terms such as “Facebook Revolution” or “Twitter Revolution” for the social events that take place all around the world. To such an extent that communication carried out on Twitter by the opponents in the Arab uprisings was followed by the whole world. In fact, the mainstream media used this medium as a news source. Digital media activism has enabled local issues to be shared with the world public and particularly, social networks like Twitter have acted as media providing economic, facilitating and interactive communication and logistic coordination. (Segerberg and Bennett, 2011:198). What is the role of social media on the power–opposition sides in terms of the social transformations in question?

IS EVERY MEDIUM A REVOLUTION?

As technology develops, the nascence of each medium carries with it revolutionary characteristics. As Murthy states, starting from Morse’s first message floating through the telegraph wire and then Graham Bell’s first words on the telephone to his assistant; radio, television and Internet media, respectively, brought with them a ‘revolution’ at every turn. However, social values attributed to the technological innovations are reminiscent of a ‘déjà vu’ rather than a revolution. Although each medium is inherently different from the other, debates on their potentials for social evolution show similarities. In the 16th century, when Luther, professor of theology, posted his ninety-five theses which opposed indulgence, on the door of the Wittenberg University, it attracted everyone’s attention. With the effect of the printing press, the Reform

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movement led to a social transformation spreading over a wide area. In fact, John Foxe, an English protestant, made the following statement with regards to the media attacks (printed materials, ballads, pictures, plays etc.), ‘Either the pope must abolish knowledge and printing, or printing must at length root him out’ (Briggs and Burke, 2004:96). Zeynep Tüfekçi, who links the public awareness created by the reform movement against the practices of the church to the role of social media in the Arab uprisings, states that the ones who felt discontent with the repressive regimes became cognizant of people who thought alike through social media and started taking collective action. They were particularly able to get their preferences en masse to the common people quickly by reaching them in an informational cascade (The Economist, 2012:41). Robert Darnton, a historian at Harvard University, states that although there are inherent differences, the social impact of social media has a history which can be traced back to past centuries and that social media is not a beginning of a phenomenon but a part of a continuity. He makes the following observation concerning his investigation of information sharing networks in pre-revolutionary France: ‘the marvels of communication technology in the present have produced a false consciousness about the past—even a sense that communication has no history, or had nothing of importance to consider before the days of television and the internet’ (The Economist, 2011:41). Technology and society constantly construct each other; therefore, the discourse created in this context is repeated in the historical process. As a matter of fact, even though Fisher’s statement ‘that technology makes society’ (Christensen, 2011:235) and McLuhan’s (2001) statement ‘we shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us’ remain moot, they emphasize the social transformations of the media.

THE HACKTIVISM POTENTIAL IN SOCIAL NETWORKS: Twitter sometimes in the leading role and sometimes in the supporting role

The Internet is able to meet the needs of the differences and requirements arising from the transformation within social movements. Collective action is based on three elements; psychological motivation, organization carrier and communicative action. Emotional factors that impel people to action constitute the psychological motivation. However, taking into account those who complain about the existing situation but prefer to remain passive, it becomes obvious that psychological factors are not sufficient. Hence, organizational behaviors can sometimes be more leading than psychological factors. In fact, the organizational forms of the new generation movements have abandoned corporate approaches, old-fashioned membership and leaderships. Which way of communication and tactical forms they adopt becomes more of an issue (‘Mediated Network, ty:7-9). For this reason, festival-like approaches and visual performances in creative acts draw attention. The way they say things can compete with what they say. The decentralized, flexible and scattered nature of social networks offer a communicational opportunity well suited for grassroots movements. With the same features, it becomes easier to create a psychologically motivated network coalition which is ready for activism through social networks. Among the forms of protests in which the Internet is used as a means of action; online
notifications, online petitions and Hacktivism help to establish recognition and awareness. With the collective identity which is established over networks, awareness and cooperation become widespread easily and rapidly. Cooperation is provided by reinforcing the feeling of being ‘us’. According to Natalie Fenton, new social movements share similar features with web-based communication;

New Social Movements share common characteristics with web-based communication: they lack membership forms, statutes and other formal means of organizing; they may have phases of visibility and phases of relative invisibility; NSMs may have significant overlaps with each other and are liable to rapid change in form, approach and mission. Furthermore, the ability of new communication technologies to operate globally and respond to global economic agendas in a swift and timely manner is key to their contemporary capacity to mobilize against the vagaries of global capital (Fenton, 2008:40).

We are currently witnessing the fact that digital media can play important roles in the mobilization of political participation, campaign management and social movements. Social networks give the Internet access groups the opportunity to express themselves against the ‘tyranny of the majority’ defined by Tocqueville. As a matter of fact, in their articles, S. Lindgren and R. Lundström study Twitter as a potential area for activism approaching the subject from the Wikileaks case. They state that social movements are able to form a ‘networked public’ due to the flexible and transitive structure of Twitter. The networked public is a participative and a collaborative environment where enthusiasts and volunteers create something together, technology and tactics are developed, interests are shared and meanings are appropriated, re-made and re-distributed. (Lindgren and Lundström, 2011:1000). One of the principles published on the Wikileaks’ website, which is a hacktivist project, was ‘to give the public the chance to rewrite history.’ Hackti-vism, which is a form of activism where documents are appropriated and distributed, is supported by new communication technologies. By making the language of his message visual and viral, he explains what kind of activism structure is created by personal tweets. The online culture consisting of a written discourse by tweets and social network relations generated by ‘tweeters’ constitute two important chapters of his study. While censorship and democracy issues come to the fore in the semantic examination of Twitter language generated by Wikileaks ‘hashtags,’ others are debates on what to do to support Wikileaks, asking for donations and the content of some particular documents that were leaked (Lindgren and Lundström, 2011:1005). There are three types of contents emphasized in the Wikileaks politics on Twitter. The first one is the sharing and redistribution of information and knowledge on Twitter activism. It is challenging that the majority of tweets has links to news put out by mainstream media companies. Moreover, the discussion platform is shaped around these pieces of news with the links being ‘retweeted.’ Secondly, it is used as a medium where calls for donations are made and mobilization for common action is undertaken. Lastly, it is a medium where slogans for the advocacy of freedom of expression and free media are shouted out. The article examines the tweets, by a user nicknamed Freakingcat, regarding the Thai
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government preventing access to the Wikileaks website. It draws attention to the sphere of influence created by the retweeting of their tweets by a large group of different users in 20 minutes. In this way, it shows how a single user can have influence over the language of a large group. (Lindgren and Lundström, 2011: 1012).

The authors draw attention to important logical errors in the social media debate. In particular, the risk of fetishization of social networking media such as Facebook and Twitter leads to their presumptive portrayal without exploring the social characteristics of the technology. In addition, instead of approaching Twitter, which is examined out of the broader political context, as a “stand-alone” platform, the important thing is to understand the role of these technologies in the organizing mechanisms and realize the diversity of this role in wide range oppositional ecologies (Segerberg and Bennett, 2011:199). Following the message traffic created by various actors or organizational structures on Twitter, it becomes easier to track the development of a collective action through technology and gives us an idea about the protest ecology (Segerberg and Bennett, 2011:199). Depending on the situation, organizational structure, messages of individuals or groups and areas of cooperation can change and shape the collective action. Twitter, as one of the digital mechanisms, configures and forms the protest space. Another point of view suggests that Twitter streams can give clues regarding the formation of the protest ecology. Users who contribute to the stream and those who connect to this stream can directly protest this ecology. For example, various institutions and organizations can meet on different layers of the protest network by means of data connection. However, every digital protest is idiosyncratic. Analyses can be an indicator for that protest space but cannot be descriptive because Twitter can take on different roles in different ecological spaces. Individually or organizationally, participation in a protest from different locations and different networks is possible. As the protest space uses mainstream media, non-governmental organizations and individual tweets, the nature of the activism undertaken changes. Segerberg and Bennett compare the Twitter activisms of two non-governmental organizations and observe differences resulting from the use of data connections in the protest spaces. While one of them has a structure that allows for the use of individual information sources such as personal acquaintance, the other has an organization which makes the movement shallow by emphasizing institutionalism with the use of the same address, the same names. Due to Twitter’s structure, the protest space can also be expanded by applications of hyperlinks, hashtags and retweeting (Segerberg and Bennett, 2011: 203). In fact, this may cause an uncontrolled expansion, a chaotic bulimia. People can form the gate-keeping process of the motivating information sources. While one movement reflects an organization-centered protest space, the other charts out a lasting, crowd-sourcing and autonomous path. While the first one develops a strategy which motivates users with encouraging Twitter messages throughout the coalition that organizes the movement, the other emphasizes freedom with personal networks. Another element is the change of the organizational dynamics during activism. The data of one stream, which is monitored, constitutes a specific layer of the network. When we analyze the quality of the activism, whether a stream is a long-term organization or a short-term support becomes more of an issue with the expansion of
networks and their interaction with one another. The active use of the network by the groups during the protest can lead the movement to be identified through different hashtags. Segerberg and Bennett’s study indicates that each protest space created on Twitter has its own dynamics and that Twitter can claim a different role in the ecology of each protest, therefore it is not possible to make a generalization. Twitter takes on the leading role when it turns into a social network-centered communication with the guidance of a social movement while it may take different supportive roles as the networked public expands according to needs and habits.

TWO DIFFERENT FACES: THE NETWORK OF THE CITIZEN,

THE NETWORK OF THE POWER

At a conference in 1994, Al Gore, Vice President of the United States, described the optimistic rationale for the call to create a ‘global information infrastructure’ as ‘promote the functioning of democracy by greatly enhancing the participation of citizens in decision making’ (Hoffmann, Kornweitz, 2011:7). According to Diamond, information and communication technologies provide the citizens with the opportunities to report news, point out wrongdoing, express opinions, mobilize protests, monitor elections, observe government actions, deepen participation and expand the area of freedom (Christensen, 2011:237). Protestors use social networking media such as Twitter, Flickr, Youtube and Facebook in order to organize protests, respond to government propaganda and provide information for global news media (Christensen, 2011: 243). The Twitter revolution in the aftermath of the elections in 2009 in Iran was followed by a series of uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East in 2011. In these uprisings the role of social media was significantly emphasized. It especially enabled the people who live under repressive regimes to share their agenda of human rights violations with the global news media. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden closely follows these developments in the Arab countries. Christensen, who examined the works of the ministry, scrutinized the process of a project which aims to support the efforts of people who demand democracy under the oppressive regimes. Bildt’s (Minister of Foreign Affairs) meetings with the web activists and social media experts in Cairo took place due to the fact that the role of social media in these changes is seen as vital. Thus, he decided to support the use of digital media on an international scale as well as projects increasing access to Internet-based media. Emphasizing that the Internet is a powerful tool for democracy, change and freedom, Bildt expresses that new technologies in media make governments more transparent and encourage citizens to take a more active role. However, he also states that technology alone cannot realize freedom of expression but access to technology is needed as a catalyst for human rights (Christensen, 2011:244). However, these optimistic perspectives give way to critical thinking due to the attempts of the power to monitor and scrutinize the digital agora.

In her study on the implementation of cyber activism on social networking media, Afife İdil Akin refers to Morris and Zalewski’s study which divides the use of the Internet and communication technologies into four classes. The first is the proliferation
of groups, the participation of members and the coordination of the activities of the movement; the second is to provide media content to groups who may be deprived of mainstream media content; the third is to create a virtual public space where participants can practice democracy; and lastly, the hacktivism movement which uses Internet technologies to manipulate or prevent them and even crash the system for political purposes (Akın, 2011:40).

The belief that social media is a new path for the development and expansion of democracy results from the excitement that each medium generates. Social networks carry messages which reflect that ‘another world is possible’, call in the global and local axis and raise awareness by giving an opportunity for quick and effective interaction among communities. Social networks enable the unrepresented to take part, spread their own agenda and proliferate by means of networks in a short time span. It helps them reach their political aims by overcoming geographical barriers and creating virtual public spaces. They are the media to which the opponent, the invisible, the unrepresented, the oppressed, the victim and those who have something to say, have relative access.

The online petition campaign, ‘I Apologize to the Armenians’ carried out in 2008, paves the way for the emergence of a new language in the Turkey-Armenia relation. Akın claims that this campaign was effective in the development of an individual and new language outside the genocide debates. She states that both Armenian and Turkish bloggers use the language of ‘pain’ and ‘empathy’ in their discussions on the events in 1915 and this has a repercussion on the contemporary relationship between Armenia and Turkey on a much larger scale (Akın, 2011:45). The Internet has played a facilitating role in the dissemination of and participation in this language. Online notifications and the messages of bloggers change the way in which a taboo subject is discussed (Akın, 2011:45). Thus, in his interviews with two activists of the ‘I Apologize to the Armenians’ campaign, Cengiz Alğan remarks that ‘raising awareness’ and ‘breaking taboos’ were the main purposes of the online petition campaign. The ‘Say Stop to Racism and Nationalism’ movement which deals with the ‘visibility’ of the campaign on the street stresses the importance of mobilization on the streets in addition to cyber activism. Şensever remarks that the examples in the world have created a vision in terms of collective action in Turkey and emphasizes the importance of the human dimension in cyber-activism: ‘It is not about whether technology is good or bad, but what is important is how we use it.’ (Şensever, personal interview, September 19, 2008). Durde states that they achieved their goal by making the events of 1915 debatable in the public space and that bringing this issue forth to the political and public spheres is a significant success. In fact, they attribute the high rate of participation in the commemoration activities on 24 April to this raised awareness. Despite the very deep hostility against Armenians in Turkish society, they consider making this subject ‘speakable’ a success. Even if it is a bit ambitious to express substantial success, they emphasize the symbolic value of the initiative. Şensever states: “In Turkey where nationalism is ‘exalted,’ for the first time a group has emerged to campaign against racism and nationalism in an institutional sense.” (Şensever and Alğan, personal interview, July 30, 2010).
On the other hand, the transformation of networks into surveillance networks due to increasing social media pressure by the authoritarian regimes and the witch-hunt launched by them justifies those who consider the cries of the Twitter-Facebook revolution to be utopian. Despite the unlimited glorification of the mass media in modernization theory, it was realized that states are not as passive and incapable in the face of the unlimitedness of technology as we have previously assumed. It is essential to investigate how this medium is used by the state. A new phase of communication activities and campaign organization has started with the Internet being involved in social movements. Filtering contents through Internet service providers, cooperating with Google on screening out search results related to banned topics, seizing website domain names, blocking websites on the basis of court orders and slowing down Internet connections are the precautions and sanctions used by states against political threats (Akın, 2011:42-43).

The Internet is considered a positive tool for the development of civil society in democratized societies, especially with regards to the channels it provides for freedom of expression. However, the Internet is also used as a monitoring tool. The notion of the ‘panopticon’ defined by Bentham in the 19th century and developed by Foucault can be adapted to the Internet age. China where contents and pictures are blocked and an Internet police-force has been established, North Korea, Myanmar and Iraq where the use of the Internet is illegalized constitute the main examples for this notion. The long lasting ban on YouTube in Turkey was lifted on October 30, 2010 and over 9000 websites were banned by the state (Akın, 2011:44).

THE CAT - MOUSE GAME IN SOCIAL MEDIA

During the progress in which at first Facebook and then Twitter appeared, some observations were made regarding the effects of social platforms on transforming social life. Such that, authoritarian rulers who aimed at preventing protest movements resorted to a variety of censor-ship practices from slowing down the Internet to shutting down Internet service providers. After the Arab uprisings in North African and Middle Eastern countries, networks such as Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, blogs, mobile communications etc. started being defined as ‘revolutionizing’ media. The unique role of the social media in the formation of a large-scale domino effect in those geographical areas is scrutinized. Even though some groups think that the ‘revolutionary effect’ of social media is exaggerated, the message traffic in the social networking media raised an awareness in world public opinion. In fact, the messages sent to the social networking media were considered newsworthy during the crisis period and contributed to the formation of world public opinion. The reason why the new media team at the Al-Jazeera Television created a table mapping out the Twitter traffic in 5 counties was because they wanted to take the Twitter stream into account as a news source (Aljazeera, 2011). As a matter of fact, this stream sometimes results in extraordinary congestion. For example, after the resignation of Hosni Mubarak, Egyptian Secretary of State, the number of tweets increased hundredfold and the top 23 videos almost reached 5.5. million views (Çildan vd., 2012:7).
Although the Twitter performance of the dissidents in the Iranian elections affected the power relations, Morozov draws attention to the fact that these communication technologies are suppressed. The Berkman Center (Harvard University) prepared a report on the contribu-tion of the effective use of social media in the transformation of a country. In their report they pointed out that policy-makers and academics overrated the effect of the Internet (Christensen, 2011:248). In addition, when the political economy of social networking media is taken into account, profit-centered approaches stand out apart from the demands for democracy. The system takes advantage of the popularity of the new medium it has commodified. J. Jones states that the stocks of Goldman Sachs and JP Morgan, that are the two largest shareholders of Facebook, increased from $50 billion to $75 billion during the first 3 months of 2011 (at the time of the North African uprisings) (Christensen, 2011:249). After these developments in the Arab world, Saudi Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal who also has shares in companies such as Apple, Time Warner, Citi Group, made $300 million worth of investment in Twitter (Eyidilli, 2011).

In addition, sceptical writers such as Morozov and Gladwell, point to the low rates of Internet access in the areas where the uprisings broke out and argue that above social media, many socio-economic factors played a role in the uprisings. In addition, as historical facts reveal it is people who carry out revolutions not technology, they claim that it is necessary to approach the effect of social media in a more restrained manner. According to the Social Media Report in the Arab world, the penetration ratio of Facebook is 22.49 % in Tunisia while it is 7.66 % in Egypt. The penetration of Twitter in Tunisia is 0.34 % while it is 0.15 % in Egypt. According to these statistics, it is clear that a large part of the population is not able to connect to social networking media (Sabadello, 2011:2).

The communication infrastructure held by the government allows it to monitor, direct, slow down or completely shut down the Internet. In addition to censorship since the first day of the uprising in Tunisia, Youtube, Wikileaks, human rights websites and activist blogs were censored during the 2011 uprisings. What is more, the government committed a virtual plunder by stealing the Facebook account passwords of citizens and interfering with the contents. Egypt, on the other hand, chose to block the access to the Internet entirely. Eric Schmidt, Google’s Executive Chairman, states that the democracy movements in the Arab world may cause the governments to impose heavier restrictions on the internet access (Ntvmsnbc, 2011). Nevertheless, Hani Morsi, an Egyptian blogger, believes that digital activism is a catalyst for social transformation. The blogger who took an active position in the ‘6 April Movement’ and ‘The Green Movement’ in Iran made the following statement: ‘activist movements which relied substantially on social media, namely Facebook and Twitter, to publicize their views, mobilize citizens, and also crucially to organize their activities.’ (Khoury, 2011:82). Morsi emphasizes that the use of social networking media did not start due to the Arab uprisings. He states that social networking media was an instrument, both in physical and virtual environments, for the opponents to raise their voices on 25 January 2011 which he defines as a ‘boiling point.’ Digital activists are educated, (high) middle class, tech-savvy youngsters who move their anti-government struggle from the
physical environment to the virtual one. Even though, Morsi expresses that these individuals do not represent the majority of Egypt, he has an optimistic approach in his statement: ‘this minority speaks for all of Egypt’ (Khoury, 2011:83). Another blogger underlines that social networking media is an effective tool for the formation of networks:

Tools are just tools and without us, humans being social, sharing, listening and creating new information, then they are just tools. The motivation for the revolutions was political, social and economic not because we have Facebook and Twitter…These tools did help bring mainstream media attention to the issues and this helped dramatically as more and more people became involved and push the revolutions to the tipping point.” (Khoury, 2011:84).

Bloggers who struggle in this region are made to pay a price. According to the December 2010 data of the ‘Social Media in the Arab World’ report, the numbers of bloggers who have been threatened, arrested and released by the regimes are 31 in Egypt, 23 in Tunisia, 16 in Syria, 5 in Lebanon and 6 in Saudi Arabia (Ghannam, 2011: 25-30).

Digital restrictions were not only imposed during the protest or uprising periods. Mutlu Binark expresses his concern about the filtering by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority which came into force due to the protests: 'It should be noted that the pattern of the mind behind these procedures and principles does not see its own citizens as individuals; being able to act on their behalf, it only sees its absolute authority and the righteousness of this absolute authority.' (Jurnal.net, 2011). Twitter also yields to this censoring mentality in time. In fact, Twitter’s statement that it would censor some tweets caused protests in social media. In the company’s statement made on its blog, it is announced that in the event of users sending tweets that are against the laws of their countries, they will be deleted from the system (VOA, 2012). Governments have started using the Internet for a witchhunt against the opponents. Although the performance of the opponents on Twitter during the Iranian elections makes an impression, Morozov emphasizes that these communication technologies are turning into pressure tools. Jon Leyne, BBC’s Teheran correspondent, who draws attention to the ongoing virtual war between the power and the opposition emphasizes in his analysis on Iran that activism by means of social media knows no borders. Leyne who in his article exemplifies the spread of Hamid Dabashi’s videos in Iran by means of the Internet makes a mention of the compelling campaign carried out in the virtual environment. Although it is clear that 19.000 Twitter users in Iran do not represent the total population of 80 million, the fact that it is used effectively by activist groups was enough to be considered a threat by the regime. However he also adds that the ‘Revolutionary Guards’ are in the preparation of a virtual army to suppress this environment (Hürriyet, 2010). As a matter of fact, Amnesty International has reported that Iranians who expressed their opinions via social networks during and after the elections were thrown into prison and tortured (Hoffmann ve Kornweitz, 2011:9). In fact, As a protection against this oppression, two American programmers have developed a programme called ‘Haystack’ that allows
users to defeat the censorship and surf the web anonymously. However, the software was withdrawn as it was not considered sufficiently secure and NGOs fighting for a free Internet have warned users about it (Çehreli, 2010).

Social networks can become the surveillance tool of the power. The Syrian government has adopted this practice originated in Iran and have started chasing down dissidents through social networking media. Hence, the reason behind the Syrian government’s decision to allow access to Facebook, which was previously blocked, is a tactic used to locate the dissidents (Sabadello, 2011:5). Therefore, Morozov states that social media is rather more functional for the supporters of authoritarian regimes than the oppositional movements. However, the supportive contribution of the West causes alternative communication channels to be created against the government’s censorship. For example, a Dutch Internet service provider assists in cases of shut-down Internet access. In spite of the fact that the connection provided is slower and more expensive, it enables Egyptians to write blogs and send emails. Google, on the other hand, enables voice messages left from certain phones to be transferred to Twitter using special software via its ‘speaktweet2’ service. They explain the reason behind this assistance as helping the Egyptians to make their voices heard ‘in these difficult times’ (Sabadello, 2011:8).

The political power uses social networks for its own political project as well as the dissidents. While China, famous for its censorship policies, blocks the access to millions of websites every year, micro-blogging services grow bigger. The great interest in local versions of social networking media sometimes makes surveillance difficult (Sabah, 2011). Previously in China, home product social networking media such as Sina Weibo and Renren (akin to Twitter and Facebook, respectively) were subjected to censorship due to anti-government content.

In this case, lack of widespread Internet access and the low number of activists among the ones who have access to the Internet pose a problem with regards to representation. For example, according to the results of ‘Information Technologies Household Usage Research’ carried out in April 2011 in Turkey, 42.9 % of the households in Turkey have access to the Internet (TÜİK, 2012). The main question is “How do people who have access to the Internet use it?” Content production-oriented active usage habits are not much sought after. For example, in Ipsos KGM’s ‘Internet Usage Habits’ report (2011), it is stated that the least favorable activity with 18 % is ‘to create a blog for oneself and write in one’s blog.’ On the other hand, 80% of Internet users visit social networking sites. The most visited websites are Google, Facebook and Youtube. Twitter ranks 24th with 9.5 %. Among the websites differentiated according to demographic age groups, people between the ages of 18 and 24 are the most frequent visitors of Facebook, Youtube, izlesene, dailymotion, Twitter and eksesozluk respectively. (İpsos KGM, 2011:7) The table below presents the ratio of the social networking media people subscribe to and social networking media people regularly use in Turkey (İpsos KGM, 2011:11). Although Turkey is considered one of the advantageous countries in terms of the rate of connection to social networking media, when looking at the Socialbreakers data, the most visited social
networking media are the ones which contain popular subjects (fans, sports, games) and entertainment contents.

**Table 1:** Social Networking Media Subscribed and Usage Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Üye Olunan Sosyal Ağlar</th>
<th>Düzenli Kullanılan Sosyal Ağlar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genel</td>
<td>79,6</td>
<td>65,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>94,4</td>
<td>78,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows Live Spaces/MSN Spaces</td>
<td>23,9</td>
<td>14,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>11,9</td>
<td>5,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netlog</td>
<td>3,7</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myspace</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>1,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badoo</td>
<td>2,9</td>
<td>0,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi5</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>0,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendfeed</td>
<td>1,0</td>
<td>0,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bebo</td>
<td>0,9</td>
<td>0,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked-in</td>
<td>0,7</td>
<td>0,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last.fm</td>
<td>0,6</td>
<td>0,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>0,6</td>
<td>0,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orkut</td>
<td>0,6</td>
<td>0,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foursquare</td>
<td>0,5</td>
<td>0,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XING</td>
<td>0,5</td>
<td>0,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Internet Usage Habits Report İpsos KGM, 2011.

Although the revolutionary role laid upon the mass media is a frequently encountered situation in the history of communication, no medium, due to its structure, has ever been so convenient for social movements and activism. Social networking media, which allows individuals to communicate in oppositional agendas and grow by networking within the built protest ecology, has brought innovations to the organizational structure and the language of activism. These networks, that can form cooperations beyond borders, are able to bring local issues onto the global platform.
The way in which social networks are used by activists emphasizes the human factor which determines how technology is used. Social networks are sometimes used for notification purposes and sometimes for protest purposes. In general, the purpose of raising awareness rather than revolution is stressed in campaigns carried out and massified on the Internet. Each protest space has its own characteristics. The struggle for rights carried out by means of digital activism is sometimes able to find an alternative way despite the fact that it faces strong reactions from the regimes. Therefore, in addition to the censorship policy, the aim of the witch-hunt governments start in the virtual environment is to be more deterrent to digital activism. In addition, the censorship systems internally developed by Google and Twitter lend assistance to the power. Moreover, the fact that social activism carried out through social networking media in Iran and the Arab countries has a narrow-scoped representation, point to the reality of a digital gap. The ownership structure which profits from the popular use of social networking media indicates that activism has also become commodified.

The fact that social networks mediate a revolution and contain revolutionary powers does not mean that they carry out a revolution on their own. Technology changes the ways in which the opposition is made but the proliferation of activism seems possible only if policies are detached from the censorship mentality and are implemented through the catalization of human rights and only if user habits are politicized.


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Does The Opposition Progress In Networks? Does The Opposition Get Caught In The Net?
SOCIAL MEDIA AS A FIELD OF SOCIAL STRUGGLE

GÜLÜM ŞENER*

"If your government shuts down the internet, shut down your government."

(Message on social networks during the 2011 Egypt revolution)

During the past ten years, attention has been drawn to the democratising functions of the internet thanks to the rise of social media. This emphasis is apparently one of the renewed interpretations of the obsolete technological determinism approach, which is conside-red as an output of modernism, and was pushed by the social elites. The discussions on the "revolutionary" potential of communication technologies are not a new issue. However, they have once again come to the fore - perhaps slightly exaggerated - thanks to the current global social movements, such as "Arab Spring" and "Occupy Wall Street". Further, it is possible to find the early examples of digital activism in the second half of the 90's, when internet began to become popular. For instance, the EZLN (Zapatista Army of National Liberation) uprising against the Mexican Government commenced on January 1st, 1994, the day when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect. Castells (2008:102) defines the EZLN uprising as the world's "first informational guerrilla movement", because the internet was used as an alternative communication tool to broadcast this rebellion. Ever since, the new media has become the primary or an important means of campaigns to inform, organize and protest.

Digital activism has entered into a new era with the widespread use of electronic social networks, and new digital activism practices have emerged. Although limited to the Web 1.0 trends including discussion forums, e-mail chains, websites and chat softwares, it has gained a new insight with Web 2.0. The differences between the first and the second internet generations appear to be a leading factor, which determine the use of internet by general users and notably the opposing voices. Compared to Web 1.0, the striking features of Web 2.0 are as follows; (more) instant, (much) faster, user-generated, self-sharing, collaborative, amateur, mobile, interactive and open to dialogue, horizontal, viral, imponderable, hard to control, responsive, daily, assembling individual and different voices, visible, hybrid, alternative, and participatory. It is also

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possible to describe social media as a communicative field, which gives priority to identity-sharing and the freedom of expression.

Indeed, the world would become a better place to live if all of the above-mentioned features and terms were used to increase the technological potential of social media. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the impact of this potential on social movements.

It appears that social media reshapes the forms of social movements and oppositions, which, in turn, has introduced "resistance culture". As mentioned before, as a user-generated content platform, and based on instant information exchange and high interaction, social media offers ample opportunities. The instant sharing feature of social media allows people to communicate and organize within social circles; social movements are able to create their own alternative media tools at low costs; political identities can become visible; the movements are able to advertise themselves from local to global platforms without space-time restrictions; new alternative and global public spheres can be established by introducing different voices. Besides, social media is outside of the hierarchical system; provides the opportunity for lateral communication; informs mainstream media about social movements; increases the impacts and the continuity of campaigns thanks to social sharing before, during and after the movements; allows for online-offline organization; integrate different campaign practices; conveys the voices of social movements to larger masses with voluntary and individual sharing, and has the potential to organize "disorganized masses". However, it should be borne in mind that this new resistance culture has many not only technological, but also social limitations. This article is aimed to discuss the opportunities and the limitations of social media in connection with social movements and with reference to some current examples.

The transformations of social movements with respect to communication, organization and campaign practices could be assembled under the following headings:

Faster Communication: Instant and fast communication are presumably the most important features of social media, which distinguish it from the other communication tools. It could be argued that communication, organization and action processes of social movements accelerate thanks to the user-generated media content and both voluntary and "communicable" dissemination of messages within social circles. Therefore, electronic social networks have become the principal communication tool in order to circulate social events. It seems that citizens can instantly respond to social events and problems on social media. As an example, the hashtags concerning any social problem are updated on Twitter every second. Furthermore, the faster information exchange allows activists to organize much quicker. That is, social struggles are gaining speed. The head of the opposition group Think-Moldova, which campaigned against the 2009 general elections in Moldavia, seems to illustrate this point. As Natalia Morar (Evans, 2010) put it: "After a ten-minute brainstorming and decision-making process with six people, it just happened through social networks, Facebook, the blogosphere, SMS and e-mails. Only in a few hours, we disseminated all information, and 15,000 people came out into the streets." Likewise, in Iran's Green
Movement, the protesters poured into Tehran and Esfahan streets, and communicated with each other and various international communities through photos, videos, blog posts, tweets and SMS. In addition to this, Twitter was the most influential communication tool to find hospitals for injured people, and disseminate information about the conflict zones. It is stated that approximately 480,000 Twitter users sent more than 2 million tweets between 7 - 26 July. This number reached to nearly 200,000 tweets on the day of general elections (Howard, 2009). In the course of "Occupy Wall Street" demonstrations, 20,000 videos were released on YouTube in October 2011. In December 2011, the number was 95,000 (Lucas, 2012). It may well be argued that professional information production takes a much longer time, and is presented with professional editing through conventional media. On the other hand, social media users can instantly save information, and share on-site. The faster information flow, therefore, appears to accelerate the organization and the action processes of social movements. To illustrate this, the people taking place in Oda TV case journalists Nedim Şener and Ahmet Şık's trial, released the information to the public earlier than the conventional mass media. Similarly, soon after the attacks on an Alawi family in Malatya, Turkey was communicated on Twitter, many NGOs and activists organized protests. All of these examples would indicate that social media speeds up the information process, and makes the voices of opposition heard much quicker.

Global Solidarity Networks: In consideration of social movements, the concept of "beyond space" is likely to be one the distinctive features of social media. Social media also attracts international societies, and fosters solidarity. Given the fact that social networks are global, and the messages are "communicable" within social circles, it becomes much easier for users to follow other countries, and support the cases similar to theirs. For instance, the videos of Mohammed Bouazizi, the icon of Arab Spring, were primarily circulated through social networks, such as Twitter and YouTube. Another example might be the Turkish theatre players' demonstrations against the Government of Turkey in favour of the privatization of theatres. Many other players from different countries supported their fellows by sharing video clips. Social media was also influential to popularise Occupy Wall Street protests in the US and around the world. Demonstrations took place more than 80 countries, and the "Day of Rage" was observed from Hong Kong to Fairbanks, and Miami to London (Taylor, 2011). Following the two weeks after the resignation of Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian President, an average of 300 messages daily were tweeted in the neighbouring countries (Howard, 2011:14). It appears that social movements can add a global dimension to the struggles with the use of social media. Considering the "voluntary" sharing and "viral" dissemination of messages, demonstrations and cases can create an impact in different regions. It has also become possible to broadcast the voices of opposition throughout the global social media map with messages, sound recordings and videos of all stakeholders participated in demonstrations. Investigating the role of the internet on Aboriginal Australians' movements, Petray (2011:932-933) points out that "the interactivity enabled by Web 2.0 serves to expand the 'virtual we', and
encompasses not just Indigenous people but their supporters, and many sympathetic individuals from around the world”.

Alternative Public Spheres: Since after the internet was popularized with its commercialization, digital media has started not only to communicate political developments, but also to create them. Chatfield (2012:122) claims that the minority groups traditionally monopolizing information flow and means of organization have lost their power, and today, there are different entities including global demonstration policies, Wikileaks and some hacker groups, such as Anonymous. Therefore, it seems that social media creates fragmented public spheres, which are originated from social movements, have no frontiers, and integrate streets with the virtual world. These public spheres are considered a place in which social struggles dart in and out of the information flow. Indeed, a social movement is created itself on social media. As Alexanyan et al. (2012:6) quote from Benkler, "the networked public sphere [is] an online space where members of society can cooperate, present political opinions, and collectively serve as ‘watchdogs’ over society, all through an online, cooperative, peer-produced model that is less subject to state authority than the traditional media.” Further, the preliminary studies on digital activism suggest that there is a weak link between the online and the offline spheres. However, this hypothesis has become obsolete today.

Social media has also broken silence upon mass media. As already mentioned, people produce messages, and try to make their responses heard in alternative public spheres. The content of social media is generated by its users, and what they share is all voluntary. Thus, it might be argued that these messages are more authentic, and based upon criticism and action. It is widely known that we swarm around computers at the time of a social movement. Moreover, social media is seen as a remedy for the citizens, who can not find a solution to the problems of the institutions of representative democracy. It may well be argued that we somewhat serve as "watchdogs", and try to create a public opinion impact. In particular, social media acts as a watchdog of state controlled national media, and alerts international new media to growing opposition and dissent events (Cottle, 2011:652). There are several examples which could be illustrative of this point. As Alexanyan et al. (2012:7) observe, "A community of activists and bloggers were able to highlight the negative impacts of a planned Gazprom tower in St. Petersburg on important historic areas of the city. Their reporting helped to mobilize opposition […] and ultimately put a stop to construction.” Another recent example is from Turkey. Cihan Kırmızıgül, a Turkish student at Galatasaray University, was accused of being a terrorist, and on pending trial because of his keffiyeh (i.e. cotton headdress commonly worn by Arabs and Kurds). However, his friends and many other students from different universities supported Kırmızıgül on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Besides this, social media seems to be a communication tool which could create a conflict zone for two different social groups, and where users can observe the polarization of different ideologies. For example, the conservative residents of Istanbul’s Eyüp district displayed their opposition to Efes Pilsen’s “One Love” concerts with "eyuptebirafestivalinehayir" (i.e. No Beer Festival in Eyüp) hashtags. Whilst they were able to create a public opinion, the Turkish
citizens in favour of secularism organized on Twitter to resist. As already discussed, the criticisms towards current political systems and democratic views spread like a virus, and easily reach to masses on social media. Therefore, social networking sites, such as Twitter and Facebook, create public spheres based upon horizontal communication, where users can observe different views on political problems, and different people's opinions. It is claimed that not only organizations, but also individuals give response. As Petray (2011:934, based on Kavada 2010) maintains, "Using email lists and social networking sites, it is now possible to organize non-hierarchically across large geographical ranges, and to incorporate individuals and organizations from a range of ideological positions. It has also become possible to make the violations of human rights and the dissatisfaction about political systems visible. The motto of Anonymous may support this view, “We use the internet to disclose what is hidden and to spread the facts all around the world”. Thus, social media has become a means of resistance enabling people to put pressure on politicians, hierarchical system and strict political organizations. In this respect, it is necessary to create a new political culture which will force politicians to be open to criticism, draws attention to user responses, and allows people to act much quicker. This culture should also introduce not a strict, hierarchical and bureaucratic, but a horizontal communication platform.

Re-Exploring Collective Struggle: It appears that social media has become the new place of collective struggle. It is also likely to describe this platform as a co-operation, where people in collective solidarity movements find solutions with their own knowledge and abilities. Cottle (2011: 651, based on Dahlgren 2010) suggests that "Social media helps a new space emerge for social inclusivity, group recognition and pluralized participation as well as different forms of political conver-sation and engagement". The struggles on social media might not always represent what is actually happening in the streets. However, it has created a new collective spirit, which is different from streets, and mediated by communication tools. In this new public sphere, it is possible to find a different type of collective spirit, which is far from standing shoulder to shoulder, shouting slogans or a collective emotion. This new collective spirit seems to look like “imagined communities”. Therefore, a collective struggle is generated from social media. There are people, who take an active, less active or a passive role in social movements. These people disseminate all community struggles through Twitter’ hashtags, Facebook groups, YouTube or Foursquare. They are trying to find solutions, and feel like a part of the aforementioned “imagined communities”. It could be argued that the popularization of the words “democracy” and “revolution” at the time of Arab Spring, and the “visibility” of the problems concerning political regimes in the countries with conventional media censorships indicate the importance of collective struggles on social networking sites. In addition to this, it has become possible for users not only to demonstrate (and to gain appreciation from) their political views by sharing, but also to learn and sympathize with other people's political approaches on these sites. Therefore, Facebook is one of these platforms, which is more intimate and is comprised of our acquaintances. As
Jeffrey S. Juris (2012, based on Postill n.d.) suggests, “The use of Twitter and Facebook can also produce a sense of connectedness and co-presence, potentially eliciting powerful feelings of solidarity as protesters read about distant and not-so-distant others engaged in the same or kindred actions and protests.” Therefore, new connections are created by the users’ rage, feelings and political views, and circulated throughout the world.

The Action Zone: In connection with the previous discussions, it appears that social media has become a channel from which demonstrations are originated. At the time of the 2009 general elections in Moldavia, the opposition groups rebelling against the election results organized demonstrations on Twitter, LiveJournal and Facebook. Likewise, pro-Jewish groups organized through SMS, Twitter and other social media tools in Iran's Green Movement. Even without TV coverage before the Bolotnaya protest, one of the largest demonstrations in recent Russian history, organizers were able to use social networks, blogs, Twitter and YouTube to rally between 50,000 and 70,000 protesters in Moscow, and tens of thousands in other cities (Alexanyan et al., 2012:9). Furthermore, many demonstrations organized on social media can sustain their continuity. Organizers efficiently use social media before, during and after social movements. The demonstrations on May 1st, International Workers’ Day are organized in Istanbul’s Taksim Square and on social media concurrently. There is, hence, a continuous interaction between online-offline spheres. As a similar example from Spain, the 15-M movement was primarily organized through the internet before coming up into the streets, and then continued on the social media (Feixa, 2012). It might be concluded that there is two different demonstrations, one is in the streets and the other on social networking sites. Social media is also considered as an alternative and complementary means of struggles. In Sennet’s words, “the fall of public man” is accompanied by the emerging internet. The people, who have become lonely on computers, try to rebel against political systems with daily practises and through social media tools. Considering the privatization of public realm, streets are no longer the authentic place of social transformation, or at least the primary. It is likely to suggest that social media has not eliminated the streets at all, and there are still crowds with rage on squares, which are able to influence the political decision-making mechanism. However, it should be borne in mind that the struggles are no longer restricted to streets. On social media, various opinions become visible, that is, something not possible to see in many street demonstrations. The struggles are able to continue through different channels and sustain their continuity. Above all, the internet can create its own demonstrations. It has become not only a means of political struggle, but a sphere. For instance, the activists notified their locations through Foursquare at the time of Occupy Wall Street movements. This would indicate the impact of social movements on virtual spaces. Investigating Occupy Wall Street movements in Pittsburgh, Mattoni (2012: Online) argues that the campsites are an important place of struggles, however they are not the only place for organization. Mattoni (2012: Online) further claims that it is possible to organize at different levels with the use of different media tools.
New Forms of Participation: New forms of participation have been emerged with social media. As an example, Scotland has planned to prepare the first e-constitution, which will allow the citizens actively participate in constitution-making process. Today, it is not necessary to become an active member of a social movement. Instead, it is possible to create social transformation in smaller groups or individually. Moreover, the role of activists has changed, as well. This new type of activist groups is comprised of the postmodern and creative individuals who are sitting at their computers, and produce and consume at the same time. Therefore, the notion of responsiveness is presumably the leading feature of social media. It could be claimed that the users’ responses are the reflection of cultural, social and ideological codes collected in mind throughout the life (Irak and Yazıcıoğlu, 2012:31). Benkirane (2012:3) divides the protestors of Arab Spring into two different categories, i.e. nomads and monads. As Benkirane (2012:3) further observes:

Involved in social revolutions, they do not intend to represent a political force or to organize themselves in a political party. They represent “all the time, everywhere” a wide spectrum of political, social and cultural sensitivities. Though they are collectively powerful, they do not seek power but want it to radically generate change […] Those educated, multilingual and often unemployed young adults are the cognitive nomads and monads […] of the new Arab consciousness (Benkirane, 2012:3).

Apart from these discussions, it appears that the language of social struggles on social media is different, much closer to daily language. Language has also become an important factor in this new type of activism, which use hybrid media including printed and audio-visual materials. The response of RedHack (RedHack, 2012), the hacker group attacked on the Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry and other Ministries' websites, outlines the use of social media in social movements as follows:

The activities of RedHack could also be considered as the creation and reformation of language. This group intends to raise awareness to create the language of struggles. It pays attention to highlight this intention in every social movement. The expressions of this language are the reflections of hot struggle zones, and do not refer to a democratic achievement or a demonstration. Instead, this language refers to revolutions. A revolution cannot be described with the words "hope", "wish" or "a pleasant memory" because of its intrinsic nature. It has a physical reality, and the participating people are the ones experiencing problems with current systems one way or another. For this reason, RedHack aims to raise awareness about the common language of struggles.

In this respect, it could be argued that social media is a realm, where social movements are able to produce a collective language and discourse. With regard to Occupy Wall Street demonstrations, "mixing analogical and digital media channels, combining low tech and high tech media materials, using fixed and mobile media supports, activists developed a rich ‘repertoire of communication’ (Mattoni, 2012: Online). Today, the forms of daily demonstrations include tweeting or re-tweeting a motto and sharing Anonymous’s viral videos. Therefore, visual media is able to present the evidences of social injustices and rebellions. Mass demonstrations, expert and
citizen opinions are recorded and then shared on YouTube and Vimeo. According to the figures of PEW, Internet and American Life Project, 45% of the adult internet users in the US watched political videos at the time of general elections, and one third of the users shared the uploaded videos (Evans, 2009: 38-41, based on Wright). In this particular context, it appears that political demonstrations have been transformed into daily practices. Marchart’s concept of “minimal politics” could be considered as an umbrella term to describe doing politics on social media. As the channels of minimal politics, there are three different functions of social networking sites, blogs and etc. First, rebutting the arguments of others, second, reflecting on the discursive or media strategies in operation and, third, re-articulating the concepts and positions articulated by others. Therefore, rather than seeing “alternative” or “marginal” political media as failing to live up to expectations, it is possible to see them as active participants in ‘minimal politics’ (Macgilchrist ve Böhmig, 2012:91-97).

As a Tool to Form and Display Political Identity: It is possible to display our personal, in particular, political identity on social media. Given the fact that the youth is criticised of being apolitical, social media offers an opportunity to enhance the interest in politics. Indeed, it seems impractical for the users of social media who follow the daily news to become indifferent in politics. As Chatfield (2012:122) suggests, "Politics is no longer considered as a separate action, but rather has become a part in the flow and tides of daily life for the citizens of 21st century, who are able to access and contribute to the digital groups with thousand or even millions of people."

On social networking sites, such as Facebook, which is a more intimate, and comprised of acquaintances, it becomes possible to display our political identities, world perspectives and seek support from our friends with similar views. We are trying to create ideological friendships. Besides, social media has been used as a tool to assemble sympathizers for social movements. As an example, thousands of people follow the Facebook page of Khaled Said, an Egyptian liberal blogger died under torture in police custody. Thus, social media enables the people, who were indifferent to politics, to express their own political opinions. Similarly, Twitter was used as a tool for political demonstrations by the supporters of Turkish football club Fenerbahçe, at the time when the president of Fenerbahçe Aziz Yıldırım, and his assistants were arrested. Fenerbahçe supporters have been still following the case of Aziz Yıldırım, protested against the police officers using tear gas, been making contacts with lawyers, and making this case a “topic trend” on Twitter. It could be suggested that social media has accomplished to gather people with no experience in social movements in Occupy demonstrations (Juris, 2012).

Alternative Media: Social media is able communicate the news that conventional media tools overlook or intentionally ignore. In particular, alternative media has become more important in the countries, where censorship or self-censorship is rampant. It is shown that there are between 40,000-70,000 active blogs in Iran (Howard, 2009). Likewise, the Russian blogosphere has become an alternative media tool to state-owned TV channels and elite media. Therefore, social media appears to be rivalling with conventional mass media, much closer to streets, and share citizen-generated information. Social media can be described as a more authentic alternative
media. Besides, this platform has emerged the concept of "citizen journalism", which enables people to broadcast social injustices through mobile devices at any time. Social movements can announce their activities on social media at low costs and in a rapid way. Social media is also likely to set today's agenda. For example, subsequent to sharing their activities on Twitter, the news about RedHack, the Turkish hacker group, took place in the national mass media. On the other hand, the conventional media working with international news agencies use social media as an information resource. Social media is able to broadcast news earlier than conventional media. There are different examples illustrating this point, such as the assassination of Benazir Bhutto and Osama Bin Laden, and the death of 26-year-old age Neda Agha-Soltan in Iran's "Green Movement". Another example is from Turkey. It is shown that social media far rapidly communicated the news about the massacre of 34 smuggling civilians by the Turkish Armed Forces at Uludere (Robotski) border (Irak and Yazıcıoğlu, 2012:84).

Thus, it can be concluded that conventional media takes social media into consideration, and invests in human capital and technological infrastructure for its development (Irak and Yazıcıoğlu, 2012:17). As mentioned earlier, the language of social media is influenced by the user-generated content. This language seems to be close to our daily language, and thereby is much basic and frank. In other words, there is no professional language on social media, and what is communicated is all about the raw information without editing or censor.

The Statistical Gap: Although the 32.7% of world population (Internet World Statistics, 2012) has access to the internet, the inequality in the access to recent information and communication technologies at intra/international level still exists. Furthermore, social movements are not independent from this statistical gap. In this respect, Arab Spring would be one of the significant examples: Facebook's penetration rate was 17.99% in Tunisia, followed by 5.49% in Egypt and 3.4% in Libya in 2011 (Arab Social Media Report, 2011). The internet and mobile device users mainly consist of the urban youth from middle and upper classes in the Middle East. For instance, the 90% of Twitter users in Iran live in Tehran, the capital city. On the other hand, although 78.3% of the US population has access to the internet (Internet World Statistics, 2012), Occupy Wall Street demonstrations were not able to create a transformation similar with Arab Spring. It can therefore be argued that the internet cannot be considered as a means of revolution on its own. The factors of the statistical gap, i.e. geographical location, socio-economic status, sex, age, educational and professional background, language etc., have also possible impacts on social movements. In Turkey, some left-wing and conservative groups adopt a technophobic approach to social media. It is also possible to observe distinct differences between the activities of the youth and those in middle ages. Similarly, there is a significant discrepancy in the internet use between the younger generation of labour unions' social movements and the senior ones.

The Culture of Democracy and Censorship: The different traditions and the views on the freedom of expression and censorship in many countries appear to the most important obstacles to describe social media as a democratizing force. Social
media is not only extending the freedom of expression, but also has become the most influential surveillance tool of states and capital markets. In Morozov's words (2011), "global digital panopticon" allows not only to monitor citizen-consumers at low costs, but also create new digital dictatorships. There are various strategies to put pressure on citizens in digital dictatorships. To illustrate, opposing web sites and blogs were censored, and many blogger were arrested by the authoritarian regimes in the course of Arab Spring. In Tunisia, the government stole the Facebook passwords of its citizens. Similarly, the internet was blocked in Libya and Egypt. In Iran and China, online opposing propagandas were observed; the internet accounts of opposing groups were hacked by the Syrian Electronic Party; the Moldavian Government cut off communication through mobile phones at the time of the 2009 general elections; the Turkish government denounced RedHack as a terrorist group, and removed its Twitter account; and a Turkish teacher was discharged from her position due to her comments on Facebook (Milliyet, 2012: Online). There are so many other regimes currently using social media to identify activists and sympathisers, and to put them into their blacklist. In China, the messages concerning the senior politicians and the previous head of states were blocked by the microblogging services (Kaufman, 2012:20). Further, the Chinese Government spends 56 million dollars per annum to broadcast pro-government propagandas on the internet (Kanally, 2012). There are also softer versions of censorship. In the US, where the freedom of expression and opinion variations are exported to the world, Twitter was criticised for excluding Occupy Wall Street demonstrations from its "topic trends", and Yahoo for blocking e-mails about the protests. On the other hand, the activists have developed different strategies to resist. As an example, in the Middle East countries, the activists generally use anonymous identities. To combat with state censorship at the time Arab Spring, the website of Global Voices translated the Arabic news to English. Anonymous attacked on the digital sphere of the Tunisian Government. Google provided Egyptian citizens without internet access with the opportunity via its "speaktotweet" program. Many Egyptian people were able to send voice messages to Twitter through their phones. The video coverages of Khaled Saed circulated through mobile devices, even though the internet was blocked. Apart from the problems in censorship, the countries' unique political cultures also influence the use of social media. Irak and Yazıcıoğlu (2012: 42-76) argue that conspiracy theories, political polarization, "the spiral of silence" theory, revanchism and gossip circles have an impact on the use of social media.

The Enduring Effect of Conventional Media: Whilst social media has established an alternative media sphere, and made different voices heard, popular culture has colonized social media, and, at times, turns it into an entertainment tool. Although social media provides news resource to printed and visual media, public agenda has still been determined by mass media tools. Then, this agenda is re-produced on social networking sites, such as Twitter or Facebook. However, users have become socialized "online" by using the internet as an entertainment resource, e.g. playing online games,

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1 The Chinese hacker group “The 50 Cent Party” has been organizing cyber attacks on Weibo, which is known as China’s Twitter-like platform with 350 million users.
visiting chat rooms. That is, the internet makes them alienated from strong interpersonal ties in the offline community, which eventually erodes civic engagement (Zhang, 2010:78, based on Shah 2001). There are also instances where social media cannot escape from conventional media censor. For instance, the Turkish conventional media merely broadcasted the funerals of the soldiers died during the confrontations (when this article was being written) in Şemdilli district, city of Hakkari. Social media was also unable to provide sufficient information about this news.

**Keyboard Activism:** Another most important discussion concerns to what extent "keyboard activism" is influential. It is necessary to investigate the impact of sharing political messages on Twitter or Facebook. According to some researchers, the number of people, who were previously indifferent to social movements, has been increasing with the use of social media. Therefore, social media is considered as a place where people can pour their hearts out and express their complaints. It is possible to suggest that there is an "immobile politicisation" and "lazy activism" on social media. In connection with politicisation, sharing our opinions and identity would be important, even though there is no mobile movement. “Push-button activism” allows people to feel as if they are involved in a movement with minimal participation, e.g. supporting Greenpeace’s activities with 1-click, or sharing a video related with Stop Kony campaigns. As Petray (2011:934) puts it:

“Movement participants can easily feel a part of the movement, by displaying their interest on their Facebook profile. But strong feelings of collective identity do not always translate into a strong movement. In other words, Web 2.0 may increase the numbers of inactive members of social movements” (Petray, 2011: 934).

Therefore, movements may reach to masses, but with minimal participations. Social media is able to connect us with others in a rapid way and through weak links.

**Individualism:** In today's world, interpersonal communication is mediated through various tools. Thus, it might be useful to answer this question: Is there a demand for face-to-face communication in social movements and solidarity groups? According to Negri and Hardt, the answer is "yes". Social movements require face-to-face communication and solidarity. As Negri and Hardt (2012:25) further suggest:

Facebook, Twitter, the Internet, and other kinds of communications mechanisms are useful, but nothing can replace the being together of bodies and the corporeal communication that is the basis of collective political intelligence and action. In all the occupations throughout the United States and around the world, from Rio de Janeiro to Ljubljana, from Oakland to Amsterdam, even in cases when they lasted only a short time, the participants experienced the power of creating new political affects through being together. […] An occupation is a kind of happening, a performance piece that generates political affects (Negri and Hardt, 2012:25).

Many people rushing onto their computers at the time of social movements may not be as interested as the previous day in participating a demonstration. There are also other social movements, during which the internet is not preferred or considered as a struggle tool for ideological or other reasons.
Cacophony: Allowing people to send hundreds of messages in seconds, social networking sites appear to create a cacophonic atmosphere. Thus, it is important to explore the degree of its influence on political transformations and discussions. Investigating Occupy Wall Street demonstrations in Pittsburgh, Mattoni (2012) argues that, apart from the clashes on campsites, the activists sometimes cannot negotiate with each other on Facebook, and revealed the intra-group hierarchies on the online platform, which escalated the passions. Another feature of social media is its inability to control messages, and thereby the discourse of “rage” is rapidly circulated. Social media also seems to have established the discourse of rage in many social movements, which increases political polarization.

To summarize, it might be important to answer this question: How could we interpret the social media-generated opinions concerning social movements? It is presumably too early to introduce certain predictions about this daily-changed and user-generated media. Indeed, social media is all about what we share. Whether it should be used as a means of revolutions or a radical social transformation is subjected to further studies. Many opposing groups cannot create a social transformation on social media. A revolution is generally depended upon people's will rather than communication tools. Social media would be helpful only citizens find it necessary in social transformations. Analysing the Twitter messages sent in the course of Arab Spring, Benkirane (2012:2) suggests, “social networks cannot be understood without factoring in their contexts and without identifying who actually uses Twitter, and what users write about and in which language they communicate”. Fadi Salem considers social media as a tool, which allows critical groups to communicate with each other in Arab countries. Even though social media is not seen as the only means of revolutions or political transformations, it offers the opportunity to its user to faster communicate, organize, and act in the course of social movements. Social media is not independent from conventional media, yet still has been complementing it. In other words, it has become an alternative voice of the citizens, who are kept away from the interaction of mass media tools in the countries with representative democracy.
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This volume of the book "Social Media and Network Society", which is the seventh book of the series "Media Criticisms", deals with three main concepts relating to social media which are culture, identity and politics. Social media brings about a culture of sharing that was never seen before. Internet users voluntarily share the information they produce with others and make it valuable, meet people with similar interests on virtual platforms, experience agreement and sympathy, and relieve their loneliness. The users share their own ideas, and thus contact people they think alike more often, feel themselves less lonely, and furthermore, talk about issues they would probably never discuss in their restricted environment. Social media is possibly the voice of quiet masses and their respond to the society they live in. It is a postmodern platform on which individuals of mass society who are stuck between working time and leisure time, latter of which is filled with consumption activities, and became estranged from each other get together, which promises them dreams of contacting the "acquaintances" safely and non-acquaintances globally, which is highlighted as a tool for social solidarity and getting connected, even though with "loose connections", and on which the limits of sharing are determined by Internet users making it suitable for self-reflection. With the help of the academic works compiled in this book, you will be able to analyze the effects of social media on social organization.