

Media Development

1/2017

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EDITORIAL

A recent report from the World Economic Forum (WEF)¹ says that the main characteristics of digital media consumption today are:

- * **Mobile:** People now spend an average of two hours daily on the mobile web, one-third of their total online time, with Millennials and digital media users in emerging countries leading the mobile revolution.
- * **Social and interactive:** Social networking is by far the most popular online activity, clocking in at an average of 1.8 hours or 30% of daily online time.
- * **Flexible and personalized:** Users can play a more active role and have more control over the digital media offerings they use and engage with compared with traditional media.
- * **Fast, instant and convenient:** Fast internet and new technologies (hardware and software) allow for easier access and use, and enriched content.
- * **More content:** As content creation and distribution become simpler, a greater amount of content and services are becoming available. Content is more diverse, but consumption is potentially focused more on breadth than depth, as capacity is limited. The importance of content filtering, curation and recommendation has grown.
- * **Collective:** The possibility to connect, share, recommend and communicate creates a collective experience that shapes not only behaviours and preferences, but also a collective consciousness of shared beliefs, ideas and moral attitudes.
- * **Fragmented and multi-channel:** The huge number of channels and creators makes content ever more fragmented. Users access multiple platforms from multiple devices. Adapting content to these multiple platforms becomes imperative.
- * The higher the usage of digital media, the

higher the willingness to pay: Increased connectivity and use of digital media should tip the revenue scale in industry's favour, but innovation in creating better user experiences is crucial, as it is clearly evident that traditional digital advertising is losing its appeal and efficacy.

The WEF report also identifies key challenges brought about by new patterns of consumption and the presence of more players and creators in the market leading to consumer trust failing because of concerns about:

- * Truthfulness of content, given its volume, the large number of creators and sources, and need for more clarity around filtering mechanisms.
- * Integrity of the company/consumer value exchange.
- * Security of personal data and digital identities from cybercrime, given the significance of this information to a consumer's professional, financial and social well-being.



In short, while digital communication technologies are transforming the world and the way people communicate, people themselves are also being reshaped by those technologies. At the same time, there is a perception that content is less trustworthy and that the communications infrastructure more susceptible to abuse.

This is partly because of a lack of oversight and partly because the ethical standards followed by traditional media (at least in principle) have not been translated into equivalent norms for so-

called social networking.

Here is where much of the concern lies. Social media are changing how people govern and are governed; they are impacting healthcare and public health; they are part and parcel of corporate business and the international banking system. But they are also helping to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges, from human rights violations to climate change, and they are becoming ever more effective in situations of natural or human made disaster.

It is too early to tell how these profound changes in a multitude of contexts will play out in the long-term. Increasing dependence on digital communications may ultimately lead to irreconcilable problems, but what is already clear is that people of the late 21st century will bear only a passing resemblance to those of the 20th century and their ways of communicating will be entirely different.

Hyperconnectivity is defined as being connected to myriad means of communication and interaction, but it also refers to its impact on both personal and organizational behaviour. It is arguably the single most important challenge facing today's world, as communication technologies infiltrate so many facets of life and change the way people think and act.

However, as Rabbi Jonathan Sacks has pointed out, while technology gives us this power, "It does not and cannot tell us how to use that power. Thanks to technology, we can instantly communicate across the world, but it still doesn't help us know what to say."² ■

Notes

1. From the Executive Summary in "Digital Media and Society Implications in a Hyperconnected Era", World Economic Forum (January 2016). http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEFUSA_DigitalMediaAndSociety_Report2016.pdf
2. "The limits of secularism and the search for meaning" by Jonathan Sacks. ABC Religion and Ethics, 17 May 2012. <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2012/05/17/3505407.htm>

Our digital ecology

Dean Dettloff

"The invention of printing is the greatest event of history. It is the parent revolution; it is a fundamental change in humankind's mode of expression; it is human thought putting off one shape to don another; it is the complete and definite sloughing of the skin of that serpent who, since the days of Adam, has symbolized intelligence."
Victor Hugo made this observation almost 200 years ago, in his famous novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.

In the last several decades, human intelligence has begun to molt once again, revealing a luminous new skin underneath: digital media - the world of computers, screens, and programs that now organizes much of human society around the globe. Most of us sense something is changing, and rapidly so. Like Hugo, we might feel that we are living in a revolutionary time. Whether that revolution is for the better or for the worse, however, is unclear.

As complicated as digital media and its effects are, the digital revolution is the result of an elegant simplicity. Where print was built on combining and recombining a set of symbols from the phonetic alphabet to produce everything from novels to modern constitutions, digital media is built on combining and recombining only two symbols, 1s and 0s, to perform everything from statistical analyses to reproducing print's literary worlds on a backlit screen.

Hugo, living in a thoroughly print world, rightly saw the emergence of print as a fundamental transformation in human experience. Now that we find ourselves in a thoroughly digital world, we would do well to ask ourselves what this change in media means for our own experience. We can start by pushing Hugo's observations further.

A change in dominant media, whether print

or digital, is not just a change in modes of human expression. It is rather a change in the very environments in which humans live. The world we live in is not simply “natural”, but also relies on a host of human interventions that make our daily lives possible. In addition to the water, air, food, and other conditions of life we assume are natural, the human ecosystem also necessarily contains tools and technologies, languages and levers, planning and practices. And these products in turn produce us.

Digital ecology

Canadian luminary Marshall McLuhan was the first to identify our “media ecology”, the environmental quality of our media. While it might seem like our relationship to media is determined by how we want to use those media, McLuhan showed that media radically work back on us and change who we are.

To illustrate his point, McLuhan tracked the shift between a world defined by print and a world defined by electronic media. Print, McLuhan suggested, was a medium that led us to experience ourselves as individuals, living private, interior lives, a point well-demonstrated by the rise of rights-based politics and capitalist economies. Electronic media, on the other hand, made for a more connected world through inventions like the telegraph and advances in travel technologies. The trend of electronic media, as McLuhan understood it, led to the creation of a “global village”, where humans led increasingly networked lives less and less defined by local geographies and static documents.

What McLuhan aimed to explain was that our gadgets, tools, and technologies are not simply neutral objects. They shape us in unique ways. Those of us old enough to be aware of a time before the pervasiveness of laptops and smart phones likely have an intuition about this already, witnessing the ways these tools changed both our own daily patterns of communication and the social worlds we inhabit.

Rarely do I have a question or curiosity that ruminates for more than a few minutes, cut short by a quick Google search. Over a decade of my life

is archived in a variety of ways through Facebook, Twitter, online purchases, and e-mail correspondences, and many of my memories are externalized on hard drives and privately owned databases - a gold mine for advertising agencies. I often feel anxious to respond to a text message or e-mail, and the window of time between when I expect to hear from a loved one and when they might actually be available to communicate is considerably shorter now than it was in the age of land line phones.

Our technologies are extensions and transformations of ourselves in ways that are so deep we are not even cognitively aware of them. I remember the first time I thought I felt a familiar buzz on my thigh, only to discover my cell phone was not even in my pocket. It was then that I realized my phone was not just a thing I used to accomplish tasks I thought about, but it had become a phantom limb - a real part of my body.

Changes in our perceptions and relationships reveal a change in our media environment, but these changes do not happen overnight. The move from a primarily print ecology to a primarily digital ecology is not smooth, total, or complete, and our slow and implicit adjustments mean we often think about digital changes from the perspective of people formed by print.

Our private lives are being transformed by digital media in ways that we are still coming to terms with, and so, too, are our public lives. In fact, digital technologies blur the lines between the private and public spheres altogether, spheres that were demarcated by print media. If print, as Hugo thought, was a “parent revolution”, one with many diverse children, then digital media, too, are a new parent revolution.

Horizontal, but not flat

Though the digital revolution is young, we can still see the early effects of the digital drift, not just on ourselves but the world around us. McLuhan, for example, suggested the electronic age, which made digital technologies possible, was an age of decentralization. The pope no longer needs to be in Rome, and the president no longer needs to be in Washington D.C., as McLuhan liked to say.

Pope Francis and President-Elect Donald Trump, as different as they are, confirm McLuhan's observation, and the polarization of opinions on both figures also results from these media trends.

When McLuhan talked about the creation of a global village, he did not mean that everyone would come together in unity. On the contrary, by being forced into contact through communication and travel technologies, which erase the temporal and spatial limitations that used to constitute our perception, social differences become more and more obvious and exacerbated. Far from leading naturally to democratic and plural societies, the global village often encourages us to enter new silos and media bubbles based on our preferences and affinities.

Some observers of digital trends have praised what they see as an extension of opportunity and wealth to areas otherwise excluded before the digital revolution, summarized in the title of journalist Thomas Friedman's 2005 book *The World Is Flat*. And, to be sure, the acceleration and democratization of digital technologies undoubtedly *has* transformed societies the world over.

What this optimistic view ignores, however, is that inequalities are not being erased so much as translated into the decentralized ecology of digital media. It would be better, perhaps, to speak in terms of peaks and valleys that emerge on the field of the digital. Donald Trump might not have to live at the White House, but this only means his presidential power will be transformed while it also makes use of the strategies of digital media.

Economically, the rise of computerized finance capitalism has made investments and speculation move, literally, at the speed of light, creating potentials for massive growth *and* massive crises. Off Wall Street, factory production has been transformed by algorithms, computer modeling, and information management, where laborers are made to conform to profit speculations and scripts determined by lines of code. How long humans will actually have these jobs, before they are replaced by automated machinery which more readily submits to these lines of code, is an open question.

Digital media also contribute to the proliferation of what political theorists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri call "immaterial labor", including the production of brands, maintenance of copyrights, and protection of intellectual property, creating a virtual world where our identities often derive more from brand loyalty than an experience of the common good. By reducing human beings to producers and consumers, and then further reducing them to bits of data, digital economies allow us to ignore the suffering of human beings and other members of earth's community who become mere sequences of numbers. Without coming to terms with this change in our media ecology, the valleys and peaks of inequality in our horizontal landscape will do anything but flatten.

As our political lives try to engage our new environment, digital technologies have led in many parts of the world both to an incredibly wide-reaching surveillance state, collecting data on citizens without consent and making questions of privacy front and center, but also to new forms of horizontal organizing strategies like the Arab Spring, #OCCUPY, and Black Lives Matter. Cyber warfare is a new front for governments and activists alike, with the power of information leaks and hacks rivaling the power of traditional intimidation or firepower as means of transforming social landscapes.

While the police state has expanded with the aid of digital technologies, the availability of cameras and livestreaming has created a new public form of accountability. Traditional political theories of virtue or rights language, belonging to earlier media ecologies, may not be useless, but they are increasingly out of touch with the new forms of human beings and relationships brought into existence by digital media. Oppression and resistance are certainly nothing new in human history, but the digital revolution, built on simple 1s and 0s, has transformed the ways in which these dynamics play out.

The world is not flat after all, though the boundaries between older hierarchies are harder to make out - which is by no means to say that they will disappear any time soon. The creatures that

produce and are produced by this digital world are still emerging, accompanied by new opportunities and problems alike.

“Do it with love”

As we continue to make and be made by our digital environment, we should avoid three temptations: (1) thinking media are innocent tools that only do what we tell them, (2) thinking media totally determine how we live, move, and have our being, and (3) thinking media will solve problems of social injustice on their own.

In the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis, the pope of the digital age, offers some helpful guidelines for avoiding these temptations. “We have to accept that technological products are not neutral,” he says, “for they create a framework which ends up conditioning lifestyles and shaping social possibilities along the lines dictated by the interests of certain powerful groups. Decisions which may seem purely instrumental are in reality decisions about the kind of society we want to build.”

Our own digital ecosystem provides challenges and opportunities, but without a critical and creative disposition we run the risk of contributing to an environment that is not habitable by healthy human beings who live in networks of care, building instead an environment more suited to “data” organized in networks of injustice.

Retreat from the problems of digital ecology is not an option, but the problems are not insurmountable. On the contrary, we need to find a way of relating to them with awareness and intentionality, with concern for what kinds of creatures we want to be.

When Paul Virilio, a philosopher often highly critical of technology, was asked how we should relate to the use and production of technology, he replied by paraphrasing St. Augustine: “Do whatever you want, but do it with love.” I can think of no better response, provided we take it as both a warning and a benediction. ■

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Less freedom for digital media platforms

Sanja Kelly, Mai Truong, Adrian Shahbaz, and Madeline Earp

Internet freedom has declined for the sixth consecutive year, with more governments than ever before targeting social media and communication apps as a means of halting the rapid dissemination of information, particularly during anti-government protests.

Public-facing social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter have been subject to growing censorship for several years, but in a new trend, governments increasingly target messaging and voice communication apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram. These services are able to spread information and connect users quickly and securely, making it more difficult for authorities to control the information landscape or conduct surveillance.

The increased controls show the importance of social media and online communication for advancing political freedom and social justice. It is no coincidence that the tools at the centre of the current crackdown have been widely used to hold governments accountable and facilitate uncensored conversations. Authorities in several countries have even resorted to shutting down all internet access at politically contentious times, solely to prevent users from disseminating information through social media and communication apps, with untold social, commercial, and humanitarian consequences.

Some communication apps face restrictions due to their encryption features, which make it extremely difficult for authorities to obtain user data, even for the legitimate purposes of law enforcement and national security. Online voice and



video calling apps like Skype have also come under pressure for more mundane reasons. They are now restricted in several countries to protect the revenue of national telecommunications firms, as users were turning to the new services instead of making calls through fixed-line or mobile telephony.

Other key trends

Social media users face unprecedented penalties: In addition to restricting access to social media and communication apps, state authorities more frequently imprison users for their posts and the content of their messages, creating a chilling effect among others who write on controversial topics. Users in some countries were put behind bars for simply “liking” offending material on Facebook, or for not denouncing critical messages sent to them by others. Offenses that led to arrests ranged from mocking the king’s pet dog in Thailand to “spreading atheism” in Saudi Arabia. The number of countries where such arrests occur has increased by over 50 percent since 2013.

Governments censor more diverse content: Governments have expanded censorship to cover a growing diversity of topics and online activities. Sites and pages through which people initiate digital petitions or calls for protests were censored in more countries than before, as were websites and online news outlets that promote the views of

political opposition groups. Content and websites dealing with LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex) issues were also increasingly blocked or taken down on moral grounds. Censorship of images—as opposed to the written word—has intensified, likely due to the ease with which users can now share them, and the fact that they often serve as compelling evidence of official wrongdoing.

Security measures threaten free speech and privacy: In an effort to boost their national security and law enforcement powers, a number of governments have passed new laws that limit privacy and authorize broad surveillance. This trend was present in both democratic and nondemocratic countries, and often led to political debates about the extent to which governments should have backdoor access to encrypted communications. The most worrisome examples, however, were observed in authoritarian countries, where governments used antiterrorism laws to prosecute users for simply writing about democracy, religion, or human rights.

Online activism reaches new heights: The internet remained a key tool in the fight for better governance, human rights, and transparency. In over two-thirds of the countries in this study, internet-based activism has led to some sort of tangible outcome, from the defeat of a restrictive legislative proposal to the exposure of corruption

through citizen journalism. During the year, for example, internet freedom activists in Nigeria helped thwart a bill that would have limited social media activity, while a WhatsApp group in Syria helped save innocent lives by warning civilians of impending air raids.

Tracking the global decline

Freedom on the Net is a comprehensive study of internet freedom in 65 countries around the globe, covering 88 percent of the world's internet users. It tracks improvements and declines in governments' policies and practices each year, and the countries included in the study are selected to represent diverse geographical in its series, focuses on developments that occurred between June 2015 and May 2016, although some more recent events are included in individual country narratives. More than 70 researchers, nearly all based in the countries they analyzed, contributed to the project by examining laws and practices relevant to the internet, testing the accessibility of select websites, and interviewing a wide range of sources.

Of the 65 countries assessed, 34 have been on a negative trajectory since June 2015. The steepest declines were in Uganda, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ecuador, and Libya. In Uganda, the government made a concerted effort to restrict internet freedom in the run-up to the presidential election and inauguration in the first half of 2016, blocking social media platforms and communication services such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp for several days. In Bangladesh, religious extremists claimed responsibility for the murders of a blogger and the founder of an LGBTI magazine with a community of online supporters. And Cambodia

passed an overly broad telecommunications law that put the industry under government control, to the detriment of service providers and user privacy. Separately, Cambodian police arrested several people for their Facebook posts, including one about a border dispute with Vietnam.

China was the year's worst abuser of internet freedom. The Chinese government's crack-down on free expression under President Xi Jinping's "information security" policy is taking its toll on the digital activists who have traditionally fought back against censorship and surveillance. Dozens of prosecutions related to online expression have increased self-censorship, as have legal



restrictions introduced in 2015. A criminal law amendment added seven-year prison terms for spreading rumours on social media (a charge often used against those who criticize the authorities), while some users belonging to minority religious groups were imprisoned simply for watching religious videos at least two bloggers were killed after reporting on local corruption. The London-based magazine *Economist* and the Hong Kong-based *South China Morning Post* were newly blocked in mainland China, as were articles and commentaries about sensitive events including a deadly chemical blast in Tianjin in 2015.

Turkey and Brazil were downgraded in their internet freedom status. In Brazil, which slipped from Free to Partly Free, courts imposed temporary blocks on WhatsApp for its failure to turn over user data in criminal investigations, showing little respect for the principles of proportionality and necessity. Moreover, at least two bloggers were killed after reporting on local corruption. Turkey, whose internet freedom environment has been deteriorating for a number of years, dropped into the Not Free category amid multiple blockings of social media platforms and prosecutions of users, most often for offenses related to criticism of the authorities or religion.

These restrictions continued to escalate following the failed coup in July 2016, in spite of the crucial role that social media and communication apps—most notably FaceTime—played in mobilizing citizens against the coup.

Just 14 countries registered overall improvements. In most cases, their gains were quite modest. Users in Zambia faced fewer restrictions on online content compared with the previous few years, when at least two critical news outlets were blocked. South Africa registered an improvement due to the success of online activists in using the internet to promote societal change and diversifying online content, rather than any positive government actions.

Digital activism also flourished in Sri Lanka as censorship and rights violations continued to decline under President Sirisena's administration. And the United States registered a slight improvement to reflect the passage of the USA Freedom Act, which puts some limits on bulk collection of telecommunications metadata and establishes several other privacy protections. ■

Source: *Freedom on the Net 2016. Silencing the Messenger: Communication Apps under Pressure.* Freedom House.

Revolución digital: ¿un universo para soñar?

Annabelle Brun

Clic y scroll. El idioma anuncia nuevas incorporaciones mientras surge una nueva red social. Ya no hablamos de lectores o públicos. Estamos en el terreno de los usuarios, prosumidores y fanáticos. Hay una efervescencia de nuevas narrativas, nuevos lenguajes y nuevas construcciones que surgen de los videojuegos, las animaciones y sus correspondientes realidades virtuales, realidades aumentadas y mundos inmersivos. Todo parece ser novedad en la llamada “revolución digital”, pero ¿es también una revolución del pensamiento?

En 1940, Jorge Luis Borges publica *Las ruinas circulares*, ese maravilloso cuento sobre un soñador que quería soñar un hombre “con integridad minuciosa e imponerlo a la realidad”. Ese mismo año, un adolescente curioso descubre en Francia las cuevas de Lascaux con sus fascinantes pinturas del Paleolítico. ¿A qué viene señalar esta coincidencia? Pues, que tanto la narrativa de Borges como el arte prehistórico de las cuevas, son señalados con frecuencia como muestras de interrupciones del orden lineal, ese que nos enseña una forma de pensar “correctamente”, clásica y jerarquizada. Solo que el pensamiento es un laberinto de múltiples posibilidades y conexiones y tratar de representarlo con fidelidad siempre ha sido una hazaña.

Por supuesto, cuando se trata de identificar estructuras narrativas no secuenciales, la lista es infinita: Joyce, Nabokov, Cortázar, los jeroglíficos egipcios... Pero, ¿qué nombre darle a estos inten-



tos? En 1963, Ted Nelson acuña el término “hipertexto”, como una forma de ejercitar el pensamiento a través de la interconexión de contenidos. Ya en julio de 1945, la revista *Atlantic Monthly* había publicado el artículo “As we may think”, con las reflexiones de Vannebar Bush sobre el “Mémex”, el sueño de un dispositivo que sería capaz de mimetizar el pensamiento.

El hipertexto es, en nuestro universo digital, la concreción del modelo teórico desarrollado por los estructuralistas. El rizoma rescatado de la botánica por Deleuze y Guattari, en el volumen *Mil mesetas* de 1980, sirvió para sustituir la descripción clásica del pensamiento como organización jerárquica arborescente por el crecimiento rizomático, producto de múltiples conexiones no lineales. Pero también el hipertexto es una abstracción, los *software* que utilizamos y toda la producción digital.

¿Es este el desenlace triunfal de una búsqueda poética milenaria? Muchos lo ven como la celebración del “sueño persistente de un lenguaje nuevo en un espacio artístico total” (Borràs, 2005:

77), un espacio que es multisensorial y multidimensional, capaz de capturar la emergencia del pensamiento, la democratización del arte, el texto como reflejo del lector y el texto como la suma de todos los textos .

Pero de los sueños también se despierta, eventualmente.

La revolución del instante

Para Chiappe (2009), asistimos a la tercera gran revolución cultural. Las precedentes serían el paso de la cultura oral a la escrita, con el uso del rollo, luego el pergamino y su posterior adaptación al libro códice. La segunda revolución llegaría con la invención de la imprenta en el siglo XV, que impulsó una visión universal, las ideas de lengua compartida y el concepto de propiedad intelectual. Ahora se trata de la “revolución digital”, de un cambio radical en “la modalidad técnica de la reproducción de lo escrito, una revolución de la percepción de las entidades textuales y una revolución de las estructuras y formas más fundamentales de los soportes de la cultura escrita”.

La creación textual digital ya no es una obra conclusa, con principio y fin, sino que es completada con cada lectura y su particular interpretación. La figura monopólica del autor, tan propia de la tradición literaria, se tambalea y comparte su poderío con el usuario. Ya no hay creadores y espectadores, usted decide el orden y crea su propio texto que solo existe en este instante. Para Pierre Lévy se trata de un “nuevo humanismo” en tanto universalidad sustentada por la interconexión generalizada, sin “clausura semántica”, pero con la participación de una inteligencia conectiva extendida.

¿Y cómo no hablar de revolución? Aguado (2005) señala cambios en los hábitos de lectura, en la organización documental, en la disposición de los elementos, en el tipo de signos y códigos usados, en la sintaxis visual y en la capacidad de elección del usuario. No olvidemos tampoco la disolución de fronteras entre canales y la confluencia entre sistemas de signos. La multimedialidad abre por primera vez la puerta hacia la integración de todos los registros de la memoria: palabra escrita y hablada, música, imagen, íconos...

La utopía del pensamiento universal o la pesadilla del siglo 21

Vuelve a establecerse la utopía, en donde el mundo feliz puede transformarse en el más terrible ante la irrupción de lo diferente. Un número cada vez más creciente de internautas busca informarse a través de su *timeline* de la red social Facebook. Pero esas noticias no las elige un periodista o un editor de prensa. Esas publicaciones noticiosas las elegimos nosotros, de acuerdo con nuestros gustos, creencias y amigos con los que interactuamos en la red. ¿Dónde queda entonces el sueño utópico de una inteligencia universal conectada? ¿Es solo un pequeño ejercicio de autoritarismo frente al espejo? Un eufemismo que sobra ante la mirada complaciente del algoritmo de Facebook...

El usuario no está al mando.

Manovich (2006: 109) había levantado bandera, porque sabía que esas celebradas asociaciones libres del pensamiento no serían espontáneas ni privadas. Es el medio el que induce la elección de

una asociación preestablecida, dijo, lo que se traduce en que “se nos pide que confundamos la estructura de la mente de otra persona con la nuestra”.

¿Hay placer o riesgo en el laberinto, como representación del pensamiento?

Una lectura del hipertexto siempre es una arbitrariedad, aunque no sea tan evidente. Es provisional y susceptible de reutilizaciones infinitas. El usuario tiene que interpretar, se le exige intervenir y ello conlleva un riesgo. La improvisación es inevitable pero el fracaso no tiene que serlo.

¿Cómo edificar una nueva estrategia de lectura?

La alfabetización digital incluye múltiples competencias de iconicidad y navegabilidad, pero, sobre todo, para desarrollar la capacidad de reaccionar críticamente a los contenidos cada vez más numerosos y complejos.

¿Cómo preservar la memoria de contenidos? ¿Cómo almacenar “lo digital”?

La virtualización de la memoria es interpretada por Bachimont y Bouchardon (2013); ahora se trata de una memoria reinventada, pero no almacenada. Los contenidos digitales serían apenas procesos que solo existen con su actualización y nunca como objetos. Un contenido interactivo no puede preservarse, solo pueden hacerlo las herramientas que lo reconstruirán.

Para soñar que soñamos

Para Steve Holtzman, el ciberespacio es un mundo único pero subutilizado. En su libro *Digital Mosaics: The Aesthetics of Cyberspace* de 1997, los usuarios y creadores de contenido aún estaríamos anclados en un pensamiento tradicional. ¿Para qué queremos un computador que emule la expresión humana? Sería mucho mejor uno que la potencie, en una realidad paralela, donde lo virtual no necesariamente se corresponda con el mundo real.

Los web-documentales, los hipertextos de literatura electrónica o los arriesgados y fascinantes Newsgames son ejercicios para soñar ese mundo paralelo. La hipertextualidad es una oportunidad invaluable para seguir ensayando nuevas formas de representar los mundos que pensamos pero,

sobre todo, de crearlos. Hay infinitas posibilidades para escoger. ■

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The future of digital communications and humanitarian response

Sharath Srinivasan

With communication a central element in humanitarian crises and humanitarian response, the next decade will see communicators change their approach in light of the increased significance of digital communications in such situations.

Digital trends include real-time mapping and analysis using social media, crowd sourcing and data mining, the use of mobile phones to disseminate information, online campaigns bringing publics and affected populations closer together, digital platforms for cash transfers and new digital tools for assessment work, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

These changes have brought new actors not traditionally associated with humanitarian situations onto the scene: technologists, data analysts, social innovators, private sector businesses and financial intermediaries, among others.

Yet to understand the full significance of these trends, we must dig deeper. There is a fundamental change underway in the underlying drivers of humanitarian crisis and of humanitarian response that will become a reality in 2025 if we consider that an essential condition that defines a “humanitarian situation” is a communications crisis. This holds on two critical levels.

At the operational level, information communication failures mean that information on urgent and fast-changing needs is not easily transmitted, including from affected populations to existing providers of public goods. Further, physical communications breakdowns – that is, transportation infrastructure – make the timely distribution of needed public goods very difficult.

A communications crisis, then, lies at the heart of a humanitarian crisis, where a disconnect emerges between the urgent needs of an affected human population and the capacity or will to meet these ends,

On the socio-political level, this communications crisis partly defines humanitarian identities. Humanitarian discourses are concerned with affected populations, beneficiaries and recipients on one side and providers, aid-givers, donors and charities on the other. Yet this marks a clear deviation from the language of everyday commerce or politics. Any major structural change to the communications landscape does not merely change the operational aspects of humanitarian response, but also has the potential to reshape discourses on humanitarian identities and ultimately the nature and scope of what constitutes a “humanitarian situation”.

Altering dynamics and scope

The digital communications revolution that has transformed connectivity and the information flows brought about through mobile phones and the Internet constitutes such a structural change. This shift in communications does not merely alter the dynamics of humanitarian response: it changes the scope of what can be considered a humanitarian situation. The communications revolution has, in a direct sense for humanitarian agencies, implications for both humanitarian operations and power relations.

Operationally, “2025 communicators” will have new opportunities to address humanitarian operations needs enabled by better information flows. They will have to carry out real-time data gathering and analytics in collaboration with experts. As such, two-way information flows will be at the heart of effective response. At the same time the “2025 communicators” will face a shift in power relations in the direction of affected populations as a result of better connectivity. “Beneficiaries” and “recipients” will have greater agency, greater voice and greater choice. They will be more informed and will demand to be more informed. “Aid shopping” will be morally acceptable – it must be – and accountability will be more visible and more pub-

lic, not simply a hidden donor-agency-beneficiary conversation. Think of “Trip Advisor” and the potential shifts become simpler to understand.

Yet as noted, what enables this – the greater connectivity through new communications infrastructure (mostly corporately owned), which produces a range of information flows and data – has much wider implications. What counts as a “humanitarian crisis” will be altered in key ways. Information flows will allow a range of other actors operating in the “normal” economy and society to engage and different relations to be created. Shifts in information flows will produce data enabling markets and modelling, where risk and return may be calculable, products and delivery can be priced and transactions can be processed.

“Big data” can be analysed and scenarios predicted, risk can be insured, portfolios can be managed, securities and bonds can be traded. Non-humanitarian actors may take advantage of this ability to reach and access affected populations in less politically complex crises and are likely to marketise these situations. Further, risk management and insurance will feature more prominently in preparedness, planning and financing of disaster response.

Increased connectivity will enable new socioeconomic power relations writ large. On the one hand, consumers can stay consumers or even be created, while on the other, citizens with rights can more easily stay citizens with rights where connectivity is resilient. As a result, the language of “affected populations” and “beneficiaries” will be less tenable, while humanitarianism will be more subject to economic logics – such as consumer satisfaction and “value for money” – and political logics – such as rights, responsive demand-led governance, transparency and accountability. The “humanitarian” situation will shrink in scope and be changed in nature.

Yet a distinctly humanitarian domain will likely remain. This discussion has largely concerned, on the one hand, risk-return, return on investment and profit margins, and on the other, citizenship, voice, rights and accountable governance. This implies certain levels of “normality”. This does not encompass all humans in

need, wherever they are located and however un-economic or socio-politically excluded, nor does it consider the subtlety of understanding human vulnerabilities in context, with sociocultural drivers (beyond markets and data); nor does it attend especially to those who remain disconnected in communications terms, which raises new questions of who is more remote and more vulnerable (including acknowledging sociocultural barriers to speaking up).

As such, humanitarian agencies will need to change to keep up with new communications realities, but some domains will remain distinctly familiar: complex humanitarian emergencies; politically challenging environments; forgotten, difficult and smaller crises; and most vulnerable groups in major disasters.

Ultimately, then the human, unqualified, accepted as they are wherever and whenever their basic humanitarian needs are unmet, will remain a central imperative in humanitarian action in 2025. “2025 Communicators” must remain cognisant of this while responding to and taking advantage of shifts in humanitarian response. ■

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The future of mobile learning

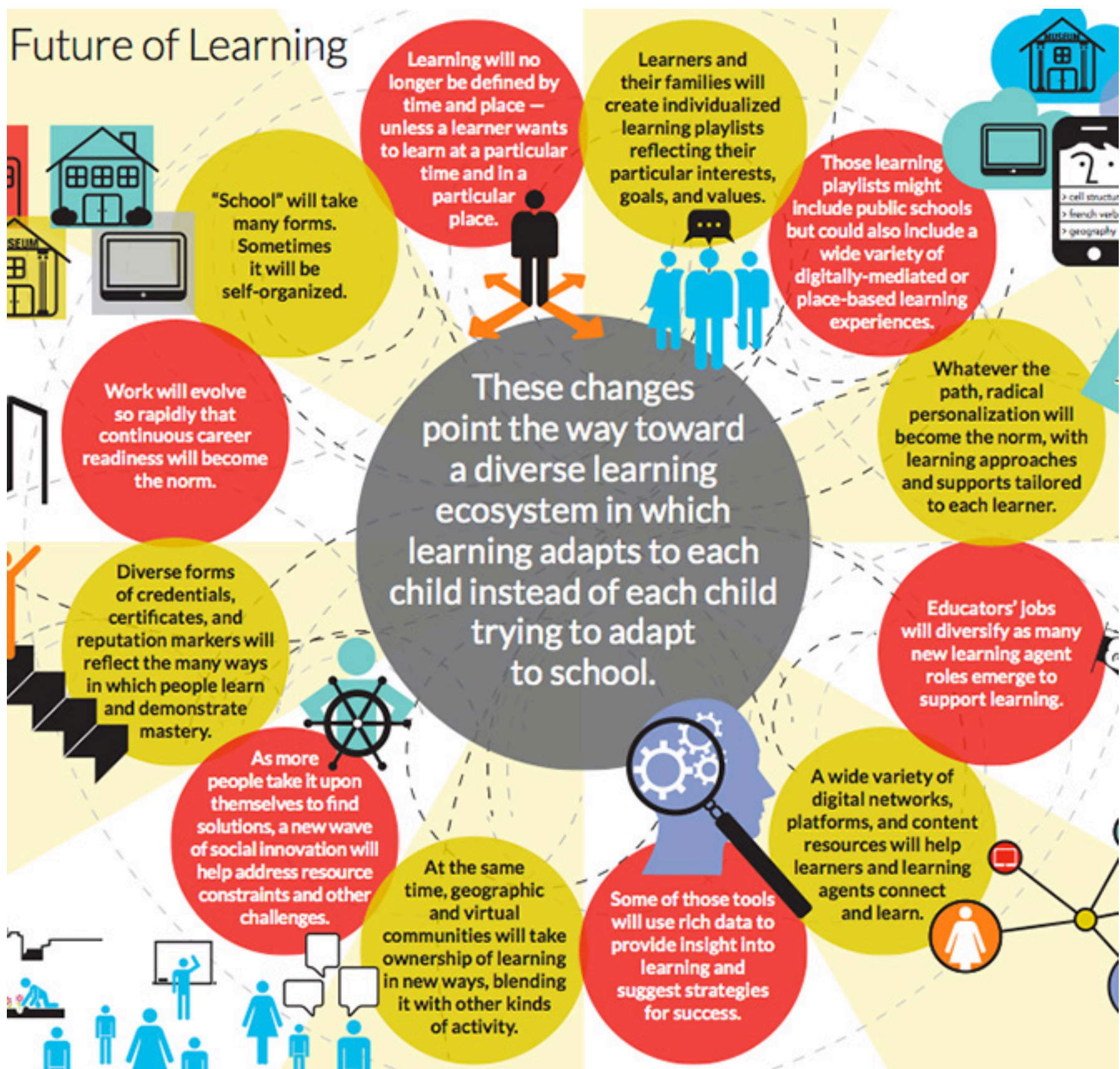
UNESCO

In 2013 UNESCO commissioned a series of Working Papers on Mobile Learning. The aim was to better understand how mobile technologies can be used to improve educational access, equity and quality around the world. Collectively and individually, the papers consolidate lessons learned in different regions to provide policy-makers, educators and other stakeholders with a valuable tool for leveraging mobile technology to enhance learning, both now and in the future. The excerpt that follows identifies some of the implications for policy makers and planners.

Technology has changed our world in ways previously unimaginable. Mobile devices permeate our daily lives, providing unparalleled access to communication and information. By the end of 2012, the number of mobile devices was estimated to exceed the world’s population (Cisco, 2012).

As the power, functionality and affordability of these devices increase, so does their potential to support learning in new ways. Innovative mobile learning initiatives from around the globe have highlighted this potential (Fritschi and Wolf, 2012b; Hylén, 2012; Isaacs, 2012b; Lugo and Schurmann, 2012; Roschelle, 2003; So, 2012; West, 2012).

In one way or another, many – if not most – of these projects are helping students learn about something important to them. Whether empowering a woman in India with daily audio messages to help convert her knowledge into economic gains, enabling a student in Singapore to bridge the gap between home and school, helping a child



in New York gather data to become a “mini-scientist”, or providing a retiree in Bangladesh with access to hundreds of English language audio lessons and quizzes, mobile devices have changed the lives and learning of millions of people in ways inconceivable even a decade ago.

Yet despite over fifteen years of research, mobile learning has so far failed to have a significant long-term impact on education. How can this be addressed? What can be done in the next fifteen years to build on the achievements of practitioners and researchers to increase educational quality

and to ensure sustained learning opportunities for all?

Intersection with society, culture and commerce

Looking towards the next decade and beyond, it seems clear that the future of mobile learning lies in a world where technology is more accessible, affordable and connected than it is today. However, technology alone, regardless of its ubiquity and utility, will not determine whether mobile learning benefits large numbers of people. De-

signing effective mobile learning interventions requires a holistic understanding of how technology intersects with social, cultural and, increasingly, commercial factors.

The technology itself is undeniably important, but equally if not more important is how people use and view technology, a point that has been largely overlooked. Just because mobile devices carry a potential to, say, help improve the literacy skills of women in resource-poor communities does not mean that these devices will actually be employed towards this end. Indeed, across the world women are far less likely than men to own and use mobile devices, and in many communities women are discouraged from using mobile technology for any purpose, learning included.

Mobile devices are often banned from schools and other centres of education, despite considerable and, in many instances, well-established potential to enhance learning. Such bans project a view that mobile devices are antithetical to learning, and this outlook, regardless of its factual validity, impacts the way people interact with technology. Over the next fifteen years, the implementation of mobile learning projects and the pedagogical models they adopt should be guided not only by the advantages and limitations of mobile technologies but also by an awareness of how these technologies fit into the broader social and cultural fabric of communities.

Education and technical innovation

Education and technology can and should co-evolve in mutually supportive ways. While people tend to think of education as perpetually lagging behind technology, there are numerous instances in which education has prompted technical innovation. For example, some historians argue that Alan Kay's 1968 Dynabook, an early prototype of the laptop computer, came into existence as a means of helping students learn through "new media". Kay drew on the theories of well-known learning specialists to inform the design and functionality of the device (Dalakov, 2013).

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Scratch tool, an innovative programming language that allows users to drag and drop code

elements instead of typing them, was designed to help students learn authentic programming skills while creating their own interactive stories, games, music and art (BBC, 2012; MIT).

Software innovators have regularly taken cues from highly specific learning theories. Super-Memo, for example, is an application that attempts to facilitate the movement of information from short-term to long-term memory (Wolf, 2008). It works by drawing on research about memory retention and loss to help users optimize when they study and review information. Education can also dictate hardware design choices. In Russia, the E-OK tablet computer has two screens: one for reading and one for writing. This configuration, and the technology that underlies it, was developed specifically to accommodate educational tasks (Silver, 2012).

Many in the education community are working to ensure that changes in technology push pedagogy forward and, conversely, that innovations in pedagogy influence technology. While important developments are already underway, a great deal remains to be done in the coming years to ensure that technology is relevant to education and education is relevant to technology.

With the unprecedented rate of technological change, it may seem nearly impossible to imagine what mobile learning will look like a decade from now, let alone two decades. Yet exploring these questions is an important exercise, as the future will be moulded by the decisions made today. With the right social and political supports and, most immediately, mechanisms to train practitioners to design mobile learning interventions, mobile learning has the potential to transform educational opportunities and outcomes.

This [UNESCO] report helps guide the way by highlighting issues and questions likely to steer mobile learning over the next fifteen years and beyond. It begins by presenting an overview of the current state of mobile learning, describing recent mobile learning developments in formal and informal education, seamless learning and educational technology. Based on current trends, the report then makes predictions for the future of mobile learning, forecasting likely technologic-

al advances and mobile learning focus areas.

Subsequent sections discuss mobile learning in light of Education for All (EFA) goals, both now and in the future, and identify the primary enablers for mobile learning as well as the main barriers to its development. Finally, the report presents the broad, overarching challenges to be met over the next fifteen years, in order for mobile learning to be integrated into mainstream education and impact teaching and learning on a global scale.

Questions for the future

While the future is sure to hold significant technological shifts accompanied by new learning opportunities, the educational community needs to capitalize on these opportunities to shape a future in which mobile technologies help facilitate learning for all.

Outlined below are important questions to be addressed if mobile learning is to transform from a field of uneven and scattered innovation into a dynamic force for educational impact.

- * Has the education community recognized the vast potential that lies within informal learning spaces, and is it leveraging the ubiquity of mobile technologies to afford new breakthroughs in bridging school, after-school and home environments?
- * Aside from the traditional model of education, what other types of education systems have emerged, and how are mobile devices being used to support them?
- * What skills are needed in a modern world, and is the education community capitalizing on the full range of tools available to help impart these skills?
- * Do teacher training programmes consider the unique value that a teacher adds in a world where enormous amounts of information are immediately available to all learners?
- * How do we effectively train educators to use mobile technologies to advance and ensure high-quality learning?
- * How do we build capacities for learners to exercise greater control and choice over their own learning?

- * Are model initiatives in the field of mobile learning effective, not only in terms of results but also in terms of scale and impact?
- * Have mobile learning solutions proven their value to learners and their families, so that parents and other gatekeepers become increasingly willing to invest in mobile devices?

It is important to consider these questions and others raised in this report, because the decisions made by policy-makers and education stakeholders today will determine what mobile learning looks like tomorrow. With clear and well-informed strategies in place, mobile learning can and will make positive contributions to teaching and learning and help increase educational access, equity and quality for all. ■

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Digital media and transnational languages

Esteban García

In 2015, the United Nations calculated that the number of migrants in the world – defined as those living in a country other than the one in which they were born – had reached 244 million. It's safe to assume that almost every culture in the world has experienced emigration. The rise of mass media and the internet in the last century fundamentally changed how people interacted with one another and by extension, how those millions of migrants related to their places and cultures of origin. Even the most far-flung corners of a diaspora could now connect with others like them in their countries of origin or in other outposts.

But newer technology is pushing changes to human interaction that have not only altered methods of communication and made the world smaller, but have had deep impacts on culture itself. One of the major advantages of digital media and mobile technology that has become evident in the last decade is its democratizing force. If telephones could connect people in real time, digital media and mobile phones hold the promise of even greater integration because they could not only render distance immaterial, but they could transcend language barriers, socioeconomic disparities, and even different levels of literacy.

The ease of accessing and exchanging images and audio from free or very inexpensive sources online and on increasingly inexpensive devices has broadened the information superhighway. More people around the world are producing and

accessing more information irrespective of their own linguistic backgrounds or limitations.

Yet the far-reaching, universal effects of this rapid democratization of information look different for different diaspora communities, because “diaspora” itself can mean vastly different things. There are new diasporas and old diasporas, diasporas tied to specific countries and diasporas of specific ethnic or religious groups that have long since lost their ties to one singular homeland.

Ancient diaspora, modern challenges

The story of the Jewish people is itself the story of Diaspora – theirs alone is the word with a capitalized D. A large part of the Jewish people can trace their roots to Spain, and today are known as Sephardic Jews. Since their expulsion from Spain with the Reconquista in 1492 – a year that might bring to mind another painful migration story – Sephardic Jews took with them to new corners of the globe the language that they had spoken for centuries.

It was the Spanish of Ferdinand and Isabella. Today's Judeo-Spanish, also known as Ladino and Djudeo-espanyol among other names, is largely a snapshot of the Spanish language as it was spoken and written in that century, with modifications from the years of exile in the Ottoman Empire, Greece, and beyond.

While five hundred years have failed to quash the language entirely, it can hardly be said to be free of the strains of exile. While maintaining the language was relatively easy when Sephardic Jews formed communities in new places in the centuries following the expulsion, the rise of mass media and, more importantly, digital media, has changed the game. The effect of assimilation given the new geopolitical and technological realities presented throughout the last century and into the digital age – primarily in Israel, the United States, and Latin America – has been detrimental to the transmission of the language to younger generations.

In a 2013 interview, a member of *Vijitas de Alhad*, a group of Sephardic Jews in Washington, D.C. that meets regularly, admitted that most of the business of the meetings is conducted not in Judeo-Spanish but in English. “No one can claim

to speak it fluently because there is another language that always dominates,” said Ralph Tarica. The digital landscape tells a similar story.

The language’s digital presence today is largely found in websites and digitized archives that act to preserve the language, but cannot be said to be viable tools for its mass transmission to younger generations. One such website is [Ladinokomunita](#). While the website’s creators insist that news of the death of language is exaggerated, it is telling to note that this introductory section of the website is in fact written in English.

Nevertheless, despite the absence of widespread use of Judeo-Spanish and a robust pattern of its transmission as a primary language, for many Sephardic Jews such as the members of the group in Washington, the Sephardic identity remains very much alive. It is nourished by other aspects of their ancient culture. “Some elements of the culture, for example cooking, have survived very well,” explained Mr. Tarica.

The vestige of Judeo-Spanish that has stubbornly and most prominently remained is no doubt the songs, called *romansas*. Mr. Tarica points out that every meeting of the group begins with one, and in fact one of the most well-known contemporary singers of *romansas* is Flory Jagoda, 93, a resident of Virginia and member of the group. She often leads the group in song. Her own digital footprint is impressive. A search of “Flory Jagoda” on YouTube returns 4,990 results. Other Sephardic artists have also found a platform in that digital space, allowing other members of their community around the world to listen to the music that speaks to their hearts, no matter what language they speak with their tongues.

Dynamism in the Latin American diaspora

The digital landscape for the Hispanic community in the United States is very different, and that’s because the story of this diaspora is itself very different. It is important to note that this is only one part of the worldwide diaspora of Latin Americans and their descendant who now live in many countries all over the world. But the United States today, home to some 55 million Hispanics, has by far the largest community outside of Latin Amer-

ica itself.

What sets this part of the Hispanic diaspora apart is the sheer scale of digital media production that it now both produces and consumes. With the growth of the community through immigration during the 20th century, media outlets produced for and by those immigrants grew with it. Univision and Telemundo are now major players in broadcast media nationally, and Spanish-language newspapers and radio stations are numerous. But the rise of digital media has presented new ways for younger Hispanics – including children or grandchildren of immigrants and those brought to the U.S. at early ages – to engage with their cultures that have made the need to master Spanish less important.

This trend is reflected in the birth of entirely new, fully bilingual or English-exclusive outlets. Univision is investing in its new English-language network Fusion, and smaller independent outlets such as Flama and Remezcla are offering young Hispanics connections to Hispanic culture in English, albeit with a strong Spanish-language element in many cases. These and other similar digital media outlets are no less part of or representative of diaspora cultural life than their Spanish-language counterparts. Instead, they recognize and respect a new landscape with the newest tools and technology.

For their part, much of the work being done with Hispanic communities by many organizations in the United States is also increasingly taking on a bilingual character. In my own work at Bread for the World, an anti-hunger advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C., we, along with our allies in other national organizations, are seeing the value and necessity in advertising, content production, and social media engagement that combine the use of Spanish and English.

And it’s with good reason. In 1980, 59% of Hispanics were proficient in English. By 2014, that number had climbed to 68.4. Among U.S.-born Hispanics, the change is even greater: 71.9% of U.S.-born Hispanics were proficient in 1980, compared to 89.4% today. Concurrently, an increasing share of young Hispanics have been born in the United States. Today, 62% of Hispanic adults

in the U.S. are bilingual or use primarily English. Thus, if the population of people who are proficient in English (those born in the United States) is growing, the trend toward increasing use of English in Latino-specific media can only be expected to grow.

Markers of identity, irrespective of language

Consumers of digital media are able to easily access cultural artefacts – images and audio – that keep them connected to their cultures without needing to speak the language. What this relationship between digital media and transnational languages such as in the two cases discussed above demonstrates is that while language is an important element of cultural identity, it alone cannot define it, nor can it determine who belongs.

When a young Hispanic in the United States can view images of dances, foods, symbols, or celebrations that are familiar to them, his or her primary language, whether it be English, Spanish, or Spanglish, becomes irrelevant. Similarly, when the Sephardic Hanukkah ballad *Ocho Kandelikas* wafts through computer speakers along with images in a video posted by a Hebrew-speaking member of that community in Israel, a young Sephardic Jew in this country might feel the pull of nostalgia, despite the linguistic differences between the individuals.

Are English-speaking Hispanics in New York any less Hispanic or Hebrew-speaking Sephardic Jews in Tel Aviv or the English speakers of Washington's Vjitas de Alhad any less Sephardic? The answer should be no, and it's there that the democratizing effects of digital media and mobile technology on culture bear their greatest fruit. The democratization of information has brought with it the democratization of cultural definition and of self-identification. ■

Esteban García received his Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University, USA, and is a native of Los Angeles, California. His research interests include international development, urban planning, national identity, and sociolinguistics. Esteban's experience in advocacy with the LGBTQ and Latino communities and his personal ties to Latin America have inspired him to pursue efforts in the fields of human rights and human development in emerging economies.

Facebook: friend or foe?

Davis Carr

It was hard to escape news in early 2016 of Facebook's "trending" feature. First we learned there were human curators behind what the social media company claimed to be an automated algorithm, then that these employees may be censoring conservative voices from users' feeds.

Facebook denied the allegations, which were first reported by Gizmodo. But shortly after, *The Guardian* U.K. published leaked documents detailing Facebook's policy for both injecting and blacklisting stories. Facebook worked hard to cultivate the belief it was delivering impartial, mathematically and algorithmically determined news to users. The official description of its "trending" feature does not mention a human element:

"Trending shows you topics that have recently become popular on Facebook. The topics you see are based on a number of factors including engagement, timeliness, pages you've liked and your location."

This results in what Upworthy co-founder Eli Pariser calls a "filter bubble," a situation where the content a user is exposed to reinforces their pre-existing beliefs and limits exposure to new and different ideas.

The backlash against Facebook for using people – with all their fallibility and personal bias – to filter the news reveals an important characteristic of the contemporary age: algorithms are considered more trustworthy than human beings. This perspective misses or ignores the reality that bias exists within the math itself. Code is written by people, and people carry explicit and implicit biases. These biases manifest in a myriad of ways, sometimes subtly, sometimes blatantly.

In 2015, research from Carnegie Mellon

University and the International Computer Science Institute found that Google's ad-targeting algorithms would display higher-paying jobs to men visiting employment websites than to women. Bias might also show up in a lack of attention to detail. Early versions of Apple's health application did not include a feature to track menstrual cycles, for example.

Gatekeeper to content

Algorithms prioritize some content over others, with high stakes. Facebook's algorithm favours video and photos over links and status updates – another preference built into the system by humans. In response, and as a sign of Facebook's tremendous impact, content creators and marketers have adapted to the algorithm, investing in more video content and graphic designers, altering how we experience the Internet in the process.

A 2015 study by analytics firm parse.ly showed that more than 40% of web traffic to news sites came from Facebook, beating Google by an inch and Twitter by a mile for redirects. Facebook therefore acts as a gatekeeper to content and is profiting from that role. Only a small fraction of a user's followers will see a given post organically, so Facebook charges users to reach a bigger or targeted audience.

This model has huge implications for news organizations. One Morgan Stanley analyst told the New York Times, "In the first quarter of 2016, 85 cents of every new dollar spent in online advertising will go to Google or Facebook." Content creators, publishers, businesses and organizations must use these platforms in order to reach their audience. Facebook in particular, with its 1.5 billion active users, has enormous power. Publishers must work with the social media giant in order for their content to be seen.

Facebook Live is the latest example of the control the company exerts on news and cultural consumption. Facebook is paying publishers and celebrities to use the new service, which livestreams events to the Facebook app on mobile phones. "In practical terms," explained an article in *recode*, "that means Facebook's News Feed algorithm prioritizes live video while the broad-

cast is ongoing, meaning it will appear higher in people's feeds. It's also doing things like sending out push notifications when videos are live, and alerting people when they've missed a live video."

With digital and social platforms increasing the size of their audience, traditional media is struggling to adapt. As examined elsewhere in this issue of the Monitor, dissemination of news and journalism has been heavily impacted by the change of distribution models, and these changes will only increase as time goes on.

It's important to remember that Facebook is not a content creator – it is a platform. While independent publishers are able to use the platform to reach their audience, mainstream media outfits still dominate the field and largely determine what is considered newsworthy. Facebook is not in the business of creating the news – just sharing it.

Facebook's domination of media creates the risk of the continued homogenization of information with a very corporate bias. It is a private corporation with no obligation to anyone but its shareholders. As users of the platform, we must remain sceptical of any product that has so much power and so little oversight. And as our lives increasingly go digital, we must be critical of the unconscious, unseen and subtle biases that exist around us, especially in those mechanisms and tools that claim to be impartial.

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Data innovation powering Sustainable Development Goals

Magdy Martinez-Soliman

The world is awash with data. Today, more data than ever in human history is produced on a daily basis. Every time a person carries a cell phone from one place to another, tops up her mobile airtime or posts on social media, new data is created.

The rapid increase of large data sets along with growing computing capacities and increasing sophistication to analyze ever-larger data sets has enabled businesses to dramatically improve their performances over the past years.

Companies can monitor client behaviour and their reactions to changes in service offerings in real time. Consumer items already come with increasingly sophisticated artificial intelligence and possess the capability to learn and adapt when being exposed to new information.

Household appliances can detect a person's presence and turn on or off when needed, resulting in significant energy savings. Smart refrigerators can automatically order groceries when supplies run low. The first generation of self-driving cars is here, promising to lower the risk of road fatalities due to human error.

There is no doubt: the future is already here, it is just unevenly distributed, as William Gibson famously said.

While companies work on improving data analytical capacities and extracting value from data innovations, we still have a long way to go in the development community and in the public sector. We do not know enough about the lives of the most excluded people on this planet.

We know very little about the quality of education, health and other basic services that

poor people receive. We do not have sufficient data about the discrimination and exclusion of women. Yet we know that these can be decisive factors to reduce inequalities, improve livelihoods and eliminate extreme poverty.

The newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals are a tremendous opportunity to accelerate efforts to end poverty and to change the lives of millions while protecting the precious resources of our globe. At the same time, it poses a serious challenge of monitoring. There is not enough reliable and up-to-date data to track progress and measure the effect of interventions across demographics.

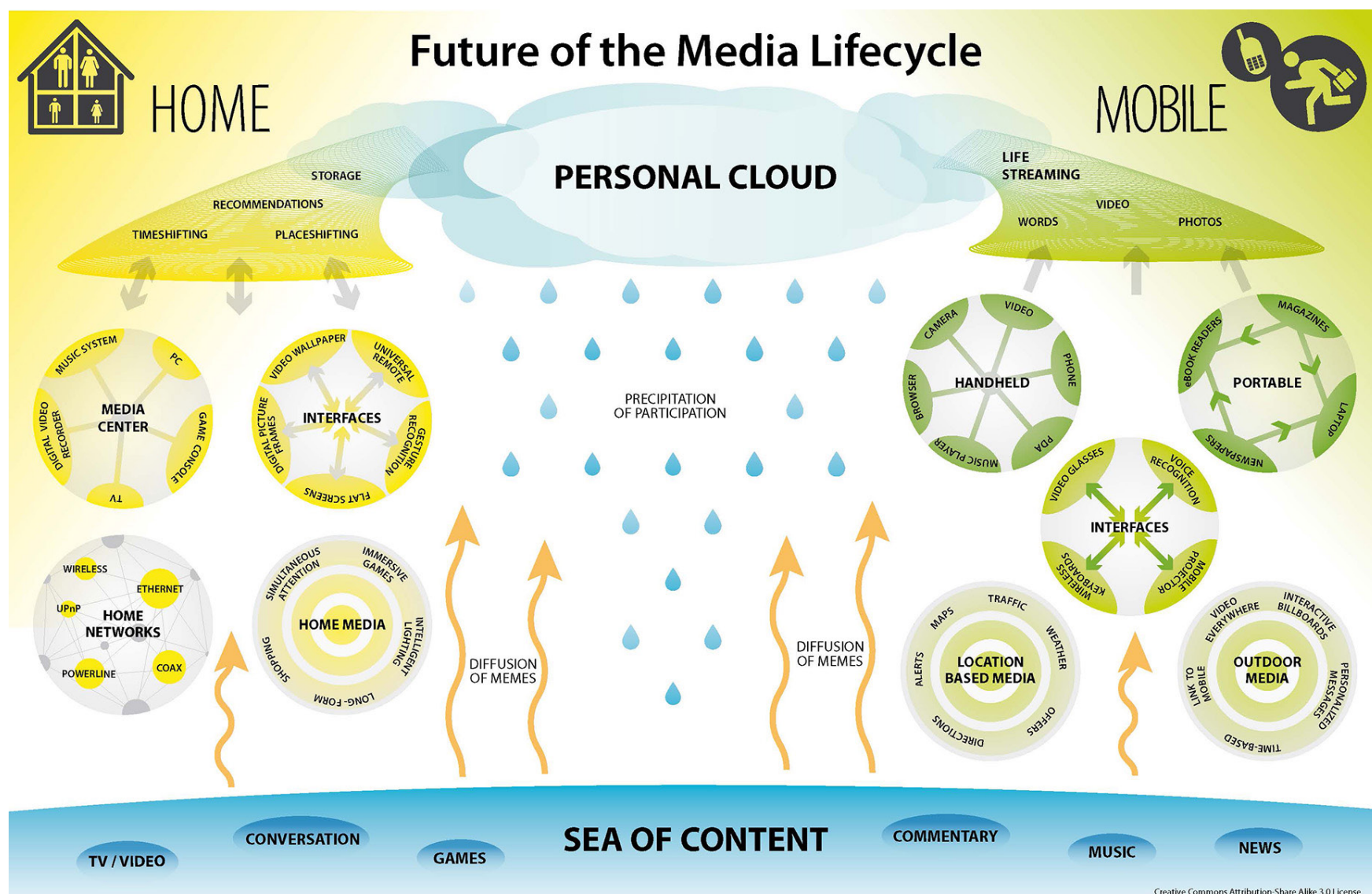
Over the past years, there has been dedicated efforts across the UN System and the wider development community to address our data challenges. Since 2009, the UN Global Pulse has worked with many UN agencies on proof-of-concept initiatives that show the potential of big data across the new Sustainable Development Goals agenda.

Following the release in 2014 of his report “A World That Counts”, the United Nations Secretary-General last year tasked the highest level officials of UN agencies with accelerating the UN System's ability to innovate in applying data to development challenges.

How might we mitigate disaster loss by better assessing risks regarding the intensity and frequency of hazards due to climate change in the Maldives? How can we improve delivery of education programmes in Gabon by measuring the impact of short-term investments in training and capacity building? Is it possible to reduce HIV-infections and AIDS-related deaths in adolescents and at-risk communities through real-time analysis in Kenya? How might we better understand the impact of migration on the development of countries of origin, transit and destination? These are some of the intractable questions that the United Nations faces on a daily basis.

Designing data-driven solutions to development challenges

Last September, while heads of states were meeting at the United Nations General Assembly on



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the east side of New York City, a small cadre of UN staff headed the opposite direction, to the heart of Silicon Alley in Times Square.

Over the course of two days, they hunkered down with innovators from civil society, academia and the private sector to co-design data-driven solutions to these humanitarian and sustainable development challenges.

Following a hands-on approach, UN staff learned to apply data innovation methodologies in their day-to-day work, mindful of ethical considerations surrounding data use, such as safeguarding privacy and actively listening and responding to people's concerns.

Benefiting from the insights and expertise of top innovators from tech companies, they started designing specific and concrete data-driven solutions to the questions above that we are committed to put in practice in the coming months and years.

The event was the second in a series of six **UN Data Innovation Labs** aiming to provide the

UN System with the capability to investigate, design and implement applications of emerging data techniques in support of global development.

We still have some ways to go to create an environment conducive to data innovation within the UN System, where risk is encouraged, failure is tolerated and learning lessons are ingrained in the culture, successes are scaled up, and we are equipped to reap the dividends of technological progress and data innovations to serve the poorest and most vulnerable.

If the data revolution is to help fulfil the transformative potential of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development by realizing its fundamental principle of leaving no one behind, it is imperative that the United Nations itself not be left behind by the data revolution. ■

Source: IPS News Agency, 3 November 2016.

Magdy Martinez-Soliman is UN Assistant Secretary General and UNDP Assistant Administrator.

Discoverability and Canadian cultural policy

Fenwick McKelvey

We can all relate to Charlie Chaplin in his classic film Modern Times. As the Little Tramp falls behind on the production line, the conveyor belt pulls him into the factory's cogs. We might laugh as he winds through the gears, but we too are working in a factory of sorts. It is a vast factory assembling our attention and its output affects how we produce and consume culture.

Canadian media regulators have begun using the term discoverability to describe these new conditions of cultural production, distribution and reception. A recent Discoverability Summit in Toronto, co-hosted by the National Film Board (NFB) and the CRTC, devoted two days of panels to the topic. The CRTC introduced discoverability as a defining feature of an Internet-enabled “world of choice” where “content is available everywhere, on so many platforms.”

Eighty-two per cent of Canadians watch or download TV and movies online using services like Netflix, itself a powerful part of the factory built to manage our attention and influence our cultural consumption. How does Netflix influence what content we watch? Depending on the device, about 50% of the screen will be dedicated to advertising a specific show or movie (usually one of Netflix's own productions). Below Netflix's promoted content you'll likely find a few strips containing recommendations under the headings New to Netflix, Saved to Your List, Trending or Recommended for You.

The Canadian Media Fund (CMF) calls these the levers of discoverability in a recent study. As regulators seek to understand this new

factory, these levers and who pulls them demand more analysis. Algorithms, suggested the CMF report, are an important lever. These computational functions use data to rank, sort and rate content or decide what's trending. Algorithms might use data from other customers to recommend a new show. Or they might use metadata to suggest other titles in one of Netflix's micro-genres, such as Independent Drama Featuring a Strong Female Lead.

We constantly interact with algorithms to discover content, often without being aware of the long-term effects of our feedback. This process has led to concerns about an overly personalized Internet as we unintentionally train algorithms to offer a limited set of recommendations.

While most of us pull levers unconsciously, clearly some people know the right ones to pull. Micro-celebrities, clickbait bards and viral video editors are a new kind of elite in the discoverability factory. Their craft differs by platform. Reply Girls game YouTube's thumbnail system. Search Engine Optimization specialists (for a fee) will boost your website's ranking on Google. It is not exactly clear how they're operating the machine, but their success demonstrates the inequities of online attention.

All this talk of algorithms and social media celebrities might obscure the most important piece of the machine: the content discovery platforms themselves. In the attention factory, platforms remain a black box whose workings we don't really understand. Facebook for years claimed its trending news section was algorithmically curated until Gizmodo and The Guardian U.K. discovered that a team of journalists frequently injected stories into the list of trends. We shouldn't be shocked that humans are involved, but we should debate the accountability of these platforms.

The front page of platforms – or what at the summit was called the First Impression Unit – remains a major lever of online attention. By managing these first impressions, platforms have an important influence on discoverability, not unlike a broadcaster's power to decide what content appears in prime time. Netflix, for example, uses its front page predominately to promote its own con-

tent. Platforms can also sell their influence. Your next smart TV might feature ads on your home screen as device manufacturers find ways to exploit this new revenue stream. That might be the only way independent or other studios can compete with Netflix for attention.

These levers play an important role in the new attention factory and they require continued regulatory oversight. The good news is that Canadian media regulators like the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) have a legacy that makes them well-suited to address discoverability as a major issue for broadcasting. While the attention factory might seem new-fangled, old questions of media globalization, cultural policy and democratic oversight remain relevant.

Like Chaplin squeezed between two big gears, Canada is in a tough spot, facing significant domestic and global media concentration. If more digital concentration continues, the machine might be controlled by Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Netflix alone, putting a squeeze on local governance. Google and Netflix have publicly flaunted the CRTC's authority, thereby undermining Canadian democratic oversight. It could be Canada seeks to harmonize oversight of the factory so its global pieces are subject to the same oversight as local ones.

Another approach to discoverability in Canada would be to explore the viability of platform-focused regulations developed in Europe. The EU has called for Netflix and Amazon to ensure that at least 20% of their video libraries consist of European content. Their concern over online media providers offering a new channel for American cultural dominance connects with growing worries about the unchecked economic power of Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon (or GAFA). The EU has investigated the monopoly power of Google, implemented a "right to be forgotten" so people can opt-out of the platform's data collection and questioned the privacy of social media data flows.

A broader first step would be to open up the machine to public oversight. The Discoverability Summit was an important opportunity for the

CRTC to publicize these issues. Accountability is a matter of public concern as seen in the debate over Facebook's trending news, though the scandal seems to have rattled the machine less in Canada than in the U.S. Does the same team of young journalists also manage Canadian trends? The manual leaked by the Guardian suggests so with reference to an ability to change the scope of the trending data and a reference to the Toronto Football Club. Could there be a review of Facebook and other platforms' mechanisms that decide what's trending in Canada?

Canadian cultural institutions should continue to have an active role in promoting and supporting Canadian content in this attention factory. Many state-sponsored cultural institutions developed out of legitimate concerns that the economic might of the United States would hinder home-grown cultural industries. The CBC started in response to concerns about American cultural annexation. Could public service media play a meaningful part in this new attention factory?

We would do well to avoid nostalgia for traditional Canadian content in thinking of the new role for public service media. Diversity remains a real issue for the Canadian cultural industries overall, as seen in the lack of coverage for the #Black-Lives-Matter movement in Toronto, as well as concerns about race and gender representation in newsrooms and television production. These issues abound online.

Taking up the issue of discoverability could encourage new voices, but emerging online platforms might not offer the best venue for them. Toxic cultures like GamerGate and the Red Pill movement have been effective in silencing and pressuring feminist voices. Wikipedia has recognized it has a problem with a lack of diversity among its editors, which negatively influences its content. Could Canadian cultural institutions play a positive role in user-generated discovery in the same way that feminists have led edit-a-thons to promote underrepresented histories and peoples on Wikipedia? No one can discover content if it is not there.

Simultaneously, the conditions of cultural production on these platforms can be econom-

ically exploitative, or what's been called platform capitalism. These necessary new voices might toil away for free in what Canadian news reporter Tamara Sheppard calls apprenticeship labour. Could a new generation of public service media be a big piece of a better attention factory? Could a better platform be created for Canadian content producers? Could Canada develop a platform that ensures artists receive a greater share of advertising revenue and offers more accountable management of content recommendation? Perhaps the CBC in its redesign of its shuttered comments might create a more supportive community for cultural production? A Canadian Reddit? Maybe an alternative platform might be too much domestically, but perhaps in collaboration with other international institutions?

Discoverability has reassembled the attention factory but not necessarily democratized it or made it more equitable. The worst case scenario would be a world where discoverability is both profoundly confusing and totally lacking in accountability or oversight. That's why the Discoverability Summit was a critical start. In looking ahead, the point to keep in mind, to remember my late colleague Martin Allor, is that "our task is to change the world, not merely to describe it." ■

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Political culture and media in post-Suharto Indonesia

Bagoes Wiryomartono

Freedom of expression through media has been important to the reformation agenda in Indonesia since the fall of Suharto's New Order in 1998. This article examines how this plan has been working, tested, challenged, and sustained under Joko Widodo's administration, whose political agenda has a strong vision of the need for the state's presence with public accountability. Accordingly, media and public participation are regarded as close partners of Jokowi's public policy for transparency and commitment to democracy, social justice, and supremacy of the law.

Patrimonial hegemony is regarded as a theoretical framework for studying political culture in relation to post-Suharto Indonesia, since it discourages transparency and public accountability in governance. In Southeast Asia, patrimonialism has been historically predominant in political culture for centuries (Brown 1994, 209, Bertrand 2013, 28, Budd 2004, 7). The fall of Suharto in 1989 was not followed by restructuring Indonesia towards the formation of civil society (Fukuoka 2015, 88-9), which would have deconstructed the dichotomy of a patron-client system between political economic elites, *priyayi*, and ordinary people, *rakyat-kawula*.

Free media and the press have been playing an active role in shaping and developing this civil society with the dissemination and production of fair and open information. To a certain extent, Indonesian media are expected to preserve and

conserve local culture for the unity in diversity of a country with more than 300 ethnic groups, languages, customs, and traditions. Historically speaking, the press and media in this archipelago have been considered the messengers of national unity in diversity; the sense of an Indonesian nation-state has been literally established with the use of Indonesian language by press and media since Dutch colonial times.

After the fall from power of Suharto, the relationship between media and the government is getting better in terms of freedom from censorship, intervention, and infringement. Investigative journalism is growing significantly in the country besides open public debates on various political and economic issues beyond parliamentary sessions. All this is made possible through the reformation of the political system from an authoritarian to a democratic presidential system.

However, despite transformations in the governance system through democratic public election processes, free press and media are less effective in dealing with public disclosure in cases concerning the abuse of power by public officials. Lack of evidence in terms of information from government sources becomes one important reason for publicly exposing such cases.

Media predicaments

This article does not intend to divulge cover ups for the abuse of power by public officials, but simply to unveil the predicaments of media concerning freedom of information. In Indonesia, the cover up of the abuse of power by public officials is considered a practice of collectively forgetting that has been chronically experienced as a political habit. The root of such a habit is mainly cultural, in that the pride of government, *kewibawaan pemerintah*, is important for the unity and harmony of Indonesia as a nation-state.

Culturally speaking, public officials are not public servants but the patron of ordinary people, *priyayi* or *orang besar*. The process of political reformation since 1999 has not yet transformed the political culture from patrimonial governance to one of democratic administration. Since then, the cultural gap between the political elites and

the ordinary people, *rakyat*, remains unchanged. Maintaining the good image of the government has been perceived as cultural preservation for the integrity and harmony of the nation-state. Culturally speaking, any flaw or defect in the government is considered a danger and a threat to the well-being of the nation-state as a psychological concept (Suryadinata 2015, 176). From this perspective, the purpose of a cover up is commonly understood as any necessary measure carried out in the name of national unity as well as maintaining Indonesia's self-pride in the eyes of the world.

Under Suharto's New Order, such measures were collectively shared by the state security forces as the justification for action against political opponents or those affiliated with any political movement against the status quo; communism and democratic liberalism were perceived as the most dangerous threat to Suharto's New Order regime. Even though post-Suharto Indonesia has been perceived as a new era with a free press and democratic governance, the Indonesian population as a whole is still not ready for an open and democratic society: seniority, oligarchic elitism, and patrimonial leadership are still in demand and valued as a political way of life.

Democracy does exist in the public election process. Democracy is still a work in progress in the daily business of politics. What media people can expect from this epoch is not free from their personal privilege in relation to political and business elites. In other words, the transparency and public accountability of the government in regard to its plans, actions, and policies are not legally bound to be shared with the public.

The post-Suharto press and media have enjoyed freedom in terms of being free from government censorship, but this does not mean they are meeting responsibilities to guard and support democratic control of the government. There are still challenging issues concerning the effectiveness of the media and the press for a democratic Indonesia. The Indonesian political culture of patrimonialism still discourages media people from seeing the whole picture of issues, constraints and opportunities of a case because they

do not have access to complete information at the hand of the public office.

Despite the democratic process, the government plays the role of patron while the people are at the government's clients. Patrons are those who control access to resources – money, materials, information, and labour – while clients are people who do not have any political influence and do business to manage, transform, and transport the resources for production and services. Culturally speaking, the media and press in Indonesia are the clients of the patronage system of government.

In this traditional framework, the freedom of press for reporting and opinion is not fully experienced because it is necessary to comply with local cultural courtesy. This predicament includes the necessity for being proper in communication either through written, spoken, or body language; all this is locally conceived as *tata krama*. In doing so, access to information from the government's side has been always subject to courtesy and personal relations to key persons in public office. To a certain extent, the source of information remains anonymous and the most common reason cited is the disappearance of information from the public archive.

Don't shoot the messenger

One study is focused on the publication of Haris Azhar concerning his exclusive interview with the Kingpin Fredy Budiman; Azhar is the leader of the NGO Violence against Humanity and Missing Persons or *Kontras*. The communication took place in 2014, prior to Budiman's execution on July 28, 2016 in Nusa Kambangan.

Haris Azhar disseminated his interview with the drug-lord Fredy Budiman via social media: "Bad Story of a Bandit". Azhar learned from Budiman about the involvement of high ranking police and military officers in the drug trafficking business. After the interview went viral on social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, he was asked by a number of high ranking police officers to prove his statements. Budiman told Azhar to investigate the involvement of police officers in the drug business as indicated in Budiman's defence in court. Azhar and his colleagues could not

find the defence report on the Supreme Court Website, nor was he able to get a copy of the report from the court. Eventually, the State Police, the State Narcotics Agency, and the Army issued Haris Azhar with a summons for defamation.

Based on Azhar's interview, people became aware that the war against drugs in Indonesia is political rhetoric because drug lords have been working together with public officials smuggling ecstasy pills from China. Besides the involvement of public officials, Azhar also identified the way law enforcement tracks drug trafficking from international distributors to local warehouses. The trick is to catch the delivery man before reaching the warehouse so that people never know who is behind this line of distribution. In other words, law enforcement officers do not take their job seriously. They pretend to prevent the drug trafficking but what they actually do is cover up the men behind the distribution of drugs.

Azhar is considered a courageous person who has reliable contacts and information concerning those who were involved in the narcotic business. In response to Azhar's report, President Joko Widodo instructed the Chief of State Police, General Tito Karnavian, to establish an independent team of investigation. The team consisted of 18 members, selected from human rights activists and academicians. The task of the team was to verify and examine all information in the Azhar interview with Freddy Budiman. Meanwhile, the State Police cancelled their investigation regarding Azhar's alleged defamation (The Jakarta Post 2016). The question is why Azhar did not go to the media to publish his interview?

Even though the public does not have any questions concerning the credibility of the team and its work, people have been sceptical about the follow up of the investigation report. The team found indications of a fund transfer from Freddy Budiman's associate, Chandra Halim, to a state police officer (Okezone.com 2016).

During past administrations, similar investigations have been done by credible teams, but the actions that followed were swept under the carpet. Most recently, the investigation report concerning the murder of Munir, a human

rights activist and former leader of an NGO for missing persons (Kontras), has gone missing from the government's archive under Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The former administration did not follow up the case after the report was submitted in 2005. When the public asked the government to reopen the case, the files were not available. All this is not surprising in Indonesia. The patronage of government discourages transparency and indiscriminate access to information.

No real right to information

Although the 1999 law guarantees and endorses journalists' right to seek information, it does not include a provision for state elites to share information and be accountable to the public at large (Romano 2003, 131). There is legally no obligation for public officers to share information with journalists or the public. The other thing that matters for freedom of press in post-Suharto Indonesia, is the fact that media and public information have become an integral part of capitalistic and oligarchic business. Broadcasting and print media are under the control of private enterprises affiliated to other commercial businesses (financial, real estates, forestry, manufacture, retails, transportation etc.).

This means that journalists are not able to be independent in reporting and publishing their findings and opinions because they have to contend with the interests of stakeholders in the media company. On the other hand, journalists are necessarily careful to see the big picture of any issue they work on because their bosses may have a client-patron relationship with public officials. Accordingly, media in post-Suharto Indonesia are not fully independent in their function and role in relation to freedom of information. Their voices are mostly under the control of big capitalist magnates and businessmen who are directly and indirectly affiliated with certain political parties (Ida 2010). From this situation, we can understand why Haris Azhar does not publish his report and interview with Budiman in the country's regular print and broadcast media.

People's trust in Joko Widodo's leadership has been challenged by the way his administration

treats and handles Azhar's information concerning the abuse of power by state police officers in the drugs trade. The president has to deal with the status quo of the state police who have enjoyed untouchability since the Suharto era. Corruption and misuse of power among police officers are well-known practices in Indonesia, consequently people do not trust them. To reform and transform the state police from its unsympathetic image to a standing that is trustworthy and professional requires a radical change in corporate culture. ■

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Chemnitz (Germany) 2016

An Ecumenical Jury awarded prizes for the first time ever at the 21st International Film Festival for Children and Young Audience “Schlingel” (26 September to 2 October 2016), strengthening the support of INTERFILM and SIGNIS for films for children and youth. Previously, the only ecumenical jury at a film festival for children and youth was in Zlín (Czech Republic), which is the oldest of its kind, founded in 1961.

The prize winner of the Ecumenical Jury at Chemnitz was *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (still below), directed by Taika Waititi (New Zealand, 2016), which also won the Junior Film Award.

A Commendation was awarded to the children’s film *Meester Kikker* (Mr. Frog), directed by Anna van der Heide (Belgium, Netherlands, 2016).

The European Children’s Film Award went to *Korunní Prince* (Crown Prince) by Karel Janák (Czech Republic, 2015). Several prizes were awarded to the Vietnamese children’s film *Tôi Thấy Hoa Vàng Trên Cỏ Xanh* (Yellow Flowers on Green Grass) by Victor Vu (Best Child Actor, Main Award of the Department of Private Broadcast and New Media of the Saxon Free State, Commendation of the Children’s Film Jury).

Buffalo Rider by Joel Soisson (USA, Thailand 2015) was awarded the Prize of the City of Chemnitz and *My Name is Emily* by Simon Fitzmaurice (Ireland 2015) won the Award of the Youth Film Jury.

The “Schlingel” festival has been organised by the Saxon Service for Children and Youth film in Chemnitz since 1991, in cooperation since 2006 with the State Institution for private broadcasting and new media of Saxony.



Kiev (Ukraine) 2016

At the 46th Molodist International Film Festival (October 22-30, 2016) the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded prizes in the competition for full-length films, short films and student films.

The award for best full-length film went to *Keeper*, directed by Guillaume Senez (Belgium, Switzerland, France 2016).

Motivation: A film about a girl and a boy, normal school things, music, football trainings and the possibility to proceed towards a professional level. And pregnancy, which puts their life in a new position: what to do, what decisions have to be made, and by whom? The film approaches the complex question of pregnancy in teenage. Especially in this case from the boy's perspective. How to meet the demands to become a father and get his own voice to be heard. The path of life can give a new direction.

The award for best short film went to *Ascensão* (Ascension), directed by Pedro Peralta (Portugal 2016).

Motivation: In the misty dawn a group of villagers tries to rescue the body of a young man who has drowned in a well. The body is laid down to his mother's lap. From that moment onwards the mystery of awakening both the young man and the morning catch the viewer's attention. A very poetic film full of symbols and metaphors challenges the viewer to interpret both the mystery of death and life of human beings, nature, and to reflect Biblical references. Extremely detailed filming with colours, sounds and movements keeps the viewers in grip from the beginning to the very end.

The award for best student film went to *Esel* (Carry On), directed by Rafael Haider (Austria, 2015).

Motivation. An old married couple lives on an isolated farm with their animals. Especially the old donkey is important for the husband. Losing it is harder than he could imagine. With a humoristic touch the film describes the importance of the presence of both human beings and animals and

the simple connection with nature. Without too many words in the film viewers, both old and young, can feel the deepest longing of love.

Members of the 2016 jury: Ninfa Watt, President (Spain); Volodymyr Krachuk (Ukraine); Juha Rajamäki (Finland).

Lübeck (Germany) 2016

At the 58th Nordic Film Days Lübeck (November 2-6, 2016) the INTERFILM-Jury awarded the Church Film Prize, endowed with €2500 by the Churches of Lübeck to *Rosemari* directed by Sara Johnsen (Norway, Denmark, Germany, 2016).

Motivation: The INTERFILM Jury awards its Prize to an intelligent, witty and complex film about motherhood, longing and reconciliation. 16 year old Rosemari does not know who her mother is, goes on a search for her roots and finds unexpected things, which in the end give her life a new turn. This film tells a never before told story about the mother-daughter relationship. The story is about why birth and giving birth is important and does not happen in life only once.

Synopsis: Unn Tove marries the wrong man. During her wedding reception, a baby is born in the bathroom of the restaurant. Unn Tove finds the newborn girl and turns her over to the authorities. The two meet again 16 years later. Unn Tove is now the mother of two daughters and works for a local broadcaster. Rosemari is trying to track down her birth mother. Unn Tove decides to help the young woman in her search and shoot a report about it. On their journey across the country, they are confronted with issues of motherhood and love. In the end, Unn Tove is faced with the decision of whether or not to tell Rosemari the truth, and of how to handle her own love life.

Members of the 2016 Jury: Astrid Baar, Germany; Poul Martin Langdahl, Denmark; Ylva Liljeholm, Sweden (President); Christoph Rehmann-Sutter, Switzerland.

Leipzig (Germany) 2016

At the 59th International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film (31 October to 11 November 2016) the Interreligious Jury, appointed in collaboration with DOK Leipzig by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded its Prize in the International Competition Long Documentary and Animated Films to *Cahier Africain* directed by Heidi Specogna (Switzerland/Germany 2016).

Motivation: *Cahier Africain* (still below) by Heidi Specogna on the ongoing atrocities between different religious and ethnic groups in the Central African Republic centres on the lives of Arlette, a young wounded Christian girl and the Muslim woman Amzine with her daughter born

after brutal rape. Amidst the desperate situation Amzine manages to find a fragile safety as refugee in Chad. There the rift between mother and daughter starts to heal.

The Interreligious Jury congratulated the filmmaker on her sensitive approach to her protagonists, her poetic filming and for leaving us with a glimmer of hope through the images of the women rebuilding their lives.

The Prize is endowed with €2500, donated by the Interreligious Roundtable Leipzig and the VCH-Hotels Germany GmbH in the “Verband Christlicher Hoteliers e.V.” including the Hotel Michaelis in Leipzig.

Members of the 2016 Jury: Annet Betsalel, Bussum (The Netherlands); Thomas Bohne, OR, Leipzig (Germany) – President; Irina Grassmann, Frankfurt a/M (Germany); Gürcan Keltek, Istanbul (Turkey).

Berlinale 2017

The 2017 Berlin Festival will feature Indigenous films from the Arctic Circle. “A Journey into Indigenous Cinema” will focus in 2017 on Indigenous cinema from the Arctic. The film programme for the special series, comprising nine short and ten feature-length films, will be complemented by a number of events featuring discussion and other spoken word formats.

NATIVE 2017 will open with a film from the cultural sphere of the Sámi, Europe’s only Indigenous people: *Kuun metsän Kaisa* (Kaisa’s Enchanted Forest), by Finnish Skolt Sámi director Katja Gauriloff.

The film tells the story of Gauriloff’s charismatic great-grandmother Kaisa. This personal and poetic documentary film effortlessly weaves original film and sound recordings from the 1930s to the 1970s together with animated sequences and folk tales of the Skolt Sámi. It is a testament to the eventful history of the Skolt Sámi and their struggle to preserve their unique culture in the wake of resettlements brought about by shifting borders throughout the course of the 20th century. ■

